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MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL: AN OVERVIEW

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

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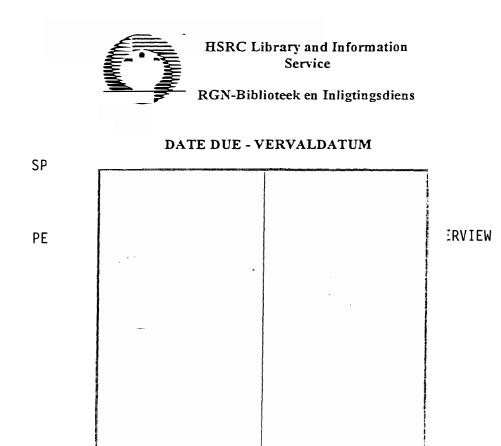






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SUMMARY

Managers are today confronted by the need to handle continuously changing situations over which they have no final control. Whereas previously select techniques and control systems could provide answers to management dilemmas these are no longer of value. Managers now have to deal with organisation demands aggravated by various external pressures such as business uncertainty, shortages of skilled labour and surplusses, wage and price spirals, etc. No textbook answers to these problems exist and managers must seek solutions within their companies. They must become sensitive to the need for change and innovation which includes challenging and re-examining their old assumptions. Manpower management, particularly in the cultural context of South Africa, poses specific challenges to managers because of its complex nature. This report presents an overview of the developmental trends involved in the management of workers. This will assist managers and researchers of management and labour in gaining perspective on this complex issue and to guide in identifying further adaptation and research needs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have produced a proliferation of literature on formal organisations, their structure, functioning and management requirements. This has placed managers, students of management and researchers in the unenviable position of having to analyze and evaluate varying approaches, models and techniques in order to find answers to their specific needs.

The fact that managerial decisions have to be made in a continually changing environment tends to make matters worse. These changes occur inside and outside the organisation and require constant assessment, adaptation as well as renewed planning. Managers have little control over these changes and no text-book answers exist to guide them adequately in their complex task of managing.

Management demands are particularly complex in South Africa where developed and developing manpower resources exist side by side. It emphasizes the need for South African managers to be selective in their choice of techniques when developing an integrated approach of management involving the peoples of our country, with their varying cultural heritages.

This brief overview has been compiled to help managers and researchers of management principles to gain some perspective on the varying management approaches available and the implications thereof for the management of workers. Particular emphasis has been placed on the management of workers, because people develop organisations and people maintain them. Effective management of an organisation thus always includes management of human resources.

1.1 Management Concept

Management is a term that can be defined in many ways

The Management Glossary (1968) defines it as:

- "(i) The art or science of directing, conducting and administering the work of others to achieve defined objectives;
- (ii) the process of decision-making and leadership;
- (iii) to the economist it is a factor of production concerned with the organisation and co-ordination of the other factors, land, labour, and capital, to achieve maximum efficiency.

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(iv) it is the social process entailing responsibility for the effective and economical planning and regulation of the operations of an enterprise in the fulfilment of a given purpose or task. It involves judgement and decisions in determining plans and using data to control performance and progress against plans, and the guidance, integration, motivation and supervision of personnel in carrying out its operations."

In terms of this definition the individual managers is a person who:

- (i) organises work and directs its completion through the services of others;
- (ii) has the authority and responsibility for translating plans and policies into effective action to achieve specified objectives.

The concept of managing is not of recent origin, but can be traced back to earliest periods in the history of mankind. However, most of the elements of contemporary organisation theory and management were developed during the present century.

Early management theory was simple and practical. Managers relied on autocratic authority and their word and direction was accepted as being final. Management consisted mainly of technological knowledge and the required deployment of workers to meet these technological demands.

This approach changed particularly during the 30 years from 1882 to 1912. During this period different aspects relating to management, apart from technology, received attention. Emphasis was placed on the need to pay attention to the financial aspects of business. Wage incentive methods were investigated and production control and office organisation were analysed.

Three people in particular emphasized the value of the human element in business operations. They were:

- (i) F W Taylor with his formula for maximum production, which included determination of a definite task (based on job study), a definite time (based on time study) and a definite method. (Taylor, 1947)
- (ii) F B Gilbreth with his experiments in motion study; (Gilbreth, 1911) and
- (iii) H L Gantt who emphasized the importance of leadership and of paying more attention to the human factor in business operations. (Clark, 1922)

"Scientific Management", as defined by Taylor, specifically referred to the study of work and the measurement thereof in order to achieve increased production.

A problem which was identified but not investigated at that time concerned the motivation of any worker or work group to collaborate in achieving the objectives set by the organisation in which they worked. The importance of this factor was recognised but, due to the problems inherent in studying the motives which influence men, attention was instead directed at the improvement of technology and machines with which the efforts of men could be paced.

The technological system was accepted as inevitable and socio-psychological research concentrated more on how to fit people into such a system than on the needs of workers.

The scientific management approach proposed by Taylor et al, developed into a 'Management Science' approach. The assumption was that the technology associated with the work itself should not be altered except by increasing the efficiency with which it functioned.

Management Science emphasized the need for greater insight into work methods, time studies, selection procedures, placement, training approaches, administrative procedures, etc. It aimed at systematizing and integrating systems and procedures involved in the process of management.

History has however, shown the fallacy of refining technical systems without giving the necessary attention to human aspects involved in the work-place. Socio-psychological research done by Mayo, Roethlisberger, Maslow, Vroom, indicated that individual and group motivation to achieve, influenced productivity. The importance of work climate on worker motivation became evident and, particularly during World War II, that of shared objectives and leadership.

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This resulted in a shift away from technology, systems and techniques and a move towards the acceptance of the importance of interpersonal relationships in the work situation. It was accepted that increased worker commitment would result if:

- everybody concerned, regardless of his/her level in the organisation, had been properly informed of what was going to be done;
- why it was going to be done;
- the ultimate objectives aimed at.

Increased technological developments and changing social demands resulted in a need for management to change as well in order to ensure the viability of their organisations. Such adaptation required perception and insight into the capabilities of both the organisation and the worker. It also required strategies aimed at involving workers personally in meeting work demands and in achieving agreed objectives.

The importance of three basic elements effecting the viability of organisations in our time were identified. These are the workers, the environment (internal and external) and change. The management of these elements has been accepted as being crucial to achieve effective and productive organisation functioning.

1.2 Cultural Influences

In order to achieve results compatibility is required between the different sub-systems of the organisation and between the organisation and its environment. Organisations should be seen as dynamic social systems where integration of the sub-systems requires perception of and insight into the capabilities of both the organisation and the workers.

Effective management requires knowledge of the implications of cultural influences. In this respect cultural influences can be interpreted both in terms of organisation culture involving traditional approaches, organisational systems, structures, techniques and hierarchies as well as in terms of the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom and habits which an individual acquires as a member of a society. For effective functioning a match between these cultures must be achieved. Differences in local culture are particularly relevant in most of the developing countries which are faced with the problem of achieving a level of socio-economic and technological sophistication which elsewhere took centuries to occur. This involves a process which could be called the 'telescopic' or 'temporal compression' of change within the span of a generation or so (Sinha, 1973). Management's role in this respect is of great importance and requires the personal attention of managers at all levels. The interrelations among management, culture and productivity, particularly in the African context have been emphasized by Iboko (1976) Onyemelukwe (1973) Sinha (1973) etc.

In South Africa we have a unique situation consisting of highly industrialised centres using sophisticated and methodological management approaches, which co-exist with manpower resources still strongly related to traditional societies and cultures. This situation, together with the current proliferation of research and theory in the field of management and organisational functioning, can serve as a source of confusion for South African managers. The assumption of a culture-free management approach which can successfully be applied anywhere in the world is an oversimplification of a complex issue.

A brief analysis of the different conceptual and methodological approaches supported by management theorists is therefore needed. Only a brief discussion of the different approaches can be offered and for practical reasons the names of only a few researchers associated with the different schools of thought can be mentioned.

It is however hoped that this overview will serve to guide managers in their personal search to develop manpower management practices specifically aimed at meeting the demands made by the South African situation.

2. MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Bell (1974) quotes Adam Smith as stating in 1776 that the wealth of a nation depends on the skill, dexterity and judgement with which its labour is applied. This is perhaps even more relevant today than it was in the 18th century. Managers must however remember that individuals entering into contract with an organisation firstly intend meeting their own needs.

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Assisting the organisation in meeting its objectives comes secondary to personal aims. It is therefore important to recognise the needs of workers and the implications thereof for motivating them to increase production in the work situation. No single generally accepted, management theory exists which can give answers to all the problems experienced by managers in their day-to-day functioning. This is particularly relevant to personnel problems encountered by managers. Existing management theories furthermore differ in terms of the discipline from which they originate, involving for instance and economic, a structural or a behavioural approach.

Differences in perspective also exist between management theorists from different cultures, e.g. Britain United States of America, Japan, etc.

The heterogeneous labourforce of South Africa, with its differing levels of educational sophistication and cultural background requires the development of management perspectives relevant to our country's general and specific worker needs. To guide the development of a management theory which would be applicable to our needs, particularly in terms of worker utilization, it is therefore necessary to make a brief analysis of current theories and methodologies of management as proposed by organisational and behavioural scientists.

The National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR) has as its objective analysis of factors affecting man at work. Management approaches involving worker utilization will therefore be emphasized in contrast to discussing general management demands which include financial, production, etc. expertise.

2.1 Conceptual and Methodological Approaches

Management theorists' approaches can roughly be grouped under several headings. This does not indicate compartmentalization, because each grouping in effect merely indicates a different emphasis in trying to solve a common problem. The following headings are relevant to the present discussion on management of personnel:

- (i) economic approach
- (ii) bureaucratic or classical approach
- (iii) behavioural approach
- (iv) integrative approach

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The differing backgrounds of the theorists' disciplines, e.g. psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, etc., are reflected in their approaches and their specific findings. Notwithstanding the differences in orientation, certain basic findings are generally accepted. These are:

- there is no best way of doing things;
- no particular management style is applicable to different situations, and
- there are similarities and differences amongst managers around the world.

2.1.1 Economic Approach

Originally management of men was seen as an extraneous factor, rather than central, to the question of economics. Drucker (1974) quotes the economist Kenneth Boulding, as stating that:

"Economics deal with the behaviour of commodities, rather than with behaviour of men. Man can at best optimize what the economy makes possible; at worst it impedes the forces of the economy and wastes resources." Bell (1974) emphasizes that organisations deal with the requirements of roles, not of persons. The efficiency of technology is the criterion and the mode of life is modelled on economics.

The economic perspective is however also dependent on the impact of culture: Veblen remarked that what ultimately provides direction for the economy is not the price system, but the value system of the culture in which the economy is embedded. Accordingly economic guidance can only be as efficacious as the cultural value systems which shapes it (Bell, 1974, p. 279).

Contributions to management theory from an economic orientation came inter alia from researchers like Morris, (1964,1968) Cyert and March (1964), Warren (1966), etc. They emphasized the value of rational decision-making, game theory and mathematical models of company behaviour, when there is a need to manage in situations of uncertainty. As Morris (1964) defines it: "....for the analysis of management decisions, one must examine the firm or organisation within which these decisions arise.In order to be definite we will also assume that the primary objective of the management of such an enterprise is profit ... The analysis which will be set forth may be recognized as managerial economics, the analysis of the firm under conditions of imperfect competition, or as the formulation of some major policy decisions under assumed certainty" (p.17).

Morris sees management development as a process "of deciding, acting and learning from the resulting experience how to act more effectively in the future" (p.279). Management is seen as a dynamic process and the mechanism by which organisational learning takes place (p.5).

Cyert and March (1964) analysed the business firm and the way in which economic decisions are made. They stated that "....in order to understand contemporary economic decision-making, we need to supplement the study of market factors with an examination of the internal operation of the firm - to study the effects of organisational structure and conventional practice on the development of goals, the formation of expectations and the execution of choices." Their research aims at a general theory of economic decision-making by a business firm or other complex organisations, by using economic theory as "a language designed to provide a systematic framework within which to analyse economic problems" (p.114) and adapting this approach to formulate a behavioural theory of the firm which will assist with organisational decision-making.

Warren (1966) emphasizes that planning is essentially a process of preparing for the commitment of resources in the most economical fashion and (by preparing) allowing this commitment to be made faster and less disruptively.

Effective management requires that attention be given to the implications of environment, size, technological change, manpower needs, etc., as these affects the economic effectiveness of the firm. Computer assistance, in the technical applications of information transfer, operations research and decision-making can guide management in purposeful prognosis. Technological forecasting approaches proposed by Jantsch (1967) Polak (1971) Meadows et al of the Club of Rome (1972) aim at the development of a science of prognostics which includes the concepts of econometrics, operations research, decision-making theory, games strategy and simulation, etc. The Delphi long-range forecasting technique developed by the Rand Corporation in Santa Monica and the scenario approach involving development and projection of synthetic pictures of the future, are examples of technological forecasting methods which also take account of cultural, political, social, economic and technical aspects essential to creative future planning.

An important development of the cost-yield ratio of classical economics is found in cost-effectiveness procedures used to assess and forecast investments made in worker training and actual worker utilization.

Jantsch (1967) emphasizes that normative prognosis techniques are person-tied. This means that they relate to what is, and what ought to be, thus introducing socio-ethical objectives. Future economic planning and economic management can be done by analysing existing trends which are then extrapolated, or by evaluating existing situations and, where change is required, modifying or altering the situation through discussion and reasoning. The need for evaluation of interpersonal reactions is emphasized by Ackoff (1974) who maintains that a person's ability to manage depends more on his understanding of, and attitudes towards, the environment in which he functions, than on his problem-solving methods (p.7).

2.1.2 Bureaucratic or Classical Approach

Drucker (1974) emphasizes that managers practice management. They do not practice economics, nor do they practice quantification, or behavioural science. Economic and behavioural science information, coupled with statistical data are sources of information and tools to assist the manager in the profession of managing an enterprise. Whilst it is true that managers must manage for profit, it is equally true that no single technique or approach will be able to assist them to achieve this goal. To manage effectively they need information on the environment, both internal and external to their organisation, which could affect its functioning.

Much research on the influence of the environment has been done and is still being done, particularly on the impact that size, structure and technology have on the functioning of the organisation and managerial strategy. Authoritative names in this field include Fayol (1949), Taylor (1947), Gilbreth (1911), Weber (1914), Urwick (1956), Woodward (1965), Dubin (1958), Perrow (1970) and Pugh (1976).

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Work done by earlier researchers is usually classified under the term "classical organisation theory."

The classical organisation model has a pyramidal shape, which relates to fundamental principles accepted as having a direct bearing on the formal organisation structure. Kassem (1976) summarizes these principles as follows:

- Specialization and division of work: one man one job
- Centralized authority: one man one boss or unity of command
- Communication: up and down the line
- Motivation: one man one motive (Money)
- Organisational goal: Singular and given. Profit maximisation.
- Criterion for organisational effectiveness: Efficiency (p.4).

Formal organisation theory was most clearly developed in Max Weber's thoughts on organisation structure. The model he developed at the turn of the century served as a reaction against personal suppression, nepotism, capricious judgement, etc., which passed for management at the time. In the bureaucratic system social roles were institutionalized and reinforced by legal tradition. It aimed at achieving rationality and predictability to assist in industrial change. Technical competence was stressed, with efficiency, both individually and collectively serving as criterion for effectiveness.

For Weber the process of rationalization and transformation of the Western World from a traditional to a modern society required rational accounting, rational technology, a rational economic ethic and rationalization of the conduct of life.

Organisational Bureaucracy can be summarized as consisting of:

- a division of labour based on functional specialization
- a well-defined hierarchy of authority
- a system of rules covering the rights and duties of employees
- impersonality of interpersonal relations
- selection and promotion based on technical competence.

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The bureaucratic form of organisation, conceptualized by Weber, still constitutes the structure of most industrial enterprises. Weber accepted that the decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organisation structure has been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organisation (Burns and Stalker, 1961).

The implications of bureaucracy have been analysed by various researchers, in terms of managerial demands, organisation structure, functioning, etc. Henri Fayol (1949) speculated on organisational structure and management and developed a rational approach to the organisation and management of an enterprise. According to Fayol six different functional aspects, in combination or selectively, affect the total organisation, viz. the technical, commercial, financial, security (both workers and industry), accounting and managerial requirements of the conern. Of these he considered the managerial requirements to be the most important. According to him these requirements consist of planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating and controlling activities. In maintaining these activities the manager would enable the undertaking to achieve results and ensure that everything occurs in conformity with established rules and expressed command.

Urwick (1956) accepted Fayol's hypothesis, but he extended the concept of managerial activities to include forecasting, planning, organising, directing, co-ordinating, controlling and communicating functions.

Various researchers in America, England and Europe have studied the implications of bureaucracy on organisation functioning. Woodward (1965), Blau (1966) and Leavitt (1965) were among the first to study the implications of technology and change on structure. Mary Parker Follet (1924) investigated the need for managerial understanding in conflict handling in a multidimensional organisation setting while Dubin (1958) and Gouldner (1954) studied bureaucratic disfunctioning.

More recent research on the relationship between organisation structure, management style, task variations, size and environment of a company, technological innovations, culture, etc., has been done by Burns and Stalker (1961), Perrow (1970), Child (1973), Pugh (1976) and Hickson et al. (1974). Litwak (1961), in studying the need for varying structures for different organisations, postulated that complex organisations can be described in terms of three models, namely Weberian, Human Relations and Professional. According to him one of the key theoretical problems in complex organisations is the study of structural procedures by which the "conflicting" forces are linked to organisational goals. Analysis of the predictability of work demands, worker discretion and their relationship as regards organisational structure needs further analysis, to determine 'key' functional and worker areas, relevant to the organisations effectiveness.

Bennis (1973), who is sometimes called one of the foremost "crystal ball gazers", studied the effectiveness of the bureaucratic form of organisations in terms of contemporary realities and submits the possibility of rapidly changing temporary systems in the future, or matrix type organisations. This would, however, involve extensive use of human discretion in problem-solving approaches.

In the original analysis of organisational structure little attention was given to the human element involved in doing the work. Special emphasis was placed on the subdivisions of tasks, the strict delineation of duties and the accepted reliability of behaviour. Weber, as developer of the theory of bureaucracy warned against the possibility of workers becoming "little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving toward bigger ones," but he accepted this danger as being of a lesser degree than the nepotism, capricious judgement and personal exploitation prevalent at the turn of the century.

The efforts of F W Taylor (1911), who started studying work with the social objective of assisting workers in earning decent wages, while doing less heavy work, and still increasing their productivity, in effect had the unanticipated side effect of isolating workers in terms of the work they do. By setting "scientific" standards, Taylor aimed at specifying the "one best way" or the "natural laws" of work. By doing so he could then remove the basic source of antagonism between workers and employer, namely the question of what is "fair" or "unfair" to be expected in a day's work. With this view of work the workers, however, easily became merely "hands" and "things" arranged according to the detailed division of labour demands.

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The implications of individual differences with regard to the manner in which work could be performed was investigated by Gilbreth (1911) and led to the identification of the principles of motion and time study and the use of Predetermined Time Standards. These techniques assist management in determining acceptable productivity indices and worker bonuses and therefore must be seen merely as a part of the total management function.

The bureaucratic organisation structure has value in determining and maintaining the internal functioning of an enterprise. Such structuring however must also recognise the implications of the human side of the enterprise if it is to achieve its objectives of service, profit, development, etc. This need gave rise to the development of a behavioural management approach.

2.1.3 Behavioural Approach

Whereas the bureaucratic or classical approach emphasizes the need for order in organisation structure, with clear delineation of responsibilities and authority, to enable more effective management planning and worker functioning, the behavioural approach places a stronger emphasis on people and their interaction with their organisation environment. The role which worker motivation can play in the achievement of objectives and organisation effectiveness is stressed.

Formal organisation structures are accepted as necessary, but factors such as delegation of authority, group decision-making, employee participation, worker motivation, are emphasized as being prerequisites for achieving effective organisation functioning.

As in the bureaucratic (classical) approach, the behavioural theorists also view the organisation as a closed system, where job context is assumed to cause problems and job content is accepted as being neutral.

The behavioural approach is traditionally accepted as having started with the theory and research of Elton Mayo (1945) and Kurt Lewin (1953).

Mayo (1945) and his associates were among the first to accept human affiliation as a motivating force and to view industrial organisations not only as economic and technical, but also as social systems. The effectiveness of a manager should therefore be judged not only in terms of the overall economic profitability of his organisation but also in terms of his ability to obtain co-operation from his workers. This indicated the need for obtaining cohesiveness in primary work groups in terms of both motivation and decision-making as well as the need to look at the formal organisation structure to determine its adequacy to deal with the personal and interpersonal needs of the workers. Organisations are formed to make profit, but they are also a way of life for their members. The impact of technology on human values requires a change in attitudes and continual adaptation. Mayo contrasted the "established" with the "adaptive" society and stressed that it is not easy to retain "emotional equilibrium" in the shifting patterns of daily life.

Lewin (1948) in his "field" theory also emphasized the interaction between the personal life situation, as experienced by the worker, and the organisation environment in which he has to function. Lewin accepted leadership to be an important determinant of group atmosphere. Such leadership does not depend on using tricks to make people feel good, but relies on a process requiring and involving responsibility from both leader and group members.

As Lewin stated: "....the question of group decision lies at the intersection of many basic problems of group life and individual psychology. It concerns the relation of motivation to action and the effect of a group setting on the individual's readiness to change or to keep certain standards. It is related to one of the fundamental problems of action research, namely, how to change group conduct so that it will not slide back to the old level within a short time. It is in this wider setting of social processes and social management that group decision should be viewed as one means of social change" (Lewin, 1953, p.301).

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Lewin suggested the value of investigation conditions and effects of various forms of social action and interaction in the work situation. The impact of teamwork and more democratic approaches to industrial functioning indicated the value of a human relations management approach to workers. These thoughts were developed further by the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan and by Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in Britain. A "Human Relations" school of thought developed, which investigated the various human aspects affecting organisation functioning and requiring specific managerial skills as a consequence.

Early researchers who contributed to this approach include Durkheim (1933) who saw solidarity as being created by the development of consensus and interdependence. He influenced Elton Mayo's thoughts on human affiliation needs. Maslow (1954) with his theory on a hierarchy of human needs, directed attention to the role of human needs and drives and their influence on work performance.

Various organisational psychologists also contributed to a greater understanding of the role which the human factor plays in the ultimate effectiveness of organisations. Roethlisberger and Dickson (1946) indicated that people, who feel that they are especially selected to show an effect, will tend to show such effect (Hawthorne effect) whereas McGregor (1960) emphasized the impact which managerial attitudes has on the functioning of their subordinates (Theory X and Theory Y). Argyris (1965) investigated the restrictions placed on managers by their environment (organisation structure) which inhibits full utilization of and participation by workers. Hall (1974) reviewed the dysfunctional effects of bureaucratic structuring.

Likert (1967) discussed possible universal principles applicable to the human factor in organisations, while Schein and Bennis (1967) studied the implications of change through group methods. The development of a need to achieve was emphasized by Vroom (1964) McClelland (1961) and Herzberg (1966).

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The assessing of organisation structure and functioning does assist in guiding towards more effective management. However, assessing human behaviour either of individuals or of groups, and determining how they react to their environment, is equally important when aiming at greater managerial effectiveness. In this respect research on organisation climate and worker motivation done by Tagiuri and Litwin (1968), Taylor and Bowers (1972), Hulin and Blood (1968) and Varney 1976) contributed to the realization that complex relationships affect organisation productivity. Accepting that organisations are developing social systems, questions concerning the assumptions about the nature of man and the correct way to utilize man in organisations need clarification. Katz and Kahn (1966) state that: "The characteristic properties of bureaucratic structures ... are responsible for some of the major dilemmas of our society. In the first place, the maximization dynamic with its push toward organisational growth ... In the second place, the use of role systems as a rational device for handling all problems has given us certain efficiencies but at the expense of some impoverishment of personal relations and loss of self identity." They stress that changes cannot be made in the technical system without repercussions in the social system of the organisations. Managers should therefore be aware of continually changing aspects of the organisational system as it is affected, firstly by the interaction between job demands, relationships and worker values, and secondly by external technological, economical and social demands. Ericson (1973) proposes that cybernetically-designed and managed organisations may have the potential of achieving the kind of psychologically maturing 'reciprocation' between organisation and individual which managers should aim at. The present era of discontinuity and change poses unique and subtle demands which managers must meet and for which no recipes exist. An integrated approach involving all these demands is required to assist managers in solving complex organisation and environmental problems.

2.1.4 Integrative Approach

The search for basic principles of management has resulted in the knowledge that few hard and fast, universally applicable, rules are available as practical guidelines for managers. Traditional methods were unable to provide adequate structures to meet situational demands and the constantly changing human variable forced management theorists to seek new solutions.

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This resulted in a re-orientation of management theory towards management practice. In the development of over-simplified general theories contact was lost with realities of the actual management job. This led to disillusionment of practising managers with the efforts of management theorists to supply them with answers for day to day problems. They can thus scarcely be blamed for continuing to operate their organisations with traditional and often inappropriate concepts of organisation theory which had little relevance to contemporary situations and future responsibilities.

Particularly important for future functioning are management perceptions and views about man and his environment, about the need and direction of organisation change, and about the implications of the existing external and cultural commitments. An approach is needed which can assist in creating a flexible and adaptive organisation and which will enable managers to utilize all resources in dealing with problems. In this respect four important elements can be isolated, man, environment, change and the existing interrelationships.

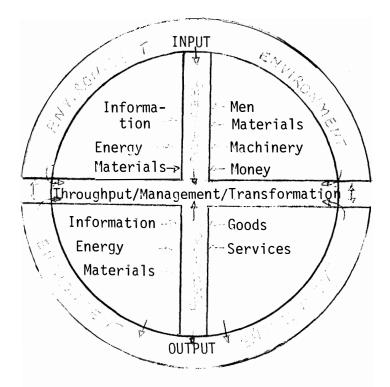
These strategies already discussed are often criticized for employing a closedsystem approach. This means that too much emphasis is placed on either control and authority or on planning to improve worker efficiency or worker motivation through improved conditions or psychological incentives. In this process structural variables, conflict and environmental factors are not considered.

In an effort to achieve integration of all factors affecting organisation and managerial effectiveness two theoretical approaches were developed during the 1960's. Theorists in America and Europe contributed to the development (and empirical investigation) of the open-system theory and the contingency theory, as applicable to organisation functioning.

2.1.4.1 <u>Open-System Approach</u>

In the open-system approach the organisation is seen as consisting of a number of interdependent parts. These parts form a whole in which each contributes something and in turn receives something. The organisation as a whole in turn is interdependent on its external environment.

Von Bertalanffy (1968) is generally accepted as the originator of this concept of organisation functioning. He defines an open-system as a "system (involved) in exchanging of matter with its environment, presenting import and export, (the) building up and breaking down of its material components" (1972). Open-systems theory thus accepts that a continual exchange of information, energy or materials takes place with and within the environment. The open-system model in terms of organisation functioning, can be illustrated as follows:



Model 1: Exchange of Information systems within organisations

The traditional classification of an organisation's input is in terms of men, materials, machines and money, whereas its output complies goods and services. Management serves as the activator or catalyst which effects a transformation or manipulation of the inputs to become output.

The organisation can also be viewed as consisting of a number of parallel higher-level and lower-level subsystems. The outputs of one subsystem can provide some of the inputs of another subsystem.

Looking at an organisation as a group of interrelated subsystems allows for a sensitivity to develop in terms of possible interactions between and within organisational units. Such interaction often accounts for managerial problems and the value of being able to diagnose, analyse and understand them is obvious.

The organisation has a hierarchy of systems which, with increasing complexity, differentiates into subsystems to enable the handling of demands as they emanate from the environment. With an appropriate feedback system the organisation can adjust more rapidly to changing environments.

The systems approach means different things to different people. There is agreement on the interconnectedness of units and the value of using an integrated or "whole" approach. With a closed-systems approach functioning units are studied with little reference to external environmental influences. By contrast the open-systems approach accepts the external influences as having a direct bearing on the internal properties of the organisation. Researchers who have contributed to the open-systems approach include Dill (1958), Rice (1963), Miller (1976), Ackoff (1970), Thompson and McEwen (1958), Emery and Trist (1973).

In complex organisations three levels are found in the managerial system. These are institutional (involved in relating activities to the environment), technical (involved in actual production) and organisational (involved in integrating the needs of the institutional and technical levels).

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Mantell (1972) quotes Makridaki's definition of the open-systems approach as being representative. "The systems approach to management is basically a way of thinking. The organisation is viewed as an integrated complex of interdependent parts which are capable of sensitive and accurate interaction among themselves and with their environment."

Child (1973) emphasizes that the design, structure and functioning of an organisation is the deliberate result of strategic choices made by organisational administrators according to their insight into environmental demands. The human element thus remains central in an open-systems approach.

All organisations are dependent upon their environment for survival in so far as their products or services can meet an existing demand. Organisations, as part of an environment, however, also have an effect on the environment, in terms of social intervention, ecological implications.

The growth in size and complexity of organisations leads to the need for management feedback. It is important for an organisation to have an information flow structure which functions efficiently internally and is capable of quick and appropriate response to changing factors in the environment. To enable managers to concentrate on relevant aspects of organisation functioning, information processing systems are required. Computer assistance in this respect is invaluable and has led to the development of Management Information System techniques (MIS). The MIS approach was developed as an aid to determine the complex processes and channels "through which products, services, resources and information flow from point to point within the organisation and between the organisation and its environment" (Hartman, et al., 1968).

Vazsonyi (1976) fits MIS into the framework of the systems approach and states that:

- the subject matter of MIS is change
- the variables of MIS are mathematical functions
- an MIS consists of structured relationships
- the solutions given by an MIS, are the information processes of the MIS
- information processes are stochastic functions that is, skillful in aiming, preceded by guesswork.

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Drucker (1974) however, had doubts about the increase in MIS in large corporations. He states that it is by no means clear that many of these systems make a contribution. He finds it difficult in most cases to judge their performance or to measure their results, and he has doubts as to whether many managers can effectively use such systems. Schewe (1976) quotes research which indicates that current or planned computer-based management information systems and their usage fall far short of their theoretical capabilities. He stresses that while research on human phenomena in MIS design, implementation and usage has been given attention, greater emphasis has been placed on the technical aspects of computer-based information systems, while little literature exists on the psychological, and other aspects of the system user and his interface with the information system. While some research into the human dimensions of MIS development is being done, much more is needed. The impact of this technological approach on human values and its effect on organisational processes requires a high level of management perception and sensitivity in handling e.g. control and communication aspects.

Management Information Systems assist in obtaining information on actual situations and guides in the evaluation, diagnosing and action to be taken. In this respect they form a valuable part of forecasting models and techniques proposed by e.g. Jantsch (1967), Polak (1971). The complexities of social interactions cannot, however easily be systematized and new theoretical approaches and ways of thinking in this respect are indicated. Organisations as dynamic social systems have to resolve their specific problems in ways that benefit their environments (internal and external) while handling social problems in ways that will benefit them as well as society generally. The social context from which a new environment emerges, and the way of reacting to the new environment, reflects what seems natural in the society at the time. A cultural function can thus affect human reactions to changing situations which can influence expectations and affect the behaviour norms of the workers. Managers, in making decisions, must take this into account and manage accordingly.

2.1.4.2 Contingency Approach

Organisation management requires achieving a match between the human and the task elements and to integrate these with both the internal and the external environment. The appropriate pattern of organisation is assumed to be contingent on the nature of the work and the particular needs of the people involved. A 'contingency theory' which also provides guidelines for using some of the attributes of the open-systems approach in studying complex organisations has been developed.

Kast and Rosenzweig (1972) point out that most sciences go through a macromicro-macro cycle. Traditional bureaucratic theory gave the first major macro-view of organisations. "Principles of Management", applicable to all organisations, were developed. When this approach seemed unable to explain all phenomena, a micro-level approach was adopted. Thus interest turned to human potentials, human relations, technology or dimensions of the structure.

The systems approach again directed attention to a macro-point of view which, with the contingency theory, is once more moving towards more concrete, specific characteristics and relationships in social organisations. Kast and Rosenzweig call this a "midrange" approach. The general tenor of the contingency view is seen to fall somewhere between simplistic specific principles and complex vague notions. It is a midrange concept which recognises the complexity involved in managing modern organisations but uses patterns of relationships and/or configurations of subsystems in order to facilitate improved practice. The art of management depends on a reasonable success rate for actions taking place in a probabilistic environment. Kast and Rosenzweig express the hope that systems concepts and contingency views, while continually being refined by scientists/researchers/theorists, will also be made more applicable to the actual work situation and not relate to theoretical principles only.

The contingency approach is also referred to as situational theory, situational management, study of patterns of relationships or a search for configurations among subsystems. Basically this approach accepts that management concepts are not universally applicable but are only appropriate if the right conditions exist in a given situation. Different situations require the use of different concepts and therefore the utilization of any specific management concept is contingent upon the situation.

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It emphasizes the complex nature of organisations and attempts to understand how organisations operate under varying conditions and in specific circumstances. Contingency views are ultimately directed toward suggesting organisational designs and managerial systems most appropriate for specific situations (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1972).

Theorizing on systems or contingency approaches without practical application to management practice does not assist in advancing the field of management science. Comparative studies of different organisations in differing situations are needed to assist managers in their day-to-day functioning.

The concept of contingency theory was first expressed in studies of leadership. As early as 1948 Ralph Stogdill stated that analysis of leadership not only involves a study of leaders, but also of situations. Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) identified certain characteristics in the manager, subordinates and in the situation that required different types of leadership. Fiedler's (1967) studies on leadership gave further impetus to the approach when he used the term contingency to represent his point of view.

Further development of this approach was done by Korman (1973) on leadership and problems in applying the contingency concept, Korman and Tanofsky (1975) on statistical problems of contingency models in organisational behaviour, Vroom and Yetton (1972) in terms of leadership and decision-making, Mayntz (1976) in terms of non-rational, non-cognitive elements of decision-making, Bowers and Seashore (1966) in terms of predictability of organisation effectiveness and leadership.

The interaction between personal and situational aspects of job satisfaction were analysed by Bass (1967), Friedlander and Margulies (1969), Dimarco (1975), Franklin (1975) investigated causal relations between organisation climate, managerial leadership, peer leadership and group processes, while Carlisle (1974) discussed the implications of a contingency approach for decentralization.

A model for explaining structural variations between work units in a complex organisation, e.g. in terms of task difficulty and variations, was attempted by Van de Ven and Delbecq (1974), while key organisation processes are discussed by Kotter (1978).

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Langdale (1976) hypothesized that the effectiveness and survival of any organisational design is contingent upon at least eleven situational parameters involving organisational goals, tasks, member personalities and stress factors. He stated that neither classical nor modern design strategies were universally appropriate across all organisational settings. He also identified some principle of congruency "in that organisations strive towards integrated, homogeneous variable patterns."

The theoretical base of the contingency approach is, however, still not quite clear although the following seems to have emerged:

- A strong emphasis is placed on pragmatism.
- Management research in the past has centered more strongly on a search for basic principles and concepts which can be used by all to lead, plan and organise. Such absolute principles and universal applications are however, not appropriate to all situations. Participative management may work well in some situations, but not necessarily in all situations.
- Contingency theory states that any management condition, or problem, results from different variables which may predominate in a particular situation. Management situations consist of complex relationships. Contingency theory stresses the need to understand the relationships among variables.
- Contingency theory emphasizes the complexity of managing organisations and decision-making. In the past, decision-making was often based on one or two factors in order to simplify a situation which is inherently complex. Morse and Lorsch (1973) correctly state: "The strength of the contingency approach .. is that it begins to provide a way of thinking about this complexity rather than ignoring it" (p. 49).
- Contingency theory emphasizes that the primary skill of the manager is to be able to select appropriate concepts and strategies, based on the particular situation at hand. They are thus challenged to make effective decisions by matching the right concepts and strategies with the demands of the situation.
- Common trends according to which situations could be classified need further research and development to serve as a guide for management action.

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Staehle (1976) attempted a classification of situations with his "if, then" approach.

Luhmann (1976) suggested a dual contingency approach. This would on the one hand involve assessment of worker attitudes as they relate to defined organisation rules and regulations and on the other hand involve assessment of different relationships which become evident as the organisation relates to its environment (e.g. economic, social, technological, etc.).

In an appraisal of contingency research findings Moberg and Koch (1975) state that as a whole, the findings appear to reconcile normative models and empirical findings. It thus seems to have value in modifying the theorypractice gap. They do, however, caution against developing a "holistic midrange theory" of organisations before more research evidence is available.

A basic problem inherent in this research is the fact that models, labelled as being universally applicable, are in effect implicitly contingent upon their assumptions. Likert's (1961) System Four Model is contingent on his assumptions about man and the organisational environment. Contingency relationships are also contingent on the values and personal system of needs of the applier (Shetty and Carlisle, 1972). The manager who favours a more human relations approach may not be at ease in implementing, for instance, a bureaucratic structure where such an approach is required. Moberg and Koch (1975) stress the need for greater insight into process skills, required to deal with the complexity of contingency findings. "Just as the contingency view requires practitioners to think more like theorists, it also requires theorists to think more like practitioners" (p.122).

Child (1970) sounds a note of warning when he emphasizes the need for senior managers to be critical of management research approaches. They should "beware of any package deal offered to them which presents them with a standard uniform model of organisation." The specific demands made by varying circumstances should not be overlooked when searching for management aids.

There is evidence to show that management and organisation structure necessarily derives relevance from its objectives and is affected by the conditions within

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which it is located and the constraints placed on its functioning. The size of an organisation is perhaps the greatest constraint upon the choice of an organisational structure. Factors such as functional activities, the manner in which functions are integrated, employee expectations, etc. furthermore require that management should have insight into the organisation and its problems to determine an appropriate methodological solution for different conditions or demands.

2.1.4.3 Transaction Theory

In line with the viewing of organisations as social institutions, the last decade has also seen development of what is called "transaction", "exchange" or "reciprocity" theory. This theory views social behaviour (particularly in organisations) as a series of transactions involving exchange, bargaining and some kind of reciprocity. Building on small group research, researchers like Blau (1964), Gouldner (1960), Homans (1961) and Whyte (1969) have done investigations. Transaction theory sees an organisation as a plural society containing many related but separate interests and objectives which must be maintained in some sort of equilibrium (Ross, 1970).

Conflict is accepted as being normal provided the organisation is capable of recognizing the problems and of developing ways of solving them.

An aspect of conflict resolution is bargaining, both in terms of unionmanagement and boss-subordinate relationships. Blake, Shepard and Mouton (1965) distinguish between different modes of conflict resolution while Landsberger (1961) describes the issues leading to conflict and the way in which they are resolved.

The cultural implications of the transaction approach in terms of e.g. social power and deference required by subordinates, emphasize the need to analyse the situation in which the transactions or conflict take place.

Social behaviour develops differently in different cultures. This also has implications for social behaviour within organisations. Onyemelukwe (1973) emphasizes that industrial relations in new societies have to start "from the grassroots" (p.165) and that the management of men in Africa must build around the existing African society which is basically communalistic and highly structured with deeply personalised sets of relationships in which individualism is suppressed. Negandhi (1975) proposes that a societal environment factor should be included to provide an enlarged perspective on contingency. He quotes Crozier as saying that organisational systems are cultural answers to the problems encountered by human beings in achieving their collective ends. The structure of an organisation system can be viewed not only as an institutional answer to handle power relationships but also as the rules of the game members have to play within the limits of the game. The players' strategies are rational but the game itself is a man-made construct which is heavily dependent on the cultural capacities and attitudes of the people concerned. The impact of socio-cultural variables on organisational structuring and functioning, particularly when seen in cross-cultural and manpower utilization perspective, is important. The "patterns of relationships" stressed by Kast and Rosenzweig (1972) and the readiness by individuals to accept responsibilities, etc., become important variables in the chain of other variables affecting management and functioning of the organisation.

Workers act simultaneously in terms of their own interests, their status, their roles in the organisation and the conflicts in which they are involved. The organisation in turn serves as a particular economic, social and professional institution or unit which must maintain a balance in terms of economic strategy and professional politics.

Within the organisation technical and economic rationality assists in the development of decision-making systems and allows workers to define themselves in terms of the roles they fulfill within the social work system. This offers the possibility of social negotiation between techno-economic progress demands, and living and working-condition demands of the workers. Where the system of work rules and norms is clear, stable work transactions and negotiations are straightforward. Modern organisations are however marked by increasing interdependence of functions, changing attitudes and values and negotiations and transactions therefore become more complex. Recognition is required of values, norms, hierarchies and social conduct acceptable to both workers and management in an effort to maintain organisation viability.

Present-day management therefore requires an integrated approach based on a perception of worker needs and environmental demands, coupled to a knowledge of the direction which organisation change requires and the implications of such change. It requires insight into the implications which varying transactions and negotiations may have on the future of the organisation.

An important aspect on which managerial insight in South Africa is required relates to socio-cultural variables influencing the manpower resources of the country. The labour force consists of people drawn from different cultures and different levels of industrial sophistication. As such they require different manpower management approaches.

Management approaches however differ in terms of their cultural origins and a brief analysis of these differences may assist managers in their assessment of the relevance of any given technique to meet their specific needs.

3. SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES

3.1 Introduction

The majority of empirical studies, theories and methods of analysing and developing organisations and management originated in America and Britain. On the assumption that the similarity of organisation and management across the world is greater than the variation, these developments have been accepted and applied elsewhere.

This assumption can be questioned. Malinowski, as anthropologist "was most insistent that every culture should be understood in its own terms; that every institution be seen as a product of the culture within which it developed" Lammers (1976 p.98). Taking this point of view to its logical conclusion would, however, mean that no comparative study of organisations could be done.

To facilitate analysis of general and specific factors and their relationships in terms of organisations and culture, research should be done on both intra-cultural and inter-cultural basis. Generalities across cultures and specific tendencies within cultures could then be identified. There are two main areas in which comparisons between countries could affect management. One is the implication for managing in under-developed or developing regions of the world. The other area involves management of multi-national companies where some comparability in terms of functioning within different cultures is to be achieved. Each of these situations generates their specific management demands. The South African environment could be said to relate to both situations.

If it is accepted that managerial effectiveness involves producing something from a situation by managing it appropriately, then the complexity of making wise decisions in situations of e.g. cultural uncertainty, becomes apparent. All management positions have common areas requiring effective functioning. These include achieving subordinate effectiveness, innovative effectiveness, project effectiveness and co-worker effectiveness. A sociotechnical approach, where the technical aspects involved in the design and functioning of the organisation are aligned to the behavioural or human and environmental factors, is thus necessary. Care should, however, be taken to distinguish between apparent resemblances, in terms of similarities and differences found in different cultures, which could affect management. Bethlehem (1975) and Dawson (1969) for instance discuss the problems involved in matching the traditional Zambian and other African culture's group functioning, with the West's concept of group participation.

3.2 Cultural manifestations in Management Approach

There are noticeable differences between Western, Eastern and Third World management approaches. These differences will briefly be discussed.

Ferrari (1974) states that never in the past has a cultural or economic movement spread internationally without taking on distinct and well-defined characteristics in each one of the countries in which it was introduced. Malinowski (1945) used the term transculturation to indicate that change takes place through a process of transition in which both cultures are active, with each contributing and merging into a new reality of civilization.

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Reddin (1973) in lighter vein, illustrates how management is tied to culture when he says: "Britain has the world's best technician training; this relates to the country's elaboration of the master-servant role they want good servants and they know how to train them. North America has the world's best management development, relating in part to the country's belief that success is measured by upward mobility. Japan has the world's best concensus management - they run a business like a family" (p.43).

Analysis of the vast amount of literature available on organisation and management development does seem to indicate that some broad differentiation in terms of cultural approach is evident.

The North American approach tends to be ethnocentric and researchers tend to be goal theorists, interested in the behavioural approaches, with the specific emphasis on the individual and his functioning amongst others as a groupmember. Argyris (1965),Likert (1961),Drucker (1974), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), Blake and Mouton (1965), Bennis (1973), Herzberg (1965), Vroom (1964), McClelland (1961), are but a few names associated with research in this field.

The British approach deals more with organisation structure and management practices within the confines of technology, size, environment and other factors. Research is done on organisational functioning, both as a totality and as it manifests itself in various sub-systems. Researchers in this field include Pugh (1976), Child (1972), Hickson (1974), Hinings (1974), Hall (1974).

The European approach tends to be more diffuse, more theoretical and philosophical, with stronger emphasis on the environmental imperative. An organisation is accepted as being the product of its own society. It forms a subsystem within the larger cultural system. Trade unions play an important role and the management approach is predominantly economic and bureaucratic. Researchers thus involved include Ferrari (1974), Crozier (1964), Schewe (1976), Staehle (1976), Lammers (1976), Mulder (1976). The Eastern group of nations is identified by stronger ideological, political and bureaucratic emphases. Ideological aspects overrule in many cases differing developmental needs and approaches. The lack of individual enterprise causes researchers to question the need for greater management development and freedom as well as greater involvement of trade-unions and workers, in order to increase the efficiency of Soviet industry. Names associated with the collective point of view include Osipov (1966), Strumilin (1966), Shubkin (1966). The request for greater individual freedom in enterprise is found in the work of e.g. Kogan (1966), Naumova (1966), Valentinova (1966), Dolguchits (1968) and Berliner (1956).

Japan is generally characterised by a nationalistic, paternalistic management approach which enables both participation and exploitation of workers. The concept of the divine origin of leadership leads to greater acceptance by workers that authority should reside in senior positions. Life-time training, and conversely, being cared for during old age, contributes to strong organisation loyalties. Noda (1963), Takagi (1969), Kikuchi (1970), Odaka (1975) are names to be mentioned.

Management in undeveloped and underdeveloped countries is often affected by their stage of economic development. As such a strong differentiation can be found between western technology and management approach, as well as between cultural norms and traditions. Management in Africa depends largely on autocratic, economic and bureaucratic principles. Aspects such as kinship lineage, pluralism and a strong orientation towards nature as a pre-disposing factor of event, often leads to conflict particularly where ignorance, political aspirations and self-interest militate against economic development of industry. Researchers who have worked in this field and who are indigenous to the continent include Onyemelukwe (1973), Iboko (1976), Abdi (1975) and Mazrui (1974).

In general it can be said that:

- North America follows a micro-approach with particular emphasis being placed on individualism;
- Britain also follows a micro-approach with emphasis on structure and environment;
- Europe follows a macro-approach, accepting organisations as being subsystems functioning within a larger system and culture;

- The Eastern group of countries are mainly ideologically and politically orientated, although changes in terms of greater worker involvement and freedom are becoming evident.
- Japan is strongly nationalistic, tradionalistic and paternalistic.
- Africa is generally still undeveloped and managers tend to follow either western approaches or socialistic approaches, whichever is offered with economic and technological help or which they have inherited from pre-independence days. In some cases social and kinship or traditional approaches are adhered to. However, as Onyemelukwe (1973) states: "There is no typical employer in Africa" (p.159).

3.3 Relationship: Management/Culture/Personality

Udy (1959) stresses that each individual member of any organisation has been socialized relative to a larger society and thus brings with him into the organisation from the outside various expectations and values which inevitably enter into the way he performs and interacts with others. This holds true for all levels of employees, be they low level labourers or high level managers. Mayo (1945) in contrasting the "established" and the "adaptive" or "adapting" societies, emphasized that it is not easy to maintain "emotional equilibrium" in the shifting patterns of daily life. This is relevant for all employees at all levels entering a different "culture", be it workplace or country.

Nath (1968) points out that most of the developing nations have now embarked on a programme of rapid economic development with the help of developed nations. The process of industrial development requires both technical knowledge and the administrative and managerial capacity to utilize such knowledge effectively. By and large, developed countries have been rather successful in rendering technical assistance but less so in aiding the transfer of administrative skills. This is so because management techniques and philosophies are affected by societal norms, cultural values and socio-emotional issues which enter into the transfer process (p.35). In introducing technical assistance, project and innovative effectiveness can contribute towards development. However, the ultimate effectiveness finally rests with subordinates and co-worker effectiveness. The modern factory or business, located in a developing society is often seen as an innovating influence. The values and attitudes in modern business could, however, be in conflict with the social and cultural norms of the people involved. Traditional class structuring based on ascribed instead of earned status, militates against individualism, whereas in western management theory individualism is often assumed to be the basis for achieving industrialisation.

That these issues have not yet been clarified, is clear from the divergent views held on the interaction between industrialization and culture.

Thompson (1964) for instance states that administrative principles derived from organisation theory and research in the United States of America will have the same developmental impact elsewhere in the world. Control-centered management, however, inhibits the conditions necessary for innovative behaviour while a non-hierarchical climate fosters innovation (p. 94).

Milne (1970) on the other hand maintains that hierarchy is too deeply rooted in the cultures of developing countries. Relationships in such countries generally contribute to a lack of trust, a desire for personal security, and loyalty only to individual goals (p. 60-63). Influence equalization in such a climate may easily allow members to work towards their own ends instead of assisting in organisational innovations.

Onyemelukwe (1973) rejects the assumption that an industrial culture exists with a body of norms and attitudes which people must acquire to industrialize adequately. He maintains that the evolution of management strategies "should arise from a study of attitudes, history and norms of a people" (p.97). He also questions the value of expecting educated African elites to introduce workable changes because he feels their outlook and reference standards, in spite of denials and pretences to the contrary, are largely westernized and in that sense colonial. According to Onyemelukwe it matters "little what one thinks about the culture of a people. What matters is that the management of individuals from that culture must derive from their culture" (p. 173).

3.4 South African Implications

The relevance of the interaction between industrialisation and culture is reflected in Maud's (1974) conclusion that South Africa's historical legacies are crucial to any attempt to explore the country's future (p. 291). The historical processes have assumed a life of their own and have thus become a "material force" as significant as any economic variable in determining present human behaviour.

Where different cultures are brought together to achieve a common industrialization, as is the case in South Africa, particularly careful planning is required to achieve smooth integration for effective functioning.

The value of understanding among individuals is basic to worker and coworker effectiveness and is particularly relevant to the heterogeneous labour composition of South Africa. The complex management demands of such labour composition is clear.

Biesheuvel (1957) commented that an increasing number of urbanized African professional and business men exist whose habits and personality make-up render them indistinguishable from their white colleagues. A more detailed study however might reveal both remnants of their traditional culture, outlook and motivation as well as the extent to which this is affected by their position in a multi-racial society which imposes different restrictions on its members.

Between the extremes of tribal life and urbanization, all stages of transition from a primitive rural cultural to a western urbanized civilization are found in South Africa. This situation can create problems concerning the manner in which Blacks for instance become aware of the conduct that is required of them in their relations with western society, the attitude which they develop towards these requirements and the influences that shape their character development (Biesheuvel, 1957).

The conduct of people is determined not only by knowledge concerning codes and values, but also by their inner acceptance of these. The habits, internalized through tribal culture, are often difficult to change to enable adjustment to western society because these habits derive from different viewings of individual responsibility. The interdependency of people is an inherent and important aspect of the developing life of a nation. This does not mean remoulding the cultures to form one common mould, but rather evolving new patterns of relationships and of interventions as well as the possible restructuring of roles and opportunities which can lead to personal growth and an overall development of the community. It is important to remember in this respect Lewin's proposition that the question of group decision lies at the intersection of many basic problems of group life and individual psychology. It concerns the relation of motivation to action and the effect of a group setting on the individual's readiness to change or to keep certain standards.

In the process of developing a community, an organisation, consisting of heterogeneous inputs, greater or lesser awareness of "culture shock" (Oberg, 1958) will be experienced by the different members. Anxiety will be felt because of the uncertainty of knowing "when to do what and how". This anxiety is relevant to rural workers entering industry, and in South Africa at present, it is also felt by management confronted with the task of developing unsophisticated, often illiterate and culture-bound workers in a "telescopic" fashion to function in a technological world of industry and in times of economic stress, and social change.

Since its inception, the NIPR has consistently conducted research into factors affecting people in the work situation. Investigations have included research on workers of both sexes and different races representing varying levels of education and industrialization. Research has furthermore included individual assessments, guidance and training, as well as group assessment, development and conflict resolution. Research has also included analysis of organisation structure, functioning and assessment of developmental demands, while recognizing the implications which this has in terms of worker values, attitudes and needs. Researchers in these fields who have also gained international recognition include Biesheuvel, Hudson, Reuning, Nelson.

Experiences obtained while conducting surveys, consulting on problems experienced by a wide variety of organisations, assessing and training workers at different work levels, etc. have emphasized the need to resolve problems according to the demands made by the South African situation. Personnel management approaches and techniques, developed in other cultures, required adaptation to meet the specific needs of this culture. In specific instances such as selecting, training and advancement of illiterate and black workers, new instruments

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and techniques have had to be developed. The NIPR research publications by Skawran, Blake, Hall, Osrin, Malherbe, Lätti, etc. are typical examples of innovative applications of available approaches to meet specific South African demands. The present economic growth demands in turn emphasize the need to develop and effectively utilize all the labour resources of the country. The NIPR, in terms of its overall objectives and its expertise gained over many years can assist in meeting the developmental demands. This would involve guiding managers in resolving manpower management problems and in identifying future research areas and research approaches.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Introduction

From the review on the developments affecting the approach to management two aspects deserve particular consideration. Firstly it must be recognized that management of an organisation involves as a basic element the management of people. Bearing in mind the limitless variations in people's needs and values, either as individuals or as members of groups, it follows that any organisation requires a unique approach in reconciling all the differences with the view to achieve its ultimate objectives. Secondly it is clear that there are many other facets within and outside to which an organisation has to adapt if it wants to remain viable. These different facets serve to emphasize the need for constant and unique adaptation. In the past a great deal of effort was directed at finding an ideal management approach applicable to most situations. At present there is a greater awareness of the need to take cognizance of the complex interrelationships and dynamics involved in management which require constant adjustment and the maintenance of a healthy equilibrium between elements. To achieve this managers need to make a concerted effort to determine the nature and extent of those factors which characterize or impinge on their specific situation and which therefore require attention.

In South Africa we experience problems typical to a developing country. In this context change is axiomatic, particularly in view of the need to industrialize a multi-cultural population. The White labour force is generally westernized in thought, life-style and industrialization. The Black labour force, although basically responding, like its White counterpart, to the demands of the work situation, is generally more heterogeneous with regard to background,

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ability and attitude. The Black worker is less developed with regard to education and training and many are as yet less assimilated to industrial traditions.

Durand (1970) emphasizes the need to see adaptation of Black labour to western standards as being less a need for "acculturation" and more a case of assisting with disengaging from the known. Adaptation is a process in which the new has to be assimilated without dissolving or resolving the existing old. This leads to ambivalence between the new, economic and technologically rich future and the security of the old, known, cultural past.

Ambivalence and insecurity undermine any attempts to establish mutual trust between individuals who have to work together to achieve common goals. <u>A first requisite to more effective functioning therefore requires greater</u> <u>knowledge of self and knowledge of others to determine areas of concensus</u> <u>and of differences</u>. This is not something done by someone for someone else. It requires an approach, or life-style, aimed at the creation of opportunities to communicate, to develop and to evolve an effective co-existence characterized by growth in the workplace.

A management approach, based on meeting the varying needs of the labour populations and according to the demands made by a changing environment is necessary. Traditional approaches alone will no longer be effective and more attention needs to be directed at the open-systems and transaction approaches to determine possible guides which can aid in managing according to the needs of the situation.

<u>Knowledge is thus required on how organisations operate under varying con-</u> <u>ditions and in specific and changing circumstances</u> to enable managers to assess complex decisions and to select appropriate concepts and strategies to meet situational demands.

The type of information required would involve an analysis of possible links which exist between traditional behaviour, personality variables, organisation behaviour, and environment. This could involve analysis of the impact of technology on human values; measurement of possible best fit between organisation rationality and worker non-rationality while taking into account implications of social factors and social change, the need for solidarity
within the organisation and integration of the organisation with its
environment e.g. development of consensus and interdependence both within
the organisation and between organisation and environment, In effect
research is necessary to analyse the implications of a variety of transaction
situations in progress, involving different variables at different stages,
to enable the projection of future courses of action and adaptation techniques.

In essence the criteria for effective management of organisations, the workers and the interaction with the environment can be reduced to basic questions like:

What is the present situation? How well/how badly does it function? What needs to be changed? Why should it be changed? How should it be changed? What would be the implications of change?

On the basis of knowledge obtained through information, planning, control and appraisal systems, key performance areas and transaction needs can be determined for both the organisation and its workers and for their interrelationships with each other and with the environment. Aspects affecting these interrelationships would include technological, economic, psychological, sociological and political factors as well as the measure of stability and instability of conditions and the rate of change required.

By implication knowledge must be obtained on four dimensions, viz. organisation (objectives, structure, function), labour, environment and transactions taking place, to enable the formulation of management theories and the construction of management models for South African situations.

4.1.1 Organisation

4.1.1.1 Organisations function as social structures according to established systems, norms and expectations. Organisational factors play an important role in determining how individuals will act in different situations. The impact of the organisation in determining human behaviour, however, differs from situation to situation, and relate to the congruence found between organisation and worker objectives. <u>The variation in individual behaviour which can be accounted for</u> <u>by organisation systems and norms as opposed to those attributed</u> to individual expectations or interactional factors is however still <u>unclear and requires research to enable the integration of personal</u> and corporate expectations, needs and efforts.

4.1.1.2 Organisations have an important need for survival and in meeting this need more is required than merely setting goals and determining processes to accomplish these goals. Aspects of the closed-system perspective need to be combined with an open-systems approach. This means that the rationality required by the one approach must be combined with the openness to handle changing situations according to their demands as is required by the second approach. It must however be accepted that organisations seek to survive in whichever way it would seem possible. Their reaction to internal and external pressures therefore cannot always be logically predicted and empirical research is required to clarify change areas which can be of crucial importance to the functioning of the organisation. Such research requires analysis of the structure of the organisation because structure is closely aligned to the actual manner of functioning of the organisation. Analysis of the work processes within the organisation is necessary to determine those processes which are crucial to its functioning. Analysis is also necessary to determine the impact which individuals and groups of individuals have on organisational ethos and their handling of key environmental interactions.

4.1.3 It is necessary to develop a model as well as instruments for assessment of organisation functioning and effectiveness in terms of structure, planning systems, control and appraisal systems, productivity indices and innovative or adaptation requirements which are crucial to the organisation to maintain equilibrium. Recognition must be given to environmental influences (e.g. economic, cultural, political, etc.) which could affect the organisation in its realization of stated objectives or in the development of its energies, e.g. planned structures and processes, to handle internal and external pressures and threats.

Knowledge of the objectives, structural and functioning of organisations and the implications thereof for local managers requires innovative research for South African situations. No answers are available but work done by organisation researchers like Pugh and his Aston associates (1976), Thompson (1967), Litwak (1961), Hall (1974), Terreberry (1968), Evan (1966), could serve as initial points of departure.

4.1.2 Labour

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Whether an organisation is labour or technology intensive does not alter the fact that people are essential factors which assist in achieving the desired end product.

4.1.2.1 Knowledge of worker ability and worker motivation of both westernized and non-westernized work forces exists. This could profitably be analysed in terms of organisation development and adaptation demands. Research in determining aptitudes and abilities of indigenous peoples of South Africa has been done by the NIPR. Research is also conducted in terms of meeting developmental needs of the heterogeneous labour force and in measuring organisation ethos (or climate) as it becomes evident through worker-attitudes, worker aspirations, etc. Research is however required on the implications of adult life experience as it relates to work involvement and career commitment as well as on life-role expectations in sofar as it affects personal development. 4.1.2.2 Leadership plays a crucial role in the actual utilization development and motivation of workers. The relevance of the existing developmental approaches, with regard to organisation and individual development and which were mainly derived from the American continent, need investigation. It is necessary to determine the contribution of the developing worker to the development of the organisation as such, the cost/benefit implications of the traditional developmental approaches, the implication of value systems for organisation equilibrium, etc. The NIPR has done research on leadership training, values assessment cost/benefit aspects of training, etc. but more needs to be done in terms of present day demands and future prognostic needs.

Increased attention must therefore be given to leadership training which should involve all levels and types of leaders in the organisation and which would require analysis of functional demands made by labour, structure and environment. Training should aim at developing problem-solving expertise and rather deal with interpersonal demands than the teaching of pre-determined management techniques.

4.1.2.3 There is a need to obtain insight into factors affecting interpersonal relationships and those determining patterns of relationships between labour socially, functionally and in negotiating.

<u>Research is required to assess worker functioning and effectiveness in</u> <u>terms of human needs deployment, control and appraisal approaches, inter-</u> <u>relationships, adaptation, interdependence and development</u>. Work done by the NIPR in terms of worker development, performance appraisal, black adaptation, etc. are valuable, but a more integrated approach is required.

The development of a model according to which the human resources function can be integrated into the overall organisation planning and strategy formulation is necessary. Mahoney (1977) et al, stress that "successful performance of the broadened role of human resource management requires data and information systems superior to those of the past as inputs for human resources planning and as control measures in the application of human resource practices" (p. 58). They propose a stock and flow model for improved human resource measurement and planning. Information systems designed around a transactions matrix can serve as a base for development of a framework against which analysis, planning, development and control of personnel within the organisation can be done. Luhman's (1976) proposed approaches to study relationships existing between member attitudes and rules and regulations of the organisation, and the relationship organisation/environment, also merit attention.

4.1.2.4 The NIPR's current research project on diagnosing organisation climate (or ethos) is in line with these research demands. The NIPR organisation development approach also takes cognizance of the research needs already indicated. The structuring of available information into a workable model which can be integrated with organisation and environment demands is however still required.

4.1.3 Environment

4.1.3.1 Little research has been done in South Africa on the interaction between work environment and worker and between the organisation and its <u>environment</u>. This is an important area of research, particularly in terms of the developing homelands with their need for accelerated industrial development and in terms of the implications of, or constraints upon, various management approaches and personnel utilization techniques applicable to different situations.

Lewis-Beck's (1977) research on organisational innovation as a phenomenon also requires analysis. He suggests the more profitable approach of trying to specify critical structural variables, critical for organisation innovation which would function anywhere and in all cultures. These thoughts could also be relevant to Litwak's (1961) propositions on manpower functioning on different levels of the organisation. The NIPR's job evaluation approach, serving as an indepth analysis of the organisation, could also prove to be of specific value in determining critical areas of functioning, with regard to both structure and personnel. These approaches however all need further development and adaptation.

In an analysis of environmental conditions a distinction can be made between general conditions and specific conditions. Hall (1974) differentiates between general and specific conditions on the basis that:

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- General conditions are of concern to all organisations e.g. economy, demographic changes, etc. These conditions are the same for all organisations although organisations may respond to them differently.
- (ii) Specific conditions relate to interaction which is directed to the organisation as specific entity e.g. through other organisations with which it interacts, or specific individuals who are crucial to its functioning, etc.

4.1.3.2 <u>The typical problem requiring analysis would involve e.g.</u> <u>evaluation of the type of technology appropriate to underdeveloped</u> <u>countries</u>. South Africa has the sophistication of a western country and the development potential of a third world country. As such it needs to combine the knowledge appropriate to developed countries with the needs of underdeveloped communities. Research is needed on e.g. the social, economic and psychological barriers which may affect decisions to structure the organisation according to technologically sophisticated approaches while labour intensive organisation structures may be required for human development and economic reasons.

4.1.3.3 In essence then, research on the assessment of environment and change demands as it affects organisation functioning and manpower utilization is required.

4.1.4 Transactions

In South Africa the complexity of contemporary life is increased by the need to move between cultures which function at different levels of development.

4.1.4.1 Team and team functioning have become important variables in achieving effective organisation functioning. Team effectiveness, however, largely depends on effective interaction between team members and this requires active efforts from all members. This is difficult to achieve particularly where heterogeneous groups of individuals are involved. Group cohesion can only be achieved where individual members of the group work together to achieve a mutual objective and where trust and support exists between them. Individual empire building, paternalism and personal insecurity or distrust are basic factors working against team effectiveness. <u>Research on group development and factors affecting</u> group functioning in the work situation is indicated.

4.1.4.2 A basic requirement for the development of functional teams is insight into peoples' values, attitudes and approaches to each other. This is of particular relevance to the work situation where workers with differing cultural backgrounds are involved. The development of work teams, particularly at the level of interaction between cultures, forms an important area of research. This would include analysis of transactions taking place in negotiating situations where potential areas of conflict are involved.

Bell (1974) suggests that the need for interaction between people will increase in the future. It can be expected that in the post-industrial society work will predominantly take the form of games between persons exchanges requiring interpersonal skills. In combination with the emphasis placed on the technology the key resources of the future will be human skills and talents.

4.1.4.3 An aspect of the South African labour complement which requires further investigation <u>involves the effects of affluence and economic</u> limitation on social character and social problems.

Rosow (1976) states: "Prosperity stifles symbiosis. Affluence creates personal opportunities that reduce people's dependence on family, kin, and friends. Their independence of the group weakens the constraints of mutuality. This undermines the solidarity that depends not only on sentiments, but on the web of affiliation that binds people into a system of reciprocity" (p. 640).

Implications of lesser reliance on the group, greater mobility and confrontation with changing values and value-groups can relate to role conflict. It may also force individuals to make life-choices which cannot be tested against traditional norms, thus causing personal conflict and strain.

4.1.4.4 <u>Research should therefore give attention to factors affecting</u> <u>patterns of relationships and role conflict as it affects work commit-</u> <u>ment.</u>

This would include analysis of values of individuals emanating from sociocultural influences, alienating pressures caused by changing life-styles as well as the implications of organisational and structural demands. It would also include research on personal aspirations, dependency needs, dealing with cognitive complexity demands, coping mechanisms, life phase experiences, etc. The NIPR is engaged in research on some of these aspects, particularly as it relates to individuals and groups. The organisational implications however need further analysis.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Management developed from an autocratic, authoritarian approach practised at the turn of the century to a greater awareness of the need for worker participation in problem solving. This has lead to a realization that organisations are complex socio-economic systems which interact and adapt continually according to demands made by both the specific requirements of the organisation and the environment.

Management team effort is accepted as being more effective than the authoritarian approach of an individual. Organisations are accepted as consisting of open-systems and subsystems interacting with each other. In managing an enterprise management cannot rely only on an economic (technological)approach, nor on a purely environmental or behavioural approach. An integration of economic principles and techniques with knowledge of environmental demands and behavioural expectations is demanded of managers today. No single technique or ready strategy for performance exist according to which managers can manage - they have to rely on their own insight and expertise and on the support from specialists in the management team to be guided in terms of a contingency management approach.

In this respect there are research needs which must be met in order to assist in the development of theories and models of management.

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Three major areas requiring further research can be identified. These are:

- Organisation functioning demands
- Manpower needs
- Interaction requirements

5.1 Organisation Functioning

There is a need to develop theories and models aimed at creating flexible and adaptive organisations.

To promote the development of such theories certain steps need to be followed. They are briefly the following:

5.1.1 Analysis of existing concepts of organisation theory must be done to assess the relevance of such concepts to contemporary organisation needs and future demands, particularly as required in the South African context.

5.1.2 Critical analysis of theories and techniques presently employed in analysing organisation demands is necessary to determine their value and relevance for the future, particularly as regards determining key interaction areas.

5.1.3 Assessment of managers' perceptions and views about workers, environment and organisation change is required to determine their implications on worker well-being and productivity and on organisation viability. The relevance of such approaches for different circumstances e.g. rural/urban, technological intensive/manpower intensive, needs to be determined.

5.1.4 Development of managers at all levels within the organisation is necessary. Such development should emphasize an open-system approach to organisation functioning and human resource utilization and should relate to a more flexible management approach which is based (contingent) upon the situation at hand.

5.2 Employee Needs

There is a need to develop an integrated theory on individual and group behaviour within an organisation.

Such theory should aim at:

5.2.1 determining factors which would affect the effectiveness of the total concern rather than individual functioning within the system. No single theory explains the complex realities of both human and organisational values. Critical analysis of existing theories on both these dimensions is necessary.

5.2.2 In developing a conceptual frame of reference on employee needs, attention must be directed at the individual in his or her relationship to the organisation, not merely as a worker but in terms of a total life situation. Information is therefore necessary on the implications of adult life-span development as it affects work commitment and as it is affected by cultural variables, human needs and values.

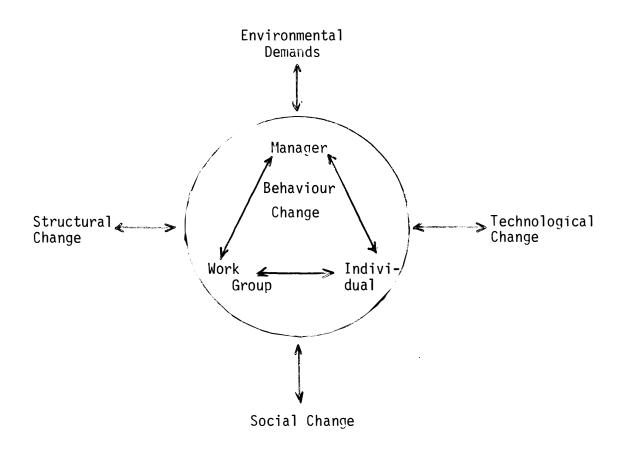
5.2.3 Identification of work areas critical to the effective functioning of different organisations is necessary. Development of workers to function as key personnel in such work areas is required not only in terms of specific work skills but also in terms of the relevance of their actions for the organisations functioning as a unit and in its relationship with the environment.

5.2.4 Interaction demands required within the organisation and between the organisation and its environment must be identified to determine specific training needs for key-personnel.

5.3 Interaction Requirements

Information is required to guide in the creation of flexible and adaptive organisations which can respond to changes taking place in the environment. This involves, inter alia, the utilization of all resources such as Management Information Systems, Personnel Information, etc., on an integrated basis to enable effective management dealing with problems.

5.3.1 Factors which affect established organisations and which require analysis in terms of macro/micro interactionimplications are the following:



5.3.2 Key interaction areas of an organisation must be determined. This could involve individuals, groups, technological demands, social and structural change.

5.3.3 Identification of the degree of formalized control, authority and power required for effective functioning is necessary. Increasing emphasis must be given to individual development, particularly in terms of interpersonal competence, professionalization and acceptance of responsibility for effective functioning within the concern and in dealing with external environmental demands. Dealing with cross cultural demands is particularly relevant to South African circumstances.

5.3.4 Organisation development must become more pro-active and less retro-active in dealing with interaction demands generally.

In conclusion it must be stressed that managers should reassess the role they presently play. Change has become an aspect of our everyday life. This managers have to accept and learn to adapt to. The complex nature of such adaptation is discussed by Toffler (1970) who states that "...while we tend to focus on only one situation at a time, the increased rate at which situations flow past us vastly complicates the entire structure of life multiplying the number of roles we have to play and the number of choices we are forced to make. This ...accounts for the choking sense of complexity about contemporary life" (p.193).

Personnel Managers in particular must accept the responsibility to guide and advise in the process of human resource utilization so as to meet and resolve the organisation problems of the present and the future. For this they will have to rely on situational strategies based on a knowledge of human qualities and of structural and environmental demands. They will have to assist managers in economic, technological, financial, production, etc. fields to plan in terms of the future social realities. Personnel managers need to become diagnosticians in terms of manpower as this relates to long-range normative forecasting of all the resources of the organisation.

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