



Class: TY BSc

Subject : Psychology of Human Behaviour at Work

Subject Code:

Chapter: Unit 3 Chp 2

Chapter Name: Understand work teams

Today's Agenda

1. Team composition
2. Team processes

1 Team Composition

A team is only as good as it's members. Some important factors relating to team composition that influences the effectiveness of a team are:-

I) Ability of team members

- The ability of a team member plays a vital role in determining what a member can do and how well will the team perform.
- High ability teams adjust better to changing situations and applying knowledge to new problem.
- They are better as solving complex problems.
- The leader's ability also matters. A smart leader will help a member with low ability or when a team member is struggling. A low ability leader may not be able to do so.

1 Team Composition

II) Personality of team members

- The effectiveness of a team is affected by the characteristics of its team members.
- The big five personality traits (extraversion-introversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness to experience) are closely related to team effectiveness.
- A team performs better when the team is average on the trait of conscientiousness and high on the trait of openness to experience. Conscientious people can sense when their team members need help and support and they provide it.
- Members who are high on openness make the team more creative and innovative because they communicate better and are more willing to express their ideas.
- Teams perform badly when they have one or more members who are low on the trait of agreeableness as the performance suffers due to disagreeable members.
- The performance of the team is better when they have members who are high on personal organization, achievement Orientation, endurance and cognitive restructuring.

1 Team Composition

III) Allocation of roles

- An effective team requires its members to play different roles.
- According to Robbins and Judge, 2013 there are nine potential roles that team members can play.
- Effective teams allocate these roles to team members based on their experience, skills and preferences.
- The leader must allocate roles based on each member's strength.
- Even if a team has members with high ability it would not be very effective if the members are not allocated their proper roles.

1 Team Composition

• These nine potential roles are :-

- A. **Linker** – the role is to coordinate and integrate.
- B. **Creator** – the role is to initiate new ideas.
- C. **Promoter** – the role is to support ideas after they have been initiated.
- D. **Assessor** – the role is to offer insightful analysis of options.
- E. **Organiser** – the role is to provide structure
- F. **Producer** – the role is provide directions and follow through the execution.
- G. **Controller** – the role is to examine details and enforce rules and guidelines.
- H. **Maintainer** – the role is to fight external battles.
- I. **Advisor** – the role is to encourage the search for more and new information.

1 Team Composition

IV) Diversity of members

Team performance is affected by team diversity. Organisational demography plays an important role in this regard.

Definition of organizational demography

“The degree to which members of a work unit share a common demographic attribute such as age, sex, race, educational level, or length of service in an organisation, and the impact of this attribute on turnover.”

ROBBINS AND JUDGE, 2013

1 Team Composition

IV) Diversity of members

Employee turnover is likely to be higher when the demographic characteristics of some team members are different from those of majority of members in the team. This is so, because:-

- A) they find it more difficult to communicate. Thus causing more misunderstandings and conflicts.
- B) People find team membership less attractive when conflict increases. Thus they are more likely to quit.
- C) Difference in demographic characteristics amongst members leads to power struggle. Those who on the losing end of the power struggle either quit voluntarily or are forced to quit.

Research on the impact of diversity on team performance has yielded contradictory results:-

- A) Some studies have found team performance unrelated to demographic diversity.
- B) Race and gender diversity are negatively related to team performance.
- C) Educational and expertise diversity are positively related to team performance.

1 Team Composition

- Good leaders provide members of a diverse team with an inspirational common goal and focus their attention on the tasks to be achieved.
- They use the diversity in values, education, knowledge and skills to the advantage of the team.
- Cultural diversity is an asset when the team is working on a task that requires a variety of viewpoints but a liability when the team works on a problem solving task.

1 Team Composition

V) Size of teams

In most organisations, managers create teams that are too large. When a team has more members than needed:

- A) there is a decline in cohesiveness.
- B) Accountability goes down.
- C) There is less communication.
- D) There is more trouble and difficulty coordinating the efforts of the team members. This problem becomes more acute when the team is working under time pressure.
- E) There is increase in social loafing.

If a team is larger than required, it should be divided into sub teams.

1 Team Composition

VI) Member preferences

- All employees are not team players. The team's morale is threatened when individuals who prefer working alone are a part of a team and these members end up feeling dissatisfied.
- Only those individuals who like working in teams must be selected. They should have the desired personality traits, skills, and abilities to work in groups.
- Great care must be taken during team selection.

2 Team Processes

Mere formation of the team does not guarantee its effectiveness. Team processes such as commitment of the members, common goals, social loafing, conflict resolving ability may have a positive or negative effect on the team.

$$\textit{Actual group effectiveness} = \textit{Potential group effectiveness} + \textit{Process gains} - \textit{Process issues}$$

Some of the processes that affect team effectiveness are:-

- A. Common plan and purpose
- B. Specific goals
- C. Team efficacy
- D. Mental models
- E. Levels of conflict
- F. Social loafing

2 Team Processes

Some of the processes that affect team effectiveness are:-

A. Common plan and purpose

Effective teams:

- i) analyse and decide their mission
 - ii) Develop and set goals to achieve that mission
 - iii) Create plans and strategies to achieve those goals.
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- Successful teams spend a lot of time discussing and through mutual agreement deciding on the common purpose.
 - Effective teams know clearly what has to be done and how it should be done. So the members should be clear about their individual goal and collective team goal.
 - They should also have clarity on how the goal is to be achieved - whether their goal is to learn and master a task or to just perform a task.
 - The common purpose serves as a navigating star and guides the team.

2 Team Processes

- Effective teams also possess the quality of reflexivity.
- The team should be willing to modify a good plan if the situation demands it.
- Teams that are high on reflexivity are better at handling conflicting ideas and goals of their team members.

Definition of Reflexivity

“A team characteristic of reflecting on and adjusting the master plan when necessary.”

-ROBBINS AND JUDGE, 2013

2 Team Processes

B. Specific goals

- Successful teams have specific, measurable and realistic performance goals.
- It is easier for team to maintain focus on achieving their results if the above is taken care of.
- Specific Goals also improve communication within the team.
- Team goals should be slightly challenging, which means they are difficult but achievable. This improves team performance,

2 Team Processes

C. Team efficacy

- Team efficacy is the collective belief of all the team members that they can achieve the goals and will succeed as a team.
- Effective teams are high on team efficacy.
- When a team succeeds its team efficacy goes up. They feel confident about future success which in turn motivates the team to work harder.
- Managements can increase team efficacy by:
 - I) helping team achieve small successes. This builds up their confidence as a team
 - II) By providing members of the team with training that enhances their technical and interpersonal skills. When an individual is high on ability, they will have greater confidence and start believing that they can be successful

2 Team Processes

D. Mental models

Definition of mental models

“ Team members knowledge and beliefs about how the work gets done by the team.”

ROBBINS AND JUDGE, 2013

- In effective teams, members of the team share the same/similar mental models.
- When team members have wrong mental models that are not similar, the team members are more likely to fight and get into conflicts regards how, when and what should be done. This causes the team performance to suffer.
- When members share the same mental model :
 - I) There is greater interaction amongst team members.
 - II) Team members are motivated and have positive attitudes towards their work.
 - III) The team performance is much better.

2 Team Processes

E. Levels of Conflict

- Moderate levels of conflict that are task related could actually improve team effectiveness.
- Task related conflicts result in greater discussion and critical evaluation of problems and alternatives. This improves the quality of decisions.
- Task related conflicts could also increase team creativity.
- However too little or too much of task conflicts has a negative effect on performance.
- The effectiveness of teams is also dependent on how they *resolve their conflicts*.
- Ineffective teams focus more on an individual's personality and how things were said.
- Effective teams resolve conflicts by openly talking about issues and problems.
- Relationship conflicts are mostly dysfunctional. Since there is tension, incompatibility and dislike among team members - it has a negative effect on the team.

2 Team Processes

F. Social Loafing

- Effective teams make their members individually and jointly responsible for the teams purpose, goals and approach.
- This makes the team members feel responsible for their team and as a result there is less social loafing.