

Organisation and Management Theories: An African Focus

Lewis B Dzimbiri



Cuvillier Verlag Göttingen
International Scientific Publisher

Organisation and Management Theories: An African Focus

*Integrating structure, people,
Processes and the environment for human happiness*

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Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.ddb.de> abrufbar.

1. Aufl. - Göttingen : Cuvillier, 2009

978-3-86727-834-8

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Nonnenstieg 8, 37075 Göttingen

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Telefax: 0551-54724-21

www.cuvillier.de

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1. Auflage, 2009

Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier

978-3-86727-834-8

To my family

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Preface to the Book

This book is both theoretical and practical. It is theoretical in the sense that it borrows and re-interprets existing knowledge on the subject of organisation and management. It is practical in the sense that in the process of reinterpreting theories, it makes explicit application to the author's experience and that of other individuals and groups he has interacted with. Organisation theory is quite a thick jungle of theories analysing the structure and functioning of organisations. We have been very selective in this book to ensure we illustrate our interpretation of what is happening in organisations today.

My interest in this area dates as far back as 1984 when one of the pillars in the then department of Public Administration of the University of Malawi- the late Anthony Namalomba- introduced me to organisation theory and management. In spite of the tense atmosphere he used to create in class (he boasted as an academic terrorist), I enjoyed his scholarly approach to the subject and the passion with which he presented and illustrated his subject matter. He could go down to earth to draw a picture of his wife on the blackboard as an example to illustrate decision making processes. Hundreds of former mature-entry and regular students shared experiences with the author since that time.

Of particular interest to the book are the three key schools of thought- classical, behavioural and open systems and contingency theories. Classical theories are of interest because of their emphasis on structural foundations of organisational functioning. The behavioural school with its focus on the human side of the organisation, illuminates vividly the reality of organisational life. After all, organisations are human entities. The open system and contingency theories are of paramount importance because of their insights into the impact of the environment on organisational functioning and processes. Within this framework, managerial processes take place in the form of planning, organising, staffing directing, coordinating, controlling, communicating, leading, decision making among others. The reinterpretation part of this book is with regard to the need to see organisation theory and management practice as a continuing effort of integrating, on a daily basis,

structural, people, environmental issues, problems and challenges with the processes and activities performed in the organisation to produce goods and services for human consumption.

The book delves into various examples at different places to illustrate the relevancy of the theory part to the African environment. Such an application is based on the author's experience and that of his former management trainees at the Staff Development Institute (SDI) at Mpemba in Blantyre, University of Malawi and Botswana students which the author taught. The numerous experiences during workshops and seminars for senior public servants at national and regional levels, such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) - Malawi, Tanzania, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe- have been very useful. His experience at the SADC Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) at the University of Botswana, where the author worked for 4 years, has been quite instrumental in providing a comprehensive insight into the dynamics of organisation and management issues at the wider regional level.

These and many others have, in no small measure, contributed to the nature of the book. As a long journey of professional development, the idea to write this book started in 1987 at the then Staff Training College, now Staff Development Institute. The preliminary draft took off at Chancellor College, University of Malawi between 2003 and 2004. More serious work was done at the University of Botswana while teaching in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies during the period 2005-2008. The final touches were done at Chancellor College, upon return from Botswana.

The book consists of fourteen chapters. The first set of chapters focuses on structural dimensions by exploring the nature and scope of the concept of organisation and an examination of classical theories. A chapter is devoted to people in organisation through behavioral science theories. Issues to do with the environment and organisation interface are dealt with in a chapter on open systems and contingency theories. Organisational processes, in particular, managerial functions, are discussed in a number of chapters. The final chapter is a summary and at the same time a reflection to the perennial question- Is Western organisation and management theory applicable to non-Western setting, and Africa in particular?

In general, the conceptual frame of reference throughout the book is integrating structure, people and environment in organisational processes. If the reader finds that certain areas of the book make him/her reflect on his/her experience- positive or negative- the book will have realised its intended mission.

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2009

Acknowledgement

A lot of people and institutions, too many to mention, have contributed directly and indirectly to this book. I thank them all. In particular, I wish to thank my former medical assistant trainee, James Mpando at the Staff Development Institute, for inspiring me to write a book on management. The Malawi Ministry of Health/ Howard University Health Institutions Development Project that engaged me in 1987, deserves my sincere thanks for activating and developing my ability to apply theory to practical situations by engaging me to write a manual on Health Centre Management. Other institutions that engaged my services- the Eastern and Southern Africa University Research Project (ESAURP) in Dar-es-Salaam, Council for Non-Governmental Organisations of Malawi (CONGOMA), Employers Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM), Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA) in Johannesburg, Commonwealth Foundation in London, the Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) and the Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) at the University of Botswana, among others provided me an opportunity to gain insights into some practical realities facing organisations in Southern Africa.

Thanks to the University of Malawi for granting me a generous leave of absence to undertake serious work and finish this book at the University of Botswana. Thanks also to the latter for providing excellent facilities and an environment conducive to teaching, training, consulting, research and publication. I thank colleagues at the University of Botswana in particular, Prof Gervas Maipose, Prof. Keshav Sharma, Dr Mogopodi Lokorwe, Dr Dorothy Mpabanga, Prof Balefi Tsie, Prof. Mpho Molomo, Prof. Isaac Obasi, Prof Gregory Kamwendo, Dr Alfred Matiki, Sego, Tumelo, Esther and Victoria for their contribution during the various stages of this book. To Dr Asiayati Chiweza, Dr Mustafa Hussein- Gama, Mr Tambala and Ms Susan Kaunda of the University of Malawi and the Director of the Staff Development Institute, Mr Blessings Chilabade, I say thank you for all you did. You will never know how much you contributed to this book. Thanks to all my former students at Mpemba, Chancellor College and the University of Botswana and the various trainees and course participants in Malawi and beyond, for the experiences you shared. Special thanks to Dr Mpabanga, for accepting to review and

make pertinent comments on my original manuscript. I am greatly indebted to my family, in particular, my dear wife Mavis and children, Joyce, Lewis Jnr. and Joel who removed some emotional stress when I was writing this book in Botswana. To my son George, your father cannot thank you enough for managing our 'things' in Malawi when your dad was writing this book away from home.

About this Book

Introduction

Organisation and Management Theories: integrating structure, people, processes and the environment has certain background and features that need to be introduced. This chapter focuses attention on the typical features of the book as a way of outlining what it contains and why it is written. It is an attempt to demonstrate why it should be added to the list of other well written books shelved in various libraries and bookshelves of universities, management development institutes and technical schools and in the offices and homes of directors, managers and administrators. The origin of the book is also explained. The question of whether there is tension between theory and practice is explored to demonstrate how both theory and experience are important attributes of anyone wanting to be an effective manager.

The What Why and How of the Book

Imagine we went on a tour around cities, municipalities, districts and rural areas to ask people on the streets and roads what they would want to see in their lives if they were to feel more satisfied and happy in society. Certainly, they will tell us a lot. They will mention things like food, shoes, clothes, decent houses, nice cars, clean water, uninterrupted electricity, good education, health facilities, entertainment, recreation and many more. A study conducted by the author in Malawi on behalf of the Commonwealth Foundation in London as part of a Commonwealth-wide study on 'Civil Society in the New Millennium' in 1998, revealed more needs for what we termed 'the voiceless'. School drop-outs, farmers, local artisans, cattle herders, unemployed youths, divorced women, school boys and girls and others were asked what they thought were features of a good society. They were also asked to comment on whether those features existed in Malawi and if not what could be done in order to bring such a good society to Malawi. Respondents mentioned most of the above but added others like increased security to reduce armed robbery, eradication of poverty, violence against women, illiteracy, hunger, poverty, HIV/AIDS and corruption. Building of health centres in the various villages and tightening discipline in school were some of them. All these are human wants which cannot be achieved unless organised social structures are created and managed to undertake various

activities to produce goods and services for human consumption.

There are many excellent books written on issues regarding organisation and management theories. Most of them however do not combine the two areas in significant detail. There are those that dwell more on organisation theory and nothing on management. Others concentrate on management side of the organisation. Yet, others focus on topical issues dealing with managerial functions. For example, there are books written entirely on planning or strategic planning, leadership, communication, controlling, budgeting etc. It is a nightmare for students of organisation, management, business, public administration and human resource management to assemble all these bits and pieces together. A student would need to buy many books to ensure he captures issues of organisation and management theory. However, as the reader is aware, more often than not, financial constraints will inhibit. Again, where libraries are struggling to get a few textbooks every year due to funding problems, it becomes uneconomical to get books that have individual topics only. It is therefore much more convenient, economical, and hassle-free for libraries, managers and students to get a book that is close to a 'one-stop shop'. This book is closer to that.

Most of the literature tends to write issues about organisation and management theories without providing a clear link between structures, people, environment and processes. Consequently a student is left with the abstract world of theory without understanding that these concepts are about practical issues in his or her context. This book is therefore an attempt to stress this link so that organisation and management theories can be seen as part of what is happening around the world. Readers will be made to appreciate that the struggle for organisations is to meet their own needs while meeting the needs of society as a whole. And that to do this, they all have to handle issues to do with structure, people and the environment as they undertake various processes.

Another important issue to mention about the wider literature on organisation and management is that some of it is written without much effort to apply the theory to the specific contexts with which the African student is familiar. As we all know, effective teaching is characterised by providing more examples that are within the context of the student or is applied to certain practical contexts. A book which has to facilitate effective learning needs to be built on a firm experiential base- ie practical illustrations are essential elements of learning. This book tries as much as possible to provide practical illustrations, notably, within the context of Africa. It also provides review questions. More importantly, research activities aimed at enhancing the experiential part of the learning process within the context of the student are also provided.

This book is about the theory and application of organisation and management to produce goods and services for the happiness of human kind

all over the world. It is also an attempt to relate this to the management of organisations in the African environment. As a student of public administration, human resource development and industrial relations over the past two and a half decades, the author has written essays and examinations in Malawi and England. In these writings issues of the application or the relevance of a particular theory to his setting were examined. Throughout his teaching, consulting and research, he has used western theories like principles of management, scientific management, Douglas McGregor's theory X and Y, management by objectives, motivation and leadership styles among many others. He has also asked students and senior course participants how relevant such concepts are to their setting. Responses on the application of these Western principles and theories have in a big way influenced the direction the book has taken.

The idea to write this book was hatched over two decades ago when one former medical assistant student at the Staff Development Institute, Blantyre, over two decades ago, asked me a question: 'sir, are you management? When I waited for a couple of seconds without an answer, he went ahead to ask another question: I mean, did you learn the management theory and practice that you teach us or were you born with these ideas? I was still puzzled and could not have a direct and appropriate answer. He was surprised that although I was not a medical doctor, I was able to touch his heart in the way I taught health center management. In 1987, the Ministry of Health through the Howard University Health Institutional Development Project (then coordinated by Dr Ross) asked me and my friend, the late John Mwale (may his soul rest in peace!) to write a management manual for health centre management to be used for training of medical assistants who are managers of health centres in Malawi. My friend who initially accepted changed his mind on account that he was not a medical person and could therefore not write on drugs and medical supplies and other topics. I took the challenge all alone. I advised that I could do that after uncovering management skills and knowledge gaps for medical assistants.

I undertook a rapid needs assessment through interviewing, observation and reading of documents. I talked to medical assistants, district medical officers, patients, health surveillance assistants, ward attendants among others at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Central Medical Stores, Machinjili Health Centre in Blantyre, Thyolo District Hospital, Chonde and Thuchila health centres. My knowledge on office practice, general management, stores management, human resource management and communication and knowledge and experience in training helped me to pose appropriate questions throughout the research period.

I drafted the manual in which were topics such as drugs and medical supplies; communication systems at the health centre, personnel systems; records management and others. Using this manual, my colleagues at the

Staff Development Institute and I designed a course which over 200 medical assistants underwent over a period of three years. The medical assistant who asked me the above question belonged to the first group and was in effect one of the medical assistants who attended a meeting which I also attended at Thyolo District Hospital. During this meeting, I was introduced as 'a tutor from Mpemba College collecting information which he will use to teach us'. This student could not understand that a non-medical person could design and facilitate a management course that touched on health centre management to his satisfaction. I was doubly encouraged to realise that my ability to apply theoretical frameworks obtained through the study of organisation theory and management during my first degree in public administration to practical situations brought in satisfaction and excitement to my students. In fact, there were many more occasions when students and seminar participants expressed words of encouragement which acted as strongest motivators. 'Your students enjoy a lot; you make difficult concepts easy through illustrations', others would say.

It was not until I left this institution and joined the University of Malawi where I taught organisation theory and management for several years, that the urge to write this book came to me in very strong terms. While preliminary drafts started at the University of Malawi, Chancellor College, more serious work started sixteen years later at the University of Botswana after a long academic and professional journey. Thus, this book is a product of advanced study of management theory as well as practical management experience as a head of department, dean of faculty and vice president of the University of Malawi's Chancellor College. It has also benefited from my teaching experience and the experiences of senior managers in government, private and non-governmental sectors who participated in most senior management training programmes that I facilitated at the Staff Development institute, Malawi Railways Training Centre, National Bank training Centre, Nasawa Malawi Young Pioneer Training College and Hotel Training School, now the Institute of Tourism in Blantyre.

Other areas of greater insights are the workshops and seminars I conducted for the Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM), Council for Non-Governmental Organisations of Malawi (CONGOMA), Trade Unions and the Ministry of Labour. At the regional level, my involvement in workshops organised by the Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Programme in Dar-es-Salaam (ESAURP) and the SADC Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) at the University of Botswana, have in a big way, exposed me to experiences of participants from the 14 SADC member states. Again, as programme coordinator and key lecturer for the two year mature-entry BA Human Resource Management programme at Chancellor College, the experiences of private and public sector managers and professionals who were my

students played an important part in the understanding of the application of organisation and management theories to local setting in Malawi. My experience in numerous consulting and advisory assignments to several organisations in the public, private and non-governmental organisations in Malawi and the SADC region have been instrumental in shaping my journey towards writing this book. It would certainly have been a huge disappointment to most of my former students if I did not write this book.

Two decades of teaching organisation theory and management against the above background experiences have given me an added advantage of being able to conceptualise what is happening in the 'management theory jungle' to determine the key issues at stake. This book is also a process of operationalising organisation and management to ensure simplicity, ease and relevance to those uncomfortable with concepts. I am convinced that there are four key issues one can identify and link in organisation and management theories. We are talking of the integration of structure, people, environment and organisational processes. In the process of planning, organising, directing and coordinating and decision-making for the achievement of organisational goals and through that the achievement and satisfaction of human needs (societal needs), managers are integrating-through various techniques- people, structures and the environment. Modern society is highly organised because each organisation is destined to satisfy just one or two aspects of human wants. We can imagine how dull and uninteresting the world would be without organisations to meet the health, food, clothing, leisure, transport and other societal needs. Thus, the presence of organisations has, in no small measure, brought in our lives some degree of human happiness.

The central terrain of this book, therefore, is to examine the theoretical basis for the structure of organisations because it is the foundation of organised social grouping which we call organisation, company, ministry, department, university, non-governmental organisation, police, prison, college, water or electricity corporation or the World Bank. This structure is created and composed of people whose effort creates the goods and services we so much desire, use and cherish. Theories which deal with the human element in organisations aim at creating a comprehensive understanding of the motives, needs, aspirations, ingenuity and potential of people and how to harness and tap them for the benefit of the organisation and the wider society. The next important aspect of this book is to acknowledge and discuss the significance of the environment- the immediate and wider social, economic, political context -within which organisations function. The student and reader know too well that companies, government departments, banks, universities, parastatal bodies, non-governmental and international organisations do not operate in isolation from their environment. They are dependent and interact with the environment- customers,

competitors, regulatory authorities, government laws, fluctuating economic outlook and governance patterns which have a huge impact on the growth, performance and survival of the organisation. It is also worth noting that while they are being influenced by their environments, organisations are also struggling to influence those environment through advertising, social responsibility, product innovation etc. There are various processes in which organisations engage themselves. These are the actual operations of the organisation. They involve lots of activities like managerial, accounting, security, commercial, production or technical. The managerial include planning, staffing, coordinating, controlling, budgeting, communication, leading, decision making, team briefing, conflict resolution and grievance handling. These processes are the day to day operations in organisations. Like the circulatory system in the human body, these processes integrate structure, people and environment on a daily basis.

When a manager is planning, he cannot afford to forget the structural imperative of the plan nor can he ignore the human implication of such a plan. Furthermore, he has to account for the implication of the plan on the relationship with the environment. No wonder when strategic planning is being done, we starts with scanning the environment first in order to identify strength, weakness, opportunities and threats and this helps us to develop our strategies based on such a scan. Thus, these processes are performed as the organisation is implementing its goals and objectives and producing a good or a service for the benefit of society. The book is therefore a synthesis of the organisation and management theories to illuminate four major properties- structure, people, environment and processes. These in a way are illustrated using experiences and examples within the African context.

The book also provides a review activity at the end of each chapter to ensure that the reader can be stimulated to think about what they have read. There are research activities for students of organisation and management theories. These are aimed at enhancing their understanding of the practical world through interviewing managers and administrators in public, private and non-governmental organisations. Not only does this enable students to relate theory and practice in various contexts, it also develops their conceptual, analytical, communication, problem-solving and social skills useful in their future job.

Theory and practice: any tension?

What is theory? What is experience? Which is better in ensuring effective management of organisations? Put in a simple layman's language, theory is what one knows about a phenomenon based on what is written and read in

books or journals. This might be something about the structure of organisations and how they are managed. For many students of management in Africa, this theory is obtained from books which were written on the experience or research of organisations in Europe and America.

Experience, on the other hand, is knowledge of a phenomenon which one has learned through his own action- learning by doing. There are many managers and administrators in the public, private and non- governmental and international organisations who have been managing departments, sections and divisions of organisations, ministries, departments of government without having studied management or organisations in formal academic settings. There is a saying that 'experience is the best teacher'. Others even say, 'life is a teacher, the more you live the more you learn'. Taken in this way, the more you learn by being involved, the more you understand the practical realities of organisation and management.

To a large number of highly experienced managers with less formal training in management, experience is probably the most important thing that counts. The author recalls a few decades ago when he joined the Staff Development Institute, that most of the trainers had no formal qualifications in the areas they were teaching. They had amassed several years of experience which enabled them to move to senior levels of their field in the main stream public service. Others came from Accountant General's Department, Local Government, Traditional Courts and the then Department of Personnel Management and Training, now the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD). Others taught financial and store regulations and procedures, public service commission regulations, public service regulations, office practice and accounting to clerical, secretarial staff, courts clerks, accounts assistants, executive officers and other senior public servants who came for induction, proficiency and promotional courses.

On the other hand, a few came straight from the University of Malawi. They taught management theory, human resource management, communication, local government theory, law and other financial and personnel procedures as practised in the Malawi Civil Service. One would hear through the grapevine, sometimes, from course participants or colleagues that a war of words went round either at the Staff Common Room or at a bottle store where trainers/lecturers would exchange arguments over experience versus theory. Those without experience would burst into a sudden rage and fight back with the words 'what is experience if it is not just a year's routine repeated several years?' 'You are mere theorists and you do not know what actually happens in practice. We know the craft well ourselves,' experienced practitioners would say, in return.

The author participated in these conversations and appreciated both views. To repeat what we said above, what is theory? Is it not practice written

down? And is practice not theory put into practice? In other words, what is being theorised is something that is being practised. Earlier on in this chapter, I mentioned that a medical assistant was impressed by the manner in which the author presented issues regarding health centre management when he was not a medical man. Yet what was perceived to be very relevant to the medical man was a research into the practice of health centre management which was written into a manual and later presented to them. Their own experience was written down. It became very relevant.

Thus, managers and administrators need both the theory and practice of management for them to do their job well. Without theory, practice remains a huge amount of experience which cannot be subjected to description, analysis and evaluation. One may not know whether what they have been doing is comparable to other practices elsewhere or departs from generally accepted principles or frameworks and models developed and shared by others, world-wide. In other words, such experience will lack concepts to describe it, comparability to determine where things are and cannot be learnt by others systematically because it is not written. After all, modern society is so advanced that it has the art of keeping records in the form of books, files, memoirs and dairies for the benefit of posterity as well as for training others.

On the other hand, theory without practice can be more than mere visions about how organisations are managed, how managers plan, organise and budget. The author is reminded of a brother, who in his primary school days, learnt the definition of zebra crossing and memorised it very well. One day when he and his brother walked along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre, they passed near a zebra crossing. He asked the 'young boy' what that thing was called. The boy said he did not know. When he was asked to define zebra crossing, he said correctly, 'it is a place where pedestrians cross on busy streets in town'.

In other words, he was not able to link what he had learnt in class with what he saw in a real situation. He did his primary education in a rural village where there was no zebra crossing. This is a pointer regarding the manner in which trainers or teachers should teach. There is need to blend theory with practice. It is becoming clear that theory without experience is not sufficient. This calls for the need to combine both theory and experience. However, it does not mean that one should have the two at the same time before they start working. It is not possible for the first time. Rather it means those who are in management positions but have not had formal management qualifications, would enhance their theoretical background through management training and development programmes.

On the other hand, those without experience have the potential to acquire it within a short period of time as they join organisations. It is also a commendable practice for management training or education institutions to

provide hands-on experience through attaching student to public or private sector organisations as part of their training. The department of political and administrative studies in the universities of Malawi and Botswana, and indeed others elsewhere, undertake attachment as part of management and administrative training. This book therefore is premised on the assumption that there is no tension between theory and practice. Rather, theory enriches better practice and vice-versa. An ideal situation is where managers combine the two in order to enhance organisational effectiveness, efficiency and health for the satisfaction of societal wants and human happiness.

Organisation of the Book

There are four major thematic areas in this book. The first theme focuses attention on structure. It defines organisations and delves into its properties, activities, and ways of studying them. It also discusses classical theories of organisation and management. Chapter 1 gives the background to the origin of the book and links theory to practice and whether there is any tension between them. The central argument is that both are two sides of the same coin and that none is sufficient enough without the other when it comes to managing organisations. Chapter 2 examines the definition, importance, features, resources and activities in organisations. It also examines ways in which organisations can be visualized and why we should study them. Chapter 3 looks at classical theories of organisations, mainly, the scientific management, principles of management and bureaucracy.

The second theme deals with people aspect of organisational life. This is where behavioral scientists of various persuasions have made an enormous contribution to our understanding of the human aspect of work organisations. Chapter 4 looks at the behavioural science school which focuses more attention on the human relations school, hierarchy of needs theory, theory X and Y, theory Z, two factor theory of motivation and immature-mature theory.

The third thematic area is the environment with which the organisation interacts. A discussion of the open systems and contingency theories contributes to our understanding of this theme. Chapter 5 looks at the open system and contingency theories as an attempt to integrate the organisation and its environment. The final thematic area is processes- those that bind the various properties together. More importantly, in this theme, managerial functions, which constitute the major processes in organisations, shall be examined. Chapter 6 introduces the concept and role of management and why organizations need to be managed. Chapter 7 examines the planning function and its processes while chapter 8 examines the organising function

and its processes. Chapter 9 analyses the processes involved in the staffing function. Performance appraisal and performance management system are examined in chapter 10. The functions of directing, controlling and coordinating are examined in chapter 11. Chapter 12 looks at decision making and communication while chapter 13 focuses attention on leadership. Chapter 14 is a summary and conclusion to the book.

Throughout the thematic areas, the author attempts to link western theory of organisation and management with practical realities in the African environment. The idea is to illustrate how much of Western theory is applicable to the context in which organisations in Africa find themselves. Chapter 14 consolidates our discussion of the four thematic areas and looks at the relevance of organisation and management theory to the African context. It maintains that since organisations in Africa are to satisfy human wants, and empirical evidence shows that they deal with structural, people and environmental dictates and processes, organisation and management theory is relevant to Africa. However, the context within which managers and administrators find themselves will determine how the four aspects can be integrated. It is not a question of whether they are applicable or not, rather how they are applicable. This calls for a diagnostic application of issues of structure, people, and environment within organisational processes to achieve organisational goals and human happiness at the same time.

Review Questions

1. What is theory?
2. What is experience?
3. What is the importance of theory in management?
4. What is the importance of experience in management?
5. To what extent is it important for managers to possess both the theory and practice of management?

Research Activity

Interview three managers, one from each of the private, public and non-governmental organisations. Find out their views on the role of theory and experience in managing organisations. Are there any differences among them? Why or why not?

2

Structural Issues: the Concept of Organisation

Introduction

This chapter focuses on clarifying the concept of organisation as the beginning of elaborating the structural dimension of organisation and management theories covered in this book. The aim is to ensure that a student of organisation and management will define organisations and understand their importance to modern life. Features of the organisation, classification, activities, resources and ways of visualizing organisations will also be explained with examples where possible.

The world in which we live today is highly organised compared to the pre-industrial period. Our food, health, leisure, education, housing, social welfare, defence, security, clothing, shoes, among many luxuries could not be met without the concerted efforts of organised activity. Organisations are 'purposeful' collectivities oriented to the pursuit of relatively specific goals. They are purposeful in the sense that the activities and interactions of participants are coordinated to achieve specified goals. Goals are specific to the extent that they are explicit, are clearly defined and provide criteria for selecting among alternative activities.

Definition of Organisation

A definition helps us to distinguish one aspect from another. Most definitions of organisation emphasise distinctive features. That is, those which distinguish organisations from other related human groupings. According to Barnard, a formal organisation is that kind of cooperation among men that is conscious, deliberate, and purposeful. For March and Simon, organisations are assemblages of interacting human beings. On the other hand, Etzioni views an organisation as a social unit (or human grouping) deliberately constructed and re-constructed to seek specific goals. Although the above definitions are close to each other, we shall adopt Etzioni's definition because it has certain concepts which help us to examine the definition further for purposes of a deeper understanding of the concept.

Phrases such as 'kind of purposeful cooperation', 'human grouping', 'constructed and reconstructed' need to be clarified. Purposeful cooperation

means that an organisation like the University of Malawi is deliberately created to achieve certain goals for the benefit of individual owners, shareholders, employees, managers, clients and the wider society. Secondly, social structure or human groupings means that organisations are composed of people. It is not the building, offices, equipment and vehicles that create or form an organisation, although they are important in the functioning of an organisation. Rather, the people who create and form the organisation are crucial in the running of those organisations. In the case of a university, lecturers, heads of department, deans, support staff, directors and managers of various divisions up to the vice chancellor or president are part of the social structure of the organisation.

The other concept of interest in the definition of an organisation is 'constructed and reconstructed'. What it means is that organisations are not natural and fixed entities that are subject to unchanging laws. They are constructed from nothing, and they can be modified, changed or transformed completely. Through organisational change or reform, an organisation which is a public corporation can be transformed into a private company or vice versa. Two or more organisations can also merge into one. Again, an organisation can be split into two organisations. Thus, organisations are dynamic entities which can be modified to fit the needs of the owners at the time or to respond to prevailing business environment. These modifications are aimed at ensuring that the needs of society are effectively satisfied. Clients from the wider society in which the organisation functions may complain about poor services or products from the organisation. To ensure customer satisfaction, the organisation might then respond by restructuring production processes, training personnel or modifying its procedures, rules and regulations.

Importance of Organisations

There is a wide consensus among scholars and even practitioners that the needs and goals of society can be satisfied mostly in formal organisations. Modern society is typically an organisational society. While the Stone Age period was a world in which man did everything for himself (jack-of-all trades), modern society is advanced. The demands of today's life are many and varied. The various types of food that we eat, the clothes we wear, shoes, building materials, books, telephones, education, health services, housing and leisure, and many more, are products of organisations. No one can therefore afford to meet them by providing himself. Ours is an interdependent society which is built on group effort. Although organisations were present in older Chinese, Greek, Indian and Egyptian civilisations, it is only in modern industrialised and urbanising societies that we find large

numbers of organisations performing many highly diverse tasks.

Apart from the organisational assignments of maintaining law and order, public administration and tax collection that characterised ancient civilisations, we have a vast array of functions added to modern industrial societies which in turn have necessitated the need to create additional organisations to handle various functions. Some of these include:

Research or discovery function.

The need to discover new ideas, technology, inventions, designs or to help improve further the living conditions of the entire humanity, has led to the creation of a category of organisations engaged in research. They are known by different names: research organisations, research and development, centres of innovation or centres of strategic studies.

Socialization function.

Organisations aimed at helping the intellectual, societal, physical, spiritual/moral development of people from childhood to adulthood are found in different countries of the world. Nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools, technical colleges, training institutes and universities are in this category.

Rehabilitation or re-socialisation function.

Organisations where offenders of justice or the mentally confused are kept with the aim of helping them reform or change back into socially acceptable behaviour before they come back into society are well known to the reader. This process helps the victim to change their bad behaviour into good citizens. It also helps them to maintain the security or safety of the very society from where these people come from. They are variously known by different names like mental-hospitals, boys' home, approved schools and prisons.

Production and distribution function.

There is an increased need to produce and distribute goods of various kinds throughout the world leading to the creation of numerous organisations which are involved in manufacturing of goods of various types- cars, hoes, pens, bread, steel, plates, clothes, shoes, watches, building materials, electronics and the selling of these items at wholesale and retail levels. That is why people in Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and others are

able to buy cars manufactured in Japan, Singapore, France, Germany and South Africa.

Service provision function.

The expansion and demand for various services has also led to the creation of purely service oriented organisations both free of charge or at a cost. Transport, shoe-shine, laundry, shoe repair, dress making, car servicing, TV repair, hairdressing, tourist guide, counseling, banking, insurance, training, counseling and consulting, are some examples.

Protection of personal and financial security function.

Security companies, the police, the army, insurance firms, banking and trust companies provide security functions to individuals, companies and society generally.

Preservation of culture.

Although societies are subject to change, they nonetheless want to maintain certain cultural heritage for its posterity. Museums, art galleries, universities and libraries fall into this category of organisations.

Communication function.

Some organisations specialise in communicating to society messages or information that is useful in many ways. Radio and television studios, telephone companies and the post office, are examples of these organisations.

Recreation function.

Others take recreation as their main task. Tennis association, swimming pools, the lake cruising club as on Lake Malawi, national park and game watching and professional football teams are examples of organisations that provide recreation.

In other words, as the needs of society have expanded beyond food, clothing and shelter, it becomes necessary to have a multiplicity of specialisation among various types of organisations to meet the expanded needs of society. It is not therefore surprising that we have numerous types of food processing or selling organisations. This is so because the range of foods people eat have expanded over time. Even the very ingredients that go into the food

different people eat have also expanded over the years. This has led to a proliferation of organisations to meet the variety of appetite people have. It is therefore proper to point out that as a result of industrialisation, urbanisation and advanced technology; organisations have expanded in size, range, number and complexity.

Features of an organisation

The fact that some organisations are public and others are private or non-governmental raises an important question about features. What features do organisation has that qualifies them to be called organisations? If you saw a social structure created to achieve specific goals, how would you know that you are dealing with an organisation in the sense used in this book? In this section we will identify those features which students of organisations can isolate for the purpose of comparing organisations all over the world. Organisations are capable and competent in achieving pre-planned goals because they are able to combine successfully the human, material and financial resources in a more rational manner because they have important features which Khandwala (1977) identified as specificity of purpose, hierarchy of authority, division of labour and specialisation, formal communication, employment of skilled personnel, rules, regulations, procedures and controls. We will elaborate and illustrate on each one of these below.

Specificity of purpose

Organisations are formed in order to achieve specific or general purpose. For example, the University of Malawi was created in order to advance knowledge through teaching, research and service. A church is created in order to advance the spiritual life of individual members. A shoe making company is established to make profit for its owners through the production and marketing of different types of shoes. It would be inconceivable that an organisation could be created without any specific purpose. The importance of organisational objective/purpose cannot be over-emphasised. It is important for purposes of legitimacy. As organisations exist within a wider governmental or political framework, it is important to ensure that the purpose of the organisation is not against the laws of the land. If the purpose is against established laws, that organisation risks being refused registration as a company. Secondly, the purpose of the organisation defines its clientele. By knowing the purpose of an organisation, one is able to know the type of customers that organisation caters for. For example, passengers' welfare

association gives an immediate impression that this organisation has the welfare of passengers at heart.

By knowing the purpose of the organisation, we can also think of appropriate location of the organisation, the type of resources human or material required and the scope of operation of the organisation. When one hears that the purpose of an organisation like a university is to produce middle and top level professionals and managerial personnel of a particular country, one can think immediately of the diversity and quality of employees required and the resources to be used. In this case, one will think of lecturers, professors, deans, and heads of department as some of the employees this organisation will employ. One can think of overhead projectors, chalk, dusters, white or blackboards, dusters, data projectors, computers and books as additional resources required in this type of organisation (university).

Hierarchy of authority

Each and every organisation has a hierarchy of authority ranging from the highest in position down to the rank and file members. There is an elaborate structuring of offices both horizontally and vertically. In a government ministry in most countries of Africa, we find a principal or permanent secretary at the top and below that position is a chain of authority from the senior deputy secretary, deputy secretary, under secretary down to principal and senior administrative officer. Below this level, the chain continues down to administrative officer, senior executive and executive officer, senior clerical and clerical officer, down to messenger grade. In a private sector company, the hierarchy of authority may range from the general manager, deputy general manager, heads of sections, down to the lowest members of the organisation. In most organisations, hierarchy of authority is depicted by an organisation chart. There are many reasons for the importance of hierarchy of authority and these are:

- It facilitates the process of delegation of work. One knows who is to deputize for whom and who reports to whom.
- It shows who supervises or is responsible to whom and for what type of activity
- It helps co-ordination of activities in various organisational units, sections or divisions
- It also helps to identify who is supposed to make what decision.

Division of labour

This is a feature which suggests that each person should do some part of an overall activity to allow for perfection and therefore effectiveness. This means that the process of making bread, for example, can be done by different people doing different portions of the bread-making task. Before the industrial revolution in Britain and other parts of the world, products were made by hand. This means that one person started and finished knitting a jersey. However, the discovery of machines led to the engagement of different people to perform various activities required to accomplish a particular item like a jersey.

The concept of division of labour and specialisation was invented by Adam Smith who noted that by undertaking tasks in which people were experienced, productivity increased. It was a realisation that the time for jack-of-all-trades and masters of none was over if productivity were to be enhanced. It was increasingly becoming clear that to compete favourably and gain a larger portion of the market, organisations needed to pay attention to a careful division of labour and specialisation.

In a university set-up for example, there are faculties, department, and units. Even within the division of university administration, we see management section, catering, maintenance, accounts, purchases, institutional planning, human resource management, training and development, health and wellness, among others. In the department of say, political and administrative studies at the University of Botswana, one sees that other lecturers are specialised in political sciences while others are in public administration. Within public administration you find that others are in human resource management, public management, public administration, local government, public enterprise, public policy analysis and comparative administration. Those in political sciences specialise in areas such as international relations, political science, political theory, African politics, regional integration, politics of Southern Africa, modern political thought, comparative politics etc.

By focusing attention on what one is well qualified to do, regularity, experience and expertise is harnessed and these lead to professionalism, specialisation, motivation and high productivity. With the increasing complexity of activities in modern organisations, division of labour and specialisation becomes a very powerful characteristic in workplaces and industrial undertakings. The needs of society are better served if people specialize in specific areas of activity. As organisations have specialized in producing different goods and services, specialization among individuals working in them, is crucial.

Employment of skilled personnel

This is linked to division of labour and specialization in relation to the people who will perform various activities in the organisation. Since activities of organisations are fairly technical to the extent that they require advanced knowledge and skills and other competencies, they employ knowledgeable, skilled and experienced personnel. One cannot be a medical doctor, nurse, accountant, engineer, university lecturer, pilot, judge, computer programmer or statistician without formal education and training. Advertisements in newspapers bear testimony on this feature. They spell out educational and professional qualifications required of a jobholder. This follows a job description which describes a job in terms of duties, tasks and responsibilities. Further, a minimum number of years of experience is stipulated. That is why highly paying and prestigious jobs demand higher levels of education, training and several years of work experience.

However, this does not mean that unskilled or semi-skilled employees are not employed. There are tasks that do not require prior education, training and experience. Cleaning, sweeping, cutting grass, lifting cartons, to name a few, are some of the tasks people are employed to perform without demanding professional or technical qualifications and experience. But even if the job is not a skilled one, an employer would prefer a person who has had previous experience to one who has never done a particular job before.

The implication of this is that by being exposed to the job for some years, one learns how to do it much better than a person who has never done the work. The trial and error approach is wasteful for an employer who wants immediate results. Because of the value of experience, the Malawi Civil Service, like other public and private organisations, shall, on first appointment, grant incremental credits for each year one worked elsewhere. That is, where one had a bachelor of education degree and worked for ten years as a secondary school teacher in a private school, upon appointment as a secondary school teacher in government, her salary shall start 10 increments inside the salary band.

Rules, regulations, procedures and controls

As human groupings, organisations will obviously assemble together people from different educational, religious, family, cultural, tribal or ethnic linguistic background. Each one has their own expectations of what the organisation will offer, how the work should be performed, how their bosses should behave, among many other things. Their bosses also have their own expectation on how employees will behave and work. The multiple set of

expectations which are at times at variance with each other need to be properly managed to prevent chaos and disorder.

To avoid chaos and uncoordinated behaviour, rules and regulations, procedures and controls are important. Rules and procedures governing daily attendance, absenteeism, holidays, advances, loans, pay and discipline are outlined in the terms and conditions of employment. For example, the Malawi Public Service Regulations, Public Service Commission Regulations, Treasury Instructions (Finance) and Treasury Instructions (Stores) outline rules, regulations, procedures and controls in the management of personnel, finance and stores respectively in the public service. Employees need to know what to do to proceed on leave, apply for a loan, get a promotion or get selected for training. They have also to understand the grievance and disciplinary procedures and what actions constitute misconduct and how such can be investigated. The public service regulations stipulate 26 acts of misconduct such as negligence, absenteeism, incompetence, insubordination, taking habit-forming drugs, financial embarrassment, political activism to mention a few. Each one of them can lead to disciplinary action including demotion, withholding of increment, discharge, warning, severe reprimand, transfer or dismissal. Civil servants need to know how to care for public property, account for moneys, how to order, issue, account, care and dispose of public property. That is why other companies and organisations conduct induction courses for employees at the very beginning of their career.

One of Malawi's oldest public administration and management training institution, the Staff Development Institute mentioned earlier, has been involved in inducting clerical, accounting, secretarial, judicial, local government, health and community development personnel since the 1960s. This is to ensure that civil servants have a thorough understanding of the rules, regulations and procedures governing their career in the public service and their role in the proper management of public resources. Even private sector organisations do have training centers where they orientate and train their employees to understand their employment conditions, and how to care company resources among other things. The role and obligations of the individual in the organisation and the obligation of the organisation to the individual are issues that are also clarified as part of the induction process.

The human resource department of the organisation ensures that important issues related to procedures for appointment, selection for training, promotion, transfer, discipline, grievance procedures, leave, advances and other career-related procedures are known and understood by employees. Thus, rules, regulations, procedures bring about coordinated efforts and standard behaviour conducive to the achievement of organisational goals.

Formality of Communication

Communication is the transfer of a message from one person to another. Since organisations are social entities where different people interact to accomplish given tasks, communication is crucial to the success of group efforts. Communication can be likened to the circulatory system in the human body. Information has to reach every part of the organisation if positive action is to be taken for the betterment of the organisation. While face-to-face interaction through staff meetings and team or one-to-one briefing takes most of the communication in the organisation, it is important to note that a lot of it is written. Memorandum, letters, notices, reports and minutes on file and circulars are used as means of written communication.

Records are kept for future reference and for purposes of continuity and accountability. A new manager in the office will have no problem to trace issues which were discussed and agreed some years back. Some organisations have computerized personnel, financial or stores records which make it easier for officers to retrieve and disseminate information when required.

Written communication from the subordinate to the boss is taken more seriously than oral communication. For example, a subordinate who meets his boss in the corridor and says he has resigned with immediate effect will not be taken seriously until he or she puts her intentions in a written form and a signature has been appended to the message. After oral discussions among themselves, managers follow up that discussion with a written memorandum or a minute on file. All this is to ensure accountability and transparency. It is also a sign of good governance of the organisational polity.

Although organisations are viewed as means to accomplish ends, the means themselves absorb much energy, and in the extreme case, become ends in themselves. This is what Merton has described as 'goal displacement.'

Formal and Informal organisations

We have noted already that organisations have certain distinguishing properties such as specificity of purpose, hierarchy of authority, division of labour, among others. These constitute the formal organisation. Formal relationships are established in an organisation through authority-responsibility relations, definitions of jobs and roles, stratification of status in a hierarchy and required patterns of interaction, cooperation and communication. Social institutions like the family, peer group, football team, village, clan or sorority group are informal organisations. However, it is

important to acknowledge that features which characterise formal organisations are also present in other human groupings popularly known as informal organisations. A family, for example, has a hierarchy of authority, some forms of communication system between children and parents, goals for its formation, some minimum age requirements, certain skills like cooking, washing etc.

In a Malawian village setting among the Lomwe people, like others, parents would not allow a son to marry unless he has learnt several skills like:

1. Ability to build a house
2. Ability to construct a grain storage facility
3. Ability to make hoe handles
4. Ability to work in the garden

A girl, on the other hand, is expected to acquire the following knowledge and skills before getting married:

1. Pounding maize
2. Cooking
3. Washing clothes
4. Sweeping the compound

The way messages are communicated to the village headman is very elaborate and formal depending on the issue- funeral messages, festivities, circumcision ceremonies, civil cases, ancestral ritual celebrations etc.

Rules and regulations are also prevalent in the family, village or other collectivities. Division of labour does exist in the family among girls and boys, father and mother although contemporary thoughts on gender equality are geared towards neutralising gender roles. How then do we distinguish formal organisations from informal organizations (like a university college and the family) when they seem to share common characteristics? One answer is by looking at the degree to which they apply. For example, whereas rules and regulations are stipulated in conditions of service in the workplace, or in some form of constitutions in other organisations, the family does not have a book in which rules are written. Communication in the family might not be recorded or filed as in formal work organisations. Again, the division of labour, though common in all, is not elaborate in the family. The chain of command might not be as rigid in the family setting compared to a formal organisation.

In short then, it is the degree to which formality applies that distinguishes formal from informal organisations. However, family ties, friendship groups which are part of the informal organisation influence the manner in which the formal organisation will function. At times a supervisor or manager might be persuaded to favour a relative or a one time friend when it comes to appointment or promotion. Even the award of a tender in an organisation might be influenced by such wider informal considerations. That

is why many organisations including the public services in Africa have safeguards for checking on favoritism, nepotism and corruption to ensure that the effectiveness of an organisation in achieving its goals is guaranteed; that extra-office considerations do not cloud over managers in decision-making.

On the other hand, by appointing persons well known to the individual manager, the latter has the advantage of winning the loyalty and commitment of the employee. In this case, there will be minimal chances of sabotage. It is not surprising that rumours circulate from both the opposition politician and civil society organisations that senior public appointments made by particular heads of state or government were done on regional, tribal or familial basis. Is it possible for a senior appointment like ambassador, high commissioner, attorney general, presidential advisors to be made on purely impersonal and detached manner? Though it is difficult to prove the extent to which informal relations influence promotions and appointment of officers in most African organisations, it is an open secret that one does not appoint persons to critical positions without knowing them too well. In other words, informal organisations can be double-edged sword. They can help bring stability, commitment and prevent sabotage to organisational goals. On the other hand, they can bring in less qualified people who may threaten the achievement of organisational goals and therefore driving the organisation out of the market.

Classification of organisations

Classification involves finding ways of creating groupings or typologies within which the various organisations can be meaningfully put. There is no best way of classifying organisations. Others might look at them from ownership point of view, from the point of view of size, or scope/coverage, outcome and motive. In terms of ownership, organisations can be looked at in terms of who owns them. Is it a government or a private entity? Thus, we can categorize them as private, public, state-controlled and non-governmental organisations. In terms of size, the focus is on how big the organisation is. Size is sometimes looked at in terms of the number of people employed by the organisation rather than the mere size and number of buildings and the ground space the organisation occupies. For example, the University of Malawi has five campuses one in Zomba, two in Blantyre and two in Lilongwe. Yet the University of Botswana is concentrated in one piece of land in Gaborone. If the university of Malawi buildings were put together, the land on which these buildings would stand would be enormous. Comparatively, however, the University of Botswana has over 15,000 students while the University of Malawi has around 6,000.

Organisations can be classified as small, large, medium and at times

as simple, complex or complicated. The University of Botswana is more complex while the Botswana Institute of Commerce and Administration is simple. Here the main focus is on layers of levels, processes involved to arrive at a decision. This is related to size. The bigger the organisation, the more complex it becomes and vice versa.

Scope refers to the geographical coverage or area of political, social or economic influence. An organisation can be classified as local, national, regional and international depending on how far its scope of influence goes. For example, the Botswana Bureau of Standards is a national organisation dealing with issues of product standards within Botswana. Yet, the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) in Arusha Tanzania is a regional organisation whose coverage goes beyond Tanzania. Organisations can also be classified in terms of whether they offer a service or produce goods. They can therefore be product-oriented or service-oriented organisations.

Other organisations are classified in terms of their functional areas of activity- commercial, manufacturing, engineering, agriculture, transport, retail, wholesale, education, health, labour, security etc. We can also focus on the motive of the organisation by questioning why the organisation exists. It can be classified as profit-oriented or non-profit oriented organisation. For example Barclays Bank, Beares, Supreme, Bata Shoe Company and Jamal Trading Company are examples of profit making organisations. On the other hand, Emang Basadi, Botswana Council for Non-Governmental Organisations and the Ministry of Education in Botswana, are examples of non-profit making organisations.

These typologies or classification are not exhaustive and rigid. A single organisation can be looked at from many perspectives as private, large, international, service and profit oriented. For example, the University of Botswana can be described as large, service oriented, non-profit making, state controlled and national organisation. Southern Africa Development Coordination Community (SADC) and the Common Market of Southern Africa (COMESA) are examples of regional and non- profit making organisations. African Union is an example of a large, non- profit making, service-oriented continental organisation. The United Nations Organisation, World Health Organisation, World Bank and World Food Organisation are examples of international organisations. It is therefore important to understand the type of organisation one is dealing with in any analysis of organisations. These classifications have implications in terms of the management of an organisation, its terms and conditions of employment, rules and regulations and procedures in the organisations.

Resources in organizations

Resources can be viewed as items, machines, material things and people which organisations use to perform various activities or processes. Organisations function with a number of resources such as human, finance, machinery, information and time. Human resources range from the chief executive officer of the company through his/her deputy, heads of sections, middle and lower level supervisors down to workers at the shop floor. In the public service, this would range from the Secretary to the President through principal secretaries in ministries, deputy secretaries, administrative, professional, technical, executive, secretarial, clerical and accounting staff to the messenger level.

Human resources are instrumental to the planning and implementation of strategic goals of the organisation and to the realisation of its vision and mission statement. They are the most crucial of all the resources in an organisation because people are sensitive, reacts and know what ought to be done. They also know how much they are worth and how they ought to be handled. Because they see, hear, perceive and express their views, they have the potential to check on management's power to decide on certain aspects of the organisation. In fact, human resources can form unions, bargain with management and disrupt the daily activities of the organisation through a strike if they are not happy with management's decision or condition of service. Beside, human resources are the custodians and users of the other resources. That is why there is a human resource department in most large organisations entrusted with the task of paying particular attention to the recruitment, selection, appointment, rewarding, welfare, benefits, privileges and discipline of employees in the organisation.

Finance refers to money. Without money it will be difficult to pay people, purchase machinery and valuable equipment and raw materials. The process of acquiring finances, accounting for them and their expenditures is the preoccupation of other sections of the organisation such as Finance, Accounting or Revenue. It is true to say that the volume of financial resources an organisation or country has determines the extent and volume of transactions or services that organisation or country can offer to its clients or citizens. With large revenues, governments are able to build universities, secondary schools, hospitals, highways, modern leisure and recreational facilities. They can also afford to pay competitive salaries and fringe benefits to retain talent.

Similarly, private sector companies or NGOs which have sufficient financial resources can expand and build new plants, modernize their technology, pay competitive salaries and even buy other companies in the

same or other industries. The opposite is also true. Organisations or countries with limited financial resources have limited capacity to pay competitive salaries, cannot hire highly qualified and scarce skills. They also have limited ability to expand social and economic infrastructure such as roads, telecommunication, power, education, health among others.

Machinery or equipment and other material resources are also important for organisational functioning- vehicles, computers, tractors, plant and others. If an organisation is capital intensive- meaning that it uses more machinery than people in its production processes-it will use a lot of machinery. On the other hand, labour intensive organisations will have far too many people employed than machinery. For example, the ministry of education will depend on having more teachers in primary, secondary and higher education institutions than machinery. However, other organisations use both heavy machinery as well as more people. For example, Nchalo Sugar Company in the Lower Shire of Malawi uses a lot of machinery for the manufacture of sugar as well as large numbers of people to work in the sugar cane plantations and carrying sugarcanes from the plantation to the factory.

Information is whatever data, news, ideas, demands, complaints, reports, instructions or grievances that come to the attention of individual managers and employees. Naturally, information is like a trigger. It prompts decision making, action, and more action in the organisation. Without information, managers in the organisation will not know the needs of its market, government regulations and import or foreign exchange regulations. Furthermore, they cannot know the existence of labour laws, their competitors, customer demands, and workers' grievances. In general, the organisation will not know how it is performing. As its products go into the wider environment, an organisation needs sufficient feedback mechanisms. At times, deliberate scanning of its environment to get a feel of opportunities and threats from it is necessary. It is also important to have an understanding of the organisation's weaknesses and strengths. That is why organisations have a Research and Development section to collect or generate relevant information and disseminate to different sections of the organisation- management, finance, marketing, production, training and public relations.

Proper collection, retrieval and dissemination of timely information is a critical aspects of organisational functioning. Appropriate decisions cannot be made by relevant authorities without adequate flow of information throughout the organisation. With modern technologies, organisations have computerised human resources or inventory information to aid in speedy access, retrieval and modification of records.

Time is also a very valuable resource in an organisation. Employees and managers, who view time as invaluable as well as perishable resource,

will certainly avoid wasting it. Coming at meetings late is an abuse of a precious resource. Time spent chatting on a telephone or with a friend in the office, is money wasted. The coming of the internet has enabled many a people to communicate instantly to friends all over the world. The reader is familiar with the practice of starting off the computer with checking e-mails first before doing anything else. Because people share a lot more on a regular basis, others receive over 50 emails in a single day. Going through them takes a lot of time. One would have produced 10 loaves of bread in 20 minutes but because he was on a telephone for a long time, the cost to the organisation is double. First is the lost productivity and secondly, the cost of the official telephone. Time management is a critical aspect of organisational management warranting serious attention. To appreciate how much harm time wasting does to an organisation, one can simply divide the amount of salary one receives per month by 30, and then divide further by 8 to find how much is lost in an hour. If that is further divided by 60 we can find how much loss an organisation incurs every minute wasted through chatting, lateness and knocking off early.

For example, an officer who receives MK120,000 per month gets MK4,000 per day and therefore MK500 per hour and in fact MK8.33 per minute. This means any hour spent chatting causes a MK500 loss to the organisation. Imagine 100 officers in an organisation doing the same thing in a day! This means MK50, 000 per hour lost to the organisation. It also means depriving the customer of a service or good which will make them happy. These resources are interdependent in the same way the various sections that handle them are interdependent. Without money you cannot hire people, buy machinery and equipment and therefore no production of goods and services. Without providing goods or services, an organisation will not have revenue. The process of management involves integrating these resources in a productive and sustainable relationship in order to produce goods and services for human enjoyment.

Activities in organisations

There would be literally nothing to celebrate for if buildings were erected, machinery installed and people hired to the organisation without any action happening. Every organisation performs different activities depending on its vision, mission, strategic goals and objectives. A university for example does perform teaching, research and consulting activities. A bread making company produces bread, packages it and sells it. However, there are generic activities one can outline. According to Henri Fayol, six activities are prominent in all organisations- technical, commercial, financial, security, accounting and managerial activities.

- Technical or production activities. These are the core activities for which the organisation exists. For example, in the University of Malawi set up, the actual teaching, researching or consulting constitute the technical or production activities because those are the core functions through which the University of Malawi will realise its vision and achieve its mission. Again, for a transport company like Malawi Bus Service and Shire Bus Company, the actual driving of passengers from Blantyre to Lilongwe or Blantyre to Johannesburg is the technical activity.
- Financial activities- as the term implies these deal with the search and optimum use of capital. Money, as noted above, is one of the key resources in organisations. How organisations get money and where they get them and in what quantities, are questions handled by this activity. A government department would put up a case for additional money with the Treasury or Ministry of Finance. A private sector company might apply for a loan with commercial banks to finance its expansion, merger or the purchase of new machinery from Japan.
- Accounting activities- these deal with calculation of items, budgets, issuing materials, balance sheets, cost statistics, profit and loss accounts. At the end of the year, a balance sheet has to be drawn to display what has been purchased from the incomes that were raised. In private sector and parastatal organisations, audited accounts are prepared and published for the scrutiny of board of directors, shareholders and the general public. They are published even in newspapers. In Government, there is a whole cadre of accounting staff creating full blown accounting departments to take care of this function. The auditor general's staff visit ministries and inquire, examine and audit their accounts and their reports are forwarded to the public accounts committee of parliament for scrutiny and further discussion.
- Commercial activities- involve buying and selling. Material resources used in an organisation such as stationery, computers, flour, wheat, tobacco, diamonds, coal and equipment are purchased from suppliers. A team of staff are entrusted with the processing of purchases, obtaining quotations and ensuring proper documentation. Some purchases require following a prescribed tendering process. Items that have been manufactured in an organisation have to be sold to customers. This is also an activity in this category. The major source of income for private sector companies is their sales. Hence goods produced have to be packaged and sold to various customers at retail or wholesale prices. A cadre of officers including marketing manager, salesmen and drivers handle commercial activities.

- Security activities deal with the protection of property and workers at the company or organisation. This can be done through insurance covers, pensions and health and safety measures. There are designated members of staff in large organisations like the University of Botswana to deal with staff insurance, insurance for staff and property like cars and houses. The staff benefits section, for example, deals with pensions and gratuities which are also an important aspect of security. Others deal with repairing and securing dangerous premises and ensuing clear labels are shown to warn staff or people generally. Fencing of dangerous places, sealing deep holes, repairing worn-out electric cables and other dangerous installations are also security.
- Managerial activities- these are also central to the functioning of an organisation. They involve planning, organising, staffing directing, controlling and coordinating the various activities performed in the organisation. A hierarchy of managers from first line supervisor through sectional and divisional managers exists to perform these functions. In fact, the success or failure of the other activities mentioned above will to a larger extent depend on the effectiveness with which managerial activities are performed.

Technical versus Support Activities

One way in which we can analyse activities in an organisation is by categorising them into technical and support activities. This enables us to locate core functions of an organisation and those that are solely for support. Thus, in this categorisation, the teaching, research and consulting functions at a university could be taken as production or technical activities and therefore core. They represent the main reason for the existence of the organisation. The other activities, like managerial, financial, accounting, security, and commercial can be viewed as support activities. This enables us to add more activities like maintenance of machinery, equipment, buildings and premises, cleaning, counseling, wellness and welfare programmes, employee assistance and recruitment of human resources to the support activity.

Another added advantage of this categorisation is that it makes a clear distinction between activities that are central and those which are peripheral to the realisation of the organisational mission. This distinction is important in the first place because it will assist in determining where the budget and attention shall be placed when making decisions regarding resource allocation. Organisations that lose this focus have a tendency of misplacing priorities to the extent that activities for the core mandate of the organisation

are given little attention. For example, it may not be a surprise to the reader that in some universities, while the core mandate is teaching or research, the amount of money allocated to teaching and research activities might be relatively small compared to money going to others areas like administration-meetings, senior management benefits, entertainment allowances, telephones for supervisors and expensive automobiles for heads of sections and divisions and also furniture and housing allowances for managers.

It will not be surprising to the reader also that the salary of the staff involved in teaching, and research- the core functions- are lower than those of managers. Consequently, the core staff become demoralised, more often than not, quit for greener pastures. The organisation suffers! When an organisation suffers, society which benefits from the services and goods of that organisation suffers most. This is not to suggest that managers be given little attention in terms of benefits. Rather, by not paying attention to key resources and the happiness of persons performing core activities in that organisation, the core services or products are negatively affected and society's happiness is compromised.

Ways of visualising of organisations

Although organisations are characterized by common properties, one way in which we can deepen our understanding of organisation is by looking at the various perspectives or ways in which they can be analysed. Each perspective gives us a partial view of the reality of organisations (Stewart, 1993). The implication of this is that a manager needs to grasp as many perspectives as possible in order to have a comprehensive understanding of organisations. This will enable them to think what type of problem they are dealing with at any particular point in time.

Some of the perspectives on organisations are Morgan's images of organisations: organisations as machines; organisations as organisms; organisations as political systems and organisations as cultures. When organisations are analysed as machines, we are focusing attention on an organisation as purpose-driven entity which transforms raw materials, skills, knowledge, capital into products or services for human consumption. This view therefore is mechanistic and inflexible. The human elements are naturally ignored as people are viewed as merely parts of that machine. Looking at organisations as organism make us think of an organisation as a living thing with parts which are interdependent on each other such that the survival of the organism is dependent on the effective functioning of its parts. Like all living organisms, an organisation strives to grow, survive and develop

its full potential using the available resources. An organisation can get ill and if not cured of its sickness, can eventually die. No wonder that in an event of organisational sickness, management hires an organisation development consultant to diagnose the organisation to identify the cause and therefore implement interventions aimed at resuscitating the organisational health and effectiveness (Cummings and Worley, 2005).

As political systems, Morgan views organisations as composed of different individuals with diverse interests and goals which have the potential to create conflict among members. This does not mean that there is no consensus in organisations; rather it is an attempt to acknowledge that by their very nature, organisations are political systems that have mechanisms for conflict generation, resolution and management. Again as cultures, organisations are shared systems of beliefs, values and meanings- of what each one is to do, why they have to do what they do, how things should be done, what action get rewarded and what action get punished.

Kwandwala (1977) focused on viewing organisations as economic, political, sociological and from social-psychological perspectives. For our part we shall focus on three of these- economic, political and sociological.

Organisations as economic institutions

Economics deals with the question of how man uses factors of production to produce goods and services. Scarcity seems to be one of the central reasons why choice is to be exercised in the allocation of resources- labour, land or capital. The concepts of opportunity cost and optimal allocation of resources signify that resources are not unlimited. Economists also talk of efficiency when they mean producing more with fewer resources. Thus, they advocate for the need to economise. Organisations can thus be looked at as economic entities which use scarce resources such as human, finance, material and capital. These resources have to be combined in a more rational manner to produce goods and services for human consumption. Organisational resources are not inelastic. They do not last forever. Hence the need to manage them properly. Opportunity cost is one of the principles that both managers and administrators confront in their day to day decision-making processes. This principle involve sacrificing one resource to get another. Managers cannot afford to use more labour without sacrificing on technology. Again, they cannot use more technology without sacrificing on labour if they have to be both efficient and effective.

Managers are wary of ensuring that while they have to achieve their goals (effectiveness) they have to do so in a manner that is not reckless(efficient). Resources have to be allocated in a more rational and optimal manner. It would be reckless of a manager to allocate three vehicles

from Zomba City to welcome a family at Chileka Airport when only one would do. The reader will have experienced moments when organisational vehicles have gone to the same destination to undertake different assignments. Yet, this could have been easily co-ordinated and therefore save more on fuel expenses, duplication of the efforts of three drivers and reduce wear and tear on three vehicles. Economists also talk of perfect competition and monopoly in the market. Organisations are also facing competition in terms of the services they produce or the human resource they recruit. For example, organisations in Malawi, like everywhere in Africa, compete for the same engineering, social sciences, law and science graduates from higher education institutions. Private, mission and government hospitals depend on the diploma or graduate nurses produced by the nursing training institutions. Government ministries such as health, agriculture, natural resources, for instance, are competing for a major share in the allocation of funds for their operating budget from the Treasury. With the advent of cash budget in the Malawi Government for example, the Treasury is always at pains in terms of trying to allocate monthly subventions to ministries, taking into account priority areas. If funds were unlimited, the Treasury would have a very easy job. On the other extreme, some organisations are monopoly producers of particular products or services. The College of Medicine in Malawi, for example, is the only producer of medical doctors in the country. Thus, organisations can be looked at as economic entities since they are continuously struggling to economise. They try to ensure that resources are allocated in an efficient manner. They are also facing severe competition for markets, support, human and material resources from the wider environment.

Organisations as mini societies

Organisations can be seen as small societies in their own right. Just as a village or tribe can be visualised as a small society, an organisation like the village or tribe, does exhibit features of a society. Not only do societies have cultures, values, norms, traditions and practices of their own, they also exhibit some degree of continuity and change. They also contend with some degree of conflict and try to reach consensus over different issues. Like a village, organisations have their own culture- how we do things around here. The operating culture, values or practices of a civil service organisation with a tall chain of command, rules and regulations and procedures, will be different from a business-like culture operating in a private sector organisation. It has been said that since private sector companies are motivated by the profit motive, they are fast and flexible in dealing with their clients than is the case with civil service organisations. A banker in Malawi told the author that in their bank culture, 'a customer is king'; and also that 'a customer is always right.'

For example, it would be far easier to process a life assurance policy from the National Insurance Company than it is to get death gratuity from the Administrator General's Department in Malawi. Equally, it would be faster to recruit a project coordinator in a non-governmental organisation than it is to recruit a personnel officer in the civil service. While in the latter, the employing ministry will have to liaise with the Civil Service Commission to advertise the post, interview candidates and select one (covering a period over six months), the process will be far shorter in a non-governmental organisation.

Like all societies, organisations do exhibit some degree of conflict. Conflict theorists believe that there is little harmony in society due to diverse differences of interests, expectation, understanding, background and ethnicity. Similarly, as mini societies, organisations exhibit some elements of conflict. There are latent conflicts between managers and professionals over the use and control of resources. Professionals want modern equipment or instruments for the effective performance of their jobs. Yet, managers might find the equipment to be expensive in view other competing demands on the same budget. They might insist on using the existing equipment while professionals might find this to be compromising their professional standards. Conflict exists between employers and employees in terms of levels of wages, terms and conditions of employment and general expectations of each other. While managers might want to maximize profits through ensuring higher productivity, reduced bonuses, conservative increments and overtime, employees expect higher wages, increased bonuses, profit sharing schemes, relaxed working conditions with ample recreation and leisure. Managers would want employees to take orders and do their work with little questioning.

However, employees might expect to participate in decisions that affect their terms and conditions of employment. They would want more and more consultation. During the period from 1992 to 1993 through to the end of the 1990s, there were numerous strikes in organisations in Malawi in which among other things, workers demanded the removal of dictatorial managers (Dzimbiri, 2008). The existence of trade unions for collective bargaining and negotiation, joint consultative committees, welfare committees in organisation, is a reflection of potential conflict in organisations. These committees are meant to manage conflict joint discussions. On the other hand, consensus or harmony does exist in organisations. As Edwards (1995) noted, if work relations were characterized by tensions all the time, then they would just break up. Thus, although there might be some misunderstanding between employees and employers and among employees themselves, ways are available for resolving these misunderstanding to ensure that harmony prevails. In other words, there is a process of continuing compromises in organisations as a way of managing the damaging effect of conflict.

Sociologists believe that organisations are subject to change. In the

face of severe operating social, political and economic environment, organisations renew themselves. Some have amalgamated; others have closed certain sections and maintained only those that are viable. Even the operating culture and functions of the organisation can also change. The Staff Development Institute at Mpemba in Blantyre, once known as a 'dumping ground for failed civil servants', has, with dynamic leadership over the past years, managed to shed such 'old' heritage to become one of the most responsive and competent training institution in the SADC countries. Not only has it managed to change its name from Staff Training College to Staff Development Institute, it has also gone beyond training for the civil service. It conducts training, research and consultancy for both private and public sector organisations. It has a staff profile comparable to that in other highly respected training institutions.

Most public services in developing countries are moving away from bureaucratic and highly centralized administrative structures to more decentralised business-like entities through public sector reforms. This is through the new public management paradigm (NPM). NPM shifts the emphasis from the traditional public administration to public management, pushing the state towards 'managerialism' (Henokon et. al, 1987; Hughes, 2003) The traditional model of organisation and delivery of public services, based on the principles of bureaucratic hierarchy, planning and centralization, direct control and self-sufficiency are being replaced by a market based public service management or enterprise culture. The latter encourages contracting out some services such as cleaning, laundry, and catering. It encourages decentralisation, flexibility and public-private partnership to enhance effective service delivery. In Botswana, like others in developing and developed countries, the government has undertaken various public service reforms over the past years in order to enhance productivity. As outlined by the National Development Plan No. 9, the public service reform programmes that Botswana has implemented include: Performance Management System (PMS); Work Improvement Teams (WITS); Computerized Personnel Management System (CPMS); Organisation and Methods (O&M); Privatization; Performance Based Reward System (PBRS); Parallel Progression; Scarce Skills; Job Evaluation; Localization; Decentralisation (GoB, 2003) and performance management system.

Organisations as political institutions

Organisations can be likened to small governments. A government has executive, legislative and judicial branches. Looking at organisations in this

way, one can observe that the rule making-function (legislature) can be a shared function in a democratic organisation. It can also be a unidirectional in a dictatorial organisation. When rules and regulations have been formulated, other segments of the organisation such as accounts, personnel, maintenance or top management, are supposed to implement (executive function). But when things go wrong, when there is some misunderstanding between sections and individuals, then appropriate officials undertake the adjudicating function (judicial). This might be through the disciplinary procedure or face-to-face discussion with top or middle management. At times designated committees are created to mediate whenever there are conflicts.

Just like in government, organisations are political entities since they are made up of coalitions of various interest groups and various parties vying for power. Power is the ability to marshal resources to get something done. The use of power and authority are crucial in organizations as they are in government. Without power managers cannot plan, organise, coordinate and control the activities of an organisation or section. That is why people want to be promoted to higher positions so that they can wield power. According to French and Ravens (1959), there are five sources of power in organisations. These are expert power (compliance based on ability to provide valued information or knowledge), reward power (gaining compliance through ability to reward) coercive power (gaining power through threats or ability to punish), legitimate power (compliance based on one's official position in an organisation) and referent power (compliance through charisma or personal identification). Again there is also a lot of politicking in order to outdo others and gain favours from top management. Blackmailing others and damaging them through heavy gossip, bribing top management, playing the good boy and flattery are some political tactics used by individuals in organisations to gain favours and meet their hidden motives. At times one finds coalitions of different sections of the organisation against other sections thereby creating oppositions 'parties' just like what exists in government. They will always team up to oppose whatever management proposes just to frustrate the smooth functioning of the organisation and undermine top management leadership effectiveness. The intensity of political bickering varies from one organisation to another such that some organisations are more intense in politics than others.

The author has seen organisational coalitions that have led to the premature removal of senior manager under the pretext of organisational restructuring. Also common are situations where middle managers have colluded with the rank-and-file members of the organisation to stage protracted strikes to remove their Chief Executive Officer. The reader will have heard of stories about organisations where some managers do not see each other eye to eye. Experience has shown that by merely sitting at a

reception of a typical organisation, one will witness how politically hot a particular organisation is. One will hear conversations, gossips about some members, and one will also see people by-passing each other at close range without greeting or talking to each other. The abuse of power is also another important feature of organisational life. There are times when those with power abuse it by using organisational resources like cars and telephone for their personal ends. Others use power to employ relatives or award tenders to friends and relatives at the expense of efficiency and good quality service. Thus, organisations can be viewed as political systems where the use and abuse of power and authority and role of politics play a significant part in organisational functioning.

Why study organisations

Why should both managers and non-managers study organisations? Certainly, there are more than one reason people should study them. Organisations are vital mechanisms for pursuing collective goals in modern societies. It is important that managers, administrators and students of management study organisations because they have a very powerful influence on our daily lives. As indicated elsewhere in this book, organisations are responsible for the production of goods and services, which we hold very dearly. As Etzion (1964) had noted over four decades ago, we are born in organisations, we play in organisations, we grow in organisations and we shall die in organisations. Organisations influence the lives of working people for good or bad. Over the past years since the advent of industrial revolution in Europe, working conditions have improved quite substantially for the better. There is evidence that with modern ways of managing human resources, people enjoy their jobs more than their counterparts during the industrial revolution when even crude theories of organisation and management did not exist.

Team building, participative management techniques, conflict resolution mechanisms such as conciliation, mediation and arbitration have all contributed to the creation of a good working environment. Other people do meet their social and psychological needs by working in organisations. Organisations have developed grievance handling procedures which ensure that workers no longer suffer in silence. The pay people get at the end of the month enables them to pay for their food, clothing, housing, school fees and other goods and services.

Other people do enjoy interpersonal relations with their bosses and colleagues at work more than they do with their family members. With new ways of managing performance, say Performance Management System, industrious employees do get bonuses and accelerated increments as well as promotion. Hence a higher pay package at the end of the month. This has in

turn enhanced their ability to meet their necessities and luxuries. Organisations also give their workers certain benefits and privileges such as paid holidays, loan grantees, medical aid schemes, assistance with hospital bills, training and educational scholarships to study abroad. Some offer recreation facilities, restaurants, free internet services, fees for children and company cars. This is the good side of organisational life.

On the other hand, organisations are stressful social institutions. The demand made by the organisation on the individual might create conflict in them. For example, rules, regulations and procedures and controls which every organisations has, might, according to Arygiris (1957) conflict with the needs of an adult for respect, esteem and recognition. Dictatorial bosses who keep on issuing instructions and at times shouting without wanting to hear out their subordinates may be doing more psychological harm to individuals without realizing it. The author remembers vividly the experience of two office assistants in one institution in Dar-es-Salaam where he did some research several years ago. The director of the institute was a very harsh manager. Every time the author was chatting with the two ladies in the absence of the director, they were all smiles and laughter. The moment the director's car arrives, one could see shivering, panic and dropping of paper from tables. When the director came he could ask whether the document being typed was completed. As he used to give too many assignments to be finished in a short time, he would start shouting. The two women frequently cried but the man kept on shouting at them for being 'stupid, lazy and unintelligent'. For the three months I worked in this organisation, I feared for the psychological torture these two women were experiencing. Such experiences belong to the bad side of organisational life.

Workers have been humiliated and others blackmailed in workplaces. Individuals suffer a lot of frustrations arising from the need to follow lengthy procedures, or wait until some officials have acted on their matter. There are yet others who have been injured and lost part of their bodies or their lives because of working in organisations. It is also true that because of the stress created by the discipline and pace of work in modern industry, people have developed stomach ulcers, high blood pressure and other long-term illnesses at work. Some soldiers and mortuary attendants, for example, have reported of total alteration of their personality that even after retirement, they still face hallucinations and nightmares because of the nature of their previous jobs. Thus, organisational life is a double-edged sword.

Because of the positive and negative impacts that organisations have on our lives, we need to understand their functioning to ensure that both would-be and currently practicing managers will minimize the negative and capitalize on the positive aspects of organisational life. By understanding various problems in organisations and management processes, researchers will focus more attention on finding better ways or techniques of handling

human and material resources, thereby making the workplace more pleasant than ever before. There are many journals based on empirical research focusing attention on general aspects of management such as Human Resource Management Journal, Management Review, Administrative Quarterly, Personnel Research, Industrial Relations, Labour and Society and Training and Development. Such research has over the past years produced valuable insights that have helped improve the management of organisations.

Through management development and training programmes, managers learn how best to deal with organisation and management issues. Contemporary organisations have benefited in a big way from organisational research than their pre-industrial revolution counterparts.

Africa- evolution of modern organisation

Africa as a continent has gone through a number of changes through contact with the West. Pre-colonial Africa is better remembered by the existence of kingdoms ruled by indigenous kings or chiefs whose line of governance was handed over from one generation to another. The Hausa, Songhai and Mali kingdoms in North Africa; the Buganda and Bunyoro in East Africa; the Maravi, Lozi, Bemba and Monomotapa kingdoms in Central Africa; and the Shangani, Zulu, Nguni, Sotho and others in parts of Southern Africa are cases in point (Oliver and Atmore).

The principles of governance and management of institutions in these kingdoms were not influenced by western organisation and management theories although most of the structural properties of organisations in these kingdoms resembled those of the west. However, during the scramble for Africa in the 1880s following the Berlin Conference, the continent was shared by foreign colonial masters of Western origin- Britain, Italy, France, Belgium and Germany. Consequently the structure of public administration machinery and political system were changed to suit the metropolitan interests.

The introduction of western education and training programmes and the fact that most key institutions in the public and private organisations were staffed primarily by expatriates meant that a gradual influx of new management techniques and approaches were fast growing in Africa. The British system of indirect rule, however created a dual system of governance where the local chiefs continued to manage their constituents in the local style while playing a significant role in the British colonial administration.

The creation of universities, management training institutions often funded by western donor governments and agencies was aimed at producing the African human resource which was crafted along Western values of organisation and management styles. Various reforms made to organisations

in the public service since independence with the guidance of World Bank and IMF, for example, has managed to globalise management systems both at the administrative and political spheres.

For example since the 1960s, it was fashionable for every independent African country to prepare national development plans which pronounced what the new nation was destined to achieve with the help of donors. While others adopted the Westminster style of governance, others took the American presidential system of governance. Yet others borrowed both the British and the American variants of constitutions, thereby producing hybrids constitutions. Within a few years after independence, many African countries created one-party dictatorial systems of political management for up to three decades. When it was realised that dictatorial government are not transparent, accountable and do not respect human rights and are corrupt, there was a shift in donor emphasis to good governance attributes as conditions for international financial assistance. The consequence of this was a change in political management to multiparty democracies in many countries of Africa.

Public service reforms also had taken their toll on Africa from the 1980s onwards toward new public management which was an attempt to improve on the existing public service machinery to function in a more dynamic and responsive manner. There were moves towards privatization of public enterprises, outsourcing, contracting out, public-private partnership, decentralisation, human resource development, e-governance, combating corruption, enhancing accountability, transparency, among other initiatives (ECA, 2004)

In other words, there are many influences on African systems of public administration and political management from the west such that there is virtually no country or organisation in Africa that can or has been functioning according to the traditional African past. Globalisation has made the whole world to think and act as one big village. Through commerce, trade, education, training, scholarship, research, multinational companies, foreign aid, international protocols and conventions, there is a general convergence of practices, values, norms, common management language and concepts which are exchanged and used on a daily basis throughout the world.

Africa as an organisation of organisations

As a vast continent of 53 countries Africa can be looked at as an organisation. As early as 1963, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was created and today we talk of African Union (AU) which is headquartered in

Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia. Each of the 53 countries can be looked at as an organisation with several organisations within them.

Each government has a legislature, judiciary and the executive branches. Within the executive branch there are ministries and government departments each responsible for various aspects of service delivery- education, community services, health, food security, foreign affairs, home affairs, information and broadcasting, transport and communication, trade and industry. There are also parastatal bodies responsible for electricity generation, water utilities, higher education, training and development of human resources, marketing of commodities and farm implements. There are also local government institutions like district councils, city councils, town councils and municipal authorities responsible for important aspects of people's welfare at different levels of the polity. Within the ambit of government are other oversight institutions such as Ombudsman, Office of the Human Rights Commissioner, Law Commission, Public Service Commission, Communications Authority, Anti-Corruption Bureau, Roads Authority etc

In each country, there are private sector organisations. These are responsible for the manufacturing and sale of various commodities- soap, perfumes, building material, farm implements, shoes, clothing, cars, stationery, computers, plastic paper, furniture, air-conditioners, filing cabinets, telephone cables, fuel, kitchen appliances, electrical installations, radios, televisions and many others. Besides, there are also organisations called non-governmental organisations which are not private or government which are responsible for the welfare of people in many respects. Others work in environmental management, soil conservation, training of teachers, nurses, doctors, artisans, etc. There are yet others in civic education on democracy, human rights, first aid, relief activities, gender equality, health, education, poverty alleviation, food security, income generating activities, women empowerment, human resource development, social work, youth empowerment and HIV/AIDS (Dzimhiri, 1999).

Examples of regional institutions include the Southern Africa Development Community , Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern Africa Universities Social Science Conference (SAUSSC), Eastern and Southern Africa Universities Research Programme (ESAURP. Apart from foreign embassies and high commissions working in individual countries, there are organisations which are international in scope and are found in most countries in Africa. These include most UN family member organisations such as UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are other influential organisation in most countries of Africa. Both government, private, non-governmental and international organisations working in Africa have goals to

achieve and need to be managed effectively and efficiently to achieve those goals. They are structured according to the hierarchy of authority, division of labour and specialization, employ qualified and trained personnel, have rules and regulations and procedures, formal communication etc. They use resources like finance, human, material, equipment, capital, land and information.

They also perform various activities like managerial, production, maintenance, security, and accounting, among others. Each and every organisation is struggling to survive with limited resources, is subject to change and continuity and has to manage conflict, and is subject to the use and abuse of power and authority. In other words, they can be looked at as economic, social and political entities. More importantly, these organisations need to be managed. They also undertake in various ways the managerial functions of planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, controlling, communication, decision making, leading and motivation of people. These organisations are influenced by structural properties that characterize the organisation, the human dimension or element at work and the influence of the environment.

They select people carefully, train and place them on their jobs and supervise them. They motivate workers using motivator and hygiene factors. They use economic incentives such as salaries, bonuses, advances, leave grants and terminal benefits to induce their workers to stay and work hard. Other workers are motivated by the challenge which their work provides and the chances of advancement available in the organisation. Others are keen to satisfy their physiological, security, social and esteem as well as self-actualisation needs at work.

We can illustrate the above with an organisational example- the University of Botswana. Our interest is to demonstrate the extent to which the properties of modern organisation and management apply in this organisation, and by extension to many mentioned above.

The University of Botswana as an Organisation

As an organisation, the University of Botswana sees its vision as being 'a leading academic centre of excellence in Africa and the world'. In order to realise its vision the University has set out to achieve the following goals:

- Offering quality academic and professional programmes
- Developing a student centered intellectually stimulating and technologically advanced teaching, learning and research environment
- Producing graduates who are independent, confident, self-directed,

- innovative, critical thinkers and socially responsible
- Advancing scholarship and generating research
- Serving as an intellectual and cultural centre
- Providing leadership in responding to the nation's needs
- Extending access to higher education through ICT
- Recruiting and developing quality staff and students
- Promoting the health, social and spiritual welfare of the university community
- Enhancing the teaching, learning and research environment through effective and quality driven institutional support services. (University of Botswana Strategic Plan 2004-2009: Shaping Our Future)

The University of Botswana depicts all the features of an organisation. It has a chain of command or hierarchy of authority from the Vice Chancellor (VC) through Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) to Deans of faculty, Heads of department to lecturer and student levels if we look at the academic side of it. We can also demonstrate hierarchy of authority in the administrative chain from the VC through the DVC- Administration and Finance, directors of various sections to managers, assistant managers, faculty administrators, secretaries and clerical and support staff. In terms of purpose, the University of Botswana would like to be an academic centre of excellence in Africa and beyond. It will realise this through various activities such as teaching, research, service to the local, regional and international community. It uses various resources such as human (lecturers, administrators, managers, secretaries, heads, deans, directors etc), financial resources, equipment like computers, and machines in the laboratories, classrooms, projectors, stationery, vehicles among others.

The university has rules and procedures for recruiting academic and administrative staff, purchasing equipment, terms and conditions of employment for both pensionable and contract staff. There are procedures for appointments, promotion and termination of contract. Benefits and discipline procedures are also stipulated. Most of the staff employed is mostly skilled. On the academic side, one has to possess a a minimum qualification of a PhD to qualify as a lecturer. Most secretaries have a diploma in secretarial studies and on-the job training is highly encouraged. Communication is both formal as well as informal. However most of it is formal as one has to fill forms and duly sign them if proceeding on leave, or has to write a letter to the head or dean to ask for permission before one leaves. Using faculty boards and departmental board meetings, lecturers are able to communicate directly and resolve important issues. Through representation by the head of department at faculty executive board and the deans of faculty at higher level committees, individual staff members are informed of what is happening in the university through briefing by heads and

deans. At times the VC attends faculty boards to brief staff on important developments. On the other hand, the VC sends memos to everyone through the e-mail. He also addresses both staff and students at times as a way conveying information. A copy of the speech is sent to all members of staff through the e-mail.

Division of labour is a key feature at UB. Apart from broader divisions between academic and administrative departments, one sees that within academic sections, faculties are organised according to areas of specialization. For example faculties of social science, humanities, education, science, engineering etc are further subdivided into departments. The Social sciences faculty has economics, political and administrative studies, social work, sociology, law, psychology, statistics, and population studies. Even within political and administrative studies, some lectures are in politics and others in public administration. Those in public administration are specialized in different areas like local government, public enterprises, development administration, public policy, budgeting, management, human resource management, organisation development, organisation theories, comparative administration, international administration and many others.

Division of labour is also found in the administrative or support side of the university- estate management, maintenance, human resource department, finance management, students' affairs, academic affairs, admissions, staff benefits, careers and counseling, wellness and recreation, security services and administration. The various sections of the university through heads of divisions, sections or departments engage in various managerial functions which involve planning for the activities of the said sections. The University has a strategic plan which forms the basis for divisional, faculty, departmental and individual performance plan. Organising, which involves setting the machinery to implement the plans is a continuous activity owing to the many initiatives top management has been initiating over time.

Creation of task forces, committees, regulations, rules and procedures, policies, reviewing same are important activities at the University. Recruitment and selection of staff, orientation/induction of new members, training, assessing performance, directing and monitoring are activities done more frequently. Coordination of activities like teaching, research, conferences, workshops and other events is done through circulars, staff meetings; team briefing, departmental or faculty coordinators, e-mail circulation etc. Both vertical and horizontal communication takes pace between lecturers and heads, deans, VC as well as among lecturers, heads, deans or DVCs. Budgeting is done by heads of department, deans, managers and directors of various sections.

This involves costing the activities planned for the year. Means of reporting through monthly, annual or half-yearly are also done as part of the

functioning of the university. Thus, the University of Botswana meets all the features of a modern organisation on which we have focused our analysis in this book.

Summary

This chapter has examined the concept of organisation by focusing more attention on definition, importance, features, resources, activities and classification of organisations. It also has examined the ways in which organisations can be analysed. It also raises the question of why we need to study organisations. The chapter has demonstrated with examples, the relevance of the concept and empirical presence of organisations in Africa. The general conclusion one can make is that organisations are crucial to our daily life and that understanding the positive and negative impacts of organisations on our life will go a long way in improving the management of organisations and therefore the prosperity of humanity in Africa and beyond.

Review Questions

1. How would you define organisation?
2. Explain major characteristics of modern organisations.
3. To what extent can organisations be described as economic and political entities?
4. Illustrate how one can analyse an organisation as a mini-society.
5. Why should we study organisations?
6. The University of Botswana is an organisation. Discuss.
7. How relevant are organisations to the African context?

Research Activity

Visit 6 organisations, 2 in the private, another 2 in the public and 2 in non-governmental organisations. Find out the extent to which they possess the major characteristics of modern organisations discussed in above. What are the similarities and differences?

The Classical School: the significance of structure

Introduction: A Note on Organisation Theories

This section examines organisation theories which provide a framework within which we can understand organisations. There was no theory of organisation and management before the advent of industrial revolution in Europe and America. Although man has practised management ever since he existed on the planet earth, organisation theory and management as a field of study emerged as a result of management problems during the industrial revolution. It was born out of practical questions and problems regarding the best way to organise and manage material, financial, time and human resources to achieve organisational objectives in a highly competitive environment.

Trial and error, personal intuition, adhoc approaches and taking of risks were managerial approaches that characterised organisational behaviour in the absence of theoretical frameworks before and during the industrial revolution. Severe competition and the need to produce goods and services more efficiently and effectively precipitated the need for proper systems of organising and managing resources. Several theories emerged over a period of time. The number of these theories kept on increasing when individual theorists or practitioners found inadequacies in theories advanced by others. It was an attempt to take into account certain factors, which were not accounted for by the preceding theory. The major point of departure for management theorists is **how best to organise and achieve goals**. Thus, there was no disagreement among theorists regarding the importance of achieving goals in an effective and efficient manner; rather, how to achieve efficiency and effectiveness was the bone of contention.

There are many ways in which theories of management are classified. One of them is that by Argawal (1982) who identifies six schools of management thought as:

- (1) The classical school,
- (2) The human relations school
- (3) The decision theory school,
- (4) The management science school,
- (5) The systems theory school, and
- (6) The contingency theory school.

As we will concentrate on three schools, (1) the classical, (2) the behavioural science and (3) the open system and contingency school, we need to comment a bit on the decisional theory and management science school.

Herbert Simon and others advocated the decision theory school. They mostly focused the decision making process, the decision maker and the environment of the decision maker. Managing organisations is viewed as an interlinked process of decision making. Every one from the company Chief Executive Officer to the messenger is making decisions all the time. Simon views decision making processes from the administrative man who has a lot of constraints such that the outcome cannot be perfectly scientific. This is so because the decision maker is facing limitations in the form of limited time-frame, limited information and limited processing abilities to process information which is available. Consequently the decision maker simply settles for a merely satisfactory- 'satisficing' decision. This view will be further explored later in this book. It is however, suffice to say that this theory has a lot of value to the context of African organisations where information, technology, expertise among other requirements cannot be readily available and therefore making it difficult to make a perfect decision.

On the other hand, management science, otherwise known as operational research, maintains that worker productivity can be increased by the use of scientific methods and the use of mathematical models. Like the scientific management school to be discussed below, management scientists consider management as a rational and logical process. They also think that all the activities and operations of management can be expressed in terms of mathematical relationships and models. Thus, all problems that characterize a system can be solved by applying the scientific method which is an approach to problem solving with the following steps (Montana and Charnov, 2000).

1. The management scientist observes the system within which a problem exists
2. A mathematical model of the system which describes the interrelationships between the variables that make up the system is constructed
3. The mathematical model is used to make deductions about how the actual system will act under certain assumed conditions
4. The mathematical model is then tested by conducting experiments that examine if the system does act in a certain manner under the projected conditions.

The attraction of management science school to African contexts could be low given the limitation and problems of technology and expertise in most organisations to handle mathematical procedures and experiments. Again the

complexity and urgency of problems facing modern organisations would not wait for experiments to be conducted.

We now start analysing theories which put much emphasis on the significance of structure in organisational functioning. These are variously called classical theories, goal-Model theories or mechanical theories. Structure in this sense includes, but is not limited to, authority structure, job specialisation, formal communication, procedures, regulations, rules, principles and controls, among others. These theories argue that if an organisation is functioning badly, it is because the organisation is poorly structured. Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management, Weber's Bureaucracy and Fayol's Principles of Management, are classical theories which we shall focus on in this book. This is so because of their relevance in explaining the structural dimensions of modern organisations. We now turn to each of them in some detail.

Fredrick Taylor and the Scientific Management

Fredrick W Taylor, an engineer by training and a man who rose from the position of labourer to Chief Engineer at Midvale Steel Works is widely known as the father of the Scientific Management movement. He proposed the need to introduce science into managing organisations in order to bring objectivity, precision, order and predictability. Significant contributions were made to scientific management by Taylor's followers, mainly Gantt, Frank and Lillian Gilberth and Emerson. The Scientific Management movement was a reaction to then *ad hoc*, firefighting and crisis-ridden management styles that characterised the earliest phase of industrial revolution. Children, old people, women and youth alike, were drafted into factories without a proper match between work and their abilities. Situations were hard, relations with employers, supervisors were not only unclear but also harsh. Punishment was severe, frequent and out of proportion.

Harsh measures were put in place for people who chatted or whispered to each other on an assembly line. The worker was supposed to function as part of a machine to maximize productivity. Wages could wantonly be cut on slight provocation by either laughter or a small rest or late coming. Individuals would be dismissed on trivial grounds. As Charles Dickens summarized in his book, those were indeed *Hard Times*. The absence of proper management in the midst of growing urbanization and industrialization as well as severe competition created the need to develop proper ways of managing the affairs of industry. This is why Fredrick Taylor made a significant contribution by advocating the use of science in managing organisations. The basic components of scientific management are:

1. Determination of standards of performance- that is, there is a rational way of determining what an average person should do in any particular work. This has to be done for all jobs. With time and motion studies it was possible to determine a day's work for each kind of job. For example, there is need to determine what the teaching job involves and what a fair day's job for an average teacher is.
2. Functional foremanship- means the need to introduce foremen for each functional area such as plumbing, welding who should plan the work of others and supervise them carefully. It was an attempt to separate planning from doing. The worker should only do the work planned by the foreman.
3. Responsibilities of management- the role of managers should be planning, directing and organising for the operations of workers who have to be properly selected and trained scientifically.
4. Differential piecework system of wage payment- this was an attempt to motivate workers to put in extra effort. If everyone is paid the same wage at the end of the week or month, then there is no reason why anyone can be motivated to work extra hard. To avoid this problem, Taylor introduced the differential piece work system of wage payment.
5. Mental revolution- because workers would benefit from hard work through increased wages and managers would benefit from high productivity as a result of scientific management, it would lead to mental revolution by both workers and managers. Thus, scientific management would bring in a change in attitudes and relations among workers, supervisors and managers. A more cooperative attitude would replace hitherto antagonistic relationship.

Taylor advocated four major principles of management, which seem to have been heavily borrowed by private, public and non- governmental organisations in the contemporary world. The first principle is developing a true science of work to determine the most efficient method for performing each specific task. To him, work has to be analysed to identify smaller tasks or components 'because we do not know what constitutes a fair day's work. For Taylor, it is not surprising under such circumstances that bosses keep on complaining about workers' inadequacies in the day to day performance of their work. On the other hand, when workers do not know what is expected of them, performance standards go down. Therefore, a job description is the foundation of a scientific approach to management. Without knowing the number of tasks a job holder can perform it will be a daunting task for management to identify the most suitable person to do the job. Furthermore, it will be difficult to determine whether or not the job is being performed well.

The second principle which follows naturally from the first is selecting

workers carefully and scientifically so that workers should be given responsibilities for performing the tasks for which they are suited. This was an attempt to avoid the unsystematic selection of workers like children, women and the old which was common during the industrial revolution. By having a proper job description, it is possible to select workers scientifically. We know what skills, knowledge, attitude and level of experience one needs to possess in order work well.

The third principle is educating and training workers scientifically to perform tasks in the best-prescribed manner. Thus, having been appointed, an employee has to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge required, to perform a particular job. A systematic training requires a thorough understanding of the job- skills and knowledge required, the current skills and knowledge that an employee has and then the skill gap to be filled by training. Training designed to fill a specific gap and implemented in a more systematic manner has the potential to equip employees with the right competences to perform their job well (Noe, 2005).

The fourth principle is closer supervision to ensure that all the work is performed according to the principles derived from scientific analysis. The fact that an employee has been selected and trained is not enough. There is need for constant supervision to ensure that an employee's performance is in accordance with the requirements of the job description. This ensures continued learning as supervisors give advice on what has gone wrong in the current performance level and what could be done to remedy poor performance.

Taylor's scientific management has been subjected to some criticism. The main points of this criticism are:

Separation of planning from doing results into multiplicity of command and violates one fundamental principle of management whereby one person should receive instruction from one boss only.

Mental revolution never materialized in practice as the relationship between management and the work continued to be characterised by latent conflict because of differing expectations at work. As noted before, while management want higher productivity and profits which have to be re-invested and can be obtained through hard working by all workers and lower costs, workers have different perspectives. They want a good working climate, high wages, bonuses and generous leave and holiday entitlement, among other benefits.

That the scientific management based its ideas on the *assumptions of rational-economic man* which ignores critical elements of human behaviour. The idea that higher wages would spur higher productivity from the worker

was based on an inadequate understanding of the impact of social dynamics at work on individual performance. Taylor might have glossed over informal relations and group norms in influencing performance. We shall clarify this last point when we discuss the behavioural science school later.

However, Taylor's scientific management was a major attempt to improve management process in order to enhance worker productivity. It created a framework within which subsequent theories would propose ways to improve organising and managing the workplace.

In Africa, one is able to see the application of Taylor's principles of management in both the private, public and non-governmental organisations. A government department wanting to employ a clerical officer or a manufacturing private sector firm requiring a salesperson will define the job description and job specification of the salesperson. The job description will describe the job, where located, key responsibilities, duties and tasks. On the other hand the job specification will define the type of person required, attributes, skills and competencies. They will advertise these details in the newspaper to widen the scope of their search. Applicants will be screened carefully to see who match with the requirements of the job. Candidates will be invited for selection either through oral interviews or written aptitude tests. When the best candidate has been selected, orientation or induction programme follows and the individual undergoes a process of probation before being confirmed in appointment. The training department of the organisation arranges for both short term and long-term training needs of the new employee. Although the degree of rigour on each principle varies quite considerably with the job, overall, the process is similar in most organisations. This follows under the staffing function to which we shall turn later in this book.

Henri Fayol and the Principles of Management

The Principles of Management School is also called the management process school or administrative theory. Chief among those who contributed to the management process theory are James D Mooney, Alan C Reiley, R C Davis, Mary Parker Follet and Oliver Sheldon. Henri Fayol was a French industrialist and a mining engineer who rose to the position of Managing Director. He sought to systematize management as an organised activity. Fayol was convinced that management plays a very important part in the government of undertakings- large, small, industrial, commercial, political, religious or any other. Unlike Taylor who concentrated on worker productivity at the operational level, Fayol was interested in the overall management of the entire organisation. He defined management as comprising five interrelated elements:

Discipline

1. Forecasting and planning- examining the future and drawing up the plan of action.
2. To organise: building up the structure, material and human, of the undertaking
3. To command: maintaining activity among the personnel.
4. To coordinate: binding together, unifying and harmonizing all activity and effort
5. To control: seeing that everything occurs in conformity with established rule and expressed command.

He identified 14 principles of management, which he argued should govern the management of organisations. He regarded these principles as 'universal' in that they were to be applicable to all kinds of organisations everywhere in the world.

Division of work

As noted in the features of organisation at the beginning of this book, division of labour is a dominant characteristic of organisations. This is a very important principle which emphasises the value of subdividing work into smaller manageable bits and allocating each bit to different individuals. Rather than one person handling the whole, many people take part and the whole becomes the total sum of all individuals put together. Productivity is said to increase due to expertise, which is developed through experience on the job. As people do the same job repeatedly, there is experience, sureness, accuracy, speed and therefore higher volumes of output/productivity.

Authority be commensurate with responsibility

Authority is the right to issue commands along with which must go the equivalent responsibility for its exercise. There is evidence in some organisations that people are expected to achieve more, yet they are not given sufficient authority. In a university setting, for instance, Deans of Faculty are responsible for both academic and administrative matters in their faculty. Any blunders in the examination assessments, or sloppy member of staff in a particular department might reflect badly on the dean. Others who are quick will level a bitter criticism on the dean straight away. Yet, a closer examination will show that the dean has no powers to discipline an academic member of staff in that university. He cannot even dismiss that lecturer. Fayol was calling for the need to ensure that officers responsible for the outcome of a particular group or

groups of individuals should be given commensurate authority to exact obedience and loyalty. They should be able to punish or reward without senior officers questioning or reversing unceremoniously decisions or actions taken already.

Equity

The need to be fair in dealing with employees at the lower, middle and top level is one of the most important principle Fayol advocated. More often than not, chaos reign when there is no fairness in dealing with situations among different people. Imagine in a situation where your colleague in the organisation took unauthorized absence or came to work late. The supervisor does or says nothing. Then another officer is late or absent without approval on another day, and the supervisor reacts. He shouts and threatens to deduct specified amount of money from your friend's salary. How would you and others look at this discrepancy in managerial action? This is a typical case of lack of equity in handling cases. There are employees elsewhere who are harbouring a deep grievance because they feel top management favours others and discriminate against them. In this case, managers can only expect conflict, reluctance to contribute, apathy, hatred, indifference and uncooperative attitude. Thus, Fayol was advocating that employees should feel that they are being treated equitably and fairly.

Order

Both material and social order are necessary. The former minimises lost time and useless handling of materials. Social order is achieved through proper selection of candidates for particular positions in an organisation. The resources of an organisation- its raw materials and workers- must be in the right place at the right time to ensure efficiency of operations. There is nothing more irritating than the absence of order in any group setting. As a result of division of labour and specialization in organisations, individuals are assigned their work. It is important that each and every individual do their work with a high degree of order- in the right manner, at the right time, right place and with the right tools. There is always trouble when everyone do their own thing at a particular time and in the wrong manner. The outcome is uncompleted product or an unpleasant service to a customer who will in turn be dissatisfied.

Order is closely related to discipline. While order entails doing the right thing at the right time and place, discipline goes beyond that. It entails understanding and putting into practice the rules and procedures required at work. Norms and values held dearly by the organisation need to be upheld if discipline has to be maintained. In some organisation like the civil service in Malawi, workers are supposed to come at 7.30 AM and knock off at 5.00PM with a tea break at 10 AM and 3 PM and a lunch break at 12 Noon. When others are found eating and loafing or worse still, knitting jerseys outside these periods, then there is no discipline. Furthermore, coming to work after 8 AM or knocking off before 4 PM without authority is a symptom of lack of discipline. This has to be punished to ensure that the observance of rules and regulations is re-enforced.

Initiative

There is always an assumption that bosses know better and therefore are there to issue instructions. Subordinates are there to do the work as instructed. Order or discipline should not be interpreted as total submissiveness of subordinate to their superiors. Supervisors need to allow their subordinates some leeway or latitude of freedom for creativity and initiative. Subordinates are not to be treated as if they without anything to contribute. They have ideas, knowledge and experience to draw from. Bosses can learn from their subordinates in the same way parents learn from their children. What is important is to give subordinates opportunities that allows them to release their potential. If subordinates are consulted or asked to do their best and delegated to handle challenging assignments, they will perform wonders. It is a matter of weighing the nature of the workload and competence of the subordinate before one strikes a proper balance on what to delegate. Thus, managers should encourage individual initiative among subordinates.

Unity of command

The major contention of this principle is that as far as possible an employee needs to have one boss and receive instructions from that boss only. This is an attempt to reduce confusion arising when two or more bosses give instructions to one subordinate at the same time. For instance, the author remembers how a driver got mixed up when Chancellor College transport officer instructed him to drop an accountant at the Zomba branch of National Bank of Malawi and proceed to pick the registrar's daughter at Zomba Central hospital. He would then drive to Chileka Airport some 90 kms away to welcome an external examiner from Makerere University in Uganda.

As the driver spade off, an economics professor stopped him a hundred metres away behind the library. He asks the driver to wait for him since he was

heading towards the same direction. Although he felt reluctant, the driver said nothing but helplessly waited for the professor to finish talking to a student. The professor did not want to know where the driver was going but instead issued his own instructions: to drive him to his house in order to collect clothes for the laundry, three kilometers away in an opposite direction of the bank. The driver failed to meet the external examiner at the airport. Having waited for an hour, the external examiner took a taxi to Zomba. Although the driver explained why he delayed and failed to pick the external examiner, the transport officer shouted at him bitterly. His apology was never taken. Her was judged to be on the wrong. But how could he have ignored the instructions of the economics professor, one of the most senior academic members of the university far above the transport officer? This is what Faylor was trying to avoid. If everyone including the professor channeled their needs to the transport officer, the latter would easily have drawn a comprehensive itinerary and instruct the driver to follow.

Unity direction

As organisations grow and develop, they become more differentiated to the extent that what might be happening in one section might not be known by another section. According to Fayol, each employee and section need to function towards the common goal the organisation set to achieve. At a university college where there are so many support departments such as the library, catering, accounts, maintenance, transport and the dispensary, the probability that each department can target its activities as if they were an independent entity contrary to the major mission of the university, is high. As a way of coordinating the behavior and activities of the organisation, this principle acts as a linch-pin. By being reminded of what the purpose of the organisation is, individuals and groups in the organisation can align their activities in line with that mission. The Centre for Social Research of the University of Malawi has placed its mission statement in each and every office to ensure that members of staff are reminded, all the time, why they are there.

Centralisation

This deals with the balance between centralization and decentralisation of authority and decision-making powers and activities throughout the organisation. Managers need to take a careful look at the nature of decision or activity when making a move towards delegating. Certain things or decisions are better handled at departmental level while others require top management intervention. At a university college where the structure reflects a federal model

like the University of Malawi, for example, while the decision to appoint a lecturer can be made at departmental level, the dismissal of the same cannot be concluded at that level. Again, the decision to hire and fire a messenger can be done at the college level when that of a professor needs a much higher level, ie at the University Central Office.

Scalar Chain

Sometimes called gangplank or horizontal communication, this principle advocates the need for horizontal communication in organisations. While unity of command means that only vertical lines of communication are open to ensure that one receives instructions and communicates to one boss only, scalar chain opens horizontal lines. To avoid unnecessary delays that might be created by being rigid to the upward and downwards communication, officers at the same level can easily communicate horizontally provided their immediate bosses have been informed of the transaction.

Subordination of individual interests to those of the organisation

This principle underscores the need for office bearers not to sacrifice the interests of the organisation in pursuit of personal goals. The reader in Africa will recall some officers who authorized transport to collect fertilizer for their farm when, in fact, some other officers are stranded at the Airport waiting to be picked up. Fayol, therefore, sought to ensure that organisational interests remain paramount when there is a clash of interests. If personal interests supersede organisational interests, then the organisation will not survive the current competitive environment.

Although difficult to balance, it is possible for individuals to meet their own interests while meeting those of the organisation. For example, in order to take advantage of a lorry traveling to Blantyre from Lilongwe, an officer at the Ministry of Health in Lilongwe can ask the transport officer to have his iron sheets collected from Blantyre when the lorry is returning to Lilongwe.

Remuneration be fair

This principle is a call for fair and just wages, which can earn one a living. A living wage is what Fayol is advocating. The quest to achieve higher levels of profits or savings has a negative impact on reward management decisions in some organisations. Preoccupation with economising has left the employee

with a deep grievance wage-wise. There are employers who have been so unfair in that in spite of higher productivity and higher profits, they have not paid any bonus or increment to their employees. Could this explain why some organisations experience more economic strikes than others?

Security of tenure

This principle calls for the need to give employees security of employment. Constant firing of employees gives an organisation a very negative image. Moreover, people are in power because they have subordinates below them. If managers continue firing employees, they end up firing up themselves as they may discover they have no following. Individuals need to be allowed to make mistakes. A single mistake should not be a warrant of dismissal. It takes time for people to learn and adapt to the requirements and discipline of industry. Many workers learn from their mistakes. Hence the saying: 'experience is the best teacher.'

Esprit de corps.

This was a call for a spirit of togetherness, which according to Fayol, should characterize work organisations. Though conflict can bring innovation and impetus to change, excessive and disruptive conflict is not good. It is through a sense of togetherness that employees can work together to accomplish a strategic goal. As division of work presupposes interdependence among employees, a lot can be gained by creating work groups, which enjoy a high sense of togetherness and collegial relationships.

The principle of management school has contributed to our understanding of the basis for managerial behaviour in modern organisations. It cannot be emphasized that public, private and non-governmental organisations are structured on the basis of most of these principles. Although critics has pointed that they cannot be called principles because they are contradictory in many ways, and that they cannot be universally applied everywhere, they, however, provide insights into how managerial behaviour can be modified to achieve goals in an efficient and effective manner. It has provided us with management concepts that managers and administrators use to describe or organise their workplaces- centralization, initiative, discipline, order, team spirit, remuneration- to name a few, are important principles in organisations in Africa irrespective of nature and size of the organisation.

Max Weber and Bureaucracy

Max Weber, a German sociologist, is the chief advocate of bureaucracy. His contribution to the understanding of organisations was his theory of authority structures which enabled him to characterize organisations in terms of authority relations within them. Weber made a distinction between power- the ability to force people to obey regardless of whether they are willing or not, and authority, where orders are willingly obeyed by those receiving them. He further categorized organisations based on how authority is legitimized in them- charismatic, traditional and rational-legal.

While charismatic authority is based on personal qualities of the leader, the basis of order and authority in the traditional organisations is precedents and usage. The rational-legal was viewed by Weber as the most dominant in society. It was rational because the means are designed to achieve specific goals. It is legal because authority is exercised by means of a system of rules and procedures through the office one occupies at a particular time. He attempted to prescribe an ideal organisation structure, which would meet the needs of urbanizing and industrializing society. It was an attempt to move away from earlier systems of administration where employment was through personal relationships and the spoils systems which encouraged nepotism, favoritism and lacked continuity were dominant (Hanekon et.al, 2003). He therefore identified several important features, which would ensure that organisations were efficient and effective. Hierarchy of authority, employment through competence, rules and regulation, formal communication, division of labour, impersonality and obedience to the office are central tenets of Weber's Bureacracy.

Hierarchy of authority

Weber believed that organisations should be structured in such a way as to show who is in charge and who is a subordinate. With a chain of command, organisations were therefore to be hierarchical. The latter varies in degree from one organisation to another. While others have a tall organisational hierarchy like the civil service, others are almost flat. Large-scale organisations have usually a tall hierarchy of authority. As noted at the beginning, organisational hierarchy ensures easy co-ordination of activities and delegation of activities.

Employment through technical competence and official qualifications

In line with Taylor's call for scientific selection of people to perform the work, Weber endorses the need to ensure that people are not employed by the back door. They need to be appointed on the basis of open and competitive interviews, measurable qualification and experience. A diploma, degree or certificate is evidence of one's competence. This also confirms the view that activities of modern organisations are so technical that only qualified and experienced persons can do the job well.

Rules and regulations

Weber saw rules and regulations as crucial for standardizing human behavior and activity and therefore avoids chaos. If people chose to do their own thing, behaviour in organisations would be random and erratic. However, others have looked at these rules and regulations as frustrating if they are interpreted very rigidly. At times, the lower level members of the organisation observed meticulously to the extent that they defeat the objectives for which they were established. Merton talks of goal displacement. While they were created to serve the interests of the clientele, they end up punishing the client.

Formal communication

Formal communication, which is mostly written, does guarantee accountability, continuity and records. Minutes on files, circulars, memos and letters serve as evidence of decisions taken and agreed in the past. A new supervisor can read written records on file and be able to understand what was done in the past. Who suggested what, and what has happened so far are questions whose answers are not difficult when formal written communication is in place in any organisation.

Impersonality and rationality

In the process of making decisions, managers are continuously struggling to balance the needs of individuals and those of the organisation. Human feelings, concerns, emotions, values and beliefs enter every aspect of managerial work on a daily basis. In trying to resolve subordinates problems, requests or to recruit, discipline or promote an individual officer, managers will

confront many dilemmas. As a guiding managerial principle, Weber recommended that managers be impersonal, impartial and neutral. In other words managers are called to be 'super' human and rise above 'noise' by avoid putting emotions or feelings first in decision making processes. The problem with putting emotions first is that the decision a manager might make will not be as rational or objective as it should be.

Obedience be to the office and not the individual

To ensure that order prevails, Weber suggested that subordinates or clients should give due respect to the office and not the person in the office. For example, there are bosses known to subordinates through relationships outside the office. These can be such relationships as family ties, schooling together, praying in the same church or mosque. There is danger when subordinates take orders lightly because they know the boss personally well. If half of the group takes this casual view, then work suffers. It is against this background that Weber prescribed that people should as far as possible give respect to the office issuing instructions and not the person.

Division of labor and specialisation

Division of labour and specialization which Fayol included in his principles of management and was discussed at the beginning of this book, ensures higher productivity.

Like other classical theories, bureaucracy seems to be a dominant blueprint of private, public and non-governmental organisations in terms of structure. While organisations differ in terms of degree of application, division of labour, hierarchy of authority, rules and regulations, formal communication, employment through technical competence are typical features of organisations in Africa. However, people associate bureaucracy with red tape, inefficiency, excessive writing and recording of detail. It is also viewed as the culture of strict adherence to rules and regulations. But in terms of Weber's definition, a bureaucratic organisation is technically the most efficient form of organisation possible- 'precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs- these raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration'.

Limitations of Classical Theories

There is no doubt that almost all organisations have several of the features that classical theories advocate. These distinguish them from informal organisations described before. The need for a proper system, structure, procedures, rules, division of labour, recruitment of competent personnel, order and discipline in organisations cannot be over-emphasised. If anything, these are common features in public, private and non-governmental sector organisations in the world. However, classical theories focused more attention and with a high degree of passion on the significance of structure to organisational functioning and closed their eyes to some important issues regarding the human element. The classical school asserted that the secret to worker productivity was efficient job design, use of appropriate incentives and effective management. There are several limitations to these theories. First, they viewed organisation as a machine subject to certain immutable laws. That once that machine has been designed and programmed properly, productivity was guaranteed.

Secondly, they assume that employees can be motivated by financial incentives alone. This grossly ignored the social and psychological needs of individual such as respect, esteem and safety. The importance of interpersonal relations and cordial manager-employee relationship were ignored. Finally, classical theories were based on the assumption that productivity is the only criterion of efficiency. The approach, on the whole, is mechanistic. Gouldner (1959) argues that the distinguishing features of a phenomenon are not its only characteristics and indeed, may not be the most important ones. Although organisations often espouse specific goals, the behaviour of participants is frequently not guided by them, nor can they be safely used to predict organisational actions. Similarly formal role definitions and written rules may have been developed, but they sometimes exhibit little or no influence on behaviour of members. Thus, the normative structure of what people are supposed to do in organisations can be misleading.

As Gouldner points out, focusing attention on the behaviour that structure produces, a picture of organisations quite different from that proffered by the classical theorists can be discerned in today's organisations. The goals pursued become more complex, diffuse, differentiated and subject to change. Participants are viewed as motivated by their own interests and as seeking to impose these on the organisation. Rather than being only a means, an instrumentality to pursuing other ends, the maintenance and strengthening of organisations become ends in themselves. Informal and

interpersonal structures are seen to be of greater importance than formal structures, which often serves only as decorative canopy concealing the real agenda.

The fact that modern organisations continue to function and do not break down means that there are other mechanisms within the organisation which act as 'shock absorbers'. In other words, some leeway in the management of organisations such as flexibility and attention to the key actors within the organisation holds the answer. The behavioural science school, to be discussed below, takes this issue further.

Summary

This chapter has discussed three major theories which belong to the classical school of thought, namely, the scientific management movement, principles of management and bureaucracy. Classical theories tried to introduce science, objectivity, predictability and precision in the management of human and material resources in an organisation. It was an attempt to find the 'one best way' of managing organisations. Consequently they found an answer in structural design and proper formalization of systems to remove all traces of informal relations. While structure is central to organisational functioning and that organisations in both developed and developing countries depict these features, there is still more to productivity or performance than just the presence of a sound organisational structure. The human aspect of organisational life was largely ignored. The next chapter elaborates on this issue further.

Review Questions

1. What is the major focus of the classical school of thought?
2. Identify and discuss the four principles of Taylor's scientific management movement?
3. Identify the major features of Max Weber's ideal bureaucracy?
4. What is the limitation of both scientific management and bureaucracy as instruments for achieving organisational effectiveness?
5. What is the difference between scientific management and principles of management?
6. What would you say are the major strengths and limitations of the classical school?

Research Activity

Visit two organisations of your choice. One should be in the private and the other in the public service. Find out from the head of the organisation the value and limitation of management styles that rigidly adhere to the structural orientation.

4

The Behavioral Science School: People in Organisations

Introduction

The behavioural science school puts much emphasis on the importance of people in organisations. Behavioral scientists have argued in a more persuasive manner that while **structure** is indeed important, and in effect, forms the backbone of group effort, the functioning of organisations is to a greater extent influenced by the human beings who work in them. Out of all the resources at the disposal of management – finance, raw materials, information, clients, human and machinery- people are the most critical factor in determining productivity or service delivery. It is the only resource that cares about how it is handled. Human beings have feelings, concerns, expectations and values. This school urges managers and administrators to understand groups and individuals, their needs, values, aspirations and the impact of non-formal communications on organisational behaviour. While formal communication, division of labour and specialisation are important in the effective achievement of organisational goals, informal communication called the grapevine, is as important. The way people think of one another, their supervisor and their organisation affect, to a certain extent, their performance. Informal leaders can be more influential in exacting obedience from employees than formal a supervisor. The Behavioural school calls managers to adopt organic or participative styles of management. It maintains that if individuals and groups are highly motivated, they will reward the organisations through superior performance. Various scholars and practitioners have contributed to this school of thought in various ways.

Elton Mayo and the Human Relations School

Elton Mayo is known as the father of the Human Relations School. While the classical theories laid much emphasis on structural factors and held the economic view of man in organisations, Mayo focused on the human element. This grew out of the findings of the Hawthorne experiments Mayo conducted research in the United States of America to determine factors that affect productivity. The experiments included: changing the rest periods of workers,

variations in the timing of meals, the intensity of light, dealing with individuals and dealing with groups. The continued productivity within the group was explained in terms of the high degree of morale individuals enjoyed in their groups. In spite of late lunches, varied degrees of light in their workroom and other huddles placed before them, workers' performance increased. Mayo observed that *social factors* are responsible for high production not physical conditions and economic incentives. It emerged from these research projects that motivation, morale and productivity are related to social and psychological factors as opposed to physical factors. They also revealed that an organisation is a system of cliques, grapevines, informal status system, rituals and a mixture of logical, non-logical and illogical behaviour.

Taken as a whole, the significance of the Hawthorne studies was in 'discovering the informal organisation which exists in all organisations. It demonstrated the importance to individuals of stable social relationships in the work situation. It also confirmed that what was believed to be a rubble hypothesis on man- that each individual pursued only narrow rational self-interest was completely false. In short, it led to a fuller realisation of the human factor in work situations. Mayo urged managers to understand the nature and role of group dynamics, informal communication, informal leaders, grapevine, gossips and rumours and their influence on morale and employee performance. It was an attempt to draw attention to the weakness of concentrating on formal structural imperatives at the cost of non-formal aspects. He also emphasized the need for participative and flexible styles of leadership and employee – centered supervision.

Abraham Maslow and Human Needs

Maslow is known for his significant contribution to our understanding of the complexity of human motivation. It was an attempt to remind managers that employees' drive at work is influenced by their desire to meet specific needs. He focused on the hierarchy of human needs. The central view is that human beings have many needs ranging from the lowest to the highest level needs. These include physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. A proper understanding of these needs will enable managers to respond appropriately in dealing with subordinates. That would in turn shape manager-worker relations and performance at work. Physiological needs include food, shelter and clothing. They are considered to be the lowest level needs that one has to meet before climbing on to the higher level needs. The assumption is that without food, shelter or clothing, one would not want to think about esteem or respect. To meet these needs, one has to have some minimum amount of money. This calls for the need for employers to provide a living wage that will enable workers to meet their basic needs.

Security or safety needs are associated with the need for safe working

environment, home or society. At the workplace, workers want to feel safe in terms of the physical work environment itself. Dangerous working places where live electricity wires, high-density cables and deep pits are left unfenced/unprotected are a threat to safety. Again, more threatening bosses who shout most of the time instead of talking calmly to workers create a very threatening and unsafe psychological environment.

Social needs relate to the view that as human beings are social animals, they need a sense of love and belongingness. This is a natural instinct. When a kid is playing with friends and the latter choose to isolate him, he will call for his mother or father to unite him with friends. If the father asks the boy to come and leave his friends aside, the kid will experience deep stress. He will be seen creeping back to his friends. People want to feel they have friends and that others care and love them. However, the author was surprised the other day to hear a wife of his chief executive of the organisation he worked immediately after graduating from the university, saying in a majestic way: 'I am different,...I do not have a friend! Do check me; you will not see me chatting with someone else. I enjoy being alone... have you ever seen me at anyone's home?.' This only demonstrates that people are complex beings. But what we know is that the majority of people enjoy a sense of social belonging. Managers need to provide an environment that fosters positive social relations.

Esteem needs include the need for recognition, appreciation and prestige. However young or old people are, they will enjoy a sense of respect and a genuine appreciation from others. A minister of health seated at a new Aids intervention strategy function would feel bad if speaker after speaker ignored her presence. At the workplace, individuals would like to be treated with dignity and as ladies and gentlemen. Reprimanding subordinates in public reduces their self-respect and esteem. There are others who would rather remain unemployed and therefore poor than to suffer deep humiliation in the presence of fellow colleagues or subordinates.

Self-actualisation is the highest level need. In whatever section or specialisation a worker is in, she would like to reach the highest level her competence can carry her. A footballer would need to reach the top of the football hierarchy; a clerical officer in the civil service would wish to become a principal secretary some other day; a local political party leader will aspire to become a party president. A student in his first year at the university wants one day to obtain a PhD. This is human craving for higher level achievement. One would like to reach self-fulfillment. The desire to become everything one is capable of becoming is a significant human need employers and managers are asked to understand. This will enable them to help their employees reach their self-actualisation. They can do that by providing opportunities, facilities, encouragement and guidance.

Maslow's order of needs is a bone of contention owing to the complexity of

human beings. To suggest that one has to satisfy physiological, security and love needs before developing a need for self-esteem or self actualization is to standardize human behaviour. In Africa there are many unemployed workers struggling to meet their basic food or clothing requirements. However, one will find such workers even resigning from their employment because the manager is rude and disrespectful. Elderly manual workers would rather be unemployed than to face the humiliation of shouting in the presence of younger employees.

The author is aware of a man who, having decided to use his hard earned cash to buy clothes for his wife, changed his mind on the way when found a group of people buying meat. The man went straight to pick the foreleg and asked the price. He straight away bought it and returned home. The wife was upset because not only was there no salt and flour in the house, but the man had not paid his minimum tax which used to send him into hiding when district commissioners messengers visited the village. While the woman was appealing for security needs of the husband who, in the first place, wanted to meet basic needs (clothing), the husband even changed his mind to satisfy his self-esteem need.

It must therefore be emphasized that workers have a complex array of competing needs which are subject to change. What Maslow has succeeded in doing is to remind managers that workers have numerous needs. Therefore, a manager needs to take a diagnostic approach to find what need might be operating at one point or another in this or that worker. A blanket approach to need satisfaction might be counterproductive.

Douglas McGregor - Theory X and Y

McGregor can be viewed as a major contributor to our understanding of the impact of manager's preconceived understanding of people on their managerial styles. If a colleague told us that the man we are going to meet in the next few minutes is mad, we are surely going to be 'armed' to handle a mad man. Even our handshake with him will be done in a more careful manner. We might even hesitate to accept a hug! McGregor argued that the manner in which managers handle their workers in organisations reflect the set of assumptions they hold about the nature of man. He categorized these assumptions into two, namely Theory X and theory Y.

Theory X assumptions are that:

- Man is naturally lazy and hate to work
- Man is less ambitious
- Man is indifferent
- Man seeks security and economic incentives

Thus, the only way a supervisor can be assured of achieving organisational goals is to coerce or punish subordinates. He also need to strictly supervise them. There is some relationship between this theory and the emergence of varied principles of management by Fayol, Taylor, Urwick and Weber discussed above. According to McGregor, human behavior research has brought to light a new set of assumptions, which he calls Theory Y which assumes that:

- Man loves work quite naturally
- Man accepts responsibility and controls himself
- Man is ambitious
- Man is viewed as having the capacity to direct himself
- Creativity is widely distributed in people.

In this theory the human being is seen to have both growth and development potential. It is up to management to find ways tapping this potential for the benefit of the organisation and the individual employee. Managers have to begin focusing attention on ways of allowing the workers to attain their uppermost needs like self-actualization and self- esteem through the following:

- Participation in decision-making- in both areas which affect workers as well as where management want advice from workers.
- Management by-objectives- in which subordinates set their own objectives with the support (as opposed to control) of their supervisors and pursue to achieve them
- Providing autonomy and job enlargement to make jobs more interesting to workers
- Delegating authority to lower levels in the organisation thereby challenging workers to make decisions and express faith in their abilities
- Creating performance rewards systems that relate to a variety of workers' psychological needs and not just money
- Treating workers with respect and increasing the share of information regarding the work content, design and results

These two managerial perceptions can be viewed as two poles on a continuum. Such extremes might not in practice exist. Experience suggests that there is a mixture of characteristics in other people. Elements in one camp are likely going to be found yet in the other. There are indeed other people who might be lazy and dislike work, when in fact others like work as natural as play. In dealing with workers therefore, diagnostic approaches need to be adopted. When faced with lazy employees, there is no harm for managers to adopt strict

supervision or coercion. The opposite is also true. It makes no sense to frustrate a self-motivated and self-directed subordinate by monitoring her strictly.

William G Ouchi and Theory Z

As an extension of McGreogor's theory X and Y, Ouchi dubbed the Japanese management as theory Z. This theory is a pragmatic approach to management based on the Japanese customs and culture and focuses mostly on the work group. It maintains that the most effective decision making is that accomplished by the group rather than the individual manager. This style of decision making called the consensual model assumes that group decision-making process will result in better decisions for an organisation because:

- The group has access to more data and personal experience
- Members of the group will 'buy into' the group decision
- The group decision-making process screens out extremely good and extremely bad information, resulting in a decision that will be better than individual's decision

Theory Z also features an ideal of life-long employment to build loyalty and ensure a constant workforce that is committed to the organisation and the accomplishment of its goals. This approach takes a long term view of human resource development and management. It requires a genuine support of management and is one of the techniques found in *Quality of Worklife* (QWL) approach where *Quality Circles* features are dominant as:

- Greater worker involvement in decision- making
- Improved and more frequent communication between workers and management
- Self- control by workers over aspects of the workplace

However, while this promises a lot in terms of commitment, participation, productivity among other things, it presupposes high skills in interpersonal communication, goal formulation and prioritization, high commitment among the groups and unflinching support from management.

Fredrick Herzberg: Motivator and Hygiene Factors

Herzberg, a former professor of management, is known for his contribution to our understanding of human motivation. He categorised factors, which influence motivation, into motivator and hygiene factors. In the late 1950s Herzberg and his associates conducted extensive interviews with 200 engineers' and accountants from 11 industries in America. Individuals were asked to relate the elements of their job that made them happy or unhappy. An analysis of the findings revealed that when people were dissatisfied the bad moments were associated with the environment of the work. Herzberg called these 'hygiene' factors. The happy moments were associated with the work itself and Herzberg labeled them, 'motivator factors'.

Hygiene Factors

The set of factors in this category- associated with job dissatisfaction- stem from the individual's overriding need to avoid physical and social deprivation. According to Herzberg, these include money, supervision, status, security, working conditions, policies and interpersonal relationships. These prevent alienation and dissatisfaction but do not increase motivation. In other words, the presence of a salary and status in a job or working condition does not add anything to motivation because they are to be there anyway. Again, the availability of a desk and chair in the office will not in itself bring motivation to work although their absence can create an enormous degree of stress as one wonders how she is to work while standing up. Yet, giving a newly qualified social science graduate a more routine job will create frustration to someone who is interested in being innovative.

Motivator Factors

These factors stem from people's need to realise their human potential for perfection. Motivator factors include, the work itself, recognition, advancement and possibility of growth. These are said to increase job satisfaction and motivation. The more the job becomes challenging and allows jobholders to advance into higher levels for example, the more one becomes motivated. Thus, when a Staff Associate in a university realises that once he obtains a Masters degree, he will be appointed a substantive Lecturer and eventually advance to senior lecturer, associate professor and later full professor, chances are that he will be motivated.

Herzberg's two factor theory succeeds in revealing to us that there are different sets of factors that motivate workers in organisations. But due to individual differences we cannot lump certain factors and call them maintenance and not motivator factors. There are many people in Africa whose salaries are below the living wage and any increase, how small it maybe, will

immediately motivate them to work hard. On his back from College one day in the early 1980s, the author found construction work going along Tuchila-Mulomba Road. He saw three men from his village and when they saw him they greeted him so cheerfully that he wondered whether they were really happy to see him. When he asked why they looked extraordinarily excited, one of them revealed: 'we have just had a wage increase'. When the author asked by how much the wage was revised upwards, one man responded quickly: 'At first we were paid MK0.26 per day, but now we get MK0.27.' In other words, an increase of just MK0.01 was enough to make these people beam their faces. Thus, factors such as company policy, status, interpersonal relations which are considered to be maintenance factors may have surprising motivational levels for certain individuals.

Chris Argyris- The immature-mature theory

A former professor of Harvard University, Argyris took keen interest in how the personal development of an individual is affected by the kind of situation in which that individual works. According to Argyris, every individual has a potential which needs to be fully realised to benefit the individual, his work group and the organisation he is working for. The major thrust of Argyris' contribution was to draw attention to the manner in which managers wasted human talents in modern organisations by failing to tap it adequately. One of the cardinal weaknesses he saw in managers was the treatment of adult workers as if they were children. Mature adults who join organisations soon discover that they are subjected to a host of obstacles such as hierarchy of authority, chain of command, division of labour and specialization, rigid rules and regulations, strict supervision and reprimands. Innocent, free and in need of maturity, autonomy and responsibility, organisation members are treated as if they were children who lack self-direction and control.

For Argyris, these bring a sense of helplessness, a feeling of being over controlled as a child. Why should there be many dos and don'ts for employees when managers are aware that they are dealing with adults? Formal structural properties of organisations are said to bring extreme passivity, monotony, alienation and existential dilemma. This dilemma emerges because while workers know the importance of remaining in employment to earn their living, they find it difficult to reconcile their true nature as adults and the manner in which they are handled. Argyris has suggested organic management, enlargement of jobs and good organisational climate to bring motivation. This will enable individual to exercise their full potential. Both skills and knowledge, which they have accumulated over the years, would better be tapped to the benefit of the organisation. He also recommends that managers need to undergo sensitivity training in order to know interpersonal relationships and

how their behaviour is affects others.

Edgar H Schein and the Complex Man

A former Professor of Management, Schein was interested in individual motivation, career dynamics and organisational culture. Like McGregor, he suggested that managers make assumptions about their subordinates in the form of rational-economic man, the social model, the self actualizing man and what he called the 'complex man'. The rational- economic model is a mental image managers hold about workers as motivated by economic incentives; that the workers is essentially lazy, passive and unwilling to take responsibility and therefore to be controlled by the manager (close to theory x). The social model views the worker as needing identity through relationships with others working with him. It views group norms and pressures as having more powerful impact on worker productivity than formal incentives like bonuses and allowances.

The self-actualizing man argues that organisations remove meaning of any work that employees do, thereby creating a sense of dissatisfaction. In an attempt to exercise their capacities and skills, workers are frustrated and alienated by the behaviour of managers in organisations. The complex model developed by Schein notes that earlier conceptions were too naïve and simplistic about human behaviour. He argues that human needs fall into many categories and vary according to the person's stage of personal development and life situation. So motives will vary from person to person and from one situation to another and from one time to another. Consequently incentives can also vary in their impact on the basis of the above complexity of man. Managers are therefore called to be good diagnosticians when dealing with workers. In other words, 'one-size-fits-all' is not advisable in dealing with subordinates.

Robert R Blake and Jane S Mouton

The two psychologists start from the assumption that a manager's job is to foster attitudes and behaviour which promotes efficient performance, stimulate and use creativity, generate enthusiasm for experimentation and innovation and learn from interaction with others. They developed a managerial grid which provides a framework for understanding and applying effective management. This grid combines two fundamental ingredients of managerial behavior- concern for production and concern for people. High concern for production and high concern for people is an ideal combination

which focuses on both ingredients. Impoverished management is where there is little concern for both. Task management occurs where there is overall concern for task and no concern on people. Similarly, concern for people and none on task is called 'country club management'. The organisation is managed as if it was created just to please people. Overall, through processes of organisation development, it is possible to transform the organisation from impoverished or country club management or task management into team management where both task and people concerns are taken into account.

Victor Vroom

Vroom is known for his contribution to our understanding of motivation by his expectancy theory. It is based on the assumption that motivational strength is determined by the perceived probability of success. That is one's motivation increases as one perceived effort-performance and performance-reward probabilities increase. For example, an employee who knows that when he works hard, he will be rewarded, that he knows that by working hard, he will certainly achieve the target required, he will be motivated to work extra hard. But even when he knows that he might be rewarded if he achieves the target but knows that he cannot attain the laid down target, then he will not be motivated to work hard.

Edwin Locke- Goal Setting

Edwin Locke made a significant contribution to our understanding of motivation of employees in organisations. Goal setting is the process of improving individual or group performance by formally stating objectives, deadlines, or quality standard. Management by objectives to be discussed later in this book is an example of goal setting which is an application of this theory. That is, when people set their own goals, target and standards with the help of their supervisors, they become more committed and motivated to take total ownership in achieving the goals.

Other Motivational Strategies

As noted above, most of the theories in the behavioural science school were attempts to provide ways in which managers can motivate their subordinates. Other approaches to be outlined below include job design, rewards, participation, flexible working schedule, wellness programmes, family support

programmes and sabbaticals (Kreitner (2001).

Motivation through job design

Job design is the creation of tasks and responsibilities based on strategy, technology and structure. This is seen as a key determining factor of individual motivation and organisational success. A challenging and interesting job can add great zest and meaning to one's life while a boring and tedious job can be a serious threat to one's physical and psychological health. Other ways of job design include job rotation where people are periodically moved to other sections of the same organisation to perform another job. This prevents stagnation and loss of enthusiasm.

Limited exposure- this is where people are allowed to knock off early after having completed what managers have delineated as a fair day's work. It is one way to deal with boring jobs.

Job enlargement- this is also a process towards motivating employees by combining two or more specialized tasks

Job enrichment- an attempt to redesign jobs to increase their challenge, variety, complexity and excitement through introducing in the job some elements like skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and job feedback.

Motivation through Rewards

There are two types of rewards- extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards like Herzberg's hygiene factors are pay offs like money, employee benefits, recognition, status symbol and praise which come from 'outside' or others. Intrinsic rewards are self granted and internally experienced pay-offs like a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem and self actualization.

Motivation through Employee Participation

Participative management is viewed as a process of empowering employees to assume greater control of the workplace. There is a belief that when employees are involved more meaningfully beyond their job, they are both motivated and productive at the same time. Different methods for meaningful participation include:

- Quality circles- voluntary problem solving groups committed to improving quality and reducing costs
- Self-managed teams- these are high performance teams that assume traditional managerial duties such as staffing and planning; they are said to foster creativity, motivation and productivity.
- Flexible working schedules- these allows workers to choose their own arrival and departure time within a specified time limit. These are said to bring better employee-supervisor relations and reduced absenteeism
- Family Support Services- these include paid parental leave, sick leave, childcare services and elder-care centres for employee's elderly relatives who cannot be left at home.
- Wellness programmes- these are aimed at achieving a balance between personal lives and work lives resulting in a win-win benefit for the individual and the organisation.

They include

- Stress reduction programmes
- Health eating and living clinics
- Quit smoking programmes
- Weight loss programmes
- Excise facilities
- Massage breaks
- Behavioral health counseling
- Health screening
- Sabbaticals- these involve paid sabbaticals for a certain number of years or months to enable employees refresh and bolster their motivation and loyalty.

The behavioural science school has obviously offered richer insights into the complexity of human behaviour. It has also provided a wider array of mechanisms by which managers can tap the vast potential in people. There is no doubt that human beings are the most sensitive and crucial actors who undertake the various activities of the organisation using various resources. An adequate grasp of human behaviour and how to positively channel it towards organisational success, is one of the key competencies managers are expected to possess.

One of the biggest criticisms leveled against the behavioural science school is that it is asking managers to learn to be good to workers in anticipation of good performance from them. There is also more emphasis on informal relations and generally human relations as the solution to organisational performance problems. This view ignores the importance of structure, authority and power in

organisation and the role of technology in enhancing performance. There might be other individuals who will always take advantage of the goodness shown by a manager to continue poor performance. While others will be motivated to do a good job when left alone, there are yet others who will do the opposite. Individual differences make it difficult to have a uniform approach to the management of people in organisations. Another criticism of the behavioural science school is that its protagonists, including McGregor, Argyris, to name a few, worked within the ground rules laid down by the classical theory. They primarily tried to fit in it the realities of human behaviour as they saw them.

Summary

This chapter has presented the behavioural science school whose major focus is people management and more specifically how to motivate them. The need to acknowledge a multitude of human needs and the impact of managerial perception of employees on management styles and leadership has been examined. We have also discussed about the need to provide motivator and maintenance factors to employees and to treat employees as adults by involving them fully in organisation decision-making processes. However, emphasis on goodness or managerial kindness and informal relations at the expense of other critical factors has been viewed as weakness of the behavioural science school. As an African adage goes, *Chisoni chidapha nkhwali* 'care killed a cat.' Too much kindness can prove to be dangerous at times in view of the many other people who are not good.

Review Question

1. What is the central concern of the behavioral science school?
2. What are the main contributions of the following to our understanding of organisational functioning?
3. Elton Mayo
4. Abraham Maslow
5. Chris Argyris
6. Douglas McGregor
7. Fredric Herzberg
8. Blake and Mourtou
9. William Ouchi
10. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the behavioral science school?

Research Activity

Interview five employees in any chosen organisation and find out the extent to which Abraham Maslow hierarchy of human needs and Herzberg's two factor theory apply. Talk to three managers in this organisation to find out the various methods they use to motivate employees.

The impact of the environment: open systems and contingency Theories

Introduction

Both the classical and behaviour theories have focused attention on the inner aspects of the organisation. They have assumed that the major clue to the effective functioning of an organisation is within the organisation. If an organisation is not functioning well, structural theories would spend more time questioning the efficacy of various structural aspects. On the other hand, a behavioural scientist would spend more time examining the people aspects of the organisation. All will not think of forces outside the organisation such as government policy, harsh economic environment, political climate, heavy competition from other organisations, just to mention a few outside forces. The open system and contingency theories attempts to address this shortcoming in perspective to include the impact of the environment on organisational functioning.

Katz and Kahn and the Open System Theory

According to proponents of the open systems theory such as Katz and Kahn (1966), organisations operate within a complex external environment that influences the manner in which business is done. A system is defined as a collection of interdependent parts which form some whole (Kreitner, 2001:70). The major characteristics of an open system according to Kreitner are:

1. They receive inputs or energy (people, money, materials and information) from the environment
2. They convert these inputs into outputs (products, services, ideas, waste)
3. They discharge their outputs into their environment.

Katz and Kahn identified several subsystems of an organisation like:

1. Production or technical subsystem- concerned with the accomplishment of the basic tasks of the organization
2. Supportive subsystems- systems which procure the inputs and dispose the outputs of the production subsystem
3. Maintenance subsystems- concerned with the stability and

predictability of the organisation. Provides roles, rules and rewards for people working in the organization

4. Adaptive subsystems- concerned with what the organisation might become; they deal with issues of change in the environment- marketing research, research and development etc
5. Managerial subsystems- these deal with managerial functions of planning, coordination and control of the total system.

The systems theory was an attempt to integrate an organisation with its task and wider environment. Katz and Kahn maintain an organisation be looked at as an open system, which continuously interact and depends on its environment. The social, political, cultural, economic and technological environment includes shareholders, banks, suppliers, trade unions, competitors and customers. This environment influences and affects the way organisation performs. The organisation receives supports and raw materials from the environment. In turn, the environment 'buys' or 'consumes' the organisation's goods and services (output). According to Montana and Charnov (2000), the internal environment of an organisation consists of human, financial, technological and physical resources.

The open system's theory emphasises on openness, interaction, exchange of inputs and outputs between organisations and their environments. The system's and contingency theory stress the openness of the organisation to its environment and how the latter impacts on organisational functioning. The Systems theory views organisation as an organic and open system, which is composed of interacting and interdependent parts. Organisations are not closed systems, sealed off from their environments, but are open to and depend on flow of personnel, other resources and information from outside it. From an open system perspective, environments shape, support and infiltrate organisations. Connections with external elements can be more critical than those with internal components.

As open systems, organisations continuously interact and depend on their environments which in turn are composed of different sub-systems like social, economic and political. From a system's view, an organisation is composed of a number of subsystems or parts: production subsystem, supportive subsystem, maintenance subsystem, managerial subsystem, individuals and informal groups. All these subsystems are interdependent and interact with each other. The various subsystems or parts of an organisation are linked with each other through its communication network, decisions, authority-responsibility relationships, objectives, policies, procedure and other coordinating mechanism in the organisation. Organisations have a variety of goals chief among them being survival, integration and adaptation with the environment and growth. All sections and departments of Chancellor College or the University of Botswana for example

could be viewed as subsystems that form up the system (Chancellor College/ University of Botswana). They continuously interact and depend on one another. Hence a change in technology, financial, social or human forces may trigger off related changes in other sections.

From the system's perspective, a change in one aspect say technology, social or political forces shall have profound effect on others. A problem of finance in an organisation may force the company to withdraw bonuses or salary increments and the purchase of modern equipment. This might create dissatisfaction among employees who may decide to go on strike. Consequently, this will affect production, marketing and revenue levels of the organisation. By failing to look at issues from a wider system's perspective, managers underestimate the ramification of a problem.

For example, in 1992 the Government of Malawi announced a salary increase of 20% across the public service. The University of Malawi authorities gave 30% salary increase to clerical, technical and support staff and 50% to academic and administrative staff. What started as a rumour on a weekend materialized on a Monday morning when workers assembled to have someone talk to them about their increment. They asked senior management to assure them that they would be given the remaining 20% so that they too get a 50%. The Registrar and top management ignored the situation for sometime. However, as lunch hour was approaching, the dining hall was deserted and no food was prepared for students. Hungry students started chanting around the campus and finally shouting towards the Principal's Office- 'we want food; we want food.' As it became clear that nothing was happening, students stormed the kitchen and vandalized cooking pots and the cold room. They also stole food items, broke glasses and vandalized several building. The chaos that reigned necessitated the need to call the police to restore law and order. Within a few hours, the college was closed and students were sent home indefinitely. Repairing the cold room cost the college millions of Kwacha, and government instructed the University to pay 100% salary increase to the support staff. All this could have been avoided if a system's perspective was employed in assessing the situation at the very beginning.

A contractor might suspend the construction of a road because he cannot import materials from outside the country largely because of the foreign exchange restrictions imposed by the Reserve Bank. The latter would be responding to pressures from the government which in turn is responding to advice from the International Monetary Fund which is financing some economic reforms in that country. Thus, the open system theory is broad and helps one to trace cause and effect relationships.

Contingency Theory

The contingency theory is similar to the open system theory in that it looks at an organisation as being open to its environment. However, the contingency theory rejects the universality thesis and emphasizes that there is no best way to manage. It focuses on the inter-relationships within and among the subsystems as well as between the organisation and its environment. It emphasizes the multivariate nature of organisations and attempts to understand how organisations operate under varying conditions and in specific situations. It regards management as situational. Like the system theorists, contingency theorists emphasize the openness of organisation to its environment. The only additional emphasis is on how organisations adapt to their environments. Technology, economy, politics, age, location, size and client system presents a lot of challenges, problems and opportunities, which affect the way an organisation works. Some of the contributors to the contingency theory include Joan Woodward, Burns and Stalker, Lawrence and Lorsch, James Thompson, Hannan and Freeman and Hofstede.

Joan Woodward

Woodward tried to find out why there were differences between organisations in terms of number of levels of authority between top and bottom, the span of control, or average number of subordinates per supervisor, the clarity or lack of clarity and extent of division of functions among specialists. Her studies revealed the significance of technology in influencing organisational characteristics. After studying 100 British firms Woodward concluded that the structure of organisations and the style of supervision adopted are contingent upon the technology used by the organisation. She also found that the objectives of the organisation determine what kind of technology to use. This in turn determines other aspects of the organisation such as hierarchy of authority, span of control and so on.

Burns T and Stalker G.M

A professor of sociology at the University of Edinburgh, Burns focused on different types of organisations and their effect on communication patterns and on the activities of managers. He also explored the relevance of different forms of organisations to changing conditions- especially the impact of technical innovation. In collaboration with Stalker they developed two 'ideal' types of management which they said vary with environmental factors. These were mechanistic and organic styles of management

They argued that in a stable environment, mechanistic style of management prevails. In this environment, problems and tasks of management are broken down into specialism within which each individual carries out his assigned tasks. There is a clear hierarchy of control and the responsibility for the overall knowledge and coordination rests at the top of the hierarchy. Formal communication, procedures, rules and regulations and social distance prevail. Authority by virtue of position in the hierarchy or specialist knowledge, protocol, obedience and loyalty characterise mechanistic organisations. In other words, the absence of threats, change or instability makes it easier to practice a style of management characteristic of the classical theories discussed in chapters 3 and 4.

Organic style, on the other hand, is adapted to unstable conditions when new and unfamiliar problems arise. There is continual adjustment and redefinition of individual tasks, free and open communication for advice. Command does not flow downwards and unilaterally. Communication is flexible and is characterized by multiple channels both upwards and downwards. There is increasing use of situational authority rather than authority by virtue of position in the organisation. Participation in decision-making, team decision-making and problem solving are central to the organic style of management. Contributive knowledge is emphasized rather than specialized knowledge. In this situation, organisation charts specifying exact functions and responsibilities are suspended because they are seen as hampering progress. One can say that behavioural science theories which emphasise on flexibility, participation, delegation and empowerment are suited to an unstable and continuously changing environment.

Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch

As professors at Harvard Business School, the two conducted studies focusing on appropriate structure and functioning of organisations using the organisation-environment framework. One of the major arguments they made is that people create organisations in order to find better solutions to environmental problems facing them. In order to do that, organisations are highly differentiated (creates different sections to handle different needs or aspects of the environment). This differentiation leads to differences in the cognitive and emotional orientation of managers in different units and differences too in the formal structures of different departments. Because of these differences, they argue, several subsystems of an organisation (personnel, finance, stores, landscape etc) which are performing different sub-functions need proper integration. For example the Malawi public service which has different ministries and departments spread hierarchically from the

ministry headquarters through regions to district and sub-district level, is a huge organisation. With so many subsystems, activities, resources, and facing diverse cognitive and emotional orientations, the need for effective systems of integration is critical if the public service is to achieve the national interest. Some devices of integration include permanent and temporary cross-functional teams, direct managerial contact, managerial hierarchy, individual integrators, notices, memorandum, circulars and workshops.

James D Thompson

Thompson portrays an organisation within its environment as complex and indeterminate and faced with uncertainty but at the same time subject to rationality and hence determinateness and certainty. Thompson argues that uncertainty is a major problem facing modern organisations. He argues that the future is uncertain and this makes planning very difficult. He therefore urges managers and administrators to reduce uncertainty by collecting, collating and analyzing information and presenting to whoever wishes to use it. In other words, organisations aspire to be rational, objective and orderly despite circumstances and events which may prevent them from being so. Thus, he sees uncertainty reduction as a crucial managerial role. Administrators are asked to provide coordination and adjustment of the organisation to circumstances outside it. They are also called to regulate transactions across the boundaries of the organisation more especially its contacts with the outside world. Organisations which undertake market research and periodically review their strategic plans or those which create departments of research and development do so in order to reduce uncertainty of the future.

Michael T Hannan and John Freeman

The two have looked at organisations from wider perspective in the same way a naturalist or bioecologist looks at animal life. They see populations of organisations surviving or thriving or declining in particular environments just as populations of say rabbits survive or thrive in particular ecological situations but die out in another (Pugh and Hickson, 1989). This perspective sees an organisation as one of a population which co-exists with or competes with other populations of organisations. It also maintains that the ability of a whole society to keep up with change depends on the creation of new forms of organisations rather than struggling to achieve new needs with old

organisations. Organisations which fits the situation survive while those which do not die. This theory questions the usefulness of efforts made to reform existing organisations to meet or cope with change. There are some elements of contingency thinking of Hannan and Freeman in the sense that organisations that adapt to their environments are able to survive and those which do not adapt, die away. However, whilst new organisations are created to meet new needs, it is also possible that an old organisation can be reformed to handle both old and new demands. That is why public service organisations in Africa have since independence been implementing various forms of reforms to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.

Geert Hofstede

Hofstede has made an important contribution to the impact of the environment on the functioning of organisations by focusing on culture differences. In a large-scale survey, Hofstede was interested in work attitudes among various national cultures around the world. He identified four basic dimensions of the difference between national cultures in forty larger subsidiaries of IBM. Each of the national cultures was positioned from high to low. The following are the four dimensions:

- Power-distance
- Uncertainty-avoidance
- Individualism
- Masculinity

The power distance dimension is concerned with how far a particular culture encourages superiors to exert power. In a high power distance culture, he points that bosses exert considerable power. Employees are afraid to express disagreement with bosses, prefer to be told what to do where and how. In a lower power distance culture superiors and subordinates consider each other as colleagues and both believe that inequalities in society need to be minimized. Employees are not afraid of their subordinates when it comes to speaking a different viewpoint. The above can be conceptualised as dictatorial and democratic cultures respectively.

The uncertainty-avoidance dimension is the ease with which the culture copes with novelty. In a strong uncertainty-avoidance culture, people feel the need for clarity and order as they feel threatened by uncertain situations and higher anxiety and stress are experienced. This is combated by hard work, career stability and intolerance of deviancy. In a weak uncertainty-avoidance culture, life is accepted as it comes. A pragmatic view is always taken to change existing rules and procedures.

Individualism dimension focus on the degree to which the culture

encourages individual as opposed to group-centered concerns. In individualistic cultures, the emphasis is on personal initiative and achievement and everyone has a right to private life and opinion. On the other hand, a collectivist /group centred culture is characterized by a tighter social framework where people are members of extended families or clans which protect them in exchange for loyalty.

The masculinity dimensions highlight masculine cultures where performance counts; money and material standards are important; ambition is the driving force; big and fast is beautiful. In contrast, in 'feminine' cultures, it is the quality of life that matters; people and the environment are important; service provides the motivation; small is beautiful and unisex is attractive. In a masculinity culture, sex roles are clearly differentiated- men must be assertive and dominating while women should be caring and nurturing. In feminine cultures, sex roles are more flexible, and there is a belief in equality between sexes.

Unlike structural and behavioral theorists, who were concerned with internal issues of the organisation, the system and contingency theorists are mind broadening. They draw attention to the structure, human element and environment, saying it is the interaction among the internal and external forces that determines how an organisation achieves or fails to achieve its goals. The open system theory provides an additional framework for decision makers who need to look beyond the confines of the organisation to identify the root cause of problems.

Secondly it brings in fresh insights to do with the impact of the environment on influencing the functioning of organisations. However critics' feel that the system's perspective is too ambiguous to be of use for research as it proposes too many variables whose links are unclear. The system's theory scores low as a predictive tool. For example, it does not clarify on issues such as what impact will what variable have on performance. It is vague on cause-effect relationships.

On the other hand, the contingency theory shade invaluable insights by demonstrating that organisations are struggling to adapt to their environment most of the time. This reminds us of a chameleon which changes its colour depending on its surroundings. Certainly, an organisation facing a severe economic environment will engage in rigorous advertising campaign, downsizing its operations or developing a new strategic plan after a thorough assessment of the environment. This theory seems to be closer to modern strategic planning approaches both at organisational or governmental levels. There is the SWOT analysis which is a deliberate attempt to scan the internal and external environment of an organisation to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) before setting organisational

strategic goals and objectives. This is an attempt to ensure that the organisation and its management is pragmatic and operating from the real situation on the ground.

However, mention has to be made that organisations are not always behaving like puppets in their day-to-day relationship with their environment. They are not passive respondents of environmental dictates. Rather, at times, an organisation can be proactive and aggressively influence its environment through strategic research, product development and advertising campaigns. Critiques have also said that since it is too open and leaves everything to the situation, it does not give a practising manager 'what to take home'. It is also argued that the contingency approach does not have its own body of knowledge. Rather, it is a methodology making use of other approaches.

Summary

The chapter has examined the open system and contingency theories which attempt to integrate the organisation with its environment. This brings additional insights into the management of organisations. Both the classical and behavioural science schools ignored the openness of an organisation to its environment and saw an organisation as a closed system. By demonstrating that organisations are open systems, the theory has broadened our understanding about organisation and management interface with the environment. Again, by focusing more attention on adaptability of the organisation to its environment, the contingency theory has provided us with additional insights into the practical realities of organisational life. Unlike the other approaches, the contingency theory does not advocate a universally correct approach to solving management problems but maintains that different problems would require different solutions. It is eclectic approach which allows the individual manager to pick a management technique which is applicable to a given situation. This calls for a greater level of flexibility from managers and effective diagnostic skills to determine what technique is required in a given problem situation.

Organisation theory is replete with various strands of management thought which we have discussed in this book. What is important, though, is that most of these theories do agree on the importance of achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the process of achieving goals. However, they disagree on how best to do that. The classical theories have put more emphasis on structure of the organisation (organisations as machines) such as rules, decisions of labour, formality and specialization as imperatives for objectivity, predictability and precision. On the other hand, behavioural theorists put much premium on the human element. The need to motivate

people, understand their needs, interests, concerns and account for social relations at work, are key issues that they emphasise. The open systems and contingency theorist have called the need to see the organisation as an open system dependent and interacting with the wider social, political, economic and cultural environment. That interaction influences the way the organisation function.

Thus, our understanding of organisations and management needs to take into account the structural, behavioural and the environment within which organisations function.

Review Questions

1. What is the difference between the open system and the contingency theories?
2. Discuss the contribution have the following to organisation theory:
 - Joan Woodward
 - Burns and Stalker
 - Geert Hofstede
 - Lawrence and Lorsch
 - Hannan and Freeman
3. What is the limitation of both the open system and contingency theories?
4. To what extent would you say the open system's theory is superior to the classical and behavioral theories?

Research Activity

Visit any three organisations of your choice. Find out how the legal, cultural, social, political and economic and technological aspects of the environment are impacting on the three organisations. What is the difference among them and why?

6

Processes in Organisations: Managerial Functions

Introduction

Previous chapters examined the concept of organisation, its features and ways of visualising organisations. Resources in organisations as well as general activities have been examined. We have also analysed several theories of organisation such as the classical theories (scientific management, principles of management, bureaucracy) behavioral theories and open system and contingency theories. It is clear from the foregoing that structural, behavioural and environmental aspects of an organisation are crucial for understanding the functioning of organisations. These organisations are managed by a certain category of human resources called managers, supervisors and leaders. Thus, organisations require effective management. According to Peter Drucker (1974), one of the earliest management gurus, principles of management include setting objectives, organising, motivating, communicating, establishing measurements of performance and developing people.

The following section examines some of the critical activities that managers or supervisors do in order to ensure that both the human and non-human resources in an organisation are well integrated to produce goods and services. We shall briefly look at the managerial functions. We will focus on such processes as planning, organising, staffing, controlling, coordinating, motivation and communication. However, we need to answer the questions: what is management? Why do we need to manage organisations?

Definitions and Clarifications of Management

According to Peter Drucker (1974:11) the major social tasks of the modern century have come to be performed in and through organised institutions like business enterprises, school systems, colleges and universities, hospital agencies, research laboratories, government and government agencies, and each one them in turn is entrusted to managers who practice management.

Management is viewed as working with and through other people to accomplish the objectives of both the organisation and its members (Montana and Bruce, 2000). On the other hand Kreitner (2001) views it as a process of working with and through others to achieve organisational objectives in a

changing environment.

According to Agarwal (1982), management is field of human endeavor whose fundamental purpose is the coordination of group effort by performing the functions of planning, organising, directing and controlling certain basic factors so that the various objectives of the group and the individuals thereof are achieved effectively and efficiently. Effectiveness is the central element in management. It entails achieving stated organisational objectives. Efficiency balances the amount of resources used to achieve an objective against what was actually accomplished. This definition provides some pointers to the next question on why organisations have to be managed.

We have learnt from the above the features of organisations such as hierarchy of authority, division of labour, employment of skilled personnel among others. Organisations use resources such as human, material, information, equipment and financial resources. They also engage in various activities such as production, marketing, sales, purchases, recruitment and selection, training and development, security, accounting etc.

Such a social structure deliberately created to achieve specific goals and performing a large number of activities with varied resources cannot be self-directing. Activities have to be planned, resources marshaled, relationships structured, regulations, procedures and rules put in place. Activities performed by different subsystems of the organisation need to be directed, controlled and monitored. They also have to be evaluated and both outputs and outcomes be communicated various interested parties-employees, top management, board of directors, shareholders etc. Above all, activities have to be budgeted for as without money or if money is unwisely utilised, the achievement of plans will be jeopardised.

That is why we need a hierarchy of managerial personnel ranging from the chief executive office in a parastatal and private sector organisation or permanent secretary in the civil service through the deputy down to the ranks of middle managers and front line supervisors. From the definition of management given above, several functions which managers perform are mentioned.

Luther Gulick proposed POSDCORB managerial as key functions:

Planning

Organising

Staffing

Directing

Controlling/**C**oordinating

Reporting and

Budgeting

One important thing to note from the outset is that the functions of management proposed by Gulick are a collective responsibility. No single manager does all these at the sometime. Rather, there is division of labour

among the managerial personnel. Others are in a department called Human Resources where staffing takes place. Others are in Planning and strategy department where planning takes place. We can go on to say some managers are in the Finance department where overall budgeting takes place. However, each department has to plan, budget, implement, (direct), coordinate, control and report its activities.

The second point to note is that a manager's job is not as neat and clear as proposed by POSDCORB. Many writers on the subject have raised very interesting views based on practical experience. For example Mintzberg (1975) described the manager's job in terms of ten roles categorized as interpersonal, informational and decisional. Interpersonal roles include that of being a figurehead, leader and liaison. The informational role includes being a monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson. Finally, decisional roles include entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator.

Luthans et al (1988) generated data from 457 managers and upon a careful analysis found twelve areas of management which they placed under four categories of activity- routine communication, traditional management, networking and human resource management. Routine communication involves exchanging information and handling paper work.

Traditional management activities involved planning, decision making and controlling. Networking activities involve interacting with outsiders and socializing/politicking. Human resource management involves motivating or reinforcing, disciplining/punishing, managing conflict, staffing and training/development.

A study by Kotter (1982) identified six common job demands of general managers.

1. setting basic goals, policies and strategies
2. achieving balance in the allocation of organisational resources among various claimants
3. monitoring activities as to ensure problems are identified and resolved quickly
4. getting cooperation, information and support from their superiors
5. getting cooperation from groups over which they have no direct authority- unions, suppliers, customers etc
6. motivating and controlling staff; managing conflict

Again in terms of behaviours of managers, the classical portrayal is that they operate in a cool, stable and systematic environment; that they orchestrate action and sitting back to observe progress. However, studies have shown that:

1. Managers' activities are highly fragmented- they jump from one topic or issue to another
2. Managers act in a reactive manner, at times in an ad hoc as opposed to systematic fashion depending on unplanned issues that

arise in the process of day to day running of the organisation.

3. Most of the bulk of managers' communication is oral- through telephones, meeting and other forms of conversations which are informal.
4. Managers spend most of their time with people who are not their immediate subordinates or superiors. They spend more time with peers in other parts of the organisation and with people outside the organisation

The above studies are important in illuminating the various taken-for-granted assumptions about the reality of organisations and management. However, to a beginner in the field of management, such scenarios can be depressing. It seems there is total chaos in management. It would be fair to point that there is both order as well as disorder in managing organisations. The fact that there is even more disorder does not mean we should not crave for systematisation and order. That is why we need to discuss the various traditional functions of management as a framework for understanding organisation and management processes. This shall act as the basis for understanding divergence of managerial functions in different organisational settings.

On a more encouraging note, although there is a different vocabulary describing the roles of a manager by different researchers above, one is comforted to realise that most of those roles are embedded in the traditional POSDCORB. We shall turn our attention to a discussion of these functions in the rest of this book.

Summary

This chapter has examined the concept and importance of management in organisations. Managerial functions are outlined as processes that integrate structure, people and environment in the management of material, human and other resources to achieve human wants.

Review Questions

1. What is management?
2. Explain Gulick's managerial functions
3. How does Mintzberg's view differ from Kotter's view of management?
4. Why is management important in organisations?
5. To what extent would you argue that management is a collective responsibility? Illustrate your answer.

Research Activity

Visit two organisations and interview one top and one middle manager in each organisation. Find out what functions these managers perform. Are they different? To what extent are their activities systematic? Why or why not?

7

Planning

Introduction

Planning is the most fundamental function of management. It always has a purpose such as the achievement of certain goals or targets. Planning helps to achieve these goals or target by using available time and resources. Other managerial functions, including organising, staffing, directing, coordinating and control are based on the planning that was made. This chapter discusses the concept and nature of planning. It outlines the characteristics and types of planning, steps in planning, advantages and limitations of planning. It also looks at the application of planning in the African environment..

Concept of Planning

Planning is deciding in advance the long- and short-range objectives of the enterprise and the means for attaining them. It involves looking into the future, anticipating it and attempting to influence it, so that the desired goals are achieved with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Characteristics of Planning

According to Argawal (1982), there are four major characteristics of planning.

The first characteristic is that planning is a continuous process- you never finish the planning process as every plan deals with the future which by nature is very unpredictable and uncertain. Anything could happen along the way be it economic, political or technological. Devaluation of the currency, government legislation, restrictions on foreign exchange transactions, severe competition on the market, or political upheaval like civil wars and other calamities might disturb the plan as was envisaged. This will necessitate the need to review the plan and come up with another plan. That is why plans should be flexible in order to take into account such unforeseeable circumstances. That is why Burns and Stalker talked of the need to apply organic styles of management in response to a dynamic and continuously changing environment.

The second characteristic that planning concerns all managers. While top management might be concerned with looking at the strategic direction of the organisation in terms of where it should be going in the next 10 or 15 years, each sectional manager needs to set their goals and plan for their implementation. In fact each and every manager who is responsible for achieving results will certainly need to plan for them. At certain levels of planning, say strategic planning- apart from a cadre of managers in the organisation, employees at the bottom level are involved in providing inputs into the planning process. The vision, mission and values of the organisations as well as goals are set with the participation of every worker.

The third characteristic is that plans are arranged in a hierarchy. As noted earlier, we have overall organisational strategic planning at the top. Then there is divisional planning, sectional planning and departmental planning down to individual planning. However, the lower level plans are attempts to operationalise and implement the strategic plan. After all, organisational performance is the sum total of the performance of individuals, sections and divisions.

The fourth characteristic is that planning commits an organisation into the future. Once strategic plans have been formulated, the whole organisation has been committed for now and the future. Most of the planning in the future will be tied with what was already done at the beginning. In other words, organisations do not plan radically every year or every three years. What is done is incremental. Completely dramatic planning comes once in a while. For plans to materialise, it takes say 10 to 15 years. No wonder even at national level, most governments in Africa adopted long-range planning which covers a period of 10 years.

This means that policies, strategies, objectives, rules and regulations and procedures cannot be changed every now and then. They will remain stable for a long time. Thus, once plans have been made and objectives, indicators, standards and responsibilities and deadlines have been planned, the organisation has to honour the plans and all activities ought to be geared towards achieving those plans. You cannot get out too liberally from what was planned unless there is a major rethinking. That is not to suggest that plans are to be made rigid. We have already noted of the need for flexibility above. Rather, it simply means that once plans have been drawn, resources and human commitments are tied up to those plans for sometime to come.

Types of Planning

Planning may be classified as long- range and short-range or corporate and functional planning. Long-range planning, also called strategic planning, has a longer time horizon and concerns mainly with the future direction of the

enterprise. The period of long-range planning generally varies from five to ten years. By nature, long-range planning tends to be fluid and tentative as it deals with more distant future. This is the one which commits the organisation into the future. Short-range planning, also called operational planning, generally, is planning for a period of one to two years.

Short-range plans constitute steps toward the implementation of long-range plans. Functional planning relates to segmental plans such as production, financial, human resources, marketing planning, etc. The human resource section has to plan for recruitment, training and succession. The production department will also plan for its production levels per month, week and per day. The marketing section will plan for its annual, quarterly, monthly or weekly sales and even daily sales. Corporate planning is composite of all the functional plans. Thus corporate planning is like an orange, it is made up of various segments.

Steps in Planning

There are different ways of approaching the planning process. However, forecasting, determination of objectives and determination of required resources are generic steps which will apply to most planning processes.

Forecasting

Planning is based on the forecasts of future state of affairs. Focusing in a process of intelligent and informed estimate or prediction of the future internal and external environment of the enterprise. Crucial elements of the environment, which must be predicted for planning, are economic, sales and technological. Economic forecasts mainly relate to the estimates of employment, gross national product, price movements, investment activity, among other variables. In most cases, this is usually called environmental scanning or SWOT analysis. It involves the assessment of the strength and weaknesses of the organisation, its opportunities and threats in relation to its environment. For the long-range planning, organisations go through a rigorous scanning process of their internal and external environment so that they develop a comprehensive understanding of it. It is after an intelligent and all-encompassing scan of the environment that the organisation can realistically determine its strategic goals and objectives.

Apart from dealing with employment, growth, price levels, inflation, foreign exchange rate, interest rates, forecasting also deals with social aspects such demographic characteristics, education and health, age groups, life expectancy and urbanization rate. Technological forecasting deals with

implications of changes in technology on organisational processes, products, services, market standing and human resources.

Determination of Objective

The second step in planning is the determination of corporate objectives and their breakdown into divisional, departmental, sectional and sub-sectional objectives. These objectives are long-range as well as short-range. Thus, objectives have to be defined clearly for different divisions or sections as well as for different time dimensions.

Determining means

Planned objectives cannot be achieved without the means for achieving them. Apart from resources which are instrumental in the attainment of planned objectives, strategies, policies, procedures, rules, methods, standards, budgets, programmes and projects are means for achieving planned objectives. These have to be determined during the planning process.

Determination of requirement of resources

This involves an estimate of the required and available financial, material and human resources for the implementation of plans. Resource planning can cover financial planning, equipment and facilities planning, materials and supplies planning and human resource planning. It also includes plans for the generation of additional resources internally and externally. As noted in chapter 2, organisations use resources such as human, material, machinery, finance, information among others to perform various activities. Without financial resources, it is not possible to purchase the necessary equipment and raw materials and even pay the human resources needed to implement various aspects of the plan. Even at governmental level, budgeting becomes crucial for the achievement of national development plans which are an amalgamation of departmental and ministerial plans. To derive an overall indicative budget, each section will have to identify what resources they will need and how much it will cost. Means of generating these resources need to be determined as well.

Implementation of Plans

Plans need to be implemented if the objectives which were set are to be achieved and enjoyed by everyone. No matter how beautiful the plans, if they

are not implemented, they remain useless documents and a waste of time and energy. It is common-place mostly in huge bureaucracies, like in government, that highly celebrated plans which are beautifully bound in expensive paper have gathered dust in the office shelf without any prospect of ever being implemented. Whilst there are various factors that influence the non-implementation of plans, one of them is lack of planning for implementing those plans. In his 2008-9 budget speech in the Botswana Parliament on 5 February 2008, the Minister of Finance expressed dismay at the number of projects which were not implemented in the previous year. One of the reasons he gave was lack of capacity. If implementation as an ingredient of an effective plan in fact planned for as part of the entire planning process, these capacity problems could have been foreseen and action taken on them. Certainly, a good number of projects could have been implemented.

According to Argawal (1982) several issues need to be considered to ensure effective implementation of plans. Communication, participation, review and adjustment of organisation structure and provision of required resources. Also, assignment of responsibility and delegation of authority, motivating the employees, measurement of performance and adjustment in plans and leadership for implementation. Implementation of any plan will entail a lot of communication between various sections of the organisation. There will also be lots contacts between people within and outside organisations outside. What and how to communicate needs to be planned to avoid crisis management. Who will participate and how do they participate are important issues to plan.

Certain plans require a good review of the organisation structure or creation of a totally new one if they have to be implemented well. Proper assignment of duties and responsibilities are crucial for successful implementation of plans. These will certainly be based on the competencies or capacities of individuals or sections. It is important that these be considerate at the very beginning.

Resources, as noted before, are critical for the successful implementation of plans. Ways of securing these resources and how they will be provided is crucial for the achievement of planned goals. Prior thought on these areas is very important.

Employees are crucial in the achievement of planned goals. They need to be motivated to willingly contribute to the achievement of those goals. Otherwise if they are disgruntled, they may sabotage the achievement of planned goals. Ways of motivating people need to be identified. Again, ways of measuring the performance of individuals and groups in the process of implementing the plans need to be identified and planned too. It is only by being able to measure performance that we can ascertain the extent of plan achievement and even take corrective action.

As noted earlier, provisions for change in plans in response to

unanticipated events have to be built into the plan from the very beginning. It is necessary to have a contingency plan of action in case of unwelcome scenarios emerging in the process of plan implementation. Finally, there is need to plan for the leadership of the plan. Who will lead the implementation process is a key question not to be postponed in the planning process. We need to think of key personnel who will champion the implementation process. Taskforce leaders need to be identified and even their training/orientation planned to ensure effective implementation of plans.

Advantages of Planning

Whether done informally or formally, planning will always be advantageous for many reasons. First, planning provides for cooperative and coordinated efforts. Organisations as social groupings entail the enactment of various activities by individuals and groups to achieve organisational goals. These activities are linked in one way or the other. They are not random. Against this background then, it is only when people engage in planning that all sections of the organisation as well individuals come to understand what it is that the organisation wants to pursue. That in turn creates an opportunity for management to apportion or allocate certain aspects of the plan to sections or divisions. It is the participation of these individuals or sections that requires a coordinated plan of action. Everyone knows where the organisation wants to go and why.

The second advantage is that planning reduces the need for crisis management. Because we are aware of what we want to do when and how and with what resources, it becomes easier to anticipate events. By thinking in advance where we want to go, and what we shall need to implement plans, we are never taken unawares in the process of running our organisation. Forewarned means forearmed. The planning process, if done properly, gives the actors an opportunity to cater for unexpected occurrences.

Thirdly, planning enables the organisation to capitalise on opportunities and face challenges. By scanning the opportunities and threats within the environment, an organisation can move swiftly to take advantage of the opportunities than if the organisation did not anticipate. By capitalising on hindsight, organisations engaged in planning are able to develop strategies that will turn some of the threats into opportunities and therefore wade off any disaster. Thus, planning reduces uncertainties in the midst of unpredictable environments.

Planning promotes effective and efficient use of resources. By planning carefully, we can avoid unnecessary wastage of resources, delays and duplication of efforts. It is easy to coordinate efforts and do things at the time with the right resources and in the right manner. Planning is also known

to provide a basis for making decisions on other things. For example, decisions to do with recruitment, promotion, transfer, purchase of equipment and budgeting might stem from an attempt to implement what was planned. That is why, as emphasized before, planning is the basis for the performance of other managerial functions like organising, staffing and directing and so on.

Planning does facilitate timely execution of complex programmes. The construction of an international airport in a busy city is a mammoth undertaking. However, with proper planning, such an assignment can be accomplished within a reasonable period of time than if there was no plan to it.

Finally planning releases forces for creativity and innovation. As people forecast, scan, analyse and think hard, forces of creativity are released. Imagination and ingenuity breed high levels of innovation and novel strategies can emerge as people brainstorm and share ideas.

Limitations of planning

While planning guarantees success in the achievement of organisational goals, there are some limitations to be noted. These relate to uncertainties of the future, premium on the present, past decisions, administrative problems, externally imposed conditions, human problems, rapid change, expense and time (Agarwal, 1982). By nature no one knows about the future. Planning is based on other factors being equal- as economists would say. However, the real world is uncertain. Many factors might come into play and derail plans. For example the demand for a particular commodity might suddenly change after the company has invested in heavy machinery in the product line.

For example in the mid-1980s, plastic shoes became fashionable among women in Malawi. They were in different colours. One would rarely see leather shoes on important occasions like weddings. The company that manufactured those shoes expanded by opening new branches in different parts of the country. Suddenly women's taste changed and plastic shoes were no longer in fashion. Thus, both today and tomorrow presents us with many challenges. However, there is a tendency among people to pay more attention to today's problem because they are seen as real and urgent. Tomorrow is viewed as having problems which are not known. Because of this tendency, people tend to ignore the future. Many of us do not want to be bothered thinking about next year. The result of this is low inclination towards planning.

The third limitation, past decisions is also a challenge. While planning involves thinking and dreaming about a bright and novel future for organisations, managers are constrained by what was decided in the past. Long- term investment in a certain line of service say transportation might

pose as a constraint when it comes to thinking of a different direction altogether even in the wake of changed technology. Even in the public sector, an arrangement or decision that a previous government made with a particular donor organisation will commit a new government to that arrangement for the foreseeable future. That is why policy making in government is mostly incremental because policymakers build on existing policies (Dye, 2005).

Administrative problems can be a limitation too. As planning involves thinking about the future and making informed judgment on what path the organisation shall take, the process is not as smooth. It involves influencing many other people within the organisation who might be uncommitted and interested to dream in the same way. It involves effective communication, negotiation, coordination and motivation which managers are not comfortable with. These are not easy and straight forward matters because they involve human beings whose behaviour is in most cases unpredictable. Things may go wrong administratively as managers try to marshal resources and human effort into the planning process.

Externally imposed conditions are also a limitation to the planning process. Managers in organisations are not free to turn things around anyhow as they please. There are trade unions, taxation policies, rules and regulations, foreign exchange and employment laws which might act as restraints to a certain extent. For example, a trade union can decide to reject a new method of staff performance evaluation and therefore act as a challenge to any move or departure from the present. Board of directors or shareholders of a private company might reject plans to merge or sell a company. Rapid change in technology and other facets within the environment might limit the planning process. This is related to shift in consumer taste which the shoe making company in the 1980s, as discussed above, faced. Some industries are prone to technological change such that what has been planned this year might suddenly be obsolete before implementation is done.

Human problems which relate to resistance to change can be another form of limitation to the realisation of plans. Many people are scared to go into the unknown. 'Better the devil you know than the angel you do not know' goes the saying. New plans might disrupt the existing equilibrium of relationships, group dynamics and comfort. It might demand new skills and knowledge which are difficult to obtain. Because of that, people might be deliberately uncooperative and would even want to sabotage the plans at an earliest stage possible.

Planning requires a great deal of expertise, time and money. Some organisations hire specialists to facilitate the process of planning. In Malawi for example, most of the strategic planning process takes place along Lake Malawi Holiday Resorts which involves paying for accommodation, food, and

other expenses besides paying for consultants. Others invite various stakeholders making the whole exercise very expensive. Consequently, some organisations cannot afford to undertake very sophisticated planning. And if that cannot be done, then some of the benefits of planning are lost.

Time is another limitation that managers face in organisations. Comprehensive and long-range planning takes a lot of time to accomplish. Preliminary consultations, market research, stakeholders' consultation, data analysis and preliminary draft, and many other related activities, can be time consuming. All these might scare top managers from pursuing a more comprehensive approach to the planning exercise.

However, although there are limitations in planning, it is true to say that knowledge of these limiting forces will enable a manager to approach planning with wisdom. Organisations that engage in planning have higher chances of success in achieving their goals than those that do not plan at all.

Application of Planning to the African Environment

Planning has a long history which can be traced as far back as the time of Africa's independence in the 1960s. National development plans which represented long-range planning became symbols of independence and a campaign tool for Africa political elite to convince their constituents that they are going to achieve more development. These national plans were also a requirement for donor funding. A country could not ask for international financial assistance without a document showing what it intend to do, when and how. Most of the plans were long term covering a period of 10 years. Within that period there were 3 years rolling plans which were translated into annual planning periods. Although there were disappointments in other countries with national development planning due to other factors, national development planning remains a crucial feature of modern governments.

There are ministries of economic planning and development in most countries in Africa which are responsible for the overall coordination of national development policies and programmes. This demonstrates the prominence of planning at national, regional, district and sub-district level.

Over the past few years, strategic planning in ministries, parastatal bodies, private and NGO sectors has become very fashionable. We have suddenly witnessed a revolution in planning. Ministries and government departments have developed visions, missions, values and strategic goals. They have also operationalised how these goals are to be achieved through clarifying key performance areas, indicators, objectives and timelines. These follow national visions like 2020 for Malawi and Zambia and 2016 for

Botswana.

Base on the national vision 2016, the University of Botswana like other universities in Africa has developed its strategic plan which details its vision, mission values and strategic goals. Each faculty has translated some of the strategic goals into their departmental goals and objectives. In turn departments under each faculty have also developed strategic plans for the department in order to translate faculty plan into reality. At individual level, academic staff members develop annual key performance areas, indicators, objectives and targets to implement departmental goals.

Summary

This chapter has examined one of the crucial managerial functions- planning. It has discussed the concept, importance and types of planning. Steps that are followed in the process of planning are also examined. It has also looked at the advantages of planning as well as its limitations. It has also pointed that there has been a lot of experience in Africa with regards to planning since independence in the 1960s.

Review Questions

- 1) What is planning?
- 2) What steps would you follow in planning for an induction course for new staff?
- 3) What should a manager do in order to ensure effective implementation of plans?
- 4) Discuss the limitations of planning. Is there any justification for planning against these limitations?
- 5) How relevant is planning to African contexts?

Research Activity

Choose two organisations for study. Find out the nature and extent of planning in each organisation. Outline the benefits and problems each organisation experiences in the formulation and implementation of plans. Compare and contrast the two experiences and draw your conclusion regarding planning in the two organisations.

8

Organising

Introduction

This chapter examines the nature of organising process by looking at objectives, importance of objectives, and management by objectives and organisation structures meant to achieve the objectives of the organisation as planned during the planning process.

Organisational strategic goals and plans cannot be implemented unless there is a deliberate effort of organising for the implementation process. As emphasized in the above chapters, organisations are tools for the achievement of common objectives through cooperative effort. There is need for management to create suitable structural relationships conducive to the achievement of organisational goals. It is important to understand that the nature of the structure that emerges depends on the objectives to be achieved. A university that wants to be an academic centre of excellence in teaching, research and consultancy will be structured in such a way that these core areas occupy prominent positions on the organisational structure. The process of organising is influenced by the nature of objectives set, which in turn is influenced by the vision and mission the organisation wishes to realise.

Nature of Objectives

Objectives are broad statements of future managerial intentions. They define the values, which an organisation seeks to attain in the future. The type of objectives pursued by organisations will depend on the nature of the organisation itself. For example, business, public and non- governmental organisations will pursue different objectives. Even within non-governmental or public service organisation, different organisations or ministries will pursue different objectives. The objectives of business organisations generally are survival, growth, profit, efficiency, productivity, innovation, employee development and social responsibility.

The multiplicity of objectives within an organisation is a source conflict in terms of priority and resource allocation. There is need to prioritize these

objectives otherwise the organisation will lose its major purpose. An academic institution which allocates all resources in research might do so at the expense of teaching and other activities. Various objectives need balancing because they are not all of equal importance. They are sometimes competing and conflicting.

Mission, Objectives and Goals

Purpose refers to the basic intentions underlying the establishment of an organisation. To provide an effective transport service to our customers can be cited as an example of a purpose. It becomes a mission when associated with some ideology and psychological commitment. To be an a dynamic leader in the transport industry in the region and beyond, is close to a mission. Objectives are more specific than purpose and have a time dimension. To make three coach trips from Blantyre to Johannesburg a week, can be an example of a specific objective of a transport company. Goals are broader than objectives and in effect we can say that objectives grow out of goals. They constitute elements of goals. For example, a transport company requiring to be a leader in the transport industry might develop several goals to achieve its mission as follows:

1. Acquire modern coaches
2. Recruit and train drivers
3. Establish links with other stakeholders
4. Advertise widely

As can be seen from the above examples, organisations are characterized by multiplicity of goals and objectives. At a university, for example, these may relate to teaching, research, service to community, quality improvement, expansion of academic programme, infrastructure development etc. In a private company, goals might relate to production, marketing, human resource management and development, research and development, finance and administration etc. These in turn shape the creation of departments, divisions and sections. Objectives are therefore set in all the vital areas of organisational functioning.

It is also important to note that objectives for the company or a government ministry are in a hierarchy. They are broken down into divisional, departmental, sectional and sub-sectional and later individual objectives. Thus organisational strategic goals are translated by departments into departmental goals and objectives. These in turn form the basis for individual goals and objectives. While at the top of the organisational hierarchy the goals might be broad and vague, as they descend down stairs to lower levels of the organisation, they become clearer and specific.

From the above analysis, we can further see that organisational objectives can be divided into long-range and short. Long-range objectives refer to a more distant future objective ranging between 5 to 10 years. An objective like 'to improve the living standards of the Malawi citizenry' is a long range objective. Short-range objectives refer to annual objectives and these are used to operationalise the long range objectives. Examples of short-range objective emerging from the long range objectives are:

1. to provide free farm in-put to poor households
2. to train additional extension staff
3. to intensify civic education to the poor farmers on good crop husbandry practices

Due to the dynamic nature of the environment within which organisations function, it follows naturally that their objectives be continually reviewed and adjusted in response to those changes. Otherwise an organisation cannot realise its vision and mission.

Stated Objectives and Actual Objectives

Another approach for analyzing organisational objectives by looking at what has been stated and what is actually being done. Stated objectives are those printed and pasted on the wall or in the handbooks and strategic plans of the organisation. Actual objectives are those one sees being pursued in practice. Sometimes stated objectives tend to differ from those actually pursued by various managers. This might happen when managers perceive that the stated objectives do not go well with their personal objectives or values. At times material circumstances facing the organisation might force it to pursue a different line of action which is different from what was stated.

Importance of Objectives

There is a saying that, if you do not know where you are going then any road can take you there. One of the features of modern organisation discussed in chapter two is specificity of purpose. Objectives are important for a number of pertinent reasons:

Basis for the performance of managerial functions

It is through the direction an organisation has chosen to go that the basis for

planning for its achievement becomes clear. For example, once an organisation like a training institution wants to diversify its product line to include consulting and research, the need to plan for these two activities, clarifying objectives, developing strategies, targets and standards are ignited. Organising comes in through setting departments, procedures and acquiring materials and equipment. Staffing comes in also as researchers have to be hired or existing staff trained and deployed to undertake new assignments. All others like directing, coordinating, controlling, reporting or budgeting for research and consultancy are triggered as well.

Identity role for the enterprise

An organisational objective has an important role of distinguishing one from the other. An academic institution which takes as its objective, to produce high and middle level human resources for the public, private and non governmental organisation, will have a different image in the minds of people from that which says 'to alleviate rural poverty through empowering women in income generation'. The nature of the objective tend to provide a pointer towards the type of target group or customers, the resources that might be used, the location of the organisation, the type and qualifications of people to work therein, among other things.

Provide direction

Objectives of an organisation tend to show the direction in which the organisation is going. Once we know where we are going, it is easy to know how best to reach there. What resources are required, what pace and behaviour is required generally what philosophy should govern our behaviour.

Basis for Evaluation

Objectives serve as the basis for the evaluation of the organisation. It is through realizing what the organisation intended to achieve from the very beginning that efforts at evaluating it become more focused and objective. That is why management by objectives, to be highlighted, below becomes an invaluable approach the systematic planning, monitoring and evaluation of worker performance.

Basis for Control

It is by knowing what we are interested in achieving that we are able to detect deviations. This is possible because we know the standards we had set to achieve and we can compare them with actual achievement or operation. It is therefore possible to identify deviations and take corrective measures without further delay.

Management by Objectives (MBO)

Management by Objectives is a process of managing performance by focusing on the accomplishment of well-defined objectives rather than on tasks and activities. It is based on the premises of self-direction and self-control. It provides scope to the individual to use his ingenuity, skills, innovativeness and creativity. It is also conducive to enhancing employee involvement and commitment in the planning, implantation and evaluation of their activities at work.

The MBO Process

Objectives such as survival, profit and social responsibility are determined within the framework of organisational Vision, mission and strategic goals. This occurs after scanning present and potential resources and the environment in which the organisation find itself. This is popularly known as SWOT analysis (analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Strategies, policies, procedures and budgets are established for the achievement of objectives. Managerial decisions are made on the basis of strategies, policies, budgets and plans. Results from the implementation of decisions are evaluated against the objectives and corrective action is taken to remove the discrepancy between the two.

Bottom-up and Top-down Objectives

Objectives are first tentatively set for the enterprise as a whole. All managers then set tentative objectives for their units and sub-units within the framework of enterprise objectives. These unit and sub-unit objectives are reviewed, and enterprise objectives are finally determined in its light. Unit and sub-unit objectives are then finally set within their framework.

Guidelines for Setting Objectives

1. objectives should be precise and verifiable
2. one objective should relate only to one key variable
3. objectives should be distinguished from strategies, policies and methods
4. objectives should constitute a complete set
5. they should relate to all significant areas of performance
6. unit and sub-unit goals should contribute to enterprise objectives
7. objectives should be realistic and attainable

Organisation Structures

The managerial function of organising leads to the creation of organisation structures. A big committee entrusted with organising a wedding ceremony will further create sub-committees to be responsible for certain aspects of the wedding ceremony. These might include protocol, decorations, transport, hospitality etc. For an organisation to achieve its plans, the very division of labour principle will dictate that sub-structures to carry out certain aspects or activities which contribute to the overall achievement of the organisation. An organisation can adopt any or a combination of the following forms of structures:

1. line structure
2. line and staff structure
3. functional structure
4. committee structure
5. project structure
6. matrix structure

Line Structure

In an organisation where line structure is the mode of organising, authority is distributed vertically. In a manufacturing organisation there are only line departments like production, sales and finance.

The advantages of line structure are:

- i) it is characterized by simplicity and clarity
- ii) chain of command ties the whole organisation in a coordinated and unified whole
- iii) it can function with speed

iv) it is consistent with the principle of unity of command.

Disadvantages

Its disadvantages lie in the absence of staff specialists to advise, guide and support line managers.

Line and Staff Organisation

Staff units such as human resources, quality control, information services, etc. are established to provide specialized advice, guidance and support to line managers.

Advantages

The staff experts help line managers in the efficient performance of their functions by providing them support in the form of advice and services.

Disadvantages

- (i) It complicates the problems of coordination, control and communication;
- (ii) staff specialists often infringe the unity of command; and
- (iii) line staff relationships are often characterized by conflict.

Functional Structure

When a staff unit exercises command authority over specific matters relating to some aspect of line functions, it creates a functional structure. A functional structure is also created when the corporate executives exercise functional control over their respective counterparts in the semi-autonomous divisions of the company. Functional structure makes possible the adoption and implementation of uniform systems and procedures throughout the company.

Committee Structure

Committee structures can also be adopted for a particular organisation primarily on the basis of the objectives to be pursued. The purpose of

committees is to make decisions or recommendations on problems requiring integration of knowledge, information, abilities and interests.

Advantages

- (i) pools information, abilities and interests for the formulation of policies, plans and strategies
- (ii) deals with complex problems
- (iii) reduces bias and conflict
- (iv) improves interpersonal relations
- (v) democratizes the decision process
- (vi) gains commitment to implement decisions
- (vii) pools abilities, information and judgment
- (viii) acts as a coordinating mechanism

Disadvantages

Its major disadvantages are that:

- (i) its decisions are least denominators of its members;
- (ii) it creates conflicts among members;
- (iii) causes diversions from main problems;
- (iv) acts as a device for shifting responsibility and postponing decisions; and
- (v) splits accountability

Conditions for Effective Functioning of Committees

According to Agarwal, there are several conditions that would ensure effective functioning of committees which are:

1. number of members should be small
2. members should be conversant with its structure and processes
3. it should deal with specific problems
4. members should be committed to task accomplishment
5. members should be trained in group processes and interpersonal skills
6. members should not be related in superior subordinate relationship and should be homogenous in personality characteristics- easily said than done
7. the committee chairman should possess leadership qualities of a very high order
8. the agenda for discussion should be communicated to members in advance

9. support should be forthcoming from executives who are responsible for implementing committee decisions
10. members should take time to develop healthy interpersonal relationships
11. committees for problem solving should be differentiated from committees used for developing managerial abilities

Project Structure

This emerges from the horizontal grouping of a number of functions for creating teams to handle specific tasks and achieve specific goals. It is flexible and responsive to innovative ideas. It is specially suited where unique solutions are needed to cope with changing environments. Its major handicap is that it often creates a situation of conflict of authority between the project manager and corporate functional heads. Project managers have also been found to entertain considerable anxiety about their career progress.

Matrix Structure

In matrix structures authority flows vertically within functional departments while authority of project managers flows horizontally crossing vertical lines. This two-way flow of authority creates a grid or matrix of authority flows. It emphasizes a lot of interdependence among various functions, horizontal relationships and operational flexibility. This makes it more adaptable to crisis and change. It should be emphasized that most companies and organisations use a combination of two or more structures.

Summary

In this chapter we have examined the importance and nature of one of the central functions or processes of management- organising. Our focus has been on the nature of the concept of organising, objectives, management by objectives and the types of structures that emerge as a result of organising. There is no best structure of organising as each will depend on the nature of the organisation and what its strategic goals are. But what is clear is that most organisations use a combination of two or more structures.

Review Questions

1. 'Organising important to the achievement of business objectives'. Discuss.
2. What is management by objectives? Discuss the value of management by objectives to both the organisation and the individual?
3. Identify and discuss any three organisational structures.
4. What are the problems of the committee structure? Explain ways you would devise to improve the effective functioning of the committee structure.
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the following structures:
 - `Line
 - Line and staff
 - Committee

Research Activity

Visit three organisations, one in the business sector, another in the public sector and the third in a non governmental organisation. Find out the type of structures they have and the benefits and problems associated with the use of these structures in each of these organisations.

9

Staffing

Introduction

Recruitment needs to be seen as part of the organising function. Once plans are formulated and organisation structures are created, there is need to staff these structures with the right number and quality of people to do the work. More often than not, textbooks on management talk of managerial functions without talking something on recruitment, selection and placement as if the human resources that are led, directed, motivated or communicated to, are always there! This is understandable because this is covered in the human resource management literature. However, it is better to shade light to a student who does not take human resource management to understand that recruitment, selection and placement are natural processes of the staffing function of management? An organisation requires the right number and quality of people to perform various activities for the achievement of its goals and objectives. Recruitment is the first step in this direction. On the other hand, when the potential pool of candidates ready to fill the vacant positions has been attracted, the next step is to select the right candidates. Once appointed, one is placed in her appropriate place in the organisation.

It is important that we understand processes involved in the recruitment and selection of candidates in an organisational setting. This chapter examines the concept, sources, and methods of recruitment and how selection and placement are done.

Definition of recruitment

What do we mean by the term 'recruitment'? Although different authors may define it in different ways, we need to take it as the process of attracting applicants with certain skills, abilities and other personal characteristics to job vacancies in an organisation (Sarma, 2003; Armstrong, 2003). It is aimed at ensuring the development and maintenance of adequate manpower sources. Recruitment involves creating a pool of available human resources from which the organisation can draw when it needs additional employees. Thus, before one decides who to select and appoint for a position in an organisation, he needs to make the vacancy known to potential candidates

so that they can apply. This is done through advertisement in various media outlets such as newspapers, radio, TV or government gazette.

How Recruitment can arise

There are various situations which can prompt the need for recruitment. Some of them include vacancies created due to:

- Promotion
- Transfer
- Termination
- Retirement
- Permanent disability
- Death
- Business expansion
- Diversification
- Growth
- Merger.

Recruitment Policy

Each and every organisation has a recruitment policy which guides the manner in which the organisation will recruit and select candidates for employment. A recruitment policy in its broadest sense involves a commitment by the employer to find the best qualified persons for each job, retain the best and most promising of those hired, offer promising opportunities for life-time working career, and provide programmes and facilities for personal growth on the job.

It may embrace several issues such as extent of promotion within the organisation, attitudes of the organisation in recruiting its old employees, the physically challenged persons, minority groups, women employees, part-time employees, friends and relatives of present employees. It may also involve the organisation system that has to be developed for implementing recruitment programmes and procedures to be used. A good recruitment policy shall have the following elements:

1. Organisation's objective- both short-term and long-term
2. Identification of the recruitment needs
3. Preferred sources of recruitment
4. Criteria of selection and preference
5. The cost of recruitment and its financial implications

The Recruitment Process

To be successful, the recruitment process must follow a number of steps:

1. Defining the job- job description
2. Establishing the person profile- skills, knowledge and competences
3. Making the vacancy known through advertisement
4. Receiving and documenting applications
5. Short- listing qualified candidates
6. Selecting the best candidate through interviews or other means
7. Notification and final checks- other employers will first receive letter from referees before a final offer of employment is made
8. Inducting or socializing employees
9. Placement

Sources of human resources

There are two major sources of recruitment- internal and external. Internal sources include personnel already on the pay-roll i.e., its present working force. Whenever a vacancy occurs, somebody from within the organisation is upgraded, transferred, promoted or sometimes demoted. Promotions and transfers from among the present employees can be a good source of internal recruitment. An organisation's recruitment policy spells out whether internal recruitment shall be its first priority or not.

There are several advantages to the use of internal recruitment.

1. It improves the morale of employees. Promotional opportunities lead to reduced turn over, increased job satisfaction and better job performance
2. The employer is in a better position to evaluate those presently employed than outside candidates.
3. It promotes loyalty among employees as it gives them a sense of job security and opportunities for advancement
4. It is less expensive and job openings can be filled more quickly.
5. Internal candidates are more familiar with organisational policies and practices and thus requires less orientation and training

However, there are also disadvantages associated with internal recruitment:

1. It leads to the circulation of 'old' knowledge and experience within the organisation. In other words, the organisation is deprived of fresh and more qualified and experienced candidates from outside who would add value to the organization
2. It may lead to internal problems of squabbling, gossip and even hatred and accusation of corruption or favouritism since there is a pool of candidates within the organisation who feel they are more deserving than the one promoted
3. There is a tendency among the 'new' appointees to relax and continue functioning with 'business as usual' attitude because they are used to the work environment. They also know weaknesses and loopholes of the organisation's monitoring and supervisory styles
4. There might also be cases of resentment by more able officers who know the weakness of the one appointed. This has the potential to create morale and loyalty problems.

External sources are those outside the current pool of personnel in the organisation. They include employment agencies such as job centers, labour offices, employment bureau, educational and technical institutes such as universities, polytechnics and technical colleges. Casual labour, trade unions and unsolicited applications put on file and those who simply come to the human resource department, are among the external sources. External recruitment is limited primarily to entry level jobs as those above the entry level jobs are usually filled with current employees through promotions. However, it is also possible to recruit from external sources more especially for positions of chief executive and other senior managers into the organisation. Again, the policy of the organisation shall spell out under what circumstances the organisation will prefer external recruitment.

There are several advantages with external recruitment as follows:

1. External sources provide personnel with high level skills, qualifications and experience required by the organisation. This is so because candidates are recruited from a large market and therefore, the best selection can be made from a diverse population of applicants.
2. The organisation stands a better chance of gaining new ideas and experience from elsewhere without having spent money for training.
3. There is likelihood that new employees will be respected and welcome by those already employed without tension which brews when internal recruitment has been adopted. This is so because

the new appointee is not known to the employees in the organisation.

External recruitment has its own problems worthy pointing out.

1. It is expensive in terms of advertisement, traveling to institutions, replies to applications, interviews as well as refunding interviewees' traveling expenses
2. It takes a lot of time to orient new employees into the organisation and ensure that they understand the culture, vision and expectations of individuals, groups and the entire organization
3. If poorly selected, they can be a liability to the organisation since removing them might prove very costly. The adage 'Better the devil you know than the angel you do not know', may apply in this case.
4. There is greater danger of human relations problems being created by new employees who might not fit into the already existing group dynamics.

The advantage of knowing the strength and weakness of both internal and external recruitment is not to suggest that one is better than the other. Rather, to be careful and aware that each has merits and demerit so that a good decision can be made with all perspectives in mind. As the saying goes, 'forewarned means forearmed'.

Methods and Techniques of Recruitment

While recruitment sources indicate where human resources may be procured, the recruitment methods and techniques deal with how these sources should be tapped. There are both direct and indirect methods of recruitment.

Direct methods

Schools, colleges, management institutes and university departments are direct methods used mostly in co-operation with placement bureaus or educational institutes. The latter provide assistance in attracting students, arranging interviews and making available space for selecting candidates. The employing organisation has definitive advantages through campus recruitment. First, the cost is low; second, they arrange the interview at short

notice; third, they can meet the teaching faculty; fourth, it gives them an opportunity to 'sell' the organisation to large student community seeking employment. Other direct methods include sending recruiters to exhibit at job fairs, using mobile camps to visit shopping centres in rural areas and places where the unemployed may be contacted.

Indirect methods

The most frequently used indirect method or technique of recruitment is advertisement in publications such as newspapers, magazines, trade, technical and professional journals. The choice of media, place and timing of the advertisements determine the efficacy of advertisements. A good advertisement has to be specific, clear-cut, reader-friendly and appealing. Ambiguously worded and broad-based advertisements may generate a lot of irrelevant applications which would increase the cost of processing them. The advertisement should indicate information about the organisation and the job. Other methods of advertising involve use of television, the radio and notice-boards placed at company gates.

Third party method

These include public and private employment agencies doing recruitment and selection of suitable candidates on behalf of the organisation that has a vacancy. Public agencies like labour offices are largely concerned with factory workers and clerical jobs. In most public services in Africa, an independent body called the public service commission (civil service commission, local government service commission or judicial service commission) does the work of recruitment and selection for government departments and local authorities and judicial staff. They also provide help in recruiting professional employees. Private agencies provide consultancy service and charge a fee. They are usually specialized for different categories of operative, office workers, sales, supervisory and management personnel. Other third-party methods include the use of trade unions.

Internet Recruiting

The internet is playing a more important role in recruitment. It advertises and serves as a place to locate job applicants. Website can provide internet users with information on the type of work the company is involved in and the job opportunities that are available. Interested parties can respond by e-mail. This is quick and time- saving. It also reduces the amount of paperwork that

would normally be associated with written job applicants. Furthermore, the internet allows an organisation to reach a broader range of applicants than traditional methods. Internet recruiting is cheaper due to:

1. Reduced direct costs compared to newspaper advertisements, job fairs and headhunter fees
2. Reduced mailing costs
3. Reduced workload for the human resource department

The majority of companies involved in active internet recruiting believe that it helps them to attract better quality applicants, given that internet users tend to be better educated and obviously more computer literate than non-users.

Executive Search

The recruitment of senior executives is one of the most important tasks facing management. Executive search is a planned, systematic and persistent campaign designed to determine and evaluate candidate's proven ability with the experience, knowledge, specific skills and the personal qualities required. It requires detailed knowledge of the industrial, business and functional areas from which to select a group of potential candidates. When filling top-level positions, many organisations use management consulting firms that specialise in the recruitment of executive personnel. They find and screen candidates, check references and present the most qualified candidates. Hence, the choice of suitable executive recruitment firm is crucial. The advantages of using search firms are several. Consultants can operate tactfully and with discretion and avoid embarrassment to the client, company and candidates and without upsetting customer or competitive relationship.

Selection

Once a pool of candidates has been secured, the next task is to scrutinise the various characteristics of the applicants in relation to the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to perform the job well. The process of identifying a good match between the candidate and the job is what is usually called selection. Selection activities will begin with an initial screening interview and end up with the final employment decision. Usually, the selection process consists of several steps which may vary from one organisation to another and one job to another. Other organisations use the following steps:

1. Initial screening interview
2. Completion of the applications form
3. Employment tests
4. Comprehensive interview
5. Background investigation
6. Physical examination
7. Final employment decision

Every step in the selection process tries to expand the organisation's knowledge about the applicant's background, abilities and motivation. It also increases the information from which decision-makers will make their predictions and final choice. The interview seems to be the most relied upon method of selecting suitable candidates. Interviews can be done by a panel of interviewers or individuals. However, there is always a need to identify key factors the panel is looking for, like academic qualification, work experience, ability to communicate, competence and knowledge of the subject matter etc. The nature of the job and the needs of the organisation will determine what key features will be emphasised.

Selection Interviewing

Interviewing is a face to face conversation between an employer and a candidate seeking employment. It can also be done by telephone or video conferencing. It is conducted to obtain additional information and to clarify information gathered throughout the selection process. If an organisation chooses, interviews can be conducted at two levels: first the human resource department can hold an initial interview, and then latter, in-depth interviews using a panel. Here, other members in the human resource department and operating supervisors and line managers in other departments, where the individuals will work, are usually involved.

In both interviews, but particularly the in-depth interview, information from various sources is pulled together in order to identify conflicting information that may have emerged from tests, application forms and references. The interviewers obtain as much pertinent information as possible during the limited interview time and use it to evaluate the applicant against job standards and requirement.

Types of interviews

There are different types of interviews like structured, behavioural, non-directive and stress interviews.

Structured Interviews

A structured interview uses a set of standardised questions asked of all applicants. The interviewer asks every applicant the same basic questions, so that comparisons can be made easily among the applicants. This type of interview allows an interviewer to prepare job related questions in advance and then complete a standardised interviewee evaluation form that provides documentation indicating why one applicant was selected over the other. Sample questions that might be asked of all applicants for a retail sales clerk opening are as follows:

- I noticed on your application that you were previously employed withhow did you get a job there?
- Tell me about your responsibilities and duties with so and so company
- Describe the occasion you were frustrated as a customer because of the way the store clerk treated you. What do you think should have been done?

Behavioral Interview

More and more interviews are using an experience-based type of structured interview. In the behavioral interview applicants are asked to give specific examples of how they have performed a certain task or handled a problem in the past. The notion that past behaviors are good predictors of the future actions provides the logic behind behavioral interviews. Learning about how candidates describe their previous behaviors helps determine which applicant may be best suited for the job. For example, applicants might be asked the following questions:

- How did you handle a situation that had no rules or guidelines for employee discipline?
- Why did you choose that approach?
- How did your supervisors react?
- How was the situation finally resolved?
- If you had another chance to chair a meeting, what would you do differently?

Non-directive Interview

It uses questions that are developed from the answers to previous questions. The interviewer asks general questions designed to prompt the applicant to discuss herself or himself. The interviewer then picks up on an idea in the applicant's response to shape the next question. For example, if the applicant says, "one aspect that I enjoyed in my last job was my supervisor," the interviewer might ask: "what type of supervisors do you enjoy working with?"

As with any less structured interview, difficulties with a non-directive interview include keeping it job related and obtaining comparable data on various applicants. Many non-directive interviews are only semi organised; the result is that a combination of general and specific questions is asked of different applicants for the same job.

Stress Interview

It is designed to create anxiety and put pressure on the applicant to see how the person responds. In a stress interview, the interviewer assumes an extremely aggressive and insulting posture. Those who use this approach often justify its use with individuals who will encounter high degrees of stress on the job, such as a consumer-complaint clerk in a department store or an air traffic controller. However, this interview is a high risk approach for an employer. The typical candidate in an interview is by nature already stressed. Any deliberate attempt to use stress interview might compound an already existing stress. Other applicants will develop a negative image of the organisation based on the rough handling that they experienced. Consequently, there is greater danger that successful applicants might turn down the job offer once made.

Problems with interviews

Some common problems encountered are:

Snap judgments

Many interviewers make a decision on a job suitability of applicants within the first two to four minutes of the interview and spend the the remaining time looking for evidence to support it. This impression may be based on a review on the individual's application blank or on more subjective factors such as dress or appearance. Ideally, the interviewer should collect all the information possible on an applicant before making a judgment.

Halo Effect

Interviewers should try to avoid halo effect, which occurs when an interviewer

allows a prominent characteristic to overshadow evidence. The halo effect is present if an interviewer lets a candidate's accomplishments in athletics overshadow the characteristics which lead the interviewer to hire an applicant because athletes make good sales people. Devils horn (a halo effect in reverse), such as inappropriate dress or a low grade point average, may affect an interviewer as well.

Biases and Stereotyping

It should be avoided in interviews. The similarity bias occurs because interviewers tend to favour or select people they perceive to be similar to them. This similarity can be with respect to age, race, sex, previous work experiences, personal background, or other factors.

Placement of Personnel

After an employee has been appointed, he is normally oriented or socialized before being appropriately placed in his or her right job. It is also possible in large organisations like the public service to place an officer before a formal induction programme. For example, the Staff Development Institute at Mpemba in Malawi, has in the past inducted clerical officers who have worked for ten to fifteen years.

Placement is understood as the allocation of people to jobs. Assignment of a new employee to a job appears to be a simple task though complex. Individuals do not work in isolation. They work with groups or teams. They have to understand the tools and equipment to be used and team members to work with. While other jobs are independent (postal serviceman, sales man), others are sequential (assembly line workers). Others are pooled (task forces, project teams). As the new employee work, he or she will gain more skills and knowledge which might enhance his or her performance. High performance might lead to promotion. If performance is consistently poor, an employee can be demoted. Good or bad performance might also call for transfer to other departments or divisions of the organisation. In the course of time, an employee can decide to terminate his or her employment. On the other hand, the employer can terminate the employment of an employee depending on circumstances. Procedures for termination of appointment are always contained in the conditions of service.

Summary

This chapter has examined the staffing function of management as an extension of the organising function. It has looked at the recruitment and selection process as an attempt to bring the right type of people and in the right quantities required to achieve planned goals of the organisation. Sources and techniques of recruitment and selection have been discussed. Issues of placement, promotion and demotion have been touched too.

Review Question

1. Define recruitment and selection
2. Why is recruitment and selection important for an organisation?
3. Why is internal recruitment a blessing as well as a curse?
4. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of external recruitment.
5. What are direct and indirect recruitment methods? Illustrate your answer
6. Discuss the merits and demerits of internet recruitment.
7. How would you handle a selection interview for the position of human resource officer?

Research Activity

Visit three organisations in the public, private and NGO sector. Find out their recruitment sources and selection methods. Are there similarities and differences? Why or why not?

Performance Appraisal and Performance Management System

Introduction

Once an individual is recruited and later inducted into the organisation, he or she is placed into their proper section where he/she will do the work. The work of the individual employees needs to be evaluated to find out how far the individual is performing according to the expectation of the organisation. One of the ways of finding out information on the performance of individuals in their jobs is through a performance appraisal. This chapter will look at performance appraisal, benefits of appraisals, approaches and types of performance appraisal. It later examines performance management system (PMS) as a further improvement on performance appraisal. The chapter looks at approaches to PMS, benefits, challenges and key lessons for organisations intending to successfully introduce and implement PMS.

Definition of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a systematic evaluation of present and potential capabilities of employees by their superiors or professionals from outside the organisation. It is a process of estimating and judging the value, excellent qualities or status of a person or thing. It is a process of collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data to relative job behavior and results attained by individuals.

Objectives of Performance Appraisal

It is important to realise that performance appraisal is conducted in order to:

1. Help employees overcome their weakness and improve their strengths so as to enable them to achieve the desired performance
2. Generate adequate feedback and guidance from the immediate superior to an employee working under him or her
3. Contribute to the growth and development of an employee through helping him in realistic goal setting

4. Provide inputs to systems of rewards (comprising salary increment, transfers, promotions, demotions and terminations) and salary administration
5. Help in creating desirable culture and traditions in the organization
6. Help the organisation to identify employees for the purpose of motivating, training, and developing them
7. Generate significant, relevant, free, and valid information about employees.

The use of Performance Appraisal Information

While one can speculate about the numerous uses of performance appraisal information, we need to appreciate that the results of the appraisal exercise are normally used to:

1. Estimate the effectiveness of employees in performing their jobs
2. Identify job weaknesses and strengths in job knowledge and skills
3. Determine whether a subordinate's responsibilities can be expanded
4. Identify further training and development needs
5. Review progress towards goals and objectives
6. Determine readiness for promotion
7. Motivate and guide growth and development.
8. Determine promotions or transfers depending on the demonstration of employee strengths and weakness
9. Determine needs and evaluation techniques by identifying areas of weaknesses.
10. Promote effective communication within the organisation though the interchange of dialogue between superiors and subordinates.
11. Motivate employees by showing them where they stand, and establishing a data bank on appraisal for rendering assistance in personnel decision

Approaches to Performance Appraisal

Approaches to appraisal can be based on personality, general description, behaviour description and result description. We shall look at each one of them briefly.

Personality-based systems. In such a system the appraisal form consists of a list of personality traits that presumably are significant in the jobs of individuals being appraised. Such traits as initiative, drive, intelligence, ingenuity creativity, loyalty and trustworthiness appear on most such lists.

Generalized descriptive system. Like personality-based systems, they only differ in the type of descriptive term used. Often they include qualities or actions of presumably good managers: “organises, plans, controls, motivates, delegates, communicates, makes things happen,” and so on. Such a system, like the personality-based system, might be useful.

Behavioral descriptive system. Such systems feature detailed job analysis and job descriptions, including specific statements of the actual behaviors required from successful employees.

Result centered systems. These appraisal systems are directly job related. They require that manager and subordinates sit down at the start of each work evaluation period and determine the work to be done in all areas of responsibility and function, and the specific standards of performance to be used in each area.

Types of Performance Appraisal

There are two types of performance appraisal systems which are commonly used in an organisation. These are (1) close end and (2) open end appraisal system. The closed end system is where the supervisor does not provide feedback about the performance of the subordinate. This raises important questions about the value of the appraisal to the individual and the organisation. It does not pay to appraise an individual but withhold information on how they have performed. On the other hand, open appraisal is where both the supervisor and subordinate discuss the quality of performance of the subordinate. In this type, the subordinate is able to know his/her strong areas as well as weak areas which need to be improved. However, it is important also to look at both the open and closed systems of appraisal in terms of the evolution of appraisal systems with the closed reflecting the earliest system and open system reflecting recent improvements. We can therefore divide types of appraisal broadly into traditional and modern systems in terms of their approaches to rating.

Traditional Performance Rating

The traditional rating involves a completion of a form by the immediate supervisor of the individual who is being evaluated. The conventional rating scale form incorporates several factors, such as, job knowledge, judgment, organising ability, dependability, and creativity dealing with people, delegation and leadership. The rating is assigned by putting a tick or mark horizontally. Frequently, descriptive phrases are given to a form to guide the rater while evaluating the ratee. This method is very simple to understand and easy to apply. On the basis of ratings on specific factors, it is possible to identify areas in which the individual requires further development. The ratings on specific factors can be summed up to obtain a composite performance score.

Newer Rating Methods

Because of several inadequacies in the traditional rating scale as listed above, attempts have been made to devise new procedures. Among these include rank order, paired comparison, forced distribution, forced choice, critical incident and field review. We briefly explain these methods.

The rank order procedure

According to this procedure, each individual is assigned such ranks as first, second, third, and so on. If the evaluation process involves several traits, the ranking is made separately for each trait. Although this method is easy to understand and to apply, it becomes cumbersome and difficult when a large number of employees are evaluated in the organisation.

Paired- Comparison System

This is where each individual is compared with every other individual. The appraiser is required to put a tick against the name of the individual whom he considers better on the trait in question. The final ranking is determined by the number of times he is judged better than the other. This method becomes complicated when the number of individuals for evaluation is large.

The Forced Distribution Procedure

It is a form of comparative evaluation in which the evaluator rates subordinates according to a specific distribution. Here judgments are made on a relative basis i.e., a person is assessed relative to his performance in

the group he works. This procedure can be used for numerous traits if required by evaluating the individual separately on each trait. The forced distribution method is primarily used to eliminate rating errors such as leniency and central tendency

The Forced Choice Technique

It forces the rater to select from a series of several statements or traits, the one which best fits the individual and one which least fits, and each of these statements is assigned a score. Since the appraiser does not know the score value of statements, this method prevents the rater from deliberately checking the only favourable trait. Moreover, the appraiser is unable to introduce personal bias into the evaluating process because he does not know which of the statements is indicative of effective performance. This enhances the overall objectivity of this procedure. However, it is a costly and a difficult technique.

The Critical Incident Method

Under this procedure, attempts are made to devise a list of critical job requirements for each job. Superiors are trained to be on the look-out for critical incidents when their subordinates are working. The superiors enlist the incidents as they happen and in the process build up a record of each subordinate with debit on the minus side and on the credit on the plus side. The merit of the procedure is that all the evaluations are based on objective evidence instead of subjective ratings.

The Field Review

It is an appraisal by someone outside the employee's own department, usually someone from corporate office or from the employee's own personnel department. The field review process involves perusal of employee records and interviewing the employee. Interviews can sometimes be conducted with the employee's superior. Field reviews as an appraisal method is used primarily in making promotion decisions at managerial level. Field reviews are also useful when comparable information is needed from employees in the different units or locations.

Result Oriented Appraisal

The result oriented appraisal is based on the concrete performance targets which are usually established by superior and subordinates jointly. This procedure has been known as management by objectives which has the following characteristics:

1. The establishing of organisational goals
2. The setting of individual objectives in relation to organisational goals
3. A periodic review of performance as it relates to organisational goals
4. Effective goal-setting and planning by top management
5. Organisational commitment
6. Mutual goal-setting
7. Frequent individual performance reviews
8. Some freedom in developing meaning of achieving objectives.

Who Conducts Appraisals?

Performance appraisals can be conducted by anyone familiar with the performance of individual employees. Possibilities include the following:

1. Supervisors who rate their employees
2. Employees who rate their supervisors
3. Team members who rate each other
4. Outside source
5. Employees' self-appraisal
6. Multi-source (360 degrees feedback) appraisal

Supervisory Rating of Subordinates

Traditional rating of an employee by a supervisor is based on the assumption that the immediate supervisor is the person most qualified to evaluate the employee's performance in a realistic and fair manner. As a result, some supervisors keep performance logs noting their employees' accomplishments from time to time. These logs provide specific examples to use when rating performance.

Employee Rating of Managers

It is rare for employees or group members to rate the performance of supervisors and managers. Few organisations like colleges and universities, where students evaluate the performance of professors in the classroom do that. There are advantages to be realised when employees rate their managers. First, employee ratings can be quite useful in identifying competent managers. Second, this type of rating programme can help make the managers more responsive to employees, though this advantage can quickly become a disadvantage if the manager focuses on being 'nice' rather than managing. Finally, employee appraisals can contribute to career development efforts for managers.

Team/ Peer Ratings

The use of employee peers and team members as raters is another type of appraisal with potential both to help and to hurt. For example, when a group of sales people meets as a committee to talk about one another's ratings, they may share ideas that may be used to improve the performance of lower rated individuals. Alternatively, the criticisms could negatively affect future work relationships. Team and peer ratings are especially useful when supervisors do not have the opportunity to observe each employee's performance, but other work group members do.

Team Appraisal and Teamwork

Total Quality Management (TQM) and other participative management approaches emphasize teamwork and team performance rather than individual performance. Effectiveness results from many factors rather than just individual efforts. In this view, performance appraisals of individuals may hinder development of teamwork. But even if formal appraisals may seem inappropriate, informal appraisals by peers or team leaders still may occur at times in order to help those whose performance is deficient.

Team Rating Difficulties

Although team members have good information on one another's performance, they may not choose to share it. They may unfairly attack or go easy to spare feelings. Some organisations attempt to overcome such problems by using anonymous appraisals or having a consultant or manager interpret team/ peer ratings. However, some evidence indicates that using outsiders to facilitate the rating process does not necessarily result in perceptions of his system being seen as more fair by those being rated. Despite the problems, team/peer performance ratings are probably inevitable,

especially where work teams are used extensively.

Self Ratings

Self-appraisal works in certain situations. As a self development tool, it forces employees to think about their strengths and weaknesses and set goals for improvement. Employees working in isolation or possessing unique skills may be the only ones qualified to rate themselves. Still, employee self ratings can be a valuable and a credible source of performance information.

Outside Raters

Rating can also be done by outsiders who may be called in to conduct performance reviews. Examples include a review team evaluating a college president or a panel of division managers evaluating a persons potential for advancement in an organisation. However, outsiders may not know the important demands within the organisation. The customers or clients of an organisation are obvious sources for outside appraisals. For a salesperson and other service jobs, customers may provide very useful input on the performance behaviors of salespeople. One firm measures customer service satisfaction to determine bonuses for top marketing executives.

Multisource Rating/360 degrees Feedback

This recognizes that the manager is no longer the sole source of performance appraisal information. Instead, various colleagues and constituencies supply feedback about the employee to the manager to obtain input from a variety of sources-360 degrees- customers, subordinates, peers and a boss.

Problems with Performance Appraisal

The following are some of the problems associated with performance appraisal:

1. Recency- this is an error in which the rater gives greater weight to recent events when appraising an individual's performance
2. Central tendency error- rating all employees in a narrow range in the middle of the rating scale
3. Rater bias- occurs when the rater's values and prejudices distorts the rating
4. Halo effect- rating an individual high on all items because of performance in one area

5. Tendency to rate people relative to others rather than against the performance standards

Performance Management System

Issues on performance management and performance appraisal have not been the concern of private sector organisations only. Governments have also shown increasing interest in performance management and the need to develop appropriate performance management processes and measures since the 1980s. As organisations are human groupings constructed to achieve specific goals, their performance is a sum total of individual employees in the organisation. The need to measure their performance is critical because it is through that performance that organisations produce goods and services for sale or human use. The public sector in Botswana and indeed in many other countries in Africa, has since the 1990s embarked on a number of reforms including PMS to ensure effective service delivery.

Definition

According to Armstrong (2003), performance management is a strategic and integrated approach to delivering sustained success to organisations by improving the performance of the people working in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors. It is concerned with managing the organisation, all aspects of employee performance and development. It is also a mechanism for communication and involvement

Difference between Performance Appraisal and PMS

In the traditional government machinery the performance of individual employees was of little concern to management. One was paid for having filled a particular post, not because he or she was performing certain activities in a department or ministry. Appraisal was not concerned with the improvement of performance. This is so because individual employees were appraised confidentially. They did not know their weak areas and therefore had no opportunity to improve on their weaknesses. Another feature was that employees worked without any specific performance objectives or targets. Emphasis was on observing rules and regulations, respect for authority and obedience. Evaluation was based on what one has done during the year. In most cases, measurement focused on behavioral or personality characteristics like loyalty, dependability, punctuality, honesty, obedience and trustworthiness of individual employees. Departments or ministries did not

have departmental, ministerial or divisional strategic goals and objectives to guide the performance, monitoring and evaluation of individual activities.

Features of PMS

Performance management system is an effort to improve performance, efficiency, accountability and effectiveness of public sector organisations. It is based on the principle of management by agreement or contract rather than management by command. It emphasizes development and the initiation of self-managed learning process plans as well as the integration of individual and corporate objectives. It is a continuous and flexible process that involves managers and their subordinates within a framework that sets out how they can best work out to achieve the required results. Its focus is on the future performance planning and improvement rather than on retrospective performance appraisal. It provides the basis for regular and frequent dialogues among managers, subordinates and teams on performance and development needs (Armstrong, 2003). PMS relies on performance reviews to make decisions on performance-related pay, as well as individual and team development plans. It is also a process for measuring outputs in the form of delivered performance compared to expectations expressed as objectives, targets, standards and performances indicators. PMS links organisational vision, mission, values and strategic goals to divisional, departmental and individual goals, objective, tasks and targets (Hughes, 200; Armstrong, 2003).

Approach to the introduction and management of PMS

There are two levels at which PMS can be approached- macro and micro levels. That is, at the broad organisational level and at the operational departmental or divisional level. We shall examine both.

Macro-level

At the macro level there are five steps through which PMS can be approached. These are, scanning the internal and external environment of the organisation, planning and design of the system, implementation, mid term review and final review.

Step 1: Scanning the environment

Scanning the internal and external environment is the best starting point for

an effective performance management system It is necessary to conduct a thorough scanning of the organisation's internal and external environment to identify strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths- these relate to the internal capacities including material, human, and financial resources which the organisation has and are favourable to the introduction and implementation of PMS

Weaknesses- these are the opposite of the strengths. They relate to what the organisation does not have or falls short of. Weaknesses can be in the form of material, equipment, personnel and technology.

Opportunities- these are factors that an organisation would capitalise on because they are favourable to the introduction and implementation of PMS. This could be the general popularity of PMS as a new management technique, the growing dissatisfaction with performance appraisal within the country, government's favourable attitude towards PMS and also the introduction of PMS as a course in most local universities and training institutions.

Threats- relate to the outside environment. Threats can be associated with fears that the organisation has in relation to its external environment which in turn have the potential to derail the PMS process. Stiff competition in the sources of supplies, and rising costs of technology, equipment or fuel can be examples of threats.

The above are important because they have the potential to influence the success and failure of the implementation process of PMS. Having scanned both the internal and external environment, the organisation can proceed to develop a strategic plan with some degree of certainty in terms of what the scenarios are on the ground. The strategic plan will have a vision, mission statement, values and strategic goals. This strategic plan becomes the basis for departmental or divisional plans. The latter are also the basis for individual performance plans and objectives.

Step 2: Plan and design of PMS

With a strategic plan now developed, the planning and design of the PMS can be done. However, both in the strategic planning and the design and development of the PMS processes, organisational departments, sections and divisions need to be involved to ensure that there is a sense of ownership. Teams or working groups can be created to brainstorm and draft certain aspects discussed by a wider group. Other organisations would

involve consultants to develop detailed procedural manuals to be used to guide head and supervisors how to conduct PMS. At this stage, departmental or divisional plans should be developed in line with the overall organisational strategic plan.

Step 3: Implementation

With the strategic plan and goals for the organisation, divisions and sections in place, the implementation of the PMS can start.

Step 4: Mid-term Review of PMS

A pilot phase needs to be built in the design and implementation of PMS to ensure that any anomalies can be corrected before full implementation and institutionalisation of the PMS. Halfway in the implementation phase, there is need to get feedback from organisational members (employees) through discussions on their performance at individual, departmental and divisional meetings.

Step 5 Final Review and Rewards

This involves an assessment of what was planned by individuals in the form of key performance areas and objectives and what has actually been done. Scores are given and this forms the basis for the recommendation for performance rewards. This point will be elaborated later under micro level analysis

Micro- level.

By micro-level, we mean at the operational level in the department or section of the organisation.

There are six generic steps in the performance management system at the micro-level. These are the development of key performance areas, development of key performance indicators, development of objectives, performance agreement, observe and provide feedback, make recommendation for reward.

Develop key performance areas (KPA)

This provides the first step for both the performance agreement and the individual development plan processes. KPA's belong to the job and not to the incumbent (job-holder). They are defined as the main areas in which results must be obtained in order to realise the core purpose of the job. In the case of a lecturer, KPAs might be teaching, research and consultancy. KPA weights provide an indication of the relative importance of each KPA. The total of KPA weights shall normally be 100%.

Develop key performance indicators (KPI)

A KPI is a yardstick of performance in quantifiable terms. The individual employee and his supervisor formulate key performance indicators for each KPA. Formulating KPIs helps to develop measurable objectives.

Table 1. Translating KPAs to KPIs and Objectives

JOB	KPA	KPI	Objectives
Lecturer	1. Teaching	No of courses taught	To teach two courses per semester
	2. Research	Number of articles submitted for publication	To submit two refereed articles per year
	3. Service	Number of consultancies conducted	To undertake one consultancy per semester

Source: Adaptation from UB PMS Manual (2006)

Develop objectives

These are what the employee, say a lecturer, aims to achieve in specific terms. Objectives must be SMART:

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Attainable, the right balance between possible and challenging

R = Relevant, to the strategic goals

T – Time-bound

Performance agreement

This is an undertaking by the employee to achieve a set of objectives. The supervisor undertakes to reward performance and to support the employee. Support could be in the form of providing funds, specialist staff, arranging fewer lecture hours and providing training opportunities.

Observe and provide feedback

This could lead to a review of the individual performance record. Did he achieve what was planned for each of the objectives under each KPA?

Make recommendations regarding rewards

Those who perform highly might be rewarded accordingly- financial rewards, special recognition award and even promotion. When performance is less than acceptable, the individual would undergo some form of development like on-the-job or off-the-job training, attachments or study tour.

In general, PMS encourages employees to play an active role in setting objectives, monitoring their own progress and identifying reasons for outstanding or poor performance. It also help them to manage their scorecards and highlight achievements as well as identifying development needs and career aspirations for which they formulate action plans.

Benefits of PMS

There are various benefits than accrue to the organisation which has adopted a performance management system.

1. By developing a strategic plan, an organisation has vision, mission statement, values and goals which become the basis for departmental, divisional and sectional. They also are the basis for individual goals, objectives, key performance areas, key performance indicators and targets as well as annual performance plans.
2. Appraisal is based on planned achievements in the KPA during the year.
3. Provides basis for evaluating the achievement of departmental mission
4. Provides the basis for regular feedback sessions with supervisors and sectional heads
5. PMS is a tool to help management and staff plan, monitor, manage, measure and reward performance

Challenges

While PMS has major advantages to the organisation, individual employee and managers, there are challenges to be surmounted to ensure its successful implementation. These include staff resistance, phasing out, organisational factors, stakeholders' involvement, dilemma on unplanned activities and reward system

Resistance by staff- Resistance is one of the normal human responses to a change process. This is so because it is little understood or because it is going to shift people from their comfort zones to the unknown. This happens when staff is not involved at the very beginning.

Phasing out of PMS- Whilst there is absolutely no best time to handle each step, a more systematic approach to the introduction of the PMS can yield a lot of support and legitimacy from staff. If it is rushed, there is potential to raise suspicion and severe criticism from staff. Others might even sabotage the process if it is forced by top management.

Organisational factors- are critical for the implementation of PMS. In the case of a teaching institution staff discontent can emerge in matters relating to teaching equipment like over-head projectors, data projectors, loud speakers and microphones (for large lecture theatres) and the large numbers of students against small classroom space. Is the work environment conducive to the implementation of PMS?

Stakeholders' involvement- By involving stakeholders, the organisation will benefit a lot not only in terms of support for the implementation but also in identifying certain factors that needs to be put in place before implementation starts.

Dilemma for unplanned for activities- The introduction of PMS raises a big dilemma on how to handle unplanned activities during the life of the performance contract. How do we account for unplanned activities for which a staff member, say, a lecturer did not agree with his head of department? These would include, for example, students references, request for assistance to help with dissertation or other works from students in other departments. Does one say 'no' to these unplanned activities because they were not included in the performance agreement? In short, will the emphasis on documented tasks to be performed not lead to minimum performance by staff?

Reward system- The development of a comprehensive reward system to ensure that good performers are properly rewarded is a big challenge

especially in an institution which has over 1,000 employees most of whom would qualify for a cash reward. To what extent can an institution which is not selling products manage to offer rewards everyone at the end of the year? But if staff is of frustrated because they were not rewarded in spite of their outstanding performance, will the PMS be sustained?

Subordinate-superior evaluation is another important dimension. While superiors evaluate their subordinates at the end of the performance agreement period, subordinates do not do the same to their superiors. How do subordinate take PMS seriously when they feel they cannot evaluate the performance of their bosses?

Lessons

From the above challenges, we can put forward a few lessons for organisations wanting to introduce PMS.

1. There is need to involve stakeholders at the very beginning of the change initiative in order to take account of various concerns and needs. This is possible through a proper scanning of the environment through workshops with various stakeholders
2. Training is an important aspect that brings some understanding of what change is being introduced and how it will be managed. It is important to conduct a lot of workshops for team members, heads of departments and sections. If all members of the organisation are to appreciate the new change, a lot need to be done in the area of increased awareness, communication and briefing.
3. The role of information technology is crucial to the success of the PMS process. An organisation endowed with good computer facilities will easily communicate thick documents to everyone. Comments can be sent by individual by e-mail hence speeding up major processes
4. The need to take stock of the work environment has been mentioned as a critical success factor in the change management process. It is imperative that the work environment be carefully analysed and corrective action taken to handle inadequacies which might act as impediments to the envisaged change
5. Detailed guidelines are an important ingredient to a successful PMS change initiative. There is need for continuous guidance from the relevant authority entrusted with championing the system. PMS manual gives guidelines on the PMS process and the performance measurement for different types of groups within

the organisation- management, professional, support and daily paid staff.

6. Top management commitment is crucial to the successful implementation of PMS. Given the inevitability of staff resistance and potential sabotage among staff in the organisation, a high level commitment by executive management is crucial to the effective implementation of PMS. If top management is not committed and has not embraced the spirit of the change envisaged, it can easily be derailed by well argued and thought-out counter-arguments from staff.

Summary

This chapter has examined the importance of appraising the performance of every employee. It has explained the use of performance appraisal information such as training, rewarding employees, identifying potential among other things. There are different methods used to appraise the performance of individuals. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Appraisal can be done by managers or supervisors, subordinates, outsiders and individuals themselves. The chapter also looked at performance management system (PMS) as a more superior and newer approach to managing the performance of individual employees, departments and the whole organisation. It is argued that there is a lot of logic in its design and implementation since an organisational strategic plan is translated to divisional, departmental and individual plans. After all, organisational performance is achieved through the sum of individual performances in various departments and divisions put together. There are both benefits as well as challenges in the introduction and implementation of PMS. To introduce and implement a successful performance management system, it is recommended that stakeholders' involvement, training, taking stock of the work environment, detailed guidelines and top management commitment are important factors.

Review Questions

1. Explain the broad objectives of performance appraisal
2. How useful is performance appraisal information to an organisation?
3. Identify and discuss the approaches to performance appraisal.
4. Describe the steps to follow when introducing performance management system at macro and micro- levels.
5. What are the challenges to be confronted in introducing a performance management system in an organisation? How can they be handled?
6. To what extent would you argue that PMS is more superior to performance appraisal in managing performance in public, private and non governmental organisations?

Research Activity

Visit three organisations of your choice. One should be a private company, the other a public organisation and the third be a non-governmental organisation. Identify and compare the methods they use in measuring the performance of people in the organisation. To what extent would you say they are practicing PMS or performance appraisal?

Directing Controlling and Coordinating

Introduction

Directing the activities of employees brought to staff the structures of an organisation is related to the process of controlling their activities and ensuring that they are properly coordinated. That is why we shall examine these activities together. We shall start by analyzing some issues involved in directing and other related human relations problems. We then look at the concept of control and the process of managerial control. We shall then end the chapter with the function of coordinating.

Directing

Directing can be seen as a watching over function of management which involves ensuring that workers are doing what they were assigned to be doing at the right time and in the right manner. It is the process of integrating the people with the organisation so as to achieve their cooperation for the achievement of its goals. Both the individual as well as the organisation have their respective needs and goals, which they seek to achieve through one another. Thus, the individual is able to meet his needs for pay, social interaction, esteem and self-actualisation while meeting the needs of the organisation for survival, growth, higher productivity and profits.

A fusion process takes place as a result of interaction of organisational and individual goals. Without a careful watching over activity, there will be a problem of balance between the needs of the individual and those of the organisation because the directing process affects the extent of integration between the two. The managerial strategy of directing is based on the assumptions of the nature of man whom Schein classified as:

- (i) rational economic man
- (ii) social man
- (iii) self-actualizing man, and concludes that man, in fact, is complex and variable. He suggests that a manager should be a good diagnostician and must understand the needs, motives and attitudes of the employees. He should vary his managerial strategy according to differences among people and in situation. This view of directing resembles Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Y assumptions discussed above.

According to Argawal (1982) directing should be built on the: integration of individual and organisational goals. It is only by seeing sufficient merit in the mutuality of interest between the needs of the organisation and those of the individual that management will benefit greatly from individual effort. More often than not, many a manager treats individual needs or concerns as if they have no part to play in formal activities. The author has heard managers refusing to listen to their subordinate's problem on account that they are personal and private issues. What is ignored at the peril of modern organisations is that one's personal problem, say family problems, financial crisis, debt problems etc, have a direct impact on the performance of the individual at work. How can she be committed to serve the interests of the organisation when she is at the same time worried about her child who has been turned away from school because of failure to pay fees? That is why those non-official issues facing the individual affect the operation of the individual and therefore the organisation. The human relations school discussed earlier focused attention on these informal aspects of organisational life.

In a similar manner, there is need for managers to integrate the needs of groups with organisational goals. Cooperation of informal leaders with management is a good approach to directing the energy of human effort. Many managers think that informal leaders are troubleshooters. They are viewed as creators of chaos and responsible for mobilising dissent or strike action. At best, they are associated with all the evils of performance among formal groups at work. Naturally, managers think that the only way they can solve problems caused by trouble generators is by dismissing or posting them to other parts of the organisation preferably in a remote town. This is more pronounced with trade union leaders (Dzimbiri, 2008; 2005).

However, what is known about informal leaders is that they will emerge when one is removed. Informal leaders are like a lizard's tail- when it is cut, another one grows! Thus, rather than creating a hostile environment, managers need to befriend themselves with informal leaders. There is need to win them and use them as useful channels for communicating managerial information. When taken as friends, when they feel they are management's ally, they will sympathise with management's interest and therefore mobilise others to work for those goals. This is one of the contributions of the human relations school which emphasizes on understanding that informal leaders may wield significant influence in setting the pace of work and performance targets more than would be done by formally designated supervisors.

Participation in decision-making is also another very important strategy to ensure effective implementation of set objectives. It is easier for employees to defend the goals of the organisation and work cooperatively towards the achievement of these goals if they feel they were involved in the initial stages. But if they believe that the goals were imposed against their

will, then they will deliberately sabotage them. Others will deliberately make it difficult to implement those goals. They will create impossible situations such as alleged malfunctioning of the machine, broken needle or other countless excuses.

Delegation is also another strategy in directing. Delegation is an approach to get things done, in conjunction with other employees. Delegation is often viewed as a major means of influence. Delegation generally includes assigning responsibility to an employee to complete a task, granting the employee sufficient authority to gain the resources to do the task and letting the employee decide how that task will be carried out. Typically, the person assigning the task shares accountability with the employee for ensuring that the task is completed. When a superior officer delegates work to the subordinate, the latter feels highly empowered. The feeling of empowerment creates more energies and commitment in the individual. They feel a sense of ownership in what they are doing. They find ways and means to ensure they achieve the goals set efficiently and effectively. Workers delegated to achieve certain targets can at times sacrifice their time and go beyond the knock-off time just to make sure they achieve their set targets.

Finally, communication is an important tool for ensuring the implementation of pre-planned goals. People need to constantly know what is happening and what need to happen as well as what need to be avoided. Information needs to flow where it is required at the right time in the right manner to ensure everything is on course.

Human Relations Problems

In the process of directing the activities of groups and individuals in organisations, managers and supervisors encounter numerous problems of human relations. Other workers quarrel over small things, others are irritable or selfish and do not want share resources. There are yet those who are not in talking terms and a sense of animosity characterises the entire section of the organisation. This is due to several reasons to do with individual differences and the complexity and variability of human nature.

According to Argyris (1957), a mature person wants to utilize and develop his abilities on the job, seeks challenge and opportunities to be creative. He wants autonomy and relationships of equality rather than subordination; develops a long term perspective, acquires deeper interest in his activities and establishes his sense of identity. On the other hand, organisation demands conformity, obedience and performance of standardized and repetitive tasks. This creates conflict between the

individuals and organisation as noted in previous chapters. This conflict results in frustration and causes human relations problems.

For Argawal (1982), Individual differences in needs and patterns of responses to need fulfillment, attitudes and perceptions create human relations problems. Again, though informal groups serve many useful functions by providing opportunities for fulfillment of security, social and esteem needs of their members, they create a number of human relations problems. They put pressure on deviants and isolates if they produce more than group norms of production, do not easily accept new employees in the group and resist transfer of group members. He suggests strategies for establishing healthy human relationships in the process of directing people's effort and these are:

1. Integrating the individual and the group with the organisation: It is the function of leadership to create a supportive environment and a relationship of mutual trust and confidence for facilitating this integration.
2. Involving individuals and groups in decision making: This will result not only in improvement in the quality of decisions but also provide satisfaction of ego needs to employees.
3. Communicating effectively. Managers should pay special attention to open communication, particularly upward communication
4. Adaptive leadership. Since people are different, complex and variable, and situations are also continually changing, managers must adapt their leadership style according to situations
5. Conditioning behaviour: Healthy human relations can be established by conditioning the behaviour of people by reinforcing desirable behaviour by positive rewards and extinguishing undesirable behaviour by not rewarding it or by punishing it.
6. Resolving conflicts. This should be done by adopting a win-win strategy, called integrative method, in place of win-lose or lose-lose strategy, called distributive method.

Controlling

Controlling is a sequence of actions by management to establish performance standards, measure and evaluate performance and take corrective action where needed. Performance standards serve as levels of desired performance against which actual performance can be measured and

evaluated. Management must decide what performance to measure, when to measure and how to measure. In the process of directing the activities and efforts of individuals and groups, managers will find discrepancies or deviations. These need to be controlled in the same way firefighters will want to quickly put off fire to prevent it from spreading far and wide.

In modern performance management systems key performance areas (KPAs) are identified, performance objectives set, and performance indicators are developed so that actual performance can be compared with performance objectives. For example in a lecturers' job the two important performance areas are teaching and research. At the planning stage the lecturer will show his areas of performance and objectives as well as indicators as shown in the table below.

Key Performance Area (KPA)	Key Performance Objectives	Key Performance Indicators
Teaching	i. By end of 2008/2009 academic year 280 of the 300 students should have mastered the course content.	280 students should be able to proceed to another level
Research	Should be able to give two conference papers; one international and one local	Presentation and submission for publication of conference papers

Controlling is an important function because it helps to check the errors and to take the corrective action so that deviation from standards are minimised and stated goals of the organisation are achieved in a desired manner. According to modern concepts, control is a foreseeing action whereas earlier concept of control was used only when errors were detected.

Control, as a managerial function, arises out of the need to ensure that all the decisions and activities are contributing maximally to the achievement

of organisational goals and that these are being achieved efficiently and effectively. According to Montana and Charnov (2000) there are several types of controls as follows:

1. Input control. This is where corrective action is taken by management during the input phase of the organisation's activities. It is also referred to as steering control. Examples include budgets, job design, training programmes with skills evaluation, production and operational techniques, scheduling of work activities
2. Process control. These are control actions that impact the organisation's internal activities and serve to regulate transformational activities- quality control, management by objectives, and contingency plans.
3. Output controls- actions taken by management to regulate the organisation's output before it is delivered to the customer- quality control of the final product, ex post facto (after the fact) audits
4. Financial controls- involves budgets and audits
5. Behavioral controls- actions taken by management that seek to specify, evaluate and correct human performance within the organisation- eg performance appraisal.

The Process of Controlling

According to Argawal (1982) the control process involves determination of performance standards, measurement of performance against standards, identification of deviation and analysis of their causes and taking of corrective action.

Establishment of performance standards

Standards provide yardsticks for the management of performance. These standards are provided by objectives, plans, strategies, policies and budgets. Standards should be set for all employees as well as for all strategic activities. With the advent of performance management systems in most public services, individuals set their key performance areas, objectives and standards that they want to achieve. This is an important starting point for the controlling function.

Measurement of performance

Measurement of performance is a process of finding out the extent of performance. It is an attempt to find out how much work has been done by an employee. It is aimed at measuring quantity, quality and even economy. What work has been done and of what quality? This is the basis for comparing what has been done with set standards in order to determine extent of deviation.

Identification of Deviations and Analysis of Causes

In the process of performing activities, care need to be taken to ensure that any deviation from set targets or standards is noted quickly. To prevent damage occasioned by checking in the eleventh hour or last minute, identification of deviation is an on-going process before, during and after the work has been done. At this stage, we compare what performance targets or standards were set against what has been achieved. There are certain deviations that are not worrisome. As not all deviations warrant attention, the principle of exception should be used. In other words, only big deviations which can negatively affect the achievement of goals, should be attended.

Taking Corrective Action

There are various corrective actions that have to be taken when deviations have been identified. They are of various types including operational, management and financial controls. Computers have revolutionised administrative controls through use of integrated management information systems, project management software, human resource information systems and office automation software. Organisations typically require a wide range of reports, e.g., financial reports, status reports and project reports are used to monitor what's being done, by whom and how. Corrective action might involve training and coaching an individual, redistribution of work, review of goals, rules, regulations, targets etc,

Characteristics of controlling

1. It is a continuous process
2. It is embedded in each level of organisational hierarchy
3. It is forward looking

4. It is linked with planning
5. It is a tool for achieving organisational activities.

Coordinating

The activities of various individuals and groups in an organisation require effective coordination. This is the process of integrating the organisationally required activities for securing unity of action in the pursuit of common goals. It is a fundamental aspect of organised effort and a necessary condition for the achievement of common goals. Coordination transcends all managerial functions. It involves a lot of cooperation and is both formal as well as voluntary.

Why Coordination

There are several reasons why coordination is crucial in organisations. There is a real case where one department of the organisation sold computers to an outsider who in turn sold them to another department of the same organisation at a very high price. While this appears imaginary to small organisations, those who have experienced working in large organisations will agree. Factors such as division of labour, vertical differentiation, functional differentiation, line and staff functions, allocation of limited resources and individual difference complicate contact and therefore makes the need for coordination very vital indeed.

As noted at the beginning of this book, organisation enjoys a high degree of division of labour and specialization. This in itself makes people function in isolation from others and use different tools and equipment and interact with different customers. Without proper coordination, each division might function autonomously at the cost of organisational goals.

Hierarchy of authority as well as functions in complex organisations necessitates coordination. In companies like sugar making, there are vertical differential of functions for example- workers in a sugar cane take care of the growing and care of canes, a different team come to cut the canes, yet another carries to the factory. Within the factory are several levels in the hierarchy. These are crushing, separation and other processing up to sugar packaging and transportation to the warehouses.

Horizontal differentiation entails the existence of several sections at the same level like personnel, accounting, training, sales, purchases etc. Vertical and horizontal differentiation demands the need to develop mechanisms to coordinate these various activities. There are sometimes disagreements between line and staff on authority over certain functions or activities. While each has their clear areas of mandates, there are certain

grey areas of overlap which might often be the recipe for tensions. Through proper coordination mechanism animosities between staff and line managers can be minimised.

Allocation of limited resources is one of the major challenges facing modern organisations. Yet several departments or individuals will use these resources to perform their functions. Transport, for example, is a resource each and every department will need at one point or the other during the day. Because of the limitation in the number of vehicles available, coordination will ensure that each section uses the available resource at the right time without inconveniencing others or creating tensions.

Finally individual differences means that an organisation is an assemblage of miscellaneous personalities and characters 'forced' to work together day in and day out. Because everyone has their own values, ambitions, objectives, interests and problems, coordination is the only way that will ensure uniform performance behaviour. Otherwise chaos will reign.

Types of Coordination

Coordination may be distinguished as vertical, horizontal and diagonal. Vertical coordination refers to integration of activities of employees working in superior-subordinate relationships. Horizontal coordination takes place among peers working in the same or different departments. Diagonal coordination refers to integration of activities among employees working at different levels in hierarchy and in different departments.

Methods of Coordination

According to Mary Parker Follet, coordination can be achieved effectively through direct horizontal communication and relationships, and in the early stages of planning. This refers to horizontal coordination of a voluntary nature. Major means of achieving coordination include authority, objectives, policies, rules, procedures and methods, liaison men, committees and conferences, communication and bargaining.

Authority makes people comply with orders and instructions issued from the boss. This enables coordinated or uniform behaviour toward activities. Objectives, policies, rules and procedures achieve coordination through standardising behaviour and ensuring conformity. For example, personnel policies and procedures help ensure that employee laws are followed (e.g., laws such as the Employment Act, Disabilities Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act etc). This minimise the likelihood of costly litigation to an organisation.

A procedure is a step-by-step list of activities required to conduct a

certain task. Procedures ensure that routine tasks are carried out in an effective and efficient fashion. By developing clear procedures and educating everyone about them, everyone does the same way to accomplish a particular task.

Liaison men, sometimes called coordinators, are useful instruments for coordinating the activities of several departments. At the University for example, there are coordinators for different postgraduate programmes who represent their departments at a graduate board meeting. Whatever policies, regulations and issues discussed are disseminated by these men and women to their departments.

Committees and conferences are also mechanisms for coordination. By virtue of their wide membership, both committees and conferences create opportunities for discussing and sharing common understanding on various issues of importance to the organisation. Communication through staff meetings, notices on walls, memos, e-mails and circulars enable managers to convey messages on important issues to members of the organisation.

In some cases, through the bargaining process between management and trade union leaders, certain issues to do with terms and conditions of employment are communicated to union leaders who will in turn convey same to their members. On the other hand, the concerns of employees are communicated to the entire management team through representatives of management at the bargaining table.

The relative effectiveness of these methods of coordination depends on the task and the environment. Impersonal and group methods of coordination are sometimes more effective than personal supervision and use of formal authority.

Summary

This chapter has covered directing, controlling and coordinating as three interrelated managerial functions. They are all linked in the sense that while directing the activities of the groups and individuals, managers might need to control deviations and take corrective actions. Again these activities need to be coordinated properly to avoid duplication, conflict and wastage. Within these functions are human relations problems which have to be managed because of the complexity and diversity of human nature.

Review Questions

1. Why is coordination necessary in modern organisations?
2. What are the methods to enhance coordination at work?
3. What are major reasons for human relations problems at workplaces?
4. How can you improve human relations at work?
5. Discuss the process of control in organisations.

Research Activity

Visit any organisation of your choice. Find out the nature of human relations problems which managers encounter when directing and controlling the activities of organised groups and individuals. How do they handle these problems?

12

Decision Making and Communication

Introduction

A manager is continuously involved in making decisions as well as communicating these decisions to subordinates in the form of instruction, advice, viewpoint, reprimand and suggestion. Good decision making is an essential skill for career success generally and effective leadership particularly. If you can learn to make timely and well-considered decisions, then you can often lead your team to spectacular and well-deserved success. However, if you make poor decisions, your team risks failure and your time as a leader will, most likely, be short. A decision situation involves either the presence of a problem or an opportunity, which can be exploited. In fact one can say decision making is the heart of management. Every managerial function requires making a decision. In fact one can visualise an organisation as an interlinked network of decision making processes because all employees as well as managers are making decisions and acting on them continuously for the whole. We shall discuss decision making and communication in this chapter. Our focus shall be on defining decision making, types of decisions, theories of decision making, process and factors influencing decision making.

Decision Making

Decision making is the process of locating and defining the problem, developing alternative solutions to the problem, weighing the various alternate solutions in terms of their possible consequences, choosing the best solution from among them, and ensuring that the decision has been implemented effectively. Decisions are made through habitual as well as problem solving behaviour. Decisions relating to recurrent problems are made habitually without going through all the above steps. Problem solving behaviour occurs when making decisions of a complex and strategic nature.

Theories of Decision Making

There are two major theories of decision making. The first is the classical theory and the second is administrative man or behavioural theory of decision

making. The classical theory argues that decisions are made rationally and are goal-directed. This is basically a theory of decision making under conditions of certainty, with sufficient time, resources and expertise. The decision making process is assumed to be systematic as well as rational. The problem situation is subjected to critical analysis to understand the problem. Possible solutions are generated and each one weighed carefully and the best alternative with significant payoffs is selected and implemented.

This theory has been subjected to much criticism, first because it is a normative rather than a descriptive theory. Thus, it based on wishful thinking and not what happens in practice. Second, it is based on the assumptions of rational-economic man, i.e that man is rational, careful, calculating and has a lot of knowledge and wisdom. Third, it should be a well known view that managers, generally, operate under conditions of risk and uncertainty rather than under conditions of certainty. Fourth, it implies that managerial goals are stable. In practice, what we know is that changing environmental forces- social, economic, political, legal or technological- make it imperative for managers to review and revise their goals periodically. This theory assumes that there is plenty of time and expertise to generate and weigh all the available solutions to the problem. Yet pressures from the environment forces decision makers to make decisions within a short period of time and more often not the most brilliant of decisions.

Administrative man or behavioural theory of decision making advocates that decisions are made on the basis of a limited, approximate model of the real situation. Managers seldom have full information about the problem and act on the basis of available information. They also do not have full knowledge of all the possible solutions and their associated consequences. Moreover, they are limited in their capabilities. Therefore, they aim at finding *satisficing* rather than optimum solution to the problem at hand. They act with bounded rationality rather than full rationality in decision-making. Thus, absolute rationality and objectivity is impossible in decision making. This seems closer to the real world of organisational decision making. Herbert Simon and Cyet March are associated with decision making theories. However, t is important to note that a hybrid consisting of elements of both rationality and bounded rationality exists at various levels of the decision making process. It is possible that at the level of planning for organisational vision, mission, values and strategic goals, a lot of rationality, logic and other attributes of a scientific approach might characterize the process. However, when it comes to implementation of the plan, the type of decisions made might be influenced by lack of timely arrival of resources, absence of expertise, bad weather among others, thereby approximating bounded rationality.

Types of Decisions

Simon distinguishes between programmed and non-programmed decisions. Decisions are programmed to the extent that they are of a repetitive nature, and are made within the framework of objectives, policies, strategies and rules. For example, recruitment, appointment, placement, promotions, selection for training, discipline, and salary acceleration decisions are made within the framework of terms and conditions of employment. Such decisions are not complex at all. Clerical officers, accounts assistants, executive officers and other lower and middle managers can make such decisions with some degree of certainty and accuracy. On the other hand, non-programmed decisions are novel and have wider consequences on the organisation. Such decisions, like, investing in new ventures, merging with other firms, creating a public-private partnership or restructuring the organisation, are non-programmed decisions. We would expect top management of the organisation to be associated with making such decisions although the lower levels officers shall be involved in the implementation decisions once broader paths have been charted.

Decisions are also classified on the basis of risk and uncertainty associated with them. Under conditions of certainty, the decision maker knows outcomes of all the alternative solutions, and can rationally choose the best solution. Under conditions of risk, the decision maker does not know all the outcomes but can estimate statistical probability of each outcome. Conditions of uncertainty exist when the decision maker does not know all the outcomes and also cannot assign probabilities to possible outcomes.

Thus, one can suggest that programmed decisions are those also made under conditions of certainty and are associated with little risk. Non-programmed decisions are those made under conditions of risk and uncertainty.

Decisions can also be classified in terms of how they are made. Are decisions made by one person or by a group? As we shall note below on styles of leadership, managers who take the authoritarian approach to decision making will make decision alone and will expect employees to implement the decision in most cases without questioning. On the other had, under a democratic style of leadership one would find a group discussing, pooling views together and coming up with a decision. However, these are two extremes as no organisation can always be characterised by one person making all the decision or that all decisions being made by groups. There is a combination of both in most organisations depending on the nature of the decision to be made and the expertise of the manager or the group. But even when a decision has been made by a group, at the level of implementation, individuals assigned specific activities to perform will obviously be making

individual decisions although they can consult if need arise.

Thus, looking at the above categories of decisions, one can say that different organisational level makes different decisions. Top management will be responsible for determining the strategic goals of a company while middle level managers make tactical or administrative decisions. The lowest level of a supervisor will make operational decision. In every instance of managerial decision making, success will depend on the manager's analytical abilities.

Decision Making Process

Decision making is not an event. Rather, it is a process that has a starting point and an ending point. It is a involving identifying the problem, analyzing the problem, developing alternative solutions, weighing alternative solutions, choosing the best solution and implementing and verifying the decision effectiveness (evaluation). Identifying a problem might be both a complex as well as an easy process depending on the problem. Some are straightforward because the problem is clear on face value. For example, it is a straightforward problem to know that staffing levels are low, equipment has been broken, or there are viruses in a computer. But for others, we might be witnessing symptoms and not the problem itself. For example staff exodus, low profits, unproductive workforce, low demand on products or services. Such problems requires going deeper to obtain the root cause which has to be addressed properly if the problem situation is to go away.

Linear thinking stress that problems have only one solution and they do not affect the rest of the organisation, and that once a solution is found, it remains constantly valid. On the other hand, systems thinking assert that problems are complex; they have more than one cause and more than one solution and are interrelated to the rest of the organisation. It believes that problem and their solutions are not constant but constantly changing, thereby making problem solving a dynamic process (Montana and Charnorv, 2000)

Analyzing the problem involved raising pertinent questions such as: what is happening. Who says there is a problem? How big is it? Who is affected? What is the cause of the problem? What happens if the problem is left like that? This analysis might reveal that the problem is system-wide or departmental, and that it is affecting all or a few individuals. It may further show that it is a financial or a communication problem. Some problems can have several dimensions such as economic, political and technological. Proper analysis leads to identification of pointers to solutions. Identifying alternative solutions implies that there is no one solution to a problem. At this stage, it involves thinking and generating several solutions to the problem. Training existing staff or recruiting new staff or transferring staff from the

division to the head office can be alternative solutions to solving a staffing problem in an organisation. However, these solutions have to be weighed in terms of advantages and disadvantages to find one with more advantages. This leads to the next step that of choosing the best solution.

Once this is chosen, there is need to effectively implement the chosen solution. This is so because failure to implement the solution will mean that the problem still stands where it was. Evaluating the solution means ascertaining that the problem has been solved and that there are no symptoms of the problem again. However, should symptoms persist, then the decision maker has to revisit the process again. Was the problem properly analysed? Were all possible solutions generated? Was the choice of the decision the best? Has the implementation been done well? The whole process starts all over again until the symptoms of the problem have disappeared.

It should also be noted that in the midst of a problem situation, deciding not to do anything is already a decision making process in its own right. Sometimes this is called 'non decision'. As Thomas Dye (2005) has pointed out public policy is what government decides to do or not to do. So deciding not to do anything is therefore a decision made.

Factors influencing Decision Making

Decision making is not a smooth process as there are number of factors which impinge on it. These include organisational, environmental and personality factors (Argawal, 1982). Organisational factors such as objectives, strategies and policies, authority-responsibility relationships, and organisational climate affect the decision making process. A manager cannot make decisions which are outside the objectives of the organisation. He has to consider the strategies, policies, procedures and rules that the organisation has put in place when making any decision.

Environmental factors, particularly its social, legal, technological marketing, political and economic aspects influence decisions. Chief executives have to cope with continuous and often unpredictable changes in their social, political, economic and technological environment. Labour laws, new pension formula imposed by government, foreign exchange regulations issued by the Reserve Bank and trade union expectation cannot be ignored in making decisions.

Personality factors such as decision makers' values, needs, intelligence, capabilities and willingness to take risk affect the nature and effectiveness of the decisions made. As human beings, decision makers cannot make a decision which is against their values, religion or tradition

even if that would have been the best decision. Again, decision making involves thinking beyond routine especially for non-programmed decisions. This means that intelligence counts. A dull decision maker cannot be expected to make a brilliant and well thought-out decision except by chance! Many decisions involve venturing into the unknown or unfamiliar waters. Decision makers who are conservative and afraid to take risks are unlikely to make a novel decision which might entail tampering with the existing structure or relationships. Yet certain problems require thinking 'outside' the box.

Communication

In this part, we shall clarify the concept of communication, its process, channels, media and problems and how to improve communication.

The concept of communication

Communication is any interchange of ideas, information, feelings and emotions among two or more persons in such a way that they share a common understanding about it. Effective communication, however, implies that the receiver should not only hear the message but should understand the message in the sense in which the sender intended it to mean. Where he or she complies with it or not is not important because he may have genuine reasons for not complying. In his response, he can also make his view point known to the original sender. Communication is one of the most central aspects of all managerial activities. Whatever a manager does, he does it by communicating with others. No organised activity is possible without communication among those engaged in cooperative effort and between them and their environment. Managers and supervisors are continuously communicating with others in the process of planning, organising, directing, controlling, reporting and budgeting. Thus, effective communication is a prerequisite to good management. In fact, we can also say that communication is the central nervous system of the organisation.

Process of Communication

As emphasized at the beginning of this section, though it can happen within a short space of time, communication is not just an event. It is a process with a beginning and an end. Communication involves a lot of transactional processes involving sender, message, encoding, medium, and decoding as

follows:

There is first a *sender* who can be a teacher, a wife, son or husband with an idea, message, information, advice, suggestion or question to ask. This sender has to *encode* the message or information- ie. He has to transform the message into a language which may either be written, oral or a body language. Then there is the *message* itself. It can be a long story, short sentence or paragraph.

A *medium* is a means for transporting or carrying the message. This has to be identified. It can be in the form of a letter, an e-mail, telephone conversation or one's shoulder or eye. What is important here is to choose an appropriate medium because some are not suitable for other messages. You cannot send a message by e-mail to parents in the rural areas where there is no electricity and no computers and let alone the internet. At the other end, is the receiver who ultimately is to receive the message. He might be student, son, supervisor or messenger or even a group like students in a classroom or officers in a staff meeting. He can be very near, a kilometer or hundreds of miles away.

Decoding is an important element once the message has been sent. The receiver has to decode (translate) the encoded message for him to understand the message. If it is body language then one has to be able to 'interpret'. For example, by shaking his head left and right, the sender is saying 'No' to my request. Receipt of message follows. Once the message has been decoded, the receiver gets the message. A message is deemed to have been understood when the receiver gets the message and understand it in the way the sender intended it to be. If not then there is a communication breakdown. If the nodding of the head is interpreted as 'No' when in actual fact it is a 'Yes', then a breakdown in communication has occurred. Feedback from the receiver to the sender about the result of communication is the last element. The sender shall know that his/her message has been understood as intended when the feedback from the receiver shows just that. As hinted above, it does not have to be positive but at least one will know that there is some relationship between the message sent and the feedback received.

As a process, it should be noted that for the receiver to provide feedback, he shall now change role from being a receiver to that of a sender. The former sender shall then change to a receiver. The process shall be the same. It has to be emphasised also that a sender can be an individual or a group of people sending a message. A choir group conveying a message to the congregation or a group of school children thanking their teacher as a group, are other examples. The receiver also can be an individual or a group. A manager who holds a team briefing to a group of subordinates is in effect a single sender communicating to many receivers. An announcer in a TV studio is sending messages to millions of listeners or viewers who are receivers.

Channels of Communication

Formal communication channels are provided by the organisation structure. Its channels are mainly vertical (downward and upward) horizontal and diagonal.

Downward communication

This type of communication flows from employees at higher levels in the organisational hierarchy to those at relatively lower levels. It typically refers to superior-subordinate communication. The content of this communication is:

1. Job instructions – telling subordinates what to do, how do, where and when.
2. Rationale for tasks and their relationship with other tasks and goals – some kind of briefing and attempts to clarify relationships to avoid confusion
3. Information relating to company policies and practices- this can be done at any point in time to remind employees. However, this information is also important during induction of a new employee
4. Feedback to employee on his performance- in organisations where there is openness to performance assessment review, the boss tells the employee how she has performed and what the boss proposes to do next or what he thinks the employee should do
5. Indoctrination of employees- time and again employees need to be reminded of vital information to do with their career planning and development activities, discipline in the workplace and custody of property.

The most frequently used media of downward communication are:

1. Written or face to face- where boss is seated on his chair and the subordinate is also seated or standing. The boss can also stand in the subordinate's office and communicate information. Staff meetings or team briefing is another example of face-to-face communication
2. Posters and bulletin boards- on company premises mostly on strategic corners or buildings where employees will be able to see

and read.

3. Company magazine- produced monthly or once every three months. Others call them bulletins. This is an opportunity for management to communicate various important events that happened over the past month or so.
4. Employee handbook- on first employment some companies provide new employees with handbooks which explain important areas and issues related to terms and condition of employment as well as important information regarding where to find what and how
5. Public address system – this can be used to communicate to employees especially in complex organisations such as airports or hospitals where tracing an employee might be difficult.
6. Information racks – in some organisations, information racks exists say in the staff room or lounge where employees can just pick one and read
7. Annual reports- these are produced for various stakeholders but employees can benefit a lot by reading important details about the performance of their organisation over the past year
8. Letters and pay inserts – important messages such as best wishes for Christmas or change of salary payment date can be placed inside employee payslips
9. Use of labour union- trade union leaders can be used to disseminate messages to their members throughout the organisation. In fact trade unions act as effective communication links between employers and employees.

Upward communication

This usually provides feedback on the effectiveness of downward communication. It also provides data for decision-making. A typical feature of upward communication is that it is highly summarised or filtered as it passes up through various levels in the hierarchy. This often results in distortions. It is also distorted due the nature of superior-subordinate relationships. Subordinates will not be comfortable to relay information from below which is not pleasing to the boss. This means therefore that some bits and pieces viewed as not palatable to the bosses' ear will be removed as the message goes up. Upward communication flows through the following:

1. Chain of command- passes through the shop floor supervisor through middle to top level managers. For example a grievance

process might pass through this hierarchy as long as the lower levels have not failed to resolve the issue

2. Suggestion boxes – placed at a strategic place to encourage employees to convey suggestions to top management. This is important because lower level employees might be intimidated by the official protocol required to meet top management.
3. Private lines – some organisations allow individuals to phone top managers directly if there is any problem
4. Personal contacts – means going up to discuss openly with the boss on one to one basis
5. Attitude and morale surveys- by designing questionnaires and asking employees to respond by giving their opinions or perceptions on different dimension of company management and performance
6. Grievance procedure- there are elaborate procedures often described in employee handbook and this can also be used as a means by which upward communication can be effected.
7. Labour union- union leaders who are in most cases lower level employees have an opportunity to communicate with representatives of management or company board of directors. They can meet the chief executive or minister or the state president
8. The informer- some senior managers use their trusted employee as informer to brief them what other workers are thinking or planning to do. This enables them to have advance warning so they can pre-empt any damaging move employees were contemplating. The only problem is when the informer has a hidden agenda. He might abuse his privilege and therefore damage or blackmail a potentially successful rival in the organisation, for his own good

Lateral communication

Lateral communication occurs among peers-employees at the same level of hierarchy. For example, employees in the accounts department might communicate with colleagues in the Human resource or purchasing department. In an academic setting like the University of Botswana, a lecturer in the department of social work can communicate with a friend in economics to liaise on rooms for a joint programme. It is essential for coordination and integration of diverse organisation functions. A head of department in mathematics can liaise with a head of physics to check what combinations a particular student has taken. This is called horizontal communication.

Diagonal communication

Diagonal communication refers to interchanges between employees occupying different positions in organisational hierarchy and outside the chain of command. Much of staff-line communications are of a diagonal nature. A head of department who consults the human resource department to find out whether posts in his department have been advertised since he forwarded them is following a diagonal line. This is also true of a lecturer from sociology department who goes to the education technology department to book for an LCD projector for use in his class the following day.

Unofficial and grapevine communication

When a manager informs his subordinate or others about an impending decision, it is called unofficial communication. Besides formal channels, communication also flows through informal channels among members of informal groups. Sometimes, this contains truths and half-truths. It is prompted by the manager's delay in communicating timely information. It is normally passed from friend to friends.

A messenger for example would find a draft letter in the office of a senior manager and quickly notices that it is a letter of promotion of a senior clerical officer to an executive officer. As he meets a friend down stairs, he whispers to him and warns him not to tell anyone. This friend cannot keep the good news alone. He whispers to another friend with a similar warning. In no time the whole organisation knows the story. As it moves further to their wives and friends in other organisations, more additions are made to the story. Others will get the story as if promotion is effected and is official. They may even congratulate the lucky man before he has even received the letter or known anything about it.

As noted, it is in most cases faster than the formal communication because it does not pass through too many levels. Management need to listen to grapevine, feed it and utilize it for strengthening the formal communication.

The Communication Media

Communication media are verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication refers to face-to-face communication, written words, graphs and charts. Non-verbal communication refers to gestures and facial expressions. It is also

called body language or the silent language.

Barriers Communication

There are several factors that create a breakdown in communication. The following are major communication barriers:

1. Perceptual differences – people perceive and interpret situations differently and this might account for a breakdown in communication
2. We hear what we expect to hear- we pay attention to what we want to hear and the rest we ignore. Thus, because of our selective understanding, we miss equally very important issues in the process of communication
3. Words have different meanings to different people- words such as plain, plane, guy, good, excellent, pleasant, excellent, may mean different things to different people depending on how they are used. With a limited vocabulary, the receiver might interpret differently from the sender
4. Motivation and interest – when people are not interested or motivated, they cannot get what is being communicated. In a classroom setting, when students are bored and uninterested with the topic being presented, they miss a lot as they switch off and start thinking other things
5. Perfunctory attention- little or partial attention to messages or communication can create some misunderstanding. It is common to see two people talking to each other but the receiver is busy staring a different thing such as a passing car, a lady walking briskly towards another direction.
6. Source credibility – we pay little attention when the person communicating the information is of low status or is not an authority in the area. For example students can pay more attention to a professor presenting methods of preventing HIV/AIDS than the same message being presented by a fellow student. Similarly, we are inclined to listen to advice by a medical doctor on what not to eat than a home economics teacher
7. Filtering – messages that go through several layers of people are amenable to filtering. Certain bits and pieces of information will be left behind when the message reaches its intended target. Alternatively, more additions will also be made to the story. Workers' representatives who talk to management

representatives on wages and conditions of employment might later learn that out of a list of 10 grievances they presented to management representatives, by the time the message reach the board of directors' level, only 5 are presented with different overtones.

8. Hidden agenda—people may communicate something when they mean a different thing altogether. An officer who talks to his supervisor that he is feeling sleepy, may in effect, want to be allowed to go home but cannot say it directly because he is not sure of the response. A man who praises a lady for her nice hairdo might be having a different motive than just the hair. All this shall create a misunderstanding.
9. Value laden words – certain words carry value judgments which might be understood differently by different people- excellent, nice, pleasant personality, sweet guy, etc
10. Omission - certain words can be omitted and this causes a breakdown in communication. This omission might be due to lack of fluency in a particular language. The author who was attending a workshop in Arusha Town in Tanzania was confused when his friend he met at the market sid: 'I am not car today.' The author was completely lost on this. What? He asked. 'I am not car today!' he repeated with emphasis. In effect, he wanted to say that he was not driving his car that day. Otherwise, he would have given this author a lift back to Njiro Hill where the workshop was taking place.
11. Context of communication- time and place or mood is important when communicating otherwise the message will not be understood. You cannot ask for a consideration for promotion from your boss just after a heated staff meeting in which he was very angry and banged tables and chairs.
12. Information overload- too much information can cause a breakdown in communication. There are people who cannot afford to listen to far too many things within a space of time. They get confused and misunderstand the whole thing.
13. Hierarchical differentiation- communicating to bosses can be a barrier because one is not free to express his views. Junior officers might even find it difficult to tell their senior managers honestly their innermost feelings.

Improving Communication Effectiveness

There are many strategies that can be employed in order to improve communication effectiveness.

1. Creation of an environment of trust and confidence. Effective communication is guaranteed when there is trust and confidence between the sender and the receiver
2. Clarity about the objectives of communication is important
3. Be sensitive to the communication situation. It is not advisable to raise a salary grievance to a boss who has just returned from a funeral at home. It is also not proper to go and request for positive recommendation for transfer to your boss a few minutes to lunch or knock-of time.
4. Sensitivity to the receiver's frame of reference is another factor to consider. Think of the receiver first before you communicate. Is she in the mood? Will she like this kind of story? Does it contradict with her interests, philosophy, values, culture, tribe, nationality or religion?
5. The other factor is empathic listening. Pay more attention to the communication and ensure you are in the communicator's shoe. Imagine what she is feeling! You also need to use feedback. Check the response as you exchange information: you will notice that the receiver is lost and therefore you can clarify further. It is also advisable to use the grapevine as a way of feeding the formal line. This will help to improve communication and removes all doubts.
6. The communicator needs to use redundancy that is, finding other ways of repeating the same message.

Summary

This chapter has examined the concept of decision making and communication. Decision making permeates all managerial functions just as communication is. Types of decisions, the process of decision making, theories of decision making and factors that influence decision-making processes have been outlined. It has also examined the nature of communication, communication process, channels, barriers and methods of improving communication effectiveness.

Review Questions

1. What is decision making?
2. Giving practical examples, distinguish programmed decisions from non-programmed decisions
3. To what extent is the administrative man view of decision making more useful than the classical theory of decision making?
4. Discuss factors which influence decision making in organisations.
5. What is communication and how important is it to modern organisations?
6. Discuss vertical, horizontal and diagonal channels of communication in organisations?
7. Discuss with examples any five barriers to effective communication in organisations.
8. How would improve communication in your organisation?

Research Activity

Visit three organisations, private, public and NGO. Find out:

1. The extent to which managers in each organisation spend most of their time making decisions
2. The channels and content of communication for each channel.
3. Methods used to improve communication in the organisation.

Leadership

Introduction

The success or failure of an organisation is attributed mostly to its leadership. This chapter examines the concept of leadership and will focus on clarifying management and leadership concepts and finally, approaches to leadership studies.

Management and Leadership

There is a strong relationship between leadership and managerial functions. Managing and leading are two sides of the same coin. Leading involves providing vision, direction, coordination, control, motivation energizing and inspiring. On the other hand, managing is about planning for the achievement of pre-set goals. According to Warren Bennis, managers 'do things right' while leaders 'do the right thing'. He also believes that leadership can be learned and taught to individuals.

For Perry (2001) leadership is ability and style and also a process which can be translated into a range of roles, activities, skills and behaviours. On the other hand, management is a thought of as roles, activities, skills and behaviours. He suggests four ways for summarising the relationship between management and leadership as follows:

They are very different constructs

They are two overlapping constructs

Leadership is part of management

Management is one part of leadership

He further identifies a list of elements that contrasts the two as follows:

Management	Leadership
Accommodating	initiating
Risk avoidance	risk taking
Planning	envisioning
Reactive	proactive
Distant relationship	face-to-face relationship
Group orientation	individual orientation
Formal	informal

Impersonal	personal
Coercion	encouragement
Transaction	transformation
Avoid change	thrive on change
Do things correctly	do the correct thing
Follow a plan	communicate a vision
Stabilization	advancement
Position power	personal power
Organising	aligning
Staffing	motivating and inspiring
Monitoring	empowerment

As Parry emphasised, both attributes are important to the extent that both a manager and a leader has higher chances of success in achieving the visions of the organisation if he possesses managerial and leadership qualities.

The Concept of leadership

For many theorists, leadership is the art of influencing individual and group effort toward the optimum achievement of organisational goals. For Bennis (1976), the leader is the person who transforms an organisation. Four key abilities he identified for leadership are; the management of attention, the management of meaning, the management of trust and the management of self. The management of attention involves providing the vision he believes in so that others can believe in and adopt as their own. The management of meaning means communicating the vision and translating it into successful results for the organisation. Managing trust involves being more focused, consistent and constant. It is the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders. Self management means being persistent, self knowledge, willingness to take risks, willingness to go on learning, commitment and challenge (Kennedy, 1991).

The principal tasks of leadership are to:

1. recognize that people differ in their motivational patterns and should also gain an understanding of group dynamics
2. create an environment that produces convergence of individual and group goals, and organisational goals
3. stimulate and inspire employees as individuals and group members to make their optimum contribution to organisational efficiency and effectiveness and

4. make sense of the changing environment, interpret it to employees and redirect their efforts to adapt to changing situations

Approaches to leadership

The main approaches to leadership are:

1. the trait approach
2. approaches based on the use of authority
3. the managerial grid approach
4. directive versus participative
5. the continuum approach
6. transactional versus transformational
7. leading above versus leading below the line
8. Contingency approach

The Trait Approach

This is sometimes known as the 'great man theory'. This approach aims at identifying some unique qualities that would distinguish more effective from less effective leaders. For example, this would mean studying the characteristics of such leaders as Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Margaret Thatcher, and Tony Blair of Britain, George Bush of the US, Hitler of Germany, Stalin of Russia, among others, to come up with a common list of factors common in effective leaders. This view seems to suggest that leaders are born. John Gardner studied a large number of North American organisations and leaders. He came to the conclusion that there were some qualities or attributes that did appear to mean that a leader in one situation could lead in another. These included: Physical vitality and stamina, intelligence and action-oriented judgment, eagerness to accept responsibility, task competence, understanding of followers and their need, skill in dealing with people, need for achievement, capacity to motivate people, courage and resolution, trustworthiness, decisiveness, self-confidence, assertiveness and adaptability or flexibility.

The problem is that early researchers of the traits theory assumed that there was a definite set of characteristics that made a leader - whatever the situation. In other words, they thought the same traits would work in the army and in the university. The impact of the situation was not taken seriously into account. They, and later writers, also tended to mix some very different qualities. Some of Gardner's qualities, for example, are aspects of a person's behaviour, some are skills, and others are to do with temperament

and intellectual ability. Like other lists of this nature, it is quite long. It was not clear what would happen when someone has some but not all of the qualities. On the other hand, the list is not exhaustive and it is possible that someone might have other 'leadership qualities' not captured by the trait researchers.

The Use of Authority Approaches

One approach classified managers as democratic, authoritarian and laissez-faire. Democratic leaders are those who allow subordinate participation in decision making. While the leader might retain the final decision making, he does not do so unilaterally. Instead she involves her subordinates and ensures that they give their views on the matter. Whether he will make the decision different from what the subordinates have suggested, he does so with a clear mind of the views or feeling of subordinates in mind. Such leaders have a belief that subordinates have something to contribute and if consulted they might illuminate a view point which would have escaped the attention of the leader.

On the other had, authoritarian leaders do not trust their subordinates. They believe in status, authority or position as the basis for making decisions. They make decisions and inform their subordinates to implement without any question. For subordinates who are willing to take responsibility and involvement in decision making on matters affecting them, such a style can be frustrating indeed. The first president of Malawi Dr Hastings Banda once said, there was no need for him to consult his ministers for advice because doing so means he is unfit to be a leader. No wonder a cabinet crisis emerged a few weeks after independence because his ministers were not comfortable with his dictatorial tendencies and constant treating them as 'his boys'.

The University of Michigan studies distinguished between *production-oriented* and *employee-oriented* leaders. The former are interested in production no matter what it takes. On the other hand, the latter pays more attention to the needs of employees. This pair of styles, can also be likened to the *directive leadership* versus *participative leadership*. The first style is characterised by leaders taking decisions for others. They expect followers or subordinates to follow instructions. Participative leadership, on the other hand, is where leaders try to share decision-making with others.

Many of the early writers that looked to participative and people-centered leadership argued that it brought about greater satisfaction amongst followers (subordinates). However, when researchers really got to work on this, it didn't seem to stand up in all contexts. There were lots of differences

and inconsistencies between studies. It was difficult to say that the style of leadership was significant in enabling one group to work better than another. It means that previous researchers did not look properly at the context or setting in which the style was used. It is not possible that the same style would work as well in a gang or group of friends, and in a hospital emergency room. Styles that leaders can adopt are far more affected by those they are working with and the environment they are operating in, than had been originally thought. This is why a contingency theory of leadership, to be clarified below, emerged to demonstrate the significance of contexts in determining a leadership style.

The laissez-faire leaders are those who tell the follower 'to pursue goals on their own'. It is like a 'leaderless' group. While someone might see this as unrealistic, it does have some room in other institutions. For example, in the academic institutions, there is a great deal of autonomy among lecturers to develop their course outlines, teach, examine, mark and assess students' performance and determine who passes or fails. Work requiring individual creativity and innovation requires an atmosphere where an individual is free to decide what to do and how, rather than being dictated on what to do by a supervisor above. The more responsible and knowledgeable the individual, the more he would prefer laissez-faire style to dictatorial style.

Consideration vs Initiation

The *Ohio State University studies* identified leadership on two dimensions- *consideration* and *initiation*. Consideration is a situation where leaders look upon their followers as people. They take into account their needs, interests, problems, development and so on. They are not simply units of production or means to an end. This can be likened to the democratic style of leadership in which subordinates are viewed as mature and reasonable, full of experiences or ideas which can fruitfully benefit the organisation, if properly tapped. Initiation is whereby leaders emphasize the achievement of concrete objectives or tasks come rain or shine. They look for high levels of productivity and ways to organise people and activities in order to meet those objectives. Such leaders will not tolerate personal excuses such as family problems or illness to interfere with employee punctuality, presence and working pace.

Managerial Grid

Blake and Mouton propounded *The Managerial Grid Approach*. They identified various leadership styles on a grid with 9 points on the horizontal

axis and 9 points on the vertical axis. The horizontal axis showed leader's concern for production and the vertical axis showed his 'concern for people'. **1, 1** leadership style is called impoverished because it has no concern for both production and people. The one with minimum concern for production and maximum concern for people is called country-club management. **5,5** style is mid-of the road style. **9,9** style is most effective with maximum concern for production as well as for people. This is, but, an ideal style many organisations are striving to attain.

The Continuum Approach

This was developed by Tannenbaun and Schmidt who classified seven types of leader's behaviour on a continuum. At one end of the continuum, the leader has almost full freedom to make decisions and at the other end, the subordinate group has it. In the middle, both have equal freedom. It is where a leader presents tentative decisions subject to change after followers have made their input. The manager should consider the following situational factors while choosing his leadership style:

- forces within himself
- forces in the subordinates
- forces in the situation

Hersey and Blanchard (1984) identified *four different leadership styles* that could be drawn upon to deal with contrasting situations. These are, telling, selling, participating and delegating. The *telling* style is high task and low relationship. It is characterised by giving a great deal of direction to subordinates and by giving considerable attention to defining roles and goals. The style was recommended for dealing with new staff, or where the work was menial or repetitive, or where things had to be completed within a short time span. Subordinates are viewed as being unable and unwilling to 'do a good job'.

The *selling* style, on the other hand, is high task and high relationship. While most of the direction is given by the leader, there is an attempt at encouraging people to 'buy into' the task. Sometimes characterised as a 'coaching' approach, it is better used when people are willing and motivated but lack the required 'maturity' or 'ability'. A leader's behaviour in the *participating style* is high relationship and low task. Thus, decision-making is shared between leaders and followers. The main role of the leader is to facilitate and communicate. It entails high support and low direction and is used when people are able, but are perhaps unwilling or insecure. It is also better used among followers who are within the range of 'moderate to high

maturity'. Finally *delegating* style is low relationship and low task behaviour. The leader still identifies the problem or issue, but the responsibility for carrying out the response is given to followers. It entails having a high degree of competence and maturity. People know what to do and are motivated to do it. This might be likened to *the laissez-faire style of leadership* mentioned above.

Transactional versus Transformational leadership

Burns (1977) argued that it was possible to distinguish between transactional and transforming leaders. Transactional leaders approach their followers with an eye to trading one thing for another. They nurture and move them toward higher and more universal needs and purposes. In other words, the leader is seen as a change agent who recognises what it is that people want to get from work and tries to ensure that they get it-if their performance merits it. He exchanges rewards and promises for their effort. He is responsive to their immediate self interests if they can be met by getting the work done.

Transformational leaders are visionary leaders who seek to appeal to their followers. They raise the level of people's awareness and consciousness about the significance and value of certain outcomes, and ways of reaching them. They alter their need level and expand their range of wants and needs. Bass (1985) was concerned that Burns (1977) set transactional and transforming leaders as polar opposites. Instead, he suggests we should be looking at the way in which transactional forms can be drawn upon and transformed. The resulting transformational leadership is said to be necessary because of the more sophisticated demands made of leaders.

Leading Above and Below the Line

Focusing attention on leadership characteristics which admired leaders have, Ferguson (2000) has developed and popularized the concept of *leading above the line and leading below the line*. This is built on the basis of polarity of humanity. On one hand of humanity are features like inner peace, spirituality, wisdom, sharing, humility, respect, justice, sympathy, fidelity, honesty, trust, service, forgiveness, morality, integrity, ethical, values, dignity, love, empathy, truthfulness and modesty.

On the other side of the coin, we find lies, insincerity, deceit, dishonesty, immorality, selfishness, hate, corruption, bribery, nepotism, racism, fraud, torture, kidnapping, magic, rape, murder, making wars, greed, lust, robbery, thievery, indolence and egocentricity. Leadership built on these

two extremes creates above and below the line. Leading above the line is about leading in accordance with fundamental principles of humanity, leading with ethics, morality, human goodness, truth, spirituality, human dignity, confidence, emotional mastery, love, humility and compassion. It also means leading with purpose, knowledge, integrity and fairness. And leading below the line is the opposite of this. To a certain extent, this description does reflect various leadership characteristics both in administrative or political circles. We hear of political leaders inciting wars and killing far too many people in their own countries; Chief Executives drawn deep into corruption scandals, bribery, jealousy and hate. However, with proper commitment and determination to change, it is possible to move from below the line to above the line in the same way a non-believer can be born again into a believer of some faith or religion.

The Contingency Approach

Researchers began to turn to the contexts in which leadership is exercised. It became clear that the choice of leadership style depends on the situation. For example one would expect a different approach to leadership in the army, political parties and in private companies. What began to develop was a *contingency* approach. The central idea was that effective leadership was dependent on a mix of factors. For example, Fiedler argued that effectiveness depends on two interacting factors: leadership style and the degree to which the situation gives the leader control and influence.

Three things are important here:

The relationship between the leaders and followers. If leaders are liked and respected by their followers, they are more likely to have the support of others.

The structure of the task. If the task is clearly spelled out as to goals, methods and standards of performance then leaders will be able to exert influence.

Position power. If an organisation or group confers powers on the leader for the purpose of getting the job done, then this may well increase the influence of the leader. (Fiedler and Garcia 1987: 51 – 67. See, also, Fiedler 1997)

Models like this can help us to think about what we can do in different situations. For example, we may be more directive where a quick response is needed, and where people are used to being told what to do, rather than having to work at it themselves.

Organisation theories and Leadership Styles

The classical, behavioral, systems and contingency theories discussed at the beginning of this book have implications on management or leadership style. By implication, managers with a classical orientation would concentrate on organisational structure, rules and regulations, strict discipline, division of labour and specialisation. In most cases they emphasize on status consciousness, authority and social distance. They issue directives and allow little subordinate participation in decision-making. In other words, they ignore human feelings and the needs of their subordinates. They are associated with dictatorial styles of management and leadership. We can also say they are the tells type or concern for tasks and initiation.

On the other hand, the behavioural science approaches to organisation and management emphasise on an adequate understanding of the human element. Emphasis is on social relations, informal leadership, understanding the needs of subordinates; trust and empathy; and concern for the welfare, esteem and security needs of individuals. Managers with this perspective are flexible, employee-oriented and allow subordinate participation in decision-making. They do not dictate or issue directives. These are invariably called organic or democratic managers or leaders. They consult and are concerned with people's feeling although they do not ignore productivity altogether. The democratic leaders, consideration and selling type are examples of leaders with a behavioural orientation.

The open system and contingency theories, which emphasize on the openness and continuous adaptation of the organisation to its task and wider environment, have implications on management styles. Environments are not static and uniform. Some are stable and others are continuously changing. Others are volatile, unfriendly and others are accommodating. The nature of organisations and the personnel in them vary considerably. Academic and research organisations are different from civil service organisations. The University of Botswana is different from the Botswana Defence Force. They cannot be managed in the same manner. Professionals and other qualified personnel cannot be handled in the same manner as the rank-and-file members of the organisation. In other words, managing organisations calls for a contingency approach to leadership or management style. Some situations demand a dictatorial management or leadership style while others need a democratic style. One 'style-fits-all' should be an exception in management.

Summary

This chapter has examined the concept of leadership. Central to the discussion is the role of leadership in organisational success. Various theories or approaches to leadership have been examined. What has emerged is that leadership is situational. A leadership approach that worked with officers in the military may not work in a research institution. Even one that can work among blue-collar or manual workers might be counterproductive with academics. One which worked well with one group of people in one country or city, may not work well with same group in a different country or city.

Review Questions

1. What is leadership?
2. What is the role of leadership in an organisation?
3. Discuss the following
 - The traits approach
 - Approaches based on the use of authority
 - The managerial grid approach
 - The path-goal approach
 - The contingency approach
 - The continuum approach
 - Leading above the line
 - Leading below the line
4. Critically examine Hersey and Blanchard four leadership styles

Research Activity

Interview three workers and three managers in any organisation of your choice. Find out from each of them:

1. Characteristics of leaders they admire
2. Characteristics of leaders they admire less
3. Compare and contrast manager's and workers' responses. Any variation? Why or why not?
4. Find out from the leaders in this organisation which style of leadership they use to stimulate workers' effort to the advantage of organisational performance

14

Organisation and Management Theories: application to African contexts

Introduction

In this last chapter we answer the question: are organisation and management theories developed from the western industrial contexts relevant to organisations in Africa? In chapter 2, we discussed features of an organisation and applied them to Africa from a macro perspective and the University of Botswana at a micro level to confirm that the western concept of organisation is applicable to Africa. The central thrust of this chapter is that organisation and management theories discussed in this book are relevant to Africa because like organisations in the West, organizations in Africa are integrating structural properties, people and the environment in their processes on a daily basis.

The chapter further observes that there are dysfunctional consequences in diverting attention from the principles of management espoused from the West because they represent the operating manual for the functioning of organisations in Africa. This is so because the structural properties of organisations in Africa mirror those in the West and attempts to use African working manuals (values and principles) risks the danger of creating a hybrid administrative tradition which will increase the discrepancy between what ought to be done and what is actually done. This will affect efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and productivity in organizations in a negative way.

However, caution has been made against wholesale use of Western concepts without a proper adaptation to certain factors in the context in which the organisation is functioning. In other words, a contingency approach is strongly recommended. The chapter will start with a summary of the book before making an argument for the application of Western organisation and management theories to the African setting.

Overall summary

Chapter 1 gives the background to the origin of the book and links theory to practice and raises an important question of whether there is any tension

between them. The central argument is that both are two sides of the same coin and that none is sufficient enough without the other when it comes to managing organisations. Chapter 2 has examined the concept of organisation by focusing more attention on definition, importance, features, resources, activities and classification of organisations. It also has examined the ways in which organisations can be analysed. It also raises the question of why we need to study organisations. The chapter has demonstrated with examples, the relevance of the concept and empirical presence of organisations in Africa. The general conclusion one can make is that organisations are crucial to our daily life and that understanding the positive and negative impacts of organisations on our life will go a long way in improving the management of organisations and therefore the prosperity of humanity in Africa and beyond.

Chapter 3 has analysed three major theories which belong to the classical school of thought, namely, the scientific management movement, principles of management and bureaucracy. Classical theories tried to introduce science, objectivity, predictability and precision in the management of human and material resources in an organisation. It was an attempt to find the 'one best way' of managing organisations. Consequently they found an answer in structural design and proper formalization of systems to remove all traces of informal relations. While structure is central to organisational functioning and that organisations in both developed and developing countries depict these features, there is still more to productivity or performance than just the presence of a sound organisational structure. The human aspect of organisational life was largely ignored.

Chapter 4 has presented the behavioural science school whose major focus is people management and more specifically how to motivate them. The need to acknowledge a multitude of human needs and the impact of managerial perception of employees on management styles and leadership has been examined. We have also discussed about the need to provide motivator and maintenance factors to employees and to treat employees as adults by involving them fully in organisation decision-making processes. However, emphasis on goodness or managerial kindness and informal relations at the expense of other critical factors has been viewed as weakness of the behavioural science school. As an African adage goes, *Chisoni chidapha nkhwali* 'care killed a cat.' Too much kindness can prove to be dangerous at times in view of the many other people who are not good.

Chapter 5 has examined the open system and contingency theories which attempt to integrate the organisation with its environment. This brings additional insights into the management of organisations. Both the classical and behavioural science schools ignored the openness of an organisation to its environment and saw an organisation as a closed system. By demonstrating that organisations are open systems, the theory has broadened our

understanding about organisation and management interface with the environment. Again, by focusing more attention on adaptability of the organisation to its environment, the contingency theory has provided us with additional insights into the practical realities of organisational life. Unlike the other approaches, the contingency theory does not advocate a universally correct approach to solving management problems but maintains that different problems would require different solutions. It is eclectic approach which allows the individual manager to pick a management technique which is applicable to a given situation. This calls for a greater level of flexibility from managers and effective diagnostic skills to determine what technique is required in a given problem situation.

Chapter 6 has examined the concept and importance of management in organisations. Managerial functions are outlined as processes that integrate structure, people and environment in the management of material, human and other resources to achieve human wants. Chapter 7 has examined one of the crucial managerial functions- planning. It has discussed the concept, importance and types of planning. Steps that are followed in the process of planning are also examined. It has also looked at the advantages of planning as well as its limitations. It has also pointed that there has been a lot of experience in Africa with regards to planning since independence in the 1960s.

Chapter 8 has examined the organising function. Our focus has been on the nature of the concept of organising, objectives, management by objectives and the types of structures that emerge as a result of organising. There is no best structure of organising as each will depend on the nature of the organisation and what its strategic goals are. But what is clear is that most organisations use a combination of two or more structures. Chapter 9 has examined the staffing function of management as an extension of the organising function. It has looked at the recruitment and selection process as an attempt to bring the right type of people and in the right quantities required to achieve planned goals of the organisation. Sources and techniques of recruitment and selection have been discussed. Issues of placement, promotion and demotion have been touched too. Chapter 10 has examined the importance of appraising the performance of every employee. It has explained the use of performance appraisal information such as training, rewarding employees, identifying potential among other things. There are different methods used to appraise the performance of individuals. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Appraisal can be done by managers or supervisors, subordinates, outsiders and individuals themselves. The chapter also looked at performance management system (PMS) as a more superior and newer approach to managing the performance of individual employees, departments and the whole organisation. It is argued that there is a lot of logic in its design and implementation since an organisation's strategic plan

is translated to divisional, departmental and individual plans. After all, organisational performance is achieved through the sum of individual performances in various departments and divisions put together. There are both benefits as well as challenges in the introduction and implementation of PMS. To introduce and implement a successful performance management system, it is recommended that stakeholders' involvement, training, taking stock of the work environment, detailed guidelines and top management commitment are important factors.

Chapter 11 has examined directing, controlling and coordinating as three interrelated managerial functions. They are all linked in the sense that while directing the activities of the groups and individuals, managers might need to control deviations and take corrective actions. Again these activities need to be coordinated properly to avoid duplication, conflict and wastage. Within these functions are human relations problems which have to be managed because of the complexity and diversity of human nature.

Chapter 12 examined the concepts of decision making and communication. Decision making permeates all managerial functions just as communication is. Types of decisions, the process of decision making, theories of decision making and factors that influence decision-making processes have been outlined. It has also examined the nature of communication, communication process, channels, barriers and methods of improving communication effectiveness. Chapter 13 has discussed the concept of leadership. Central to the discussion is the role of leadership in organisational success. Various theories or approaches to leadership have been examined. What has emerged is that leadership is situational. A leadership approach that worked with officers in the military may not work in a research institution. Even one that can work among blue-collar or manual workers might be counterproductive with academics. One which worked well with one group of people in one country or city may not work well with same group in a different country or city.

Western Theories in African Contexts

Given that the organisational properties such as hierarchy of authority, rules and regulations, procedures, formal communication common in the western organisational setting, where organisation and management theories emerged, are typical in African organisations, how might we respond to the question of whether western theory is relevant to Africa? There are two answers, yes and no and yes again.

Yes: Very relevant and applicable

Office management systems, operational and information technology in the West and in Africa are similar. In most cases, these are imported from the West. Again, globalisation and improved technology has brought the whole world closely together such that management practices are transferable at a rapid rate. So against this background, it is possible to argue that organisation and management theories are therefore relevant to Africa? We might start by pointing that when one buys a car, sewing machine or a sophisticated musical instrument, there is an accompanying manual which describes the various parts of that machine. A good manual will give details about the functions of each part and how to operate it. There is emphasis in most cases on ensuring that one understands the manual before operating the machine. When the machine is operated accordingly, we are assured that it will function well and for a long time. However, failure to observe the procedures laid down can affect the proper functioning of the machine.

Against this background, one would look at the organisation structure that has been imported from the West as a machine and organisation and management theory as the manual to use in order to operate the machine well. For example, as noted at the beginning of this book, the University of Botswana has the vision, mission and organisation structure which resemble any other institution in Britain or America. It has one of the finest libraries and well qualified international staff surpassing some of the well renowned universities not only in Africa but also in the West. It has also values to guide its operations- integrity, academic freedom, student centered, internationalism etc. It has various policies and management documents which guide the activities of the university. The implication of this is that if the university tries to function outside the stipulated procedures and regulations, it will not realise its vision, mission and strategic goals. These procedures and regulations are not different from other universities overseas. In other words, we have transferred western practices in our organisations.

However, critics have questioned the relevance of western concepts and theories of management to the African setting. There is talk about the African culture, and the difficulty of transferring western concept of management to Africa when the setting and culture are different. Some argue that we need to adapt western theories and concept to our culture. There is one question which many do not answer. How do we adapt western concept and theories to our culture? What do we mean when we say our culture? Is there one African culture? Can organisations structured according to western principles be operated according to 'our cultural imperatives'? The reader will admit that it is common knowledge that African countries have imported structures, machines, theories and concepts which they use or apply in their

everyday life. People do not define computers, e-mails, or automobiles in their own cultural way. They learn the rules about how to drive a car, operate a machine in the way the was designed by the manufacturers in the West. If they want to speed up, they follow the instructions provided. No compromise about it.

Thus, if organisations in Africa are to be efficient and effective in achieving defined goals and objectives, then managers have to follow the principles associated with how best to make organisations work far better. Doing otherwise is compromising and the organisation may not achieve the goals set. One would argue that the moment manager's start allowing cultural values to set in, this is tantamount to operating a western machine with African instructions. Will this work? If managers want to use African instructions to operate organisations, then it would be logical that they design organisations which are purely African.

It is the first view of the book that because we do not have African organisational features in our public and private sector as well as non-governmental organisations, attempts to deviate from western management and organisational theory is probably the major cause of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in some organisations in Africa. A further manifestation of deviating from principles of organisation and management in the process of integrating structure, people, environmental dictates in organisational processes and activities is what is called corruption. Corruption can manifest in several forms like bribery, nepotism and favouritism. These are tendencies which results when officials in an organisation divert from prescribed principles or procedures of formal organisational functioning and substitute with their own way of doing things. Corruption is broadly looked at as, any conduct or behavior in relation to persons entrusted with responsibilities in public or private office which violates their duties. Such behaviour is aimed at obtaining undue gratification or benefit of any kind for themselves and for others.

Bribery involves giving of a benefit that improperly affects actions or decisions of an official while favouritism involves the provision of services or anything on the basis of personal affiliation. Nepotism entails ensuring family members are appointed to positions or receive contracts. According to Mauro (1997), the consequences of corruption are reduction in government revenue and productive investment and growth. It also creates enormous social costs as well as costs to the public and the poor. It distorts the composition of government expenditure, a loss of confidence in public institutions. Paying bribes to reduce tax, fees, dues, licensing fees, traffic fines, custom duties and public utility reduces revenue reduce government revenues. Widespread corruption provides a poor environment that does not attract foreign investment and investors who can make long-term contribution to development. It only attracts investors who seek to make quick profits

through dubious ventures. Again, corruption in aid programmes reduces benefits for the recipient governments.

There are also a social cost resulting from corrupt practices. For example, social costs often results when people's lives are lost through collapsed hotels, stadiums, buildings and bridges because laws, regulations and procedures were disregarded and allocation of contracts for the construction of road, buildings or bridges were made through a corrupt system. It also leads to resistance to economic reforms by those who enjoy twisting the rules and procedures to their advantage. Reforms require transparency, accountability, free and fair competition and reliance on market forces. Beneficiaries resist reforms as that would mean an end to kickbacks and limitation to discretionary powers which reduce chances for economic rent on which corruption thrives. The rich and the powerful who gain from a corrupt system will oppose these reforms. Can this not explain why well intentioned public sector management reforms in many countries have failed to yield fruits over the past decades? (See Ayeni, 2004)

All over Africa and beyond, there is talk about the dysfunctional impact of corruption on the economy of nations and inequality of access to service. Misallocation of resources or projects, awarding of tender to incompetent firms and appointment of unqualified persons to fill positions of authority are issues heavily guarded against everywhere at the formal organisational level. That is, rules of recruitment based on merit and verifiable qualifications or selecting the best tenderer which leads to effective service delivery, are deliberately flouted in a corrupt system. Alternatively, rather than appointing the most qualified candidate, a friend's son or a relative is appointed.

According to the cultural values or beliefs of the author, friends and relatives would expect him to award them tenders or appoint them to existing vacancies. This is irrespective of their level of competence or qualification. If this is the expectation of his culture, should he follow these expectations as a way of adapting western concepts to his culture? If no, which aspects are to be adapted to the culture and which ones are not to be adapted?(Dzimhiri, 1996).

Interestingly, we do not adapt musical equipment, computers, fax machines and televisions which we purchase from London or New York to our culture. We operate them according to the instructions given in the manual. This raises an important question: Why should we adapt organisational functioning to our culture in spite of the fact that it has all the characteristics which do not originate from our culture? It is also a fact that attempts to follow the norms of our culture will lead to dysfunctional consequences like corruption. In other words, the impact of diverting from the prescribed manual- procedures, rules and regulations for running the organisation is negative. In any case there are cultural diversities in Africa-

diverse values, beliefs, expectations and norms thereby creating further confusion which has the potential to divert attention from stated organisational vision, mission, strategic goals and objectives. Because of the dysfunctional consequences of these off-the rule practices, a universal road of rule based, objective, merit-based and rational choice would be appropriate in managing organizations everywhere. When we apply universalistic values, rules and procedures, the outcome is objective, competitive and reasonable. We appoint the right candidate who will perform to the expectation of the organization. The best qualified tenderer who will construct a building, road, or bridge in a more professional manner is selected. This raises citizen confidence for public institutions.

The role of international donor agencies is becoming more and more harmonising in terms of management systems in Africa and beyond. In the process of helping to restructure the economies of many African countries, the IMF and World Bank for example, recommend certain values and attributes for public institutions and organizations. For example, aid over the past decades is dependent on democracy, good governance, transparency and accountability. A lot of reforms taking place in Africa in the public service attest to this standardisation of organisation and management of public institutions. At the national level, countries have been helped to develop their national visions, missions, and values to ensure that they manage their institutions effectively and efficiently. There has been a great deal of commonality in the way system and structures and values are being disseminated around the world through these international agencies. National visions, poverty alleviation strategies, anti-corruption measures, poverty reduction strategy papers and strategic plans, to name a few, have been formulated in governments, departments, parastatal bodies and NGOs in Africa. This, no doubt, is an attempt to ensure that all organisations, irrespective of cultural contexts, should adhere to western principles and values of management?

A Word of Caution: Contingency Management

We have argued that any deviation from universalistic principles runs the risk of breeding corruption with all its dysfunctional consequences on organisational performance. An attempt has been made to compare organisation theory as a framework or superstructure of how organisations are designed and management theory as the manual which has to be used to operate the machine. We have therefore suggested that we do not have to deviate from the principles of management advocated from the West. The impression we seem to be creating is that of advocating for the universalistic theory and practice of management. Is this realistic?

This is not to suggest that the context and nature of an organisation should not be taken into account when applying management theories developed from the West. It is quite clear that even Western theorists have failed to agree on the one best way to manage organisations. Whilst the classical theorist paid more premium on organisation structure as the basis for organisational effectiveness and efficiency, the behavioural science school paid particular attention on the human element. The open system and contingency theories laid emphasis on the importance of the environment in influencing the functioning of modern organisations. From the open systems and contingency perspective, the implication is that systems of leadership and managerial styles, for example, should be based on the situation a manager finds himself. As emphasised before, managing a university or research institution will be different from managing an army barracks. Similarly, managing a private sector profit making organisation will be different from a non-profit making service-oriented public service organisation. This in effect is to do with styles, and nature of rules, regulations, procedures and controls that are available. Contingency approach therefore does not mean absence of rules and regulations and procedures. It is rather a matter of the differences in the style and degree to which control is exercised by the manager. What is becoming universal in the above discussion is that:

1. Organisations have structural properties which enable them to coordinate various activities and achieve pre-determined goals.
2. These organisations have set rules, regulations and procedures as well as controls to achieve their goals
3. Organisations are social structures or human groupings meant to achieve pre-determined goals. Both skilled and unskilled people work in them and therefore need to be motivated if they have to contribute willingly for the organisation to achieve its performance targets
4. The political, social, economic, technological and cultural environment of the organisation influences the way the organisation functions.
5. The style and nature of managerial competence embedded in its leadership or management will determine the extent to which certain organisations will achieve their planned goals.
6. Adaptation to local culture or conditions within which an organisation is functioning should not mean giving up totally to the dictates of the local context. Rather, it involves using a diagnostic approach to determine the extent to which a more flexible compromise can be reached without sacrificing the goals of the organisation in question.

7. It also means, for example, avoiding offending women by forming a mixed team of men and women in certain cultures where they should not mix with men. Or if the local cultural values a lot of participation in decision making, then it makes sense to involve people in decision making.
8. All this does not mean doing away with the formal aspects of organisational imperatives. Rather, taking account of the situational factors within which the organisation finds itself. Otherwise we loose employees due to religious or cultural imperatives, or we loose customers because we are not sensitive to local cultural values.
9. After all, organisation behaviour is influenced by the wider culture within which they are operating.

Two Concluding Points

In conclusion to this book, two points can be made about the applicability of western theories and concepts of management and organisations to Africa. It is quite obvious from our discussion that organisations in African are structured according to western organisational theory and are managed in many ways accordingly. Their superstructure as well as communication and information technology is almost the same though the degree of sophistication may vary. If they were managed according to the local conditions overall, most of them would have collapsed. By implication, those that collapse are in one way or the other diverting from the ideal discipline found in the principles of management.

The second point is the opposite of what we have just said. Although the superstructure of organisations in Africa mirror those of the West, if they were functioning without taking into account the local cultural environment, they would have collapsed long ago. We are dealing with African peoples with diverse background traditions, customs, beliefs and values which cannot be ignored. The fact that a Western manager is able to survive in African contexts-which are quite different from where he comes from- means that managers are able to adapt managerial styles or attitudes to non-Western contexts.

Thus, there is a particular informal line on managerial behaviour that is required to strike a balance between the needs of modern formal organisations as espoused by the owners and the needs of the operating contexts within which an organisation operating. The organisation has to give and take, much as cultural imperatives have also to take and give. Therefore, effective management of organisations involve taking all the strength of Western principles and concepts of organisation and management plus all the strengths found in the wider culture within which organisations are

functioning. We therefore need contingency managers who can blend the two antagonistic hitherto interdependent forces- the organisation and its environment.

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