

Developing Workplace Critical Thinking

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Introduction

To conduct this report, the Unilever organisation has been chosen because this is one of the largest companies in UK. The writing contains brief discussion about four management theories. Which are contingency management theory, bureaucratic management theory, scientific management theory and human relation management theory. These are the four major management theories which will be critically evaluated in this report based on the organisation, Unilever.

Part 1

Four Major Management Theories

Management theories look at how managers put plans in place to achieve corporate goals and how they drive individuals to perform at their best. Management theories are a set of concepts that suggest broad guidelines for running a company or organisation. The origins of management ideas may be traced back to "scientific" and "bureaucratic" management (hierarchies). Management ideas have developed from a variety of sources.

From a focus on authority and organisation to a focus on creativity on the workers. Companies began prioritizing individual workers as part of the "human relations" approach. Corporate culture has been recognized as a factor in performance by several theories. Management theories are applied in an organisation to get various advantages such as,

- To help the company to upgrade their productivity and the quality of their service.
- Using only one theory may not bring much benefit to the company.
- So, the managers of the top companies often use the combination of the major management theories to develop their overall performance.
- Management concepts aid in the more effective management of personnel.
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There are various major management theories which are used in organisation.

Human Relation management Theory

Human Relations management theory is a postulate of organisational psychology from the early twentieth century that claims that healthy social relationships in the workplace and recognition of

the worker as a unique individual may boost employee productivity and motivation (Tullar, 2018). Some of the major factors are

- the requirement of attention,
- the achievement of each employee and
- social interaction.

To increase the productivity of the organisation, the company should focus more on these factors.

Besides, there are some issues a company may face while using this approach. Such as,

- If the organisation fails to evaluate the connection between productivity and employee satisfaction, then the company may face trouble.
- The control of managers may lead to the misuse of fear and may manipulate the performance of the employees.
- In an addition, if the company fails to research enough and fails to figure out enough data to support the relationship which are supported by fulfilling the needs and satisfaction.

With the development of proper strategy, the company will be able to overcome these issues while using this approach.

Human relation is appropriate in various cases such as,

- In the case of team management program and when higher employee involvement is required, two types of human relation management approach is used. One is the usage of Just in Time approach and the plan of Scanlon (Griffin, 2017).

Scientific Management Theory

The process of tackling many areas of companies using scientific methods such as research, administration, and analysis in a scientific manner is called the theory of scientific management (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019). This theory is applied in an organisation based on various factors. Such as,

Organisational size, nature, resource, management techniques, no of employees, usage of technology, trade and so on.

This management theory helps a company in many ways. Such as,

- This theory helps the company to improve their production and to reduce their cost.
- This theory is widely used in US and Europe.
- This theory is very helpful to control the overall performance of the organisation.

Contingency Management Theory

It is the theory that the organisational structures and control systems that managers pick is influenced by (i.e., depending on) the external environment in which the organisation functions, and that the organisation must ADAPT to meet the needs.

Some of the major characteristics of contingency theory are,

- To increase the chances of obtaining scarce resources, managers must empower departments within an organisation to plan and regulate their operations in ways that are most likely to allow them to receive those resources.
- Burns and Stalker offered two main techniques for managers to arrange and govern an organisation's operations in response to its external environment, based on Weber and Fayol's ideas of organisation and management. One is, for companies in ever-changing surroundings, an organic structure is necessary. Another one is, In stable conditions, a mechanistic framework for organisations (Lars Bluma and Rainhorn, 2015).

Bureaucratic Management Theory

Bureaucratic management examines how huge organisations with several levels of administration may run efficiently and rationally (Williams, 2013). The initial proponents of this management style, Weber, and Fayol, were combating favouritism and ineptitude, which were prevalent in huge corporations at the time. This management theory has some advantages. Such as,

- This management theory helps the company to check out the shortcomings and the balances that.
- It improves the efficiency of the company by establishing rules and regulations.
- It improves the predictability
- It develops the usage of technology.

It also has some disadvantages such as,

- It increases inflexibility
- The company which has large amount of service is not suitable to use this (Griffin, 2017).

Answer to the Given Question

Beliefs

A belief is a personal conviction that something is true, even if the view isn't backed up by evidence. Alternatively, it might be unreasonable. Such as the belief of afterlife (Mathis et al., 2019).

Attitudes

A person's attitude is the way he or she displays or applies their views and ideals via words and actions (Robbins and Judge, 2017). For example, the way a person behaves with the children.

Value Systems

A value is a measure of a person's opinion of something's worth or importance; our values are frequently reflected in the way we conduct our lives (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019). Such as, how a person gives effort to another person.

In the workplace, these three aspects are very important fact on how the employees behave and react to a decision.

In the Unilever company, the management system follows the combination of four major theories of management. To increase the productivity of the employees, the company evaluates the human relation theory through which the company develops a productive relation with the employees (Unilever, 2021).

People with different beliefs, attitudes and value system behaves differently in the workplace. For example, an employee who is very concerned about the timing and duty may behave different than the employee who is not very much concerned about the duty and time management. In this case, the beliefs of the two persons are different from each other. Their attitude towards the duty and workload is different and their value system based on the job is different as well (Argyris et al., 2015).

To figure out the issue and to sort out the situation, the company can use different theories. Like to evaluate the employee who is not much concerned about the timing and duty, the company may use the theory of Bureaucracy management. Through this management theory, the company will announce the rules and regulations of the company strictly and will announce that the employee who will fail to follow the rules may face consequence. Besides, through this management theory, the company may change the attitude, belief, and value system of the

employee towards the development of technology (Indeed, 2020). And thus, the usage of technology will be upgraded.

On the other hand, to evaluate properly the employee who are sincere and really concerned about the timing and duty, the company may use the theory of human relation management theory. Through this theory, the Unilever company develops a very friendly and productive relation with the employee (Reitsma, 2010). This creates employee satisfaction and inspires and motivates the employees to become more efficient and effective for the company. through the usage of this management theory, the company offers various incentives like they offer bonus and increments, promotion and extra facilities based on the activities and performance of the employees. through these incentives, the company is automatically increasing the satisfaction rate of the employees. and the increase of satisfaction causes the improvement of performance of the employees.

in a situation, the company was facing some financial issues because of the inefficiency of the cost management process. The financial management team of the company once failed to develop the proper cost strategy for a new product range. As a result, they were not earning enough from that new product range. In this situation, the management team of the company evaluates the scientific management theory and the contingency theory. With the combination of these theories, the company became able to reduce the cost and was enabled to develop the overall performance of the company (Reitsma, 2010).

so, in short, this can be said that in the workplace the beliefs, attitudes and value system affect the workplace in two major ways. Negative beliefs, attitudes and value system has negative impacts and positive beliefs, attitudes and value system have positive impact on the workplace.

Tailoring workplace means the renovation of the workplace according to the recent situation and to rectify the ongoing critical situation. In the post pandemic situation, like other organisation, Unilever company has also changed the environment of their workplace according to the new situation (Wong, 2012). Like they have installed the germ clean system in the entrance section of their workplaces to provide safety to their employees. also, to manage the employees who are still afraid to come to office through local transport, the organisation has started providing various extra facilities like the transportation facility. Besides, the management team of the company is developing new and effective strategies regularly to tackle this type of unforeseen situation in the future.

So, tailoring the workplace in the effective way will take the business to the next level while on the other hand, failure in this process may bring more complexity and may have a long-lasting negative impact on the company in this post pandemic situation.

Critical Evaluation of the Four Major Theories of Management

The four major management theories are Bureaucracy management theory, human relation management theory, scientific management theory and the contingency management theory.

Besides, there are different definitions of beliefs, attitudes, and values. Beliefs mean taking something as true. People with different beliefs have different attitudes. Where attitudes mean the way, a person behaves with another person or community (Corporate Finance Institute, 2018). And values are the result of belief which gets reflected through the behaviour of a person.

The four managerial theories can be described differently by the people with different beliefs.

For example, the manager who thinks that employees should be dominated and by pressurizing the employees, the company will develop will not find the human relation theory that much useful. This type of management system will always prefer Bureaucratic management theory and will define this theory as the managerial process of dominating the employees. They may define the human relation management theory differently (Nicolaou, 2020). Also, their evaluation process of scientific management theory and contingency theory will be different. He or she will define these theories based on their beliefs, values, and their attitudes toward the employees.

On the other hand, the management team who believes that employees must be treated equally, and the efficiency of the employees is only possible with the higher satisfaction rate of the employees will define the managerial theories differently. They will not use the bureaucracy theory as same as that other kind of manager. They will evaluate this strategy only when its necessary and they will always prefer to use the human relation theory, scientific theory, and contingency theory to increase the employee satisfaction rate. So that according to their belief their company will be developed (Nicolaou, 2020).

Recommendations

As the chosen organisation Unilever has been facing various issue in this post pandemic situation here are some recommendations based on the theories described in this report. At first, the company should find out the exact causes of the issues. There will be several causes of the

problems such as the mental situation of the employees, the environmental situation, the reduction in production and so on. To sort out the mental issues because of the pandemic situation, the company may use the human relation management, scientific management as well as the contingency theories. Through the human relation management theory, the company will be able to build a strong productive relationship with their employees. through scientific managerial theory the company will be able to tackle the unsatisfaction situation of the employees and the uses of technology will be able to reduce the work burden of the employees and will improve the efficiency of the employees. on the other hand, to resolve the environmental issue, the company may use the contingency theory and the effective organisational structure will help the company to develop a work friendly environment for their employees. also, through this theory, the company will be able to reduce the impacts of external factors during this post pandemic situation.

These are some of the recommendations through which Unilever company will be able to tackle the problems faced during the after COVID-19 situation.

Part 2

Reflective Journal

This reflective journal covers the weekly learnt topics of this module. Through this journal one will be able to learn how much a student has learnt so far from the module Developing Workplace Critical Thinking.

First Week

The first week lectures were about the introduction of this module. The aim of this module and the topics which will be covered through this module were discussed in the class lecture. In the first week, the students learnt about the workplace, and how workplace gets affected by various factors. Through some examples, the students were able to understand how various companies select their workplace for the employees and what are their priorities while choosing the suitable workplace. Then the course instructor discussed in detail about the management theories and the evaluation of management theories. Through this topic the students were able to learn what management theory is and how management theories work. The evaluation of management theory described how different theories were established and five major types of management theories which are Human Relation Management theory, Scientific management theory, Contingency management theory, Bureaucratic management theory and Systems theory. Then through various examples and other activities the students learnt the ways of evaluating these theories in the workplace to upgrade the performance of a company (Bell and Waters, 2018).

Second Week

The second week of the module is about various topics like beliefs, attitudes, values, and emotions. This week the students learnt about critical thinking and how critical thinking works. The importance of critical thinking, the theme, components of critical thinking were discussed in this week. Through some activities the students were able to know how to think critically and how critical thinking helps in the learning process. This week, the students were taught about thinking and what is red thinking and green thinking. The evaluation of critical thinking and how critical thinking has become an important part of daily learning process was also taught. Then the students attended some tests and later the learning process shifts forward to the process of becoming a critical thinker. The students learnt how to make themselves a critical thinker in every aspect of life. The students learnt about the skills which are required to become a critical

thinker and the things to remember to become a critical thinker. Also, the students were taught that to become a critical thinker one must avoid logical fallacies. The connection between critical thinking and bloom's taxonomy were also a topic of learning. Through the class lectures and various class activities, in this week the students were able to learn the detailed process of critical thinking and could evaluate how much they have learnt so far from this module.

Third week

This week was divided into two lectures. Through lecture 1, the students were able to learn how does critical thinking function in the workplace and the importance of critical thinking in the work life. Then there was a recap of the learnt topics of the previous week.

Then the lecture covers the human relation management theory. The students learnt about the establishment of this theory and the major factors of this theory. Then the students learnt about the issues of human relation management theory and when to use the theory in an organisation. Then through exercises, the students were able to evaluate themselves about how much they have learnt about human relation approach through this module in the third week.

Then the second lecture of this week covers the creative thinking skills for leaders. This lecture is to figure out the difference between critical and creative thinking. Through this lecture, the students were able to learn how critical and creative thinking works. The students learnt about skills and abilities which are required to think creative. The practice of critical thinking helps the students to think more critically. This lecture, the students were taught about systems thinking, strategic thinking and opportunity thinking. Besides, the tools of thinking were taught through this week.

Fourth Week

This week is about the skills which should be developed to prepare for the solving issues and in the case of decision making. Then the students were taught about the process of thinking critically and creatively. Besides, the process of decision making and how decision-making process is related with the decision-making process in business was learnt during this week. Then the students learnt about the stages of problem solving and decision making. Then at last, the scientific management theory was taught in this week. In this week, the students learnt about the changes of business environment and the characteristics of business environment. The behaviour pattern of the successful businessperson was taught in this week. Then the changes in

21st century business and how does critical thinking sort out the problems faced in the 21st century is also discussed in this week.

The detailed description about the scientific management theory, the evaluation, the usage, the result, the criticism, and other aspects of scientific management theory was discussed, and the students learnt about this.

Fifth Week

In the fifth week, the learnt topics were divided into two lectures. In the first lecture, the students learnt about the critical thinking summarization. Then the students were taught about the systems management theory and the implications of the theory in the business sector.

At first, the students learnt how the different beliefs, attitudes and values of the employee changes the workplace environment. And the ways through which an organisation can use the station in the efficient way. Then the students learnt about the background of systems management theory. They learnt how systems management theory works. The descriptions of systems theory, the types of systems, basic elements of any system, the implications of systems, characteristics of systems theory was taught in the fifth week. The students were able to learn about the features of system theory and the concept of system hierarchy and the concept of sub system. The students learnt what is equifinality and the skill of adaptability. Then this week the course instructor taught the students about the limitations of system management theory and through a case study solving the students were able to find out how much they have learnt so far from this module.

Then during the second lecture of the fifth week, the students learnt about utilization of the critical thinking poles, then the discussion of decision-making skills and critical thinking approach were taught by the course instructor. At first the students learnt what is decision making and the connection between decision making process and critical thinking approach. Then the students learnt about the criteria required for decision making process and through some examples the whole topic became easier for the students to understand. Then the learning process moves forward to the next topic which is the contingency theory of management. At first, the background was described. Then the students learnt about the basic concept of contingency theory and the relationship between external contingency theory. After that, the students were taught about the characteristics of the contingency theory of management in detail. And at last, the exercise part helped the students to evaluate themselves.

Sixth Week

In this week, the students learnt about the process of using critical thinking skill to solve various problems. At first, the students learnt what are the challenges and barriers of the critical thinking process. then the implications of critical thinking and the core critical thinking skills were taught during this week. The disposition of critical thinking and the summary of the things which a critical thinker can do was learnt by the students.

Seventh Week

At first, the students revised the topics which have been learnt by the students through this module so far. Then the students learnt how to manage innovation and creativity in the business environment. Then through a small test the students were able to figure out how much they have learn about innovation and creativity. Then the characteristics of successful innovative companies were taught to the students by the course instructor. Then the relationship between innovation potential and the improvement of the company was learnt by the students. Then the assessment process of innovation in the company was taught and the whole process was divided into six steps. Those steps were learnt by the students and the difference between Fuzzy Front End and the New Product Development process was another topic of learning. The new concept development model was a topic of this week. The students were taught about the components of the NCD. Various definitions of innovation, degree of novelty, classifications of innovation, the process of innovation was the topics of this week. At last, the case study solving section helped the students to interpret and to imply the learnt topics (Bell and Waters, 2018).

Eighth Week

This was the last week of this module, and this week was about the process of managing the change or the change management process. the students were learnt about the basic concept of the topic change management. The definition of the change management and the introduction of the change management in the organisation were taught to the students. The issues which should be considered in the process of change was a topic of this week. The change of the organisation is divided into three parts and each part was described in the class lecture in detail. Besides, the consequences of failing to evaluate the productive change in the organisation was another topic of this last week. At last, the module included the ADKAR Model and the description of this model (Brookfield, 2012). The connection between the model and change was taught in this week. Connection between ADKAR model and recent and future transition, ADKAR gap model,

development of corrective actions using ADKAR model and the implications of ADKAR model was the topics of the last week of the module.

In this way, the module Developing Workplace Critical Thinking was completed and with the help and proper instructions of the course instructor, the students become able to learn the necessary topics of this module.

This is the reflection journal of the module and all the necessary topics discussed in every week of the module have been discussed in this reflective journal.

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