

“Role of Hawthorne Studies in Human Relation Approach” Neo Classical Theory

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Abstract:-- Human relation approach has highly influential in the modern world, first coined in the industrial scene, has penetrated far reaching scenario since its relatively recent inception in the 1920's by Elton Mayo and his colleagues. They are well known as Mayo group in human relations literature. Illumination experiment is the first one with which they started experimenting; later on they did some other experiments also. Elton Mayo often referred to as the Father of the "Human Relations" approach because of his intuitive thinking. He headed a staff of men who were to revolutionize the then-current trends and beliefs in industrial relations at the Hawthorne plant of the western Electric Company in Chicago. "In general, the studies established that men are not typically individualistic and materialistic, but social beings with social as well as material needs." This study shows how Hawthorne studies make an impact in human relation approach and it also reveals the importance of social and psychological factors in determining the workers' productivity and satisfaction.

Keywords: Illumination experiment, Revolution, social and psychological factors

I. INTRODUCTION

The classical writers including Weber, Taylor and Fayol neglected the human relations aspect but on the other hand neo-classicists focused on human aspect of industry. They modified the classical theory by emphasizing the importance of human factors. Some experiments conducted by them which are known as Hawthorne experiments and explore informal groupings, informal relationships, pattern of communication, pattern of informal leadership etc. which led to the development of Human relation approach. Elton Mayo is recognized as father of Human relation school. There are some other prominent contributors to this schools include Roethlisberger, Dickson, Dewey, Lewin etc.

Human relation approach concerned over human elements in organization. It reveals the importance of social and psychological factors in determining the workers' productivity and satisfaction. It was instrumental in creating a new image of man and the work place. This approach put stress on informal groups and inter-personal relations at the work place.

Achievement of organizational objectives is impossible without the willing cooperation of people and such cooperation cannot be automatically secured or ordered. It has to be consciously achieved. The neo-classical approach favored people oriented organization structure which will integrate formal and informal organization. The basic notions of neo-classical theory or human relation approach are as under:

1. Informal group dominated the behavior of individual of which he is a member.

2. Motivation by economic incentive alone cannot satisfy an individual. His other needs like social and psychological needs must be satisfy.

3. Morale and productivity go hand in hand in an organization.

4. Developing social and leadership skills must be an aim of management in addition to technical skills.

5. Cooperation is the foremost attitude which keeps everyone in one unit.

II. ROLE OF HAWTHORNE STUDIES IN MANAGEMENT

In 1927, a group of researchers led by George Elton Mayo and Frintz J. Roethlisberger at the Harvard business school were invited to join in the studies at Hawthorne works of western electric company, Chicago. The experiment lasted upto 1932. Earlier from 1924 to 1927, the National Research Council made a study in collaboration with western electric company to determine the effect of illumination and other conditions up on workers and productivity.

1. Illumination experiment: This experiment was conducted to establish relationship between output and illumination. The output tended to increase every time as the intensity of light was improved. But the output again showed the upward trend when the illumination was brought down gradually from the normal level. Thus it was found that there is no consistent relationship between output of workers and Illumination in the factory. There were some other factors which influenced the productivity of workers when the intensity of light was increased or decreased.

2. Bank writing observation room experiment: This experiment was conducted to study a group of workers under conditions which were as close as possible to normal. This group comprised of 14 workers. After the experiment, the production records of this group were compared with their earlier production records. There were no significant changes in the two because of the maintenance of „normal conditions“.

The Bank writing experiment led to the following observations:

- a. The group had its own “unofficial” standards of performance.
- b. Each individual was restricting output.
- c. Individual output remained fairly constant over a period of time.
- d. Departmental records were distorted due to difference between actual and reported output or between standard and reported working time.

3. Relay assembly room experiment: This experiment constituted over a small homogeneous work -group of girls. Some new elements were introduced in the work atmosphere of this group. These included rest pauses, short working hours, friendly and informal supervision, improved physical conditions, free social interaction among group members, etc. productivity and morale increased considerably during the period of experiment. Even if improvements in working conditions were withdrawn morale and productivity were maintained. The researchers concluded that socio-psychological factors such as feeling of being important, recognition, attention, cohesive work -group, participation and non-directive supervision held the key for high productivity.

4. Mass Interview Programme: A large number of workers interviewed by researchers with regard to their opinion on work, supervision and working conditions. Initially, a direct approach was used whereby interviewers were asked questions considered important by managers and researchers. Later, this approach was replaced by an indirect technique where the interviewer simply listed to what the employees had to say. The findings confirmed the importance of social factors at work in the total work environment.

III.CONTRIBUTIONS OF HUMAN RELATIONS APPROACH OR HAWTHRONE STUDIES

The human relationists proposed the following points as a result of their findings of Hawthorne experiments:

1. Social system: The social system defines individual roles and establishes norms that may differ from those of the formal organization.

2. Social environment: Management is not the only variable. Social and psychological factors exercise a great influence on the behavior of worker s. Therefore, every manager should adopt a sound human approach to all organizational problems.

3. Communication: Two-way communication is necessary because it carries necessary information downward for the proper functioning of the organization and trans mits upward the feelings and sentiments of people who work in the organization. It will help in securing workers“ cooperation and participation in the decision making process. Workers tends to be more productive when they are given opportunity to express their feelings, grievances and opinions. This also give them psychological satisfaction.

4. Group dynamics: At the workplace, the workers always react as group often do not react as individuals. The group determines the norms of behavior for the group memb ers and thus exercises a powerful influence on the attitudes and performance of individual workers. The management should deal with workers as members of work group rather than as individuals.

5. Informal organization: The informal organization does also exist within the frame work of formal organization and it affects and is affected by formal organization.

6. Non-economic Rewards: Motivation sometimes achieved by economic rewards but not always. There are many other factors which provide satisfaction to the workers like social and psychological factors so non-economic rewards such as praise, status, recognition, interpersonal relations, etc. plays an important role in motivating employees. These rewards must be integrated with the wages and fringe benefi ts of the employees.

7. Conflict: Conflicts are important as aspect as it may influence in many ways to the organization. It must be quickly handled by management otherwise it will harm the organizational goal and group goals. Conflicts can be resolved through improvement of human relations in the organization.

8. Informal Leader: The informal leader sets and enforces group norms. He helps the workers to function as a social group and the formal leader is rendered ineffective unless he conforms to the norms of the group.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the end, we can conclude that human aspect is one of the most auspicious aspects for the better future of organizations. Every industry relies on their manpower. Morale and productivity go hand in hand in an organization. Satisfaction of workers is the foremost priority. It can be achieved by economic and non -economic rewards. Social as well as psychological factors such as

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praise, status, recognition, interpersonal relations, etc. are proven to be critical. Organization must work as group rather as individual. Structure of an organization can also affect the workers so it should be avoided by better management resources.

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