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PERCEPTION OF MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE BY JUNIOR MANAGERS — A Study

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The success or failure of an organisation depends to a great extent on the motivation of its employees at various levels. The motivation of the employees is largely influenced by the perception of the internal climate of the organisation, whether it is conducive for better performance or not. The Organisational climate determines the attitudes, values and beliefs of its members. It is a "relatively enduring quality of the internal environment, that is experienced by its members, influences their behaviour and can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics of the organisation." The author explains that unless the members, especially those who are better educated, experience the internal climate to be not satisfactory, they either quit the organisation or don't discharge their functions to the best of their abilities.

It is the responsibility of the corporate management of the organisation to provide the conducive climate of proper motivation and satisfaction for their employees at various levels. Organisational climate is one of the forces that determine the extent of motivation. The importance of motivational climate in an organisation lies in its potential for influencing such important factors as efficiency, productivity and job satisfaction. Motivational scientists like Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Fredrick Herzberg and Chris Argyris in their theories of motivation stated that apart from factors like adequate salary, security, challenging work, etc., a conducive environment will act as great motivator and make the individuals desire to do the job well and achieve the goals set by management. Motivational climate of an organisation refers to the major concerns of its members and different people perceive different motivational concerns differently depending on one's place and importance in the hierarchy, experience, expertise and educational qualifications, etc. It is in the best interest of an organisation that its management at the top, gain some knowledge about the perception of various motivational concerns by its members, so that appropriate measures can be taken to ensure the prevalence of proper internal environment. The corrective measures may include modification in certain managerial factors like supervision and communication, etc., or implementation of some non-monetary incentives as the case may be. It was observed that in the united states "The system in the excellent companies make extraordinary use of non-monetary incentives". In Indian context, this is applicable mostly to those who are in the managerial cadres.

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Importance of The Study

The job of a junior manager in most of the enterprises is quite complex and demanding. To accomplish his task he has to depend on his subordinates, superiors and peers. In the process, he plays a conflicting role of a superior, subordinate and peer. Another aspect is that the junior manager's position in the organisation is such that he lacks influence in the formulation of company's policies which he is expected to implement and execute and has insufficient authority and resources to carry-out such policies. In view of the circumstances in which a junior manager has to perform his tasks, the internal environment should be conducive and encouraging for him to do his job most effectively and efficiently. In other words, it should be achievement oriented. In this context, an attempt has been made in this study to analyse the perceptions of various junior managers in different operating divisions of a large Public Sector enterprise located in Karimnagar about the motivational climate in the organisation.

The Objectives of The Study

- i) To examine the relative dominance of various motivational concerns in terms of their strength with special emphasis on the "Achievement" and "Extensions" concerns.
- ii) To analyse the internal environment (organisational) factors that contribute most/least to these concerns.
- iii) To make appropriate suggestions for making the internal environment more "Achievement" and "Extension"-oriented.

Scope and Methodology

The present study aims at analysing the perceptions of junior managers regarding the motivational climate in the study 'Public Sector Undertaking situated in Karimnagar'. To assess the perceptions of motivational climate*, 50 Junior managers, with more than 3 years of experience, were selected and a questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire relates to five different motivational concerns, viz., Achievement, Affiliation, Dependence, Extension and Power.

The "Achievement" concern refers to doing a task better to achieve a standard of excellence, accomplishing something unique and important. The employees of an organisation having "Achievement" as dominant concern may undertake certain risks to achieve something new or challenging so that they are distinguished from average performers.

The "Affiliation" concern refers to warm, friendly and compassionate relationships. An organisation with "Affiliation" as dominant concern foregoes all types of "Achievement" for the sake of harmonious relationship.

* Questionnaire developed by Dr. Udai Parikh, & Dr. T.V. Rao, IIM, Ahmedabad.

Members of such an organisation seldom take initiative or attempt any adventure.

The dependency concern relates to "compliance" and "conformity" to orders from above. An organisation having "dependency" as a major concern usually lacks initiative and officers depend on superiors for even simple decisions and expect their subordinates to behave in the same way. Task is not viewed as important as "conformity".

The "extension" concern describes an urge to benefit others and taking-up challenging tasks. An organisation having "extension" as dominant concern may undertake many new strategies and the officers may take certain risks to ensure success.

The "power" concern signifies influence and control over others and to gain position of authority and status. The members of an organisation with "power" as dominant concern derive satisfaction by controlling the means of influence over others. "Status" and "self" are considered more important than task and people.

It is desirable that a successful organisation should have "achievement" and "extension" as dominant concerns; otherwise the organisation may not be able to carry-out the task with commitment and involvement.

There are 11 dimensions and under each dimension there are five statements representing the five motivational concerns. The respondents were asked to rank the statements so that all the statements get ranks between 1 and 5. First rank is given to a statement indicates the highest strength and fifth rank to it the less.

The total/rank scores of the five concerns vary between 11 and 55 except in case of power concern for which the range is 10 to 50. The average score of each concern is obtained by dividing the total/rank score by 11 (10 in case of power concern) and the average rank score varies between 1 and 5. The higher the average rank score, the lower the strength and vice-versa. In order to facilitate direct comparison the average rank scores are converted in to strength scores by subtracting the average rank score of each concern from 5. The higher the score, the higher the strength and vice-versa.

Table-I shows the total/rank scores, average rank scores and strength scores of the five motivational concerns after adjusting the scores with common factor 50 i.e., equivalent to the number of respondents.

From the above table it is clear that achievement concern has the highest strength (2.45) followed by affiliation (2.18), dependence (2.00), extension (1.91), power (1.80). Though relatively achievement concern has the highest strength, the degree of it strength is less than 50% of the maximum strength score which is 5. "Extension" with an average strength of (1.91) is fourth in the order after "Affiliation" with (2.18) strength score occupying the second place.

In the succeeding paragraphs an analysis is made to ascertain the degree of influence of the various dimensions on the "Achievement" and "Extension" concerns as perceived by the respondents. Table- II and Table-

III show the dimensional ranks of "Achievement" and "Extension" concerns given by the respondents.

TABLE-I : Rank And Strength Scores of Five Motivational Concerns

S.No.Motivational Concern	Total Rank Score	Average Rank Score	Average Rank Score
1. Achievement	28.00	2.55	2.45
2. Affiliation	31.00	2.82	2.18
3. Dependence	33.00	3.00	2.00
4. Extension	34.00	3.09	1.91
5. Power	32.00	3.20	1.80

The first rank is the most descriptive or indicates greater degree of influence of a dimension on a particular concern, whereas fifth rank is the least descriptive or indicates lesser degree of influence of a dimension on a particular motivational concern. Rank 2,3 and 4 fall in between these two extremes. An analysis of Table-II reveals that the range of the percentage of respondents giving 1st Rank to the dimensions under "Achievement" concern varies between 14% and 54% i.e., 14% to "Managing mistakes", and 54% to "Orientation". The position of other dimensions is "Managing problems" (16%), "Managing Conflicts" (18%) "Communication" (28%), "Managing Rewards" (24%), "Inter-personal Relationships" (30%), "Trust" (26%), "Risk Taking" (26%), "Decision making" (30%), and "Supervision" (38%).

An analysis of Table-III shows that the range of the percentage of respondents giving the first rank to the dimensions under "Extension" concern varies between 4% and 34% i.e., 4% to "Managing rewards" and 34% to "Managing problems". The position of other dimensions is "Orientation" (8%), "Interpersonal relationship" (10%), "Supervision" (8%), "Communication" (8%), "Managing conflicts" (8%), "Managing mistakes", (32%), "Trust" (12%), "Risk-taking" (12%) and "Decision making" (2%).

It is clear that almost all the dimensions of "Achievement" -"Extension" concerned need to be improved. Discussions were held with selected junior managers to find out their views regarding the shortcomings in some of these factors and suggestions for improving the situation. As far as "Communication" (8%), "Managing rewards" is concerned, presently, there exists no system of monetary incentives for any outstanding performance for the Junior managers. But it is not perceived to be a hindrance for better performance as monetary incentives are not expected by these managers. Personal competence is recognised only by the peers and by the immediate superiors and many a time, it may not go to the notice of the top management. Regarding "Managing mistakes", the present situation is that even serious

mistakes are taken in a casual manner. People who commit mistakes are not even admonished and are left to correct themselves out of their experience and in the process some mistakes are repeated and some more are being committed. As regards, the problem of management is concerned, the problems faced by the Junior managers can be classified into technical and non-technical. Technical problems are expected to be solved at one's own level or with the help of the peers.

The major non-technical problem is finding adequate resources for performing the assigned task. One has to approach the top level for this purpose and follow a number of administrative procedures resulting in some degree of misunderstanding between the junior managers in the operating division and the functional managers in the administration.

The "Management of Conflicts" relates to "Official Conflicts" only. Such conflicts arise due to conflicting goals/subgoals of different divisions. Even certain procedural matters become "irritants". But such conflicts in general do not adversely affect the smooth functioning of the departments. Mostly such conflicts are resolved through informal discussions.

In respect of "decision making" interesting opinions were expressed by the respondents. Work alone is viewed as important and is isolated from other environmental factors and in the process most of the decisions become adhoc in nature. Inconvenient decisions, which may adversely affect certain people are avoided or postponed. Decisions in respect of disciplinary matters are referred to the administrative sections. Sometimes, the decisions are not comprehensive based on sound principles of cost-benefit analysis. At the same time, the decisions are timely and all those who are concerned with a decision are consulted and nothing is imposed unilaterally.

"Communication" in general is perceived to flow freely in all directions, upward, downward and horizontal. People have access to all relevant information. But the major drawback in this aspect is the degree of informality and most of it is oral. Appeasing type of communication flows in all directions at the cost of accurate feedback. Usually people communicate what others like to receive.

As regards "Risk-Taking" if the situation warrants, junior managers do take risks at a moderate level.

Conclusions and Suggestions

From the analysis of the replies given by the respondents and subsequent discussion held with some of them, the study reveals that though certain deficiencies are perceived to exist in the internal climate, such shortcomings do not adversely affect the functions of the junior managers. By and large everyone tries to achieve the assigned task to the best of one's abilities, by overcoming the hurdles that may crop up due to imbalance or maladjustment of various dimensions in the internal climate. Thus, it can be said that the junior managers perceive the internal climate in general to be achievement-

oriented, but needs to be sustained and certain improvements are to be made by the top management by removing certain "irritants" and "bottle-necks", for instance unnecessary bureaucratic procedures with regard to resource allocation.

Regarding the "extension" concern the junior managers take only moderate risks, when the situation warrants. Not many people come forward to take up challenging tasks which can be attributed to complacency and lack of adequate support and encouragement from above.

Suggestions

1. A system should be developed wherein the talent, competence and potential abilities of individual junior managers are identified by the top to ensure necessary support, encouragement and adequate appreciation which can be regarded as a 'reward' for better performance by the junior level managers. Every employee is happier when he feels that his work is appreciated.
2. Formal communication in certain respects should overtake informal communication wherein correct feedback regarding one's performance is provided for the betterment of the individual and the organisation. Regular meetings should be held throughout the organisation at various levels and managers should be trained to conduct such meetings effectively. Managers should be made accountable for communicating effectively by way of building communication goals into the performance evaluation process. The top management should also ensure that the junior managers have the information they need to communicate with their employees.
3. There can be direct face-to-face discussions between the top management, middle management and the junior managers at regular intervals, so that the latter can express their views, and opinions regarding the operational problems and make necessary suggestions. "Each member of the top management team might sit down a few times a year with a group of middle and junior managers and should listen to them about what they think the top management need to know about their work. It is for the middle and junior managers to tell them about the problems and opportunities for the company and what the top management can do to help them do their job and what are the top management's acts that hamper them."
4. Wherever practicable, 'job rotation' schemes should be implemented among the junior managers. This would give an opportunity for the junior managers to comprehend the complexities involved in different types of jobs, enabling them to develop a broader view of the functioning of different divisions, so that they can extend necessary co-operation and help others and this would to a certain extent minimise the 'irritants' or misunderstandings among the junior manag-

- ers working in different divisions.
- 5. Allocation of resources should correspond to the task/responsibility assigned to junior managers with a greater degree of freedom in utilising the resources allocated. Minimising the administrative procedures in drawing as well as accounting for the resources is desirable.
- 6. Creation of "Think Tanks" consisting of experts/counsellors to guide the junior managers in times of necessity. Immediate superior and peers may not provide the needed guidance at all times.
- 7. Giving need-based training and utilising the improved skills, using modern management methods can reduce the chances of mistakes.
- 8. All decisions have to be evaluated properly in terms of cost-benefit analysis.
- 9. The top management should try to build and encourage proper work culture at all levels. Building a strong, successful work culture consists of selecting, motivating, rewarding, retaining and unifying good employees". Work culture can be developed by ensuring coincidence of individual and collective interests and rewarding competence in key areas on a perpetual basis.
- 10. From the above discussions, it is clear that developing proper motivational climate needs a multi-pronged approach, wherein various dimensions constituting the internal environment are strengthened collectively and not in isolation of each other.

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