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Expectancy Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Cataloguing Departments

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Introduction

This study of motivation and behaviour is the search to the perplexing question about the nature of Man. The problem of motivating other people is as old as man himself at least as old as that point in time when man found he could only accomplish certain tasks by combining his efforts with those of other individuals. The problem was further complicated when large number of people was needed to accomplish a given task. The situation then arose of providing direction that is, someone telling others what to do and overseeing their efforts. Then the matter of how to motivate other people became an issue.

A library is an Organization having the purpose of providing professional service to its users. All the library members of staff are the means by which these services will be provided. How well this service will be rendered will depend upon how well the various activities are carried out by staff of the library. How adequately these staff will perform will depend upon how well they have been motivated.

Expectancy Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy

An American psychologist named Edward C. Tolman formulated Expectancy theory in the 1930s. This theory suggests that human behavior will be motivated by the conscious expectation more than response to stimuli. The expectation will be that the action in prospect will lead to desired goal or outcome hence the name "Expectancy Theory".

If an individual worker for instance, needed more money to meet his needs, which according to Maslow are physiological, safety and security, social, esteem and self-actualization" and he is assured that if he works harder, he will receive more money to meet his needs. Then he/she can put in necessary time and effort to win the desired reward. Expectancy theory can also be used to explain another phenomenon. That is, an individual worker seems to adjust his own motivational levels to those of his/her colleagues and his acceptance by the group within and knows that exceptional output on a unilateral basis will anger his colleagues and disrupt the group norm of production.

But if the individual feels frustrated and unhappy, he will not make the maximum contribution to either the common task or harmonious relationship in the group, which will affect job performances as well as individual needs. That means, the group will fail in its task which in fact intensifies the disintegrative tendencies in the group and diminishes the satisfaction of individual needs.

Adair (1996) suggested three areas of overlapping needs which are present in any working group. Specifically, he mentioned: (a) the need to accomplish the common task; (b) the needs of the group for unity; (c) and needs individuals bring with them by virtue of being human beings.

The cycles are dynamic in the sense that each of them possesses its own motivational forces in a magnetic field, which is the immediate work environment. These fields interact positively or negatively. So if there is a positive change in any one of them, the areas of needs will affect each other.

In the concern of general theory of the three interlaced circles, it can be seen how the meeting of individual needs affects the other areas.

What are these individual needs? To answer this question, one needs to study Maslow's hierarchy of need, which has been briefly discussed in this paper.

Cataloguing Departments

This is where library materials are catalogued, and classified (Olanlokun and Salisu 1993). It is in this department that other routine processing of materials are done before they are made available for public use. In a typical cataloguing department, three types of professional duties and host of other routine activities are carried out. These professional duties include descriptive cataloguing, subject cataloguing i.e. assigning subject headings and classification which also include assigning class mark. It is after these that other routine activities like typing, catalogue card production, pasting of book pockets labeling etc. are done. In the cataloguing department, there are many categories of staff with different expertise and schedule of duty, which combines or blends together to achieve the aim and objective of the department, which is processing the library and information materials and making them available for use by the information seekers and the library users.

Apply expectancy theory in this situation, if the individual workers are well motivated, work will flow smoothly. But if any individual feels frustrated and unhappy, he will not make his maximum contribution and this will negatively affect the work, the group, and other individuals that make up this department. If any individual worker is highly motivated or raises his own motivational level, the tendency is that his output will be exceptional and this may anger his colleagues and will probably adversely affect the general departmental output. If this particular worker values the esteem of others and his acceptance by the group and that his exceptional output on a unilateral basis, will anger his group, you can predict with high level of certainty that such an individual will conform to the group's norm of production.

Role of Library Leadership

Working in the cataloguing department is not always easy. Cataloguing and classification can be difficult and need a suitable working environment. If a cataloguer's needs are not being met, concern for the work may be swept away which will upset other members of the group, and will result in lower output.

As for safety and security, the cataloguer needs these as well. Cataloguing can be exhausting, and involve risk to physical and mental health. If the physiological and safety needs are met, there are still social needs. Cataloguers will feel keenly the

absence of friends or family, because of the nature of the job which not only isolates them during working hours to avoid distractions but also leaves them mentally and physically exhausted, making after work social interactions impossible. Social needs are intrinsic to our human nature. We are individuals, but we never lose our need for each other.

The nature of the job also affects esteem needs and the need for self-actualization. These needs, according to Maslow, include the desire for both high evaluation of self and for the esteem of others. Maslow defines self-actualization as people's desire for self-fulfillment.

Although the materials to be processed do have a priority but it can be overemphasized: There is nothing wrong in library leadership being work focused, but it should not be blind to the needs of the cataloguing staff both as a group and as individuals. The situation is so serious that the individual is subordinated to the work. He becomes a mere means to an end, which is getting the materials processed. Despite poor salary and reward system to such self-subordination, a high cost is paid in physical and mental health. That is why trade unions and professional bodies come into being to protect the individuals.

If the emphasis is on the cataloguing staff as a group it will be at the expense of the work and more to the individual on the other hand, if the individual become the primary concern the work and the group become secondary in importance.

The best the library leadership can do is to achieve an equilibrium or balance, and avoid a situation where more attention is on one aspect of the factors at expense of others. This however does not mean that all the three factors should receive equal attention at all times. The leadership may have to be work-focused for a sustained period. A good leadership should find or create time to strengthen and motivate the cataloguing team as well as encourage each individual member of the team.

The library leadership must never forget that it is the individual who is being asked to do the job and it is the individual who is in control. He or she makes the final decision and determines how little or much he will do.

Another fact is that one can not employ only the hand, the owner of the hand must come with it. One can only employ a whole person, and when that happens, one has employed a personality, attitudes, motives, levels of aspiration, goals, ambitions, needs egos, roles, abilities, etc.

Conclusion

If the library leadership must be effective, it must have some understanding of the above factors because it would be in a better position to motivate the work force in the department. It must be at the back of the mind of the leadership that it is in work place that the individual worker's hopes and ambitions will be fulfilled or destroyed. It is here that an aspiration may be achieved or frustration, aggression, hostility, and apathy will develop. Searching deeper to understand this worker, the leadership can see what needs are there.

Again, in motivating the staff, certain conditions must be taken into consideration. These include the fact that- leadership cannot blanket all workers by a general formula. Motivation is an individual matter and one needs to know and understand the individual to be motivated.

Library leaderships will not be able to motivate the cataloguing staff in any length of time if such motivation is for selfish reason or personal gains. That is using worker, for ones own personal gain

A most important condition that must not be overlooked is that individuals have their own goal objectives, and aspirations.

Unfortunately, only the library goals – processing library materials- are often considered. The cataloguing staff is equally important.

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