Research Paper Commerce

Concept of Employee Morale

Dr.A.Venkatachalam Associate Professor PG and Research Department of Commerce GTN Arts College Dindigul.

P.SAKUNTHALA Ph.D.Scholoar Part Time Mother Teresa Women's University Kodaikanal

ABSTRACT

The attitudes, feelings and emotions of employees play a vital role in determine their performance and behaviour. These in turn determine the success and growth of the organisation. It is for this reason that personnel experts as well as line managers now keen attention to the issues of motivation and morale in industry.

Morale is a very widely used term. It generally refers to esprit de corps, a feeling of enthusiasm, zeal, confidence in individuals or groups that they will be able to cope with the tasks assigned to them. A person's enthusiasm for his job reflects his attitude of mind to work, environment and to his employer, and his willingness to strive for the goals set for him by the organization in which he is employed.

Thus, there is a complex relationship between morale and productivity. This is because morale is only one of the factors influencing productivity.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Human resource is considered to be the most valuable asset of any organisation. It is the sum of inherent abilities, acquired knowledge and skills represented by the talents and aptitudes of the employed persons who comprise of executives, supervisors, and employees. It may be noted here that human resources should be utilized to the maximum possible extent in order to achieve individual and organisational goals.

The attitudes, feelings and emotions of employees play a vital role in determine their performance and behaviour. These in turn determine the success and growth of the organisation. It is for this reason that personnel experts as well as line managers now keen attention to the issues of motivation and morale in industry.

Morale is a very widely used term. It generally refers to *esprit de corps*, a feeling of enthusiasm, zeal, confidence in individuals or groups that they will be able to cope with the tasks assigned to them. A person's enthusiasm for his job reflects his attitude of mind to work, environment and to his employer, and his willingness to strive for the goals set for him by the organization in which he is employed. Morale is a synthesis of superiors, his organization, his fellow-employees, his pay and so on. Feelings, emotions, sentiments, attitudes, and motives-all these combine and lead to a particular type of behaviour on the part of an individual or his group; and this is what is referred to as employee morale. It represents the attitudes of individuals and groups in an organisation towards their work environment and towards voluntary cooperation to the full extent of their capabilities for the fulfillment of organisational goals.

APPROACHES TO MORALE

Morale is generally referred to as "willingness to work". Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction create the problem of low morale among the employees. Good motivation leads to high morale. It being a psychological concept, it is not easy to define it precisely. Different authorities have variously defined morale. Different definitions of morale can be classified into three major approaches.

1. Classical Approach
2. Psychological Approach
3. Social Approach.

CLASSICAL APPROACH

Robert M. Guion defined morale as the extent to which individual needs are satisfied and the extent to which an individual perceives that satisfaction stemming form total job satisfaction. According to this approach, the satisfaction of basic needs is the symbols of morale. If the basic needs of the employees are satisfied their morale will be high.

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

In the words of Jucious and Slender, "morale is a state of mind and emotions affecting willingness to work which in turn affects individual and organisational objectives". According to this approach, morale is a psychological concept i.e., a state of mind. Emotions are affect the willingness to work which in turn affect individual and organisational objectives. Accordingly the attitudes and willingness to work is morale. Morale is a mental condition or attitude of individuals and groups which determine their willingness to cooperate.

SOCIAL APPROACH

Morale is a social phenomenon which enables the men to live in a society or group in pursuit of a common goal. According to Blackmanship, morale is the feeling of togetherness. There is a sense of identification with and interest in the elements of one's job, working conditions, fellow employees, supervisor, employer and the company. Broadly speaking, morale is;

1. a stimulation of the feeling of togetherness
2. an identification of group interest and that of the interest of the enterprise, fellow employees and the requirement of the job; and
3. the creation of an atmosphere in the organisation conducive to the achievement of the enterprise.

Morale is an indicator of the attitude of employees towards their jobs, superiors and the organisation's environment. It is a collection of employees' attitudes, feelings and sentiments towards these variables. Morale is a by-product of the group relationships in the organisation. It is a mental process, which, once started, permeates to the entire group creating a mood which results in the formation of a common

attitude.

NATURE OF MORALE

Generally, the term 'morale' is used to describe an overall climate prevailing among the members of a group. It is not an absolute concept which can convey a specific meaning. Like the word 'health', the word 'morale' by itself does not convey any favourable or unfavourable meaning. Morale is an elusive thing. It is not easy to define, control or measure. But it exercises a potent influence on the human relations climate in an organization. It has to be qualified with a degree, as high morale or low morale. Thus, morale is the degree of enthusiasm and willingness with which the members contribute their efforts towards the organisational goals. If the enthusiasm and willingness to work of a group are high, we will say the morale is high and vice versa. Therefore, morale has to be qualified like the word 'health'. Just as good health is essential for any individual, high morale is necessary for any organisation. Managers cannot establish high morale once and then forget about it for several years. High morale is to be built and maintained by continuous efforts.

Morale is multi-dimensional in nature in the sense that it is a complex mixture of several elements. It recognizes the influence of job situation on attitudes of individuals and also includes the role of human needs as motivational forces. Morale is mostly regarded as a long-term phenomenon. Raising morale to a high level and maintaining it is a long-term measure such as gimmicks, contests or one-shot actions.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MORALE

Morale is a feeling, somewhat related to *esprit de corps*, enthusiasm or zeal. For a group of employees morale, according to a popular usage of the word, refers to the over-all tone climate or atmosphere of work, perhaps vaguely sensed by the members. If employees appear to feel enthusiastic and optimistic about group activities, if they have a sense of mission about their job, if they are friendly with each other, they are described as having a good or high morale. If they seem to be dissatisfied, irritated, cranky, critical, rustled and pessimistic, they are described as possessing a poor or low morale. It is a mental condition or attitude of individuals or groups which determines their willingness to co-operate. Good morale is evidenced by employee enthusiasm, voluntary conformance with regulations and orders, and willingness to co-operate with others in the accomplishment of an organization's objective. Poor morale is evidenced by surliness, insubordination, a feeling of discouragement and dislike of the job, company and associates. Morale is a group concept with five components:

(a) A feeling of togetherness, i.e., of belonging to a group and not being isolated
(b) A clear goal which will be the target of production set before them
(c) There must be an observed or perceived progress towards the attainment of the goal, i.e., expectation of success
(d) Within the group each member feels that he has a meaningful task to perform and
(e) A supportive or stimulating leadership.

FEATURES OF MORALE

- Morale is a state of mind. It reflects mental health.
- It is the aggregate of attitudes, feelings, emotions, sentiments, etc.
- Morale is of two types.

  - Individual morale-which means a persons attitudes towards life, and
  - Group morale, which implies the collective attitudes of a group of persons.
- Morale is a relative term. It may be high or low.
- Morale influences human behaviour and performance.
- Morale is a psychological feeling.
- Morale is intangible. It cannot be increased directly.
- Morale is a contagious phenomenon. Individuals transmit their attitudes to each other.

ASSUMPTIONS IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF MORALE

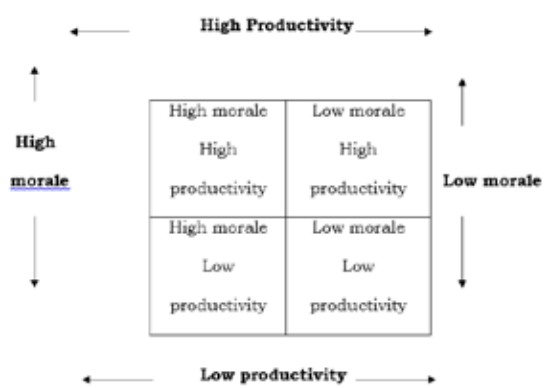
The following basic assumptions about people are significant because they are tied up closely with an understanding of what morale is:

(i) There are psychological uniformities which obtain among all tribes, nations and races.
(ii) Each psychological uniformity has a range through which it varies. Some variants are characteristic of particular groups of people and form a part of their culture.
(iii) Everyone is disturbed by the following general stresses: (a) Threats to life; (b) Discomfort arising from pain, heat, cold, fatigue and poor diet; (c) Loss of the means of subsistence, whether in the form of money, job, business or property; (d) Deprivation of sexual satisfaction; (e) Enforced idleness; (f) Isolation; (g) Threats to children and other members of the family and to friends; (h) Restrictions on movement; (i) Dislike and ridicule to which one may be exposed, and rejection by other people; and (j) Capricious and unpredictable behaviour on the part of those in authority on whom one's welfare depends.

Personnel management carefully analyses these different items of morale because employees vary greatly in their ability to face a situation of stress, and because it is capable of determining the impact which good or bad morale will have on the attainment of organizational objectives. By taking the necessary steps in time, it may improve the attitudes and morale of its employees.

MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

One of the most unpredictable effects of the level of morale is its impact upon employees' productivity. The reviews of the research studies do not show a direct relationship between morale and productivity. Productivity sometimes is high with high morale, but at other times may be low even when morale is high, and vice versa. There can be four combinations of morale and productivity.



1. High morale–High productivity

High morale reflects a predisposition to be more productive if proper leadership is provided. This situation is likely to occur when employees are motivated to achieve high performance standards through financial and non-financial rewards.

2.High morale–Low productivity

The situation arises when employees spend their time and energy in satisfying their personal objectives unrelated to the company's goals. Faulty machinery, lack of training, ineffective supervision and restrictive norms of informal groups can also lead to low productivity on the part of employees with high morale.

3.Low morale–High productivity

Low morale cannot result in high productivity for a long period. However, this situation can occur for a temporary period due to fear of loss of job, exceptionally good supervision and machine paced work in which only a part of employees' capabilities are used.

4. Low morale – Low productivity
This is a normal relationship. In the long run low morale is likely to result in low productivity.

Thus, there is a complex relationship between morale and productivity. This is because morale is only one of the factors influencing productivity.