Leading Change in Organizations by Incentivizing Teachers to Stimulate Motivation

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ABSTRACT

In this article, a conceptual model for the study of motivational dynamics behind leading change in educational organizations is proposed. In support of the present model, this article includes (a) a delineation and critical analysis of the theoretical frameworks in relation to the understanding of the development of motivation concept, and (b) a conceptualization of motivational dynamics by relating the organization’s aims to the external educational context, and, moreover to the external market requirements. Based on the above considerations, a leader’s integrative conceptual model of promoting motivation is presented, anchored within a dynamic capabilities paradigm, emphasizing the importance of motivation toward strategic organizational change.

Keywords: Educational Organizations, Leadership, Market Requirements, Motivational Dynamics, Organizational Change

1. INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization, motivation is considered the most effective dynamic capability for developing a leading 21st century organization. A significant body of literature on organizational effectiveness supports motivation theory as the key to predicting success both at the individual and the organizational levels (Vallerenad, 1997; Davis et al., 1992; Venkatesh, 1999; Grewal et al., 2001). To respond to market requirements, nowadays, organizations have to learn how to adapt, renew, and recreate, bringing new motivational dynamics to further reinvent themselves.

The concept of dynamic capabilities, defined as a ‘wide range of resources, processes and capabilities’ (Wang & Ahmed, 2007 p.31) has been widely studied by researchers, in line with organizational performance. However, some researchers have relied mainly on observable market factors or structural variables, ignoring the motivation dimension. Moreover, competitive dynamics research stresses that at the core of the organization the leader is empowered to systematically operationalize motivational variables across the organization. Path-goal theory underlines that ‘one of the strategic functions of a leader is to enhance the psychological states of subordinates that result in motivation to perform’ (House & Dessler, 1974, p.30). According to Bass’s comprehensive leadership model (1985, p. 23), leaders

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behaviours ‘heightened motivation to attain designed outcome(s)’ across the organization. Thus, by examining the predictors and effects of motivation the leader will designs a diverse set of organizational and strategic variables centered on incentivizing personnel to attain a high level of performance.

Although these research findings have a wide range of applicability in an era of intensified accountability, and throughout all public and private settings, a particular attention should be given to education. Bringing new motivational dynamics to the education ‘market’ will bring about synergy with external market dynamism, thus better meeting customers’ expectations. Taking into account that education develops a foundation for future business leaders, we have to support this movement.

The purpose of this paper is to extend our understanding of the motivational dynamics behind leading change in educational organizations. The research questions are: what do we mean by motivation, why is motivation necessary if we hope to develop an effective organization, and how might leaders motivate personnel towards organizational change? To address these concerns, the first part of this paper provides a comprehensive framework for the concept of motivation. Based on this, the next session provides a conceptualization of the motivational dynamics within an effective organization. Finally, the last section reveals leaders’ integrative model of motivating personnel. The aforementioned theme is substantiated by recent and relevant research on motivation.

2. DEFINING MOTIVATION

2.1. Brief History of the Concept

The term ‘motivation’ is frequently used with many connotations. The word ‘motivation’ originates from the Latin verb ‘movere’, which means, “to move.” Motivation is what moves us ‘to initiate and maintain behaviour (action)’ (Beck, 2004, p.38). Greek philosophers stated that motivation is determined by passion and reason. Socrates claimed that rational analysis of the situation influences people’s decisions. On the contrary, Aristotle and Epicurus argued that passions (love, hate) play an important role in people’s actions. Besides this, psychological hedonism showed that people tend to involve themselves in activities, which have desirable outcomes and avoid the ones with unpleasant outcomes (Beck, 2004). Moreover, recent researchers (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999; Lewis & Haviland-Jones, 2000; Oatley & Jenkins, 1996) defined psychological theory considering the main role of emotions in people’s choices. Beck (2004) claimed that ‘emotions involve our feelings of pleasantness and unpleasantness’ (p.33). Furthermore, hope, disappointment, fear, and relief are rewards and punishers, which influence people’s behaviour (Rolls, 1999).

Modern research and theory have proposed James-Lange’s theory (in Beck 2004, p.34) and Cannon-Bard’s theory. James (1884, 1890) and Lange (1885) made a connection between events and emotion, where the emotional experience comes as a perceived reaction to the event. It is also demonstrated that there is a one to one relation between experienced emotions and physiology, in the sense that the emotional experiences get their distinctive physiological equivalent. Therefore, this theory underlines that emotions appear because of physiological events such as blood pressure, heart beat, dryness of the mouth, sweating. On the contrary, Cannon-Bard theory (in Beck, 2004, p.35, 36) stated that first emotions take place and afterwards physiological events happen. Emotions occur when a stimulus activates the thalamus to send a message to the brain which triggers a physiological response. Fereguson (2000) expressed that motivation has old roots in the history of psychology since 1920. Theoretical perspective and practical knowledge have asserted the development of the concept of the motivation.

Contemporary study of emotions concentrates upon people’s feelings. The analysis of ‘affect’ regarding pleasant and unpleasant experiences reflects three different facets temperament, mood, and emotions. Temperament defines steady characteristics of the personality...
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