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MODELS OF SCHOOL STAFF MOTIVATION

Abstract: *Motivation stands as a cornerstone in shaping the overall atmosphere and interactions within school staff. It encompasses the provision of essential resources that enable teachers and professional associates to fulfill their responsibilities proficiently. This paper explores the pivotal role of the principal in human resource management, with a specific focus on teachers and professional associates. Additionally, it conducts a comprehensive examination of diverse strategies for motivating employees, with a detailed analysis of Douglas McGregor's model. A multitude of studies underscores the profoundly human dimension within organizations, particularly in educational sector. They dissect the intricate interplay among employees, scrutinizing how both individuals and groups respond and engage within the organizational framework. This encompasses avenues for taking initiative and exhibiting self-direction, driven by an authentic commitment to the betterment of the whole organization. These attitudes not only permeate the thought processes of managers but also wield substantial influence over their actions within the organizational milieu. This underscores the crucial interplay between motivation models and management approaches, in accordance with the foundational tenets outlined in McGregor's X and Y theories. Managers who align with the Theory Y perspective foster an environment that champions active participation and places a premium on the ideas and aspirations of individual team members. Proponents of Theory X advocate for intensified supervision and endorse an authoritative management style, deeming it indispensable for attaining organizational objectives. This dichotomy in approaches underscores the fundamental impact of managerial philosophy on the organizational climate and the motivation levels and productivity of employees.*

Keywords: *Theory X, Theory Y, models of motivation.*

Introduction

The post-World War II era witnessed a surge in studies aimed at uncovering the intricate interplay between workers' attitudes and behaviors, and how these factors significantly shape managerial conduct. One of the most influential contributions to this field was made by Douglas McGregor, whose groundbreaking work introduced two distinct sets of assumptions. These assumptions not only shape the mindset of managers but also exert a profound impact on their behavior within organizational settings. These contrasting paradigms were later coined as Theory X and Theory Y by McGregor in 1960.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y represent seminal concepts in the realms of human work motivation and management. Originating from his tenure at the MIT Sloan School of Management during the 1950s, McGregor's ideas continued to evolve and gain prominence throughout the 1960s. His research was deeply rooted in the realm of motivation theory, aligning with the pioneering work of Abraham Maslow, who introduced the influential concept of the hierarchy of needs. Together, these scholars laid the foundation for comprehensive understanding of human behavior and motivation in the workplace.

Theory X and Theory Y

McGregor's delineation of Theory X and Theory Y encapsulates divergent paradigms of workforce motivation, serving as guiding principles for managers in the realms of human resource management, organizational behavior, communication, and development. Theory X underscores the significance of rigorous supervision, coupled with the application of external incentives and penalties, as mechanisms to spur productivity. In stark contrast, Theory Y places emphasis on nurturing job satisfaction and entrusting workers with a sense of autonomy, reducing the need for direct oversight.

The strategic deployment of Theory X and Theory Y by managers can wield distinct impacts on employee motivation and productivity. Some may opt for a blended approach, drawing upon elements from both theories to tailor their management practices to the specific needs of their teams (Morse and Lorsch, 1970). McGregor astutely posited that Theory X and Theory Y do not occupy opposing poles on a single spectrum, but rather constitute two separate continuums. Therefore, achieving optimal productivity often necessitates a judicious fusion of both paradigms (Hattangadi, 2015).

This nuanced approach finds its roots in Fred Fiedler's seminal work on leadership styles, known as the contingency theory. According to this framework, managers conduct a thorough assessment of the work environment, considering both internal and external factors, before determining their leadership style. Managers aligned with Theory X tend to adopt an authoritative management style, characterized by multiple tiers of supervisors and managers actively involved in overseeing and micromanaging employees. Conversely, managers subscribing to Theory Y favor a more hands-off approach, fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity that places a premium on individual perspectives and aspirations.

Given the dynamic nature of workplaces, where internal and external conditions are subject to change, it is improbable for managers to rely solely on either Theory X or Theory Y. Instead, adaptability becomes paramount, prompting managers to judiciously blend elements of both approaches as circumstances dictate (Avolio, 2007). This fluidity allows for a responsive and effective management style that aligns with the evolving locus of control within the organization.

Theory X vs. Theory Y

Theory X

In stark contrast to Theory X, Theory Y operates on fundamentally different assumptions about the nature of employees and their intrinsic motivations. According to Theory Y, workers possess a natural inclination to seek out and engage in meaningful work. They are not inherently lazy or averse to labor, but rather exhibit a desire to contribute and excel in their roles. Moreover, Theory Y posits that individuals are innately ambitious and seek opportunities for growth and development. They are not content with mere routine and are willing to shoulder responsibility.

For managers who embrace Theory Y, the approach to creating a conducive work environment diverges significantly. Rather than seeking to exert strict control, Theory Y managers recognize the importance of fostering an atmosphere of trust, collaboration, and empowerment. They understand that providing employees with autonomy and the latitude to tackle challenges leads to greater creativity, problem-solving, and overall productivity.

Unlike the carrot-and-stick method advocated by Theory X, Theory Y managers lean towards intrinsic motivators. They acknowledge that a sense of purpose, achievement, and personal fulfillment are potent drivers of employee performance. Instead of relying solely on rigid rules and standard procedures, they prioritize open communication, teamwork, and mutual respect.

The exemplar of a Theory Y manager can be found in those who empower their teams, encouraging them to take ownership of their tasks and participate actively in decision-making processes. This approach promotes a culture of self-motivation and shared accountability. McGregor himself illustrated this concept by highlighting the transformative leadership style of Abraham Lincoln, who demonstrated a deep belief in the potential and inherent goodness of people (Jones, George, 2008).

In essence, Theory Y represents a paradigm shift in management philosophy, one that places faith in the intrinsic motivations and capabilities of employees. It emphasizes a more human-centered approach, recognizing that by nurturing a sense of purpose and autonomy, organizations can unlock untapped reservoirs of creativity and productivity within their workforce.

Theory Y

Theory Y represents a paradigm shift in the understanding of employee motivation and behavior. Unlike Theory X, which posits that employees are inherently disinclined to work and require stringent control, Theory Y asserts that workers are not inherently lazy. Rather, work is seen as a natural and fulfilling endeavor for them, and they have the potential to be genuinely committed to organizational goals. According to McGregor, the work environment plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' perceptions of work, determining whether it is perceived as a source of fulfillment or drudgery.

In a Theory Y-oriented environment, managers operate on the premise that employees, when aligned with the organization's objectives, exhibit a degree of self-motivation and self-control. This perspective empowers managers to focus on creating a conducive work setting that fosters commitment to organizational goals. It encourages an atmosphere that values creativity, initiative, and self-direction among employees.

One of the key tenets of Theory Y is the belief that cooperation within an organization is not merely contingent on innate human nature, but is profoundly influenced by management's ability to tap into the potential of its human resources. This viewpoint underscores the vital role that effective leadership and managerial practices play in nurturing a collaborative and productive work environment.

When managers implement Theory Y principles, the organizational landscape transforms. Authority is decentralized, granting employees more autonomy and control over their work, either individually or in groups. While individuals and teams are held responsible for their actions, the manager's role shifts from one of strict control to that of a facilitator, providing the necessary support and guidance to ensure employees have the resources they need to excel in their tasks. This approach aligns closely with the management philosophy of Henri Fayol, who advocated for a more decentralized distribution of authority, reflecting the ideals of Theory Y over Theory X (Jones, George, 2008: 59).

In essence, Theory Y champions a more holistic and human-centric approach to management, acknowledging that when provided with the right environment, employees are not only capable but also eager to contribute meaningfully to the success of the whole organization. This paradigm places trust in the innate drive and potential of individuals, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and mutual growth.

The specific characteristics of the school environment and its personnel

Research shows that high-performing schools have...¹

a) **A clear and shared focus.** Knowing the expectations or goal of a project can often mean the difference between performing poorly and performing well. It's no different on a school-wide level. When an entire school knows and shares the focus, everyone within that school works better toward the end goal.

¹ "What Are the Characteristics of a Successful School?" available at <https://www.readnaturally.com/about-us/blog/what-are-the-characteristics-of-a-successful-school>

b) High standards and expectations for all students. If expectations are high, performance tends to be high as well. School must set high standards, with a belief in the competence of each and every student to work at or slightly above instructional level—with challenging, but not frustrating material—in order to accelerate progress.

c) Effective school leadership. Anyone who has worked in a school understands the importance of having strong leadership. And strong leadership does not begin and end with the administration. A high-performing school has good leaders at all levels—the principal, faculty, staff, parents, students, and so on. High-quality trainings and individualized coaching services provide that teachers may lead others in implementing programs to support their development.

d) High levels of collaboration and communication. We can accomplish more as a team than we can accomplish by ourselves. And productive communication is the difference between a team that works well together and a team that falls apart. Schools that have a teamwork mentality and good communication measures—both within the school and as part of a greater community—tend to perform best. Students, teachers, administration, and families working together to achieve optimal results for each student build clear communication every step of the way in the form of graphs, letters home, communicating day-to-day progress, personal interactions, and more.

e) Curriculum, instruction and assessments aligned with state standards. High-performing schools use research-based strategies and materials. They also train staff to understand state assessments and respond appropriately to the results, research based, research proven, and aligned with best practices, assessment tools that work well in conjunction with standardized assessments to determine the students' needs and support.

f) Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching. When teachers are able to closely monitor student progress, they can make the appropriate adjustments to ensure each student's needs are being met. Successful schools incorporate frequent monitoring and offer support to students who need extra help. Progress monitoring is an essential component. Students monitor their own progress, which is highly motivating and provides data that enables the teacher to make appropriate adjustments.

g) Focused professional development. Successful schools support staff in obtaining high-quality professional development.

h) A supportive learning environment. In addition to offering a healthy and respectful school climate, research shows that successful schools offer personalized instruction and small-group interactions to increase student-to-teacher contact. Providing an individualized support and valuable teacher/student interaction are highly conducive to this kind of environment.

i) High levels of family and community involvement. Finally, successful schools embrace the “village mentality” of leaning on family and community members to help with education. Support from parents and guardians is a vital part of the supporting programs, and the many friends and partners in the industry can help in the mission of improving the quality of education as possible.

The interplay between various management models and the distinct attributes of the school environment

In terms of education, in the context of school leadership, what applies to society, also applies to schools.² If democracy is the best way to respond to the challenges facing contemporary society, if we advocate democratic school leadership, it is necessary to consider the alternatives.

Autocratic leaders tend to make all decisions by themselves. They will argue that this is the most effective style to complete a lot of tasks in a short period of time. That is indeed the strength of autocratic leadership, but its weakness is that the decisions may be opposed or questioned, which in turn increases the likeliness of conflict and the refusal to cooperate. Autocratic leaders underestimate to what extent they depend on others. School rules that are imposed without discussion are disobeyed more frequently, which is counterproductive in dealing with misconduct and bullying. Autocratic leadership often follows the status quo and given conventions, offering little in terms of innovation and development. Academic results are poor in autocratically led schools, as the students' specific needs for support and encouragement receive little attention.

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by the lack of clearly defined procedures for decision-making and little involvement by the leader in decision-making processes. Time for discussions is not clearly limited, so the efficiency of decision-making and school management is poor. On the other hand, the strength of this type of leadership is a low level of aggression and conflicts in the school community.

Paternalistic leaders act as parental figures by taking care of their subordinates as a parent would, without giving them any responsibility or freedom of choice. In this type of leadership, the leader shows concern and cares for his staff. In return, he expects trust, loyalty, and obedience. Teachers are expected to be totally committed to what the leader believes in and to refrain from making their own choices or working independently. The teachers are expected to remain employed in the same school for a longer time to strengthen loyalty and trust. Paternalistic leadership tends to divide the staff, as the school leader will reward his favorite teachers for their loyalty with special treatment and opportunities like projects, trips, training, etc.

A democratic style of leadership offers the potential to overcome the weaknesses that the other types of leadership tend to develop. A democratic school leader ensures that all members of the school community are involved in the decision-making process – but participation will vary, depending on the context. Students will not participate in every decision and the leader may not always have the last word. In some cases, he may confine himself to facilitating an agreement among the staff or the whole school community, or accept a decision he does not support himself.

Leadership and responsibility are shared, and frequently there are leaders of subgroups. The more members of the school community participate in the

² “ Styles of school leadership “ available at <https://www.living-democracy.com/principals/leadership/a-democratic-style-of-school-leadership/styles-of-school-leadership/>

process – the school leader, the staff, students, housekeepers, office staff, perhaps also parents and external stakeholders, the clearer the picture of different interests, views and values will be. The strength of democratic school leadership lies in its potential to produce decisions and solutions that are widely accepted and supported, provided all interests and queries have been taken into account. The learning effort required for the different groups in the school community to develop their full participation potential may be quite daunting, but it is rewarding. The school community can develop a democratic school culture with an open and friendly atmosphere. Its members will be more motivated and committed, formal and informal communication will thrive, both involving the school leader and the school community. Discipline will improve if the students feel responsible for their school as well. The school will achieve higher academic results by accommodating the diversified abilities and talents of its students.

Democratic school leadership therefore has strong potential as well as challenges. The more members participate, the more complex the processes of discussion, consensus- building and decision-making will be. Autocratic shortcuts to efficient decision-making may then seem to offer an attractive alternative. It is worth the effort to deal with this complexity, as nowadays students should learn how to thrive in ambivalent and unclear situations. Democratically led schools support their societies by educating their students to become citizens who are competent and confident to take part in controversial and dynamic decision-making processes.

Conclusion

As McGregor aptly pointed out, the boundaries of collaboration within organizational settings are not solely defined by human nature, but hinge on the management's proficiency in tapping into the latent potential within its workforce. This insight underscores the critical role that effective leadership plays in harnessing the capabilities of employees.

For managers, particularly principals, fostering a conducive and productive work environment requires an approach rooted in empowerment and mutual respect. They should actively seek to cultivate a culture of active participation and genuine appreciation for the diverse perspectives, aspirations, and objectives of individuals within the organization. This inclusivity extends to both teaching and non-teaching staff, recognizing that every member of the team brings unique strengths and insights to the table.

Encouraging initiative and self-direction among employees is a cornerstone of this approach. Principals should provide opportunities for individuals to take ownership of their roles and projects, thereby instilling a sense of ownership and pride in their contributions. Furthermore, decentralizing authority empowers employees, enabling them to have a more direct impact on the outcomes of their work.

In this paradigm, the role of the manager shifts from strict oversight to that of a supportive guide. Principals should be readily available to offer advice, resources,

and mentorship, ensuring that employees have the tools they need to excel in their tasks. This not only bolsters their confidence but also demonstrates a genuine investment in their professional growth and success.

The cumulative effect of these strategies is a workplace characterized by heightened motivation and a palpable commitment to the overarching goals of the organization. By creating an environment where every individual's voice is valued and their contributions are acknowledged, principals contribute to a culture of engagement, innovation, and shared purpose.

Ultimately, this holistic approach to management, grounded in McGregor's insights, has the potential to transform the organizational dynamic, resulting in a more vibrant, motivated, and collaborative workforce. It reinforces the notion that, given the right conditions, individuals are not only capable of realizing their full potential but are also eager to do so in service of the collective success of the organization.

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