



Beginning of HR School

Authors:

- (Roethlisberger, 1939 #3445)
- (Mayo, 1933 #3183)
- (Homans, 1958 #2884)

Hawthorne

- reconceptualization of industrial organization as a social system.
- important role that informal organization plays in industrial organization.
- group's activities and satisfactions / dissatisfactions to be viewed as a complex system of patterns of interrelationships (Bank Wiring Observation Room)
- informal group norms and status structure determine productivity and output levels.
- used in ... Motivation

Various methodological issues yet: subjects pressured to do well

- (Ross, 1991 #3465)
- (Carey, 1967 #4200)
- (Sonnenfeld, 1985 #489)

firms are made up of people with needs, not just bodies who complete tasks - Against Taylor

former president of the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company and a man of varied experience in business, academic and government organizations.

Underestimation of the variability of individual behavior and its impact on organizational effectiveness.

theory of cooperation stressed the joint importance of factors emanating from the system as a whole and from the individual member.

theory of authority stresses personal predilection and perception as elements in the acceptance or rejection of authority.

concepts of effectiveness and efficiency,

(Barnard, 1938 #35)

- focus on motivational elements than on structural features
- three requirements for organization:
 - i) willingness to cooperate
 - ii) common purpose
 - iii) communication.
- an attempt to win over the "hearts and souls" of the workers to ensure their cooperation in building effective organizations.
- incentives as a means of inducing the members of an organization to cooperate in achieving the organization's objectives served:
 - the cornerstone of the human relations perspective: "inducement-contribution" theory
 - direct intellectual predecessor to March and Simon's behavioral theories.

Theory X: scientific management: people hate their work

1. "Management is responsible for organizing the elements of productive enterprise - money, materials, equipment, people - in the interest of economic ends.
2. With respect to people, this is a process of directing their efforts, motivating them, controlling their actions, modifying their behavior to fit the needs of the organization.
3. Without this active intervention by management, people would be passive - even resistant - to organizational needs. They must therefore be persuaded, rewarded, punished, controlled - their activities must be directed. This is management's task. We often sum it up by saying that management consists of getting things done through other people.
4. The average man is by nature indolent - he works as little as possible.
5. He lacks ambition, dislikes responsibility, prefers to be led
6. He is inherently self-centered, indifferent to organizational needs.
7. He is by nature resistant to change
8. He is gullible, not very bright, the ready dupe of the charlatan and the demagogue." (McGregor 1957)

Behind this conventional theory there are several additional beliefs - less explicit, but widespread:

Theory Y: work can be source of satisfaction

1. "Management is responsible for organizing the elements of productive enterprise - money, materials, equipment, people - in the interest of economic ends
2. People are not by nature passive or resistant to organizational needs. They have become so as a result of experience in organizations.
3. The motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, the readiness to direct behavior toward organizational goals are all present in people. Management does not put them there. It is the responsibility of management to make it possible for people to recognize and develop these human characteristics for themselves.
4. The essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals best by directing their own efforts toward organizational objectives." (McGregor 1957)

People will self direct and self control if committed to org. obj. (McGregor, 1957 #346)

(Roy, 1960 #447) - "Banana Time": Job satisfaction and informal interaction

HR/OB Persp.

Background on Blau

- Important and productive social theorist and researcher
- Focused on social stratification and social structure, though theoretical work and research methods varied substantially throughout career
- His work spans 1954-1994, this study one of his first

Overview of "Consultation Among Colleagues"

- "Stimulated by Weber's theoretical analysis of bureaucracy"
 - Sought to refine Weber's theory of bureaucracy with attention to informal organization
 - Also stimulated by Roethlisberger and Dickson's study of informal norms of industrial workers in the late 1930's, which found that informal norms (complemented by status structure) controlled output
 - Also influenced by Barnard (1938), Selznick (1948), and Gouldner (Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy, 1954)
- Empirical account of informal processes within bureaucratic work group in federal government (micro-level analysis)
- Looking at social/psychological processes that govern social relations and work practices in a bureaucracy
 - In particular, processes of social exchange that promote social integration and status differentiation (Exchange theory developed in detail in later work.)

Context and Rules

- Federal Bureaucracy
 - Work group responsible for enforcing gov. regulations (16 agents, 1 supervisor)
 - Supervisor responsible for oversight, quality control, and evaluation
 - Agents formally expected to work individually and seek advice of supervisor if problems arose
 - Consultation w/ supervisor was recorded in agent's diary (file)
 - This preserved bureaucratic structure, individual accountability, and the supervisor's authority and oversight
- Difficult nature of the job
 - Accuracy of decisions crucial (public legal action often followed)
 - Difficult to ascertain how general and complex regulations applied to a particular case
 - Evaluations depended on making the right decisions, and the formal rules penalized agents for seeking advice of supervisor and forbade them from consulting peers.

Informal Peer Consultation (Blau, 1963 #4196)

- Requests for information as a time-saving device (no discrimination regarding who was consulted)
- Consultations (seeking advice)
 - Consultation as exchange of values (both participants get something and pay something)
 - Questioning agent looks dumb but gets the help he needs (potentially leading to lower status and self-confidence)
 - Advisor gets implicit acknowledgement of superior competence but has to take time from his work
 - Collateral advantages for experts (increased confidence and ability to distribute questions)
 - Consultation pairs
 - Avoided rejection and negative status implications
 - Prevented isolation and relieved anxiety

Consultation in Disguise

- Popular practice of sharing difficult/unique cases
- Benefits
 - Allowed agents to think out loud, relieve anxiety
 - Provided potential for enhanced status
 - Avoided costs of obvious consultations

Why did the agents break the rule?

- Consultation was a coping mechanism for the problems that the formal organization created.
- Consultation provided numerous advantages
 - Increased social cohesion
 - Improved the quality of work
 - Stimulated interest in work
 - Stabilized relationships and clarified status structure, preventing conflict with evaluations and promotions
- Consultation's disadvantages
 - Reinforced competence/status differences
 - Made frequent transfers more disruptive
 - Weakened the authority of supervisor

Why did the rule persist?

- It preserved supervisor's authority
- Bureaucratic accountability
- Consultations were new, and the rule may change in response to them (formal adjustments take time)

Implications for Theory

- What are the functions of informal norms? Might informal norms develop that work against the formal organization rather than complement it? (Example?)
- Will informal norms exist in all formal organizations?
- Are "exchanges of values" at the heart of interactions within organizations?

Informal Org authors: Barnard, Blau, Selznick, Braverman, Burawoy - See "Informal Organization Author Matrix" in Chong

Is it just another way to control workers? (Perrow, 1986 #401)

Several decades of worker satisfaction and productivity

