

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

MBA HRD 405

SUBJECT NAME: INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

TOPIC NAME: MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

MORALE MEANING

Morale is defined by various terms from different standpoints. In military situation morale means enthusiasm to accomplish the assigned task or esprit-de-corps in sports it may mean self confidence of a team, in education it may be the eagerness to learn by students, in business it is associated with the desire to achieve the goals. So it is an overall attitude of an individual or group towards all aspects of their work e.g., the company, the job, the supervisors, fellow workers, working conditions, etc.

DEFINITIONS

Flippo has described morale “as a mental condition or attitude of individuals and groups which determines their willingness to co-operate. Good morale is evidenced by employee enthusiasm, voluntary confirmation with regulations and orders, and a willingness to co-operate with others in the accomplishment of an organization’s

objectives. Poor morale is evidenced by surliness, insubordination, a feeling of discouragement and dislike of the job, company and associates.” In the words of Yoder, “morale is a feeling, somewhat related to esprit de corps, enthusiasm or zeal. For group of workers, 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.’

According to Prof. Jucius, morale consists of : What is it? What does it do? Where does it reside? Whom does it affect? And what does it affect? He answers his own questions as:

- (i) What is it? It is an attitude of mind, an esprit de corps, a state of well being, and an emotional force.
- (ii) What does it do? It affects output, the quality of a product, costs, co-operation, enthusiasm, discipline, initiative and other ingredients of success.
- (iii) Where does it reside? It resides in the minds and emotions of individuals and in the reactions of their group or groups.
- (iv) Where does it affect? It affects the employees and executives in their interactions. Ultimately it affects consumers and the community.

- (v) Whom does it affect? It affects an employee's group's will to work and co-operate in the best interests of the individuals or groups and the organizations for which they work.

TYPES OF MORALE

The following are the two types of morale:

1. Individual and Group Morale:

Individual morale is a single person's attitude towards work, environment etc. Whereas group morale reflects the general attitude of a group of persons. Group morale is everybody's concern and may go on changing with the passage of time. Individual and group morale are interested but not necessarily identical. They have an effect on each other. The individual's personal perception of the present conditions may be high but the group's perception may be low or vice-versa.

2. High or Low Morale:

Morale may be referred to high morale or low morale. In the words of McFarland, high morale exists when employee attitudes are favourable to the total situation of a group and to the attainment of its objectives. Low morale exists when attitudes inhibit the willingness and ability of an organization to attain its objectives. The words such as zeal, enthusiasm,

loyalty, dependability denote high morale. Low morale may be described by words like lack of interest, laziness, apathy, bickering, jealousy, quarrelsome, pessimism, etc.

MORALE AND MOTIVATION

Morale and motivation are interrelated but differ from each other. Morale refers to the attitude of a person towards his work and environment while motivation is a process to inspire people. Motivation is an inner feeling which energizes a person to work more for satisfying his unsatisfied demands. Motivation revolves round needs and incentives while morale will determine the willingness to co-operate.

Morale is a group phenomenon while motivation is an individual's readiness to work more. Morale is related to the combination of various factors operating at work but motivation concerns to the job only. Motivation helps in mobilizing energy while morale is concerned with the mobilization of sentiments.

MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

Morale reflects the attitude of employees towards their work, it will be of interest to know if it has any bearing on productivity. A number of research studies reveal that there is no direct relationship between morale and productivity. High morale

may lead to higher productivity but in some cases production may go down even. It is generally felt there is a positive relation between morale and productivity but the degree may not be the same. For example, 10 per cent increase in morale may lead to higher productivity but production may not necessarily increase by 10 per cent.

Miller and Form have given four combinations of productivity and morale viz:

- (i) High productivity-high morale
- (ii) Low productivity high morale
- (iii) High productivity-low morale; and
- (iv) Low productivity-low morale.

The first situation occurs when the individual is satisfied from the job and prevailing environment. He will try to achieve high standards of performance which will lead to higher productivity. In the second situation (low productivity and high morale) the employee may be satisfied from his work and situations prevailing, showing high morale. Lack of proper teaching of the employee, lack of administrative skill of the supervisor, defective materials, out-dated technology may lead to low productivity in spite of high morale.

In the third-situation, management may use strict supervision, prescribe punishments for low productivity and use better technology for raising productivity

in spite of low morale. The fourth situation occurs where factors obtained in combination of high productivity high morale are lacking. There is a complexity of relationship between morale and productivity. This relationship cannot always be predicted. It may differ from organization to organization and from one time to another time.

Figure: Morale and productivity

High	High Morale Low productivity	High Morale high productivity
Low	low Morale Low productivity	low Morale Low productivity

FACTORS AFFECTING MORALE

The employee morale is a very complex phenomenon and is influenced by many factors. Different authors like McFarland, Bradshaw and Krugman, Roach and Apple white name given different criterion for the determination of morale.

On the basis of all these classifications, the important factors in the determination of levels of morale are as describe below:

1. The Organization:

The first factor affecting the employee morale is the organization itself. The organization influences the worker's attitudes to their jobs. The public reputation of an organization may build up for better or worse, their attitudes towards it.

2. The Nature of Work:

The nature of the work, the worker is expected to perform also affects his attitude towards the job as well as his morale. If the employee is expected to perform routine or specialized jobs, he will feel bored and alienated. Repetition of the same task again and again makes the working situation worse for the employees. Another factor is the large impersonal organizational structure. Sometimes, if the employee feels that he is just a cog in the machine instead of a person, his morale will become very low. Lack of understanding of organizational goals may also affect the morale. Another factor which causes low morale is the assembly line operations moving at a constant speed.

3. The Level of Satisfaction:

The level of satisfaction, a worker derives from his job is another determinant of morale. If the job factors and the satisfaction they bring is perceived to be favourable by the employee morale will tend to be higher than if there factors seem to be unfavourable. The job factors include the factors such as opportunities for promotions, job security, steadiness of employment, opportunities to learn the job and to use his own ideas, pay working conditions, recognition, cooperativeness of co-workers, group relationship etc.

4. The Level of Supervision:

The level of supervision received by an employer has a tremendous influence on his morale. High rate of employee turnover indicates that the leadership is ineffective. On the other hand, if employees are given freedom to do the job, their morale will be high. Nobody likes to be supervised all the time.

5. Concept of Self:

What is the employee's concept of himself? The answer to this question influences the attitudes of the employees to the organizational environment. How an employee perceives himself, is a very important question. The morale of persons who have lots of self confidence or who enjoy good mental and physical health is generally high as compared to those who lack self confidence or suffer from poor physical or mental health.

6. Worker's Perception of Rewards System:

The worker's perception of past rewards and future opportunities for rewards affect their morale to a substantial extent. If the workers regard the rewards as fair and satisfactory, their morale will tend to be higher than if the perception is in the opposite direction. Moreover, if the rewards and opportunities for the future tend to be bleak, morale will tend to be low as compared to the situation where the worker perceives opportunities for satisfaction and for attainment in the rewards that lie ahead in the future.

7. The Employee's Age:

Studies have reported that age and morale are directly related. Other things being equal, elder employees seem to have higher morale. This is because of the reason that perhaps younger workers are more dissatisfied with higher expectations than their elders. The older employees have more stability which comes with maturity, a serious attitude towards job. more reliability, less absenteeism, proven steady work habits, a sense of responsibility and loyalty and less tendency to be distracted by outside interest as influences.

8. The Employee's Educational Level:

Studies have concluded an inverse relationship in the educational level of the employee and his morale. Higher the educational level lower will be the job satisfaction and vice versa. The higher he thinks he should be the more dissatisfied he will be.

9. The Employee's Occupational Level:

The occupational level of the employee also influences his level of morale. The higher up in organisational hierarchy an employee is higher will be his morale. The morale of the people who are lower in the levels of hierarchy is

generally low because they compare their own attainments with those of others.

10.The Off the Job Activities of the Employee:

The relationship of an employer with his family and work group influences his behaviour and attitude while he is on the job. His off the job activities e.g. whether his family life is happy or not, whether he has excessive drinking habits etc. The influences and pressures of a formal and informal group have a significant effect on the morale of workers.