

Theory Double U: The Missing Link between Theory X and Theory Y

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Abstract

This research paper titled “Theory Double U: The missing link between Theory X and Theory Y” is a new impetus to the study and practice of Management and Administration. While Theory X and Theory Y assume that the average human being is either good or bad, and that managers should adopt either of the basic assumptions in relating with workers in their control; Theory Double U believes that managers, administrators or supervisors need concise knowledge of workers’ temperament and personality profile to functionally guide them (the managers) in relating to each worker under them instead of basing their actions on assumptions. The study analysed Theory X and Theory Y with their basic assumptions, identified the concept and assumptions of Theory Double U, pin-pointed the Managers’ role in Theory Double U, x-rayed the four temperaments that each Manager needs to know to classify his workers accordingly, and concluded that rather than serve as a condemnation of the already existing theories of human motivation and management, Theory Double U is an added modernization to the study and practice of Management and Administration.

Theory X and Theory Y are theories of human motivation and management as propounded by Douglas McGregor in his book, “The Human side of Enterprise” published in 1960. These theories were created and developed at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He sought to describe two contrasting models of workforce motivation applied by managers in human resource management, organizational behaviour, organizational communication and organizational development. Wikipedia (2016) observed that according to the models, the two opposing sets of general assumptions of how workers are motivated form the basis for two different managerial styles. Theory X stresses the importance of strict supervision, external rewards, and penalties. In *Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction, Volume 13 No. 1, December, 2016: ISSN 2276-9684* 232

contrast, Theory Y highlights the motivating role of job satisfaction and encourages workers to approach tasks without supervision. However, the missing link between Theory X and Theory Y is “Theory Double U” which emphasizes that the managers do not necessarily need to be different persons to handle the average employee that has little ambition, shies away from work or responsibilities, and is individual-goal oriented, nor the workers that do not only accept but seek responsibilities.

“Theory Double U” believes that a school administrator (manager) needs a good knowledge of human psychology to know how to deal with every manner of employee under his control. This means that the administrator’s choice of carrot or stick will depend on the attitudes of his employees. The principal tenet of Theory Double U is the proper understanding of the human temperament which the boss needs as the instrument to the understanding of his staff/employees, and definitely not an application of a general assumption that workers are either good or bad.

Theory X

Sorenson (2015) observed that Douglas McGregor’s Theory X is based on pessimistic assumptions of the average worker. This management style supposes that the average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can. Consequent upon their dislike of work:

- ❖ Most people must be controlled and threatened before they will work hard enough;

- ❖ The average human prefers to be directed, dislikes responsibility, is unambitious, and desires security above everything;

Other assumptions that are inherent in Douglas McGregor’s Theory X, according to Peretomode (1999:30) are that:

- ❖ *The average man is by nature indolent –he works as little as possible;*

- ❖ *He lacks ambition, dislikes responsibilities, and prefers to be led;*

- ❖ *He is inherently self-centered, and indifferent to organizational needs;*

- ❖ *He is by nature resistant to change; and*

- ❖ *He is gullible, not very bright, the ready dupe of the charlatan and the demagogue.*

Sorenson (2015) observed that Theory X style managers generally believe that their employees are less intelligent and lazier than the managers, or work solely for a sustainable income. Due to the foregone assumptions, Theory X concludes that the average workforce is more efficient under “hands-on” approach to management. Wallgreen (2013) noted that the Theory X manager believes that all actions should be traced and the responsible individual given a direct reward or a reprimand according to the action’s outcomes. He further noted that this managerial style is more effective when used to motivate a workforce that is not inherently motivated to perform. He

concluded that it is normally exercised in professions where promotion is infrequent, unlikely or even impossible and where workers perform repetitive tasks.

Sager (2008) observed that Douglas McGregor identified two opposing approaches towards the implementation of Theory X, namely. The “hard” approach and the “soft” approach. The hard approach relies on close supervision, intimidation, and imminent punishment. This hard approach has the tendency to attract a hostile and minimally cooperative workforce that could generate resentment towards management. The soft approach is characterized by leniency and relaxed rules, and therefore attracts employees’ cooperation in workplace.

Theory Y

Aydin (2012) stated that Theory Y is in complete contrast to Theory X. The basic assumptions in Theory Y include:

- ❖ The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest.
- ❖ Control and punishment are not the only ways to make people work, man will direct himself if he is committed to the aims of the organization.
- ❖ If a job is satisfying, then the result will be commitment to the organization.
- ❖ The average man learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
- ❖ Imagination, creativity, and ingenuity can be used to solve problems by a large number of employees.
- ❖ Under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentials of the average man are only potentially utilized (Wikipedia, 2016),

Theory Y managers make assumptions that people in the workforce are internally motivated, enjoy their labour in the company, and work to better themselves without a direct “reward” in return. Avolio (2007) observed that Theory Y employees are considered to be the most valuable assets to the company, and truly drive the internal workings of the corporation. Sager (2008) also added that Theory Y employees tend to take full responsibility for their work and do not require constant supervision in order to perform quality and higher standard production.

The other managerial outcomes of Theory Y include the following:

- ❖ Theory Y managers tend to relate to their subordinate workers on a more personal and relatable level, as opposed to their Theory X counterparts who are more conductive and teaching-based relationship. Consequently, Theory Y followers may have a better relationship with their superiors, and also have a healthier atmosphere in the workplace.
- ❖ Theory Y encourages more democracy and freedom at work because it allows the employees to design and construct their assigned responsibilities in accordance with their workload and time-space.

However, Sorenson (2015) noted that while Theory Y may seem optimal, it has some set-backs. The advantage of a more personal and individualistic atmosphere of Theory Y carries along with it the disadvantage of leaving room for errors in terms of consistency and uniformity. It may make the workplace to lack reasonable rules and practices, and this has the potential to result in inconsistent product which could be detrimental to the quality standards and strict guidelines of a given company or organization.

Theory Double U

Instead of being an opposite of both Theory X and Theory Y, Theory Double U serves as the missing link between the two extremes. In order to achieve the most efficient production, a combination of both Theories is appropriate. This combination, inevitably gives birth to Theory Double U in which the manager is not a different individual. He does not relate with employees on the basis of preconceived assumptions of workers, but on the basis of their employees' attitude to work and personality profile.

Basic Assumptions of Theory Double U

- ❖ By nature, while some human beings hate work and wish to avoid it if they can, others look at work as gracefully as they see play or rest.
- ❖ While the average human prefers to be directed, and is unambitious, others very strongly believe that control and punishment are not the only ways to make people work (this means that man will direct himself if he is committed to the aims of the organization).
- ❖ While some individuals shy away from responsibilities, other individuals do not only accept but go ahead to seek responsibilities.
- ❖ While some workers are indolent and possess very limited potentials that can be cultivated in organization through the use of force, other humans believe that under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average man are only partially utilized.

The Manager's/Administrator's Role in Theory Double U

Theory Double U believes that Theory X manager should not be a different fellow from Theory Y manager. Theory Double U manager is the same man that manages workers with Theory X characteristics and Theory Y traits. The tool that the manager needs to be an effective Theory Double U individual is his full identification and understanding of his workers' "temperament". Temperament may be defined as a combination of unborn traits that subconsciously affect man's behaviour. It is passed on through the genes and no doubt was influenced by the Adamic fall. That is why we all identify with the desire to do good while at the same time we possess a desire to do evil (Lahaye, 2002). It is a person's temperament that makes him outgoing and extroverted or shy and introverted.

Lahaye (2002) identified four temperaments which have the tendency, among other things, to improve social and working relationships between the managers and employees on the one hand, and between workers and workers on the other. The four temperaments are: Sanguine (optimistic and social), Choleric (Short tempered or irritable), Melancholic (analytical and quiet), and Phlegmatic (relaxed and peaceful). To him, each temperament type has both strengths and weaknesses that form a distinct part of an individual's lifestyle throughout life. A concise diagnosis of workers' temperament by the manager will equip him with a sufficient and realistic tool with which to handle the workers under his control and supervision.

Sanguine

This is a warm, buoyant, lively and "enjoying" person. He is receptive by nature and external impressions excite his heart. He takes decisions not by reflective thoughts but by feelings. A sanguine fellow is super-extroverted and outgoing. He has an unusual capacity for enjoying himself and loves exuberant conversation and fascinating storytelling. He never lacks friends and can genuinely feel the joys and sorrows of the person he meets and has the capacity to make him feel important as though he were a very special friend. Unfortunately, a sanguine fellow's noisy, blustering and friendly ways make him appear more confident than he really is, but his energy and lovable disposition get him by the rough sports of life. On the negative side, the Sanguine person possesses the following weaknesses, namely: he is indisciplined, emotionally unstable, unproductive, egocentric and exaggerative.

Choleric

A choleric worker is hot, quick, active, practical, strong willed, self-sufficient, and very independent. He has the tendency to be decisive and opinionated, and finds it easy to make decisions for himself and other people. Although the choleric worker is an extrovert, but he is not nearly so intense like the Sanguine.

To his credit, the choleric man/woman thrives on activity. He does not need to be stimulated by his environment, but rather stimulates his environment with his endless ideas, plans, goals, and ambitions. He does not engage in aimless activity, for he has a practical, keen mind, capable of making sound, instant decisions or planning worthwhile projects. He is never moved by the pressure of what others think but takes a firm stand on issues. He is not frightened by adversities; instead they tend to encourage him. Above all, the Choleric's dogged determination usually allows him to succeed where others have failed.

The choleric person does not sympathise easily with others, nor does he naturally show or express compassion. He is often embarrassed or disgusted by the tears of others and most often insensitive to the needs of others. Lahaye (2002) noted that the choleric worker invariably seeks utilitarian and productive values in life. He is not given to analysis, but rather to quick, almost intuitive appraisal. He tends to look at

the goal for which he is working without recognizing the potential pitfalls and obstacles in the path. To his organization's advantage, once the choleric worker has started towards his goal, he may run over individuals who stand in his way. He tends to be domineering and bossy and does not hesitate to use people to accomplish his goals. However, the choleric person possesses the following weaknesses, namely: he is cold, unemotional, self-sufficient, impetuous, domineering, unforgiving, sarcastic, angry and cruel.

Melancholic

The melancholic employee is analytical, self-sacrificing, gifted and perfectionist type with a very sensitive emotional nature. By nature he is an introvert, but since his feelings predominate, he is given to a variety of moods. Sometimes he rises to heights of ecstasy that cause him to act extrovertedly, while at other times he will be gloomy and depressed, and during these later periods he becomes withdrawn and can be quite antagonistic.

The melancholic is a very faithful friend, but quite unlike the Sanguine, he does not make friends easily. He scarcely imposes himself on people, but rather lets them come to him. He is believed to be the most dependable of all the temperaments and the richest in terms of strength qualities. His perfectionist and conscientious tendencies do not permit him to disappoint or let others down when they put faith in him. He does not only like others but has a strong desire to be loved by them, but finds it difficult to express his true feelings. Disappointing experiences make him reluctant to take people at face value, thus he is suspicious when others seek him out or shower him with attention.

To the best of his organization's advantage, the Melancholic staff's exceptional analytical ability causes him to diagnose accurately the obstacles and dangers of any project that he takes part in planning. This quality is contrasted with the choleric who rarely anticipates problems or difficulties, but is confident that, he can cope with whatever crises or obstacles that may arise. Such a characteristic, Lahaye (2002) noted often finds the Melancholic fellow reticent to initiate some new projects or in conflict with those who wish to do so.

As a naturally determined person, the Melancholic usually finds his greatest happiness in life through personal sacrifice. He desires to make himself suffer, and will often choose a difficult life vocation involving great personal sacrifice. But once it is chosen, he is prone to be very thorough and persistent in his pursuit. However, the Melancholic has the following weaknesses, namely: he is moody, self-centred, persecutive, revengeful, theoretical, unsociable, critical and negative.

Phlegmatic

The phlegmatic individual is calm, easygoing and never-get-upset. He seems to be the easiest of the temperaments to get along with and is by nature the most likeable.

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Life for him is a happy, unexcited and pleasant experience in which he avoids as much involvement as possible. He is so calm and unruffled that he never gets agitated no matter what circumstances surround him. The phlegmatic fellow is consistent every time you see him. Beneath his cool, reticent and almost timid personality, he has a very capable combination of abilities. He feels more emotion that can be observed on his outlook and usually avoids violence.

The Phlegmatic worker is friendly and humorous yet never cracks a smile. He has a good, retentive mind and is capable of being a fine imitator. He tends to be a spectator in life and tries not to get involved with the activities of others. Apart from his daily routine, the Phlegmatic worker is hardly motivated to any form of activity. He is usually kindhearted and sympathetic, but rarely conveys his true feelings.

Whenever a Phlegmatic is aroused to action, his capable and efficient qualities become apparent. Although he will not volunteer into leadership on his own, but when it is forced upon him, he proves to be a very capable leader. He has a conciliating influence on others and is a natural peacemaker. However, the Phlegmatic individual has the following weaknesses, namely: he is unmotivated, procrastinating, selfish, stingy, self-protective, and secretive.

Conclusion

While Theory X and Theory Y assume that the average human beings are either good or bad, and that the managers have to adopt a peculiar supervisory or managerial attitude to relate to the workers concerned, Theory Double U believes that managers, administrators or supervisors need not assume that workers are either good or bad. All that the Theory Double U manager needs is a concise knowledge of the individual worker's temperament and personality profile to guide him in his managerial and administrative supervisory style. Theory Double U is not a condemnation of the already existing theories of human motivation and management, rather it is an added impetus to the study and practice of Management and Administration.

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