Theory X and Theory Y

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LEARNING OUTCOME

• Describe Theory X
• Describe Theory Y
• Explain the application of Theory X
• Explain the application of Theory Y
Introduction

• Theory X and Y was developed by Douglas McGregor, a social psychologist in 1960.
• Theory X and Y is about managers’ beliefs about people and attitudes, which then translates into ways they choose to motivate their employees
Introduction cont,

• Is based upon Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, in that he grouped the hierarchy into lower-order needs (Theory X) and higher-order needs (Theory Y).

• The two opposing perceptions theorized how managers view human behavior at work.

• Managers who believe in Theory X will do the thinking and planning with little input from subordinates.
Beliefs about Theory X

• The average man is by nature lazy
• He lacks ambition, dislikes responsibility and prefers to be led
• He is self centred and indifferent to organizational needs
• He is by nature resistant to change
• He is not very bright
Theory x

• The theory leads to mistrust, highly restrictive supervision, a punitive atmosphere, threat and coercion to gain employees' compliance
• Theory X managers feel the sole purpose of the employee's interest in the job is money
• They will blame the person, without questioning whether it may be the system, policy, or lack of training that deserves the blame.
Theory X managerial assumptions

• Management should be responsible for organizing elements of increasing productivity eg money, materials, equipment, people
• Direct people’s efforts, motivating them, controlling their actions, modifying their behaviour to fit needs of the organizations
• People must be persuaded, rewarded, punished, controlled by directing their activities to meet organizational needs.
Theory Y

Theory Y managers role is to develop the potential in employees and help them to release that potential towards common goals.

- Management assumes employees may be ambitious and *self-motivated* and exercise *self-control*.
- It is believed that employees enjoy their work as natural as play and rest.
Theory Y

• They possess the ability for creative problem solving, but their talents are usually underused in most organizations.

• Given right conditions, employees will accept responsibility, exercise self-control and self-direction in accomplishing organizational objectives.

• Employees are NOT lazy
Theory Y

• Theory Y is a positive set of beliefs where responsibility is shifted to subordinates rather than superiors

• Subordinates set own goals and objectives (participatory) while the superior serves as listener, advising with organizational knowledge and encouraging his employees to develop their own potential
Theory Y Managerial assumptions

• Management is responsible for organizing elements of increasing productivity—
  — uses positive incentives such as praise and recognition, give general supervision, provide opportunities for individual growth, delegate responsibilities, and encourage participation in problem solving, job enlargement, money, materials, equipment

• People are not by nature passive or resistant to organizational needs. They become so because of experience in the organization
Theory Y Managerial assumptions

• Motivation, potential for development, capacity for assuming responsibility, readiness to direct behaviour toward organizational goals are all present in people. Management need to recognize and develop these human characteristics for themselves.

• The essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their goals best by directing their own efforts towards organizational objectives.
Case study

Mrs Banda, a community nurse with 5 years experience, from another health center wants to develop a teenage health education programme. Permission is denied from her immediate new supervisor.

Her previous supervisor accepted changes and new ideas from juniors.

She is thinking of transferring to another facility with more autonomy although she feels she can make a difference if given the opportunity to do so.
Case study

• Discuss the type of management theory under which Mrs Banda is operating
• How can Banda approach this problem
Case study Response

• Nurse Banda appears to be operating under theory X where the incharge nurse is using authoritarian type of management. She has little regarding for ideas of other employees

• Banda is unable to be creative or use her potential for betterment of the health centre

• She is failing to cope since where she worked previously, theory Y style of management was used and she was allowed to be creative, self directed, and use her potential
Case study

• She can use a chain of command and arrange an appointment with the in charge nurse to discuss reason that her request was denied.

• If not satisfied she may continue up the chain of command but she should be prepared to face the challenges and consequences.

• She should evaluate the importance of the issue in order to pursue it now or to just give up.
References

• Booyens, S. W. (2002). Dimensions of Nursing Management Lansdowne Juta