
BOOK RESUME

TITLE : ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR IN EDUCATION

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EDITOR'S NOTE

A new section called 'Book Resume' has been started in the Journal. The main purpose is to bring to the notice of the teachers and managers of engineering education the professional literature and the key ideas contained in this literature. Since the information about professional literature in higher education is scarcely disseminated to teachers and managers, the present Book Resume, unlike traditional book review, has been written in more detail.

Readers are requested to send their reactions to the Editor.

INTRODUCTION

This book is written for people who want to be leaders in education. In this era, the powers of the leader do not emanate from their legal clout, but from their ability to elicit the enthusiastic and voluntary involvement of students, teachers, community residents and official hierarchy, for improving effectiveness and efficiency of the educational institutes.

That the importance of this field of study called 'Organisational Behaviour in Education' is growing is evident from the fact that in American Colleges and Universities, its study has become a part of central core of programs of educational administration. In view of the growing complexity of higher educational scene in India, there is no doubt that the UGC, AICTE UNIVERSITIES AND MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION will have to highlight its importance to the educational leaders in this country.

SALIENT STRUCTURE OF CONTENTS IN THE BOOK

This book is divided in two parts. Part I

explains the theoretical foundations of Organisational Behaviour; Part II explains concepts in organisational Behaviour.

Under the broader theme of theoretical foundations, the book explains ideas in the first three chapters. In Chapter one, the author compares three organisational thoughts.

- i) Classical theory which emphasises scientific management in which management decides the tasks to be done, assigns roles to people and systematically gets the work done through closer supervision;
- ii) Human relations theory which emphasizes psychological and social aspects of the organisation and the impact of workers' participation, co-operation and morale on the workers' BOOK productivity.
- iii) Organisational behavioural theory which seeks the synthesis of both the above mentioned theories.

The current writers on organisational behaviour, according to the author, espouse a new perspective called Human Resource Management for educational organisations,

which are different from manufacturing and business organisations in that their goals are ambiguous; important activities like teaching, research and extension services are loosely coupled, but other administrative sub-systems are tightly coupled.

Chapter 2 describes organisational theory as applied to educational institutes. Consciously or unconsciously, every administrator uses organisational theory to manage their institutes professionally. An administrator, in the early days, used bureaucratic theories. Recently human resources theory is steadily gaining acceptance in managing teachers and researchers, while bureaucratic approaches are applied to routine management. It must be remembered that both approaches have different assumptions about the people working in the organisation and are explained adequately by Douglas McGregor through his Theory X and Theory Y in his book 'Human side of Enterprise'.

Chapter 3 describes systems theory and its relation to Organisational Behaviour. According to systems' theory, the school is viewed as an open system which is affected by the demands and culture of the external environment- economic, political, social and cultural. The system also assumes its present operational characteristics through its internal interaction between individual employees and the organisation as a whole. The strong point of the systems theory is that it emphasizes that the organisation consists of sub-systems and that there are multiple factors that cause problematic situations, not just one or two.

Systems theory is supplemented by role theory, which further explains the relationship of an individual with the organisation. The above two theories by themselves do not explain the relationship between basic components of an organisation: people, technology, structure and task. This is done through viewing the organisation as a socio - technical system. Organisational scientists, however, note that

the general theoretical framework provided by above theories are not always sufficient to manage all problematic situation in industries and schools, unless specific characteristics like its culture, environment etc. are taken into account. The scientists have, therefore, evolved a 'Contingency theory' which emphasizes that there is no one way of handling organisational issues. Diagnosing the current situation by the managers is always the starting point before deciding policy issues.

Chapter 4 on 'Motivation' explains the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and suggests that managerial policies should encourage an environment where employees are intrinsically motivated. Qualitative improvement needs efforts of intrinsically motivated employees. Reward system regarding intrinsically motivated employees, like job-enrichment and introduction of quality circles are some of the measures to improve intrinsic motivation.

Chapter 5 on 'Leadership' distinguishes exercise of naked power from other types where power is used in mutual consultation of the people managed. Such a new perspective of leadership emphasizes simultaneous attention of the managers to task and human relations. But in the educational institutions it is important for the managers to focus on pedagogical and curricular problems and help teachers to improve their instructional behaviour. The chapter adds two more dimensions to leadership in educational culture. Through symbolic leadership, the administrator signals and demonstrates to others what is important, what is valued and what is wanted and what goals override all others. Leaders who build organisational culture articulate the purpose and the mission of the school, develop symbols that reinforce uniqueness of the school and make them highly visible and reward those who reflect the norms and values of the schools, and thus shape and mould people to think, feel

and behave and move all teachers and researchers to move together towards higher level of excellence.

Chapter 6 describes characteristics of organisational culture as a body of solutions to problems which have worked for the organisation in the past. This, then, is taught to newcomers as the correct ways to perceive, think about and feel in relation to these problems; over a time the organisational culture takes a deeper meaning and defines assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, even perceptions of the participants in the organisation and defines rules of the game. Since performance of educational institutes is strongly linked to this organisational culture, it is necessary to understand the culture, before attempts are made to reform them. But traditional methods of rationalistic research cannot discover the culture. New research methodology called naturalistic method of inquiry in now being used for the purpose. The chapter compares and contrasts the characteristics of the traditional and the emerging research methodology called naturalistic research.

Chapter 7, then, proceeds to explain management strategies for introducing change in the school in a planned way. Out of the several strategies in vogue in literature and practice, the book introduces three distinct but complementary strategies viz.

- (i) emperical - rational strategy,
- (ii) power coercive strategy,
- iii) normative - reeducative strategy.

Emperical - rational strategy emphasizes inventing and discovering better ideas through experimentation or from others and make them available to teachers and researchers in useful form. Power - coercive strategy uses sanctions to compel organisations to change by introducing time - table, forms of reporting progress and monitoring compliance. Normative-re educative strategy believes that change can

be brought about by improving teachers and organisations' problem solving capacities. This envisages shift of manager's orientation from mechanistic, bureaucratic and classical one to creative and problem solving norms. This leads to organisation's capacity of self-renewal. These are strategies which were evolved to reform industrial and business organisations. While using these concepts to educational organisations, it must be recognised that they differ from the business organisations in the sense that in the educational organisations -

- (i) goals are diffused,
- (ii) technical capability within the organisations is low, i.e. scientific base of academic activities is weak,
- (iii) sub - systems are loosely coupled
- (iv) boundary management is difficult,
- (v) educational institutes have always functioned in a protected environment,
- (vi) they are simultaneously constrained as well as decentralised.

Chapter 8 describes 'Conflict' as a legitimate phenomenon within any organisation, because it stimulates creative solution. However, management should strive for managing conflict for constructive purposes, which requires that they should not seek help from legal advisors or mediators who view conflict in combative form, but from behavioural scientists who would try to minimise destructive tendencies, encourage tenderness and use win-win situations to promote organisational growth and development.

Chapter 9 on Decision Making warns that decision making in educational organisation is a complex process, because number of events take place simultaneously. The theory of Human Resource Management takes into account such concepts like goal ambiguity, loose coupling, organisational culture, motivation and learning, employee participation, styles of management in decision making. It creates decision making teams consisting of both managers and the employees who simultaneously engage in

sequence of steps i.e.

- i) defining the problem,
- ii) identifying possible alternatives,
- iii) predicting consequences of each reasonable alternative and
- iv) choose alternative to be followed, before taking organisational decision about educational reform.

The strong point of this book is that each chapter is followed by 'suggested reading' and 'Notes'. 'Suggested Reading' also highlights the special features of the references cited. Anybody wishing to study this subject can derive a lot of guidance from this information for self study.

RELEVANCE TO ENGINEERING EDUCATION

In the Indian context, the managers of the post-secondary technical and vocational education are not very much aware of this field of study even though it is taught as one of the subjects in MBA courses. However, the fact remains that engineering colleges and polytechnics are in the throes of utter confusion. Students' demand for ATKT, supreme court interventions in capitation fee colleges, inability of UGC to give strong direction to teacher education through their staff colleges, crises in university education,

etc. all point to the malaise prevalent in the higher education.

Through this 'Book Resume', an effort has been made to describe key concepts that build up this field of study. Indian educational leaders, it is hoped, will understand the breadth of this field and realize that to be a professional manager, one has to build up the scientific base for subsequent actions. This needs a well organised in-service educational programme by staff colleges or through self-learning.

In - service educational needs of principals, directors of technical education and bureaucrats of the ministry of education are complex and too important to be taken casually and left to unorganised visits, short courses and incidental learning through on-the-job experience. It must be in the form of organised initial education program of at least one year leading to an advance degree or diploma. Such programs will equip them with theoretical concepts of educational administration. This should be one of the component of organised continuing education program of educational managers and administrators, other two being induction and on-the job training for skill development.

