

Lecture - 11 : Introduction - Sustainable Happiness at Workplace

Hello viewers, welcome back to this NPTEL course on Sustainable Happiness. In the last two week classes, we have already discussed about what is happiness, what is sustainable happiness, what are the different types of happiness etcetera. Now, let us see how sustainable happiness plays a role in the workplace. So, that is this is this topic is on sustainable happiness at work. As all of us we know that we spend a lot of time in our workplace and it is our second you can say second home usually. So, we need to ask many questions to ourselves to deeply contemplate on the environment ecosystem whether really we are satisfied or not whether it caters to our educational needs, psychosocial needs etcetera etcetera.

So, these are so many things these things these questions self reflective questions actually relates to our happiness. So, what is happiness at work? this, what is happiness at work, where how can we ensure us that we are happy at our workplace. So, definitely it relates to many of our needs, our educational needs, social needs, psychological needs, intellectual needs, so many things. So, if is it really pleasurable, it is really pleasurable to work together in a particular organization, in a particular institution or whether it relates to our ambitions or it brings prosperity, it brings a mental happiness, job satisfaction or not.

So, these are the questions we need to analyze. So, selecting the first job in our career in our things that is the most important thing especially in the corporate sector because before joining the first job you need to contemplate deeply on many various aspects not just the pay package, not just the posting, not just the level of you know level of the job profile etcetera, but we need to ask many questions. So, here the philosophers also write about happiness do we really enjoy our work the because the why workplace is very important because it is our next home. After home we need to we spend usually 10 to 12 hours in our in our workplace and it also gratifies our needs. Social needs, psychological needs, intellectual needs, many things we get out of this workplace our work environment or from our jobs.

So, that is a so, when we can say the in the workplace do we really achieve happiness is the that means, and happiness all of us we know that it is psychological sense of you know contemplation happiness state of it is a state of mind. So, in psychological sense it has actually it is a mental state. So, what is that meant mind call we happiness that means, whether do we really feel happy or not and what is that mental state that defines our happiness. So, it includes whether it includes our pleasure, pleasure because we socialize our self and we have the very good colleagues and friends in the workplace. is that giving us the pleasure does it give us does it does this job give us life satisfaction.

That means, when we look into our experiences and future in the particular work place or the organization etcetera, does it give us the life satisfaction that over the life. That means, I feel really happy that because yes whatever I have imagined, I have aspired, I have you know I have imagined for now I could achieve it and it gives an immense satisfaction because not just the job satisfaction, but the satisfaction from the you know from the financial perspective, from the ecological perspective, from the work culture perspective, so many aspects are there. So, it relates to life satisfaction that we get from the work, the pleasure, the pleasurable experiences, the positive emotional conditions like after working for 8 to 10 hours in a day in a work place that means, do we really feel satisfied happy or not. So, that is it is a mental condition is the emotional condition that defines whether we really enjoy that job or not. So, how valuable is this mental state? So, there are again in the workforce also there are different types of work different types of job every job has an inherent nature.

nature of work. So, and so, what is so, it is again whether that means, whether the job that means, the job profile matches with the individual psychological need or not, does he really enjoy that type of work. So, also many things many things come in the happiness at work process. So, how valuable this mental state does it really give us the immense pleasure and happiness the satisfaction and how happiness can be valuable in our life. That is why you might have observed.

So, in the in the tech sector or even in the organizational in the corporate sector initially you know after graduation after engineering or management etcetera suppose you have joined a job, but after after 6 months you are not getting it very happy or the students support the they are not finding it very happy or very you know. or very self satisfying etcetera. So, that they again strive for the job hopping or switching over to thing. So, because that creates a lot of conflict that conflict is and again it has many challenges. So, before that is the first job opting for the first job joining the first job is very very important.

A life that goes well for being for the person leading it that is it is a potential value or more communication not just related to our happiness, our growth, our need satisfaction gratification, but it is also related to our well being. Well being and for future and future future scope of flourishing our self our personality. So, they relate it to the meaningfulness, they make it more purposeful, they make the same work and same work and with different you know different you different directions, different interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary explorations, they make themselves more engaged in the work in this way they become very diverse in terms of skills and potentialities etcetera. So, it becomes more purposeful and engaged environment for them to you know to not just to gratify their needs, but to know explore their potentialities. So, so that is why those because and why do we think that happiness at work is very important because we spend a lot of time it is an investment,

it is an investment lifetime investment in the workplace because whatever we have acquired over the years of our career, whatever you have learned we have we have earned the degrees and the skills we have learned the skills and etcetera we are going to apply it in the workplace that is why it is the most significant.

aspect of any human being any employee any worker. So, now happiness is a state of fully satisfied consciousness, a state of mind that depends on how it is interpreted. So, when I am happy suppose as an employee suppose if I am happy that means, in my consciousness I am happy means I live fully satisfied in the sense that and I can elaborate it like I can interpret it I can elaborate on it. So, when I deeply analyze my reflect on my own thinking on my. work experience etcetera it gives a kind of satisfaction.

So, it defines a state of mind where I can interpret clearly explain it explicitly that why I am happy. So, it is not a temporary, but momentary where when it is relate to workplace we try to make it more sustainable more authentic. Because, we want to continue with either with the type of job or the organizations we want to make it more sustainable. So, that is there are some of the important factors are there. So, happiness can be compatible to the extent that productive activity can be made more creative activity, fruitful activity and source of satisfaction of the multiplies.

So, when we feel that I am enjoying my work, I am completely engaged. It is not just I am working for the organization for getting a pay package, but you know it I am also learning, I am also learning the new things and my skills and potentialities are being utilized properly. So, it is not just production or increasing the production or business profit or national profit is not the only goal of the of our professional development. So, rather from being from state of productivity to how can we move towards the creativity being more creative, being more innovative, being more you know futuristic. So, and however, in this because it is again it is a learning process.

So, in this journey when what is the source of our satisfaction. Because not just it is full is fulfilling our basic needs primary needs at this moment, but we are all looking for the for our future needs for future need gratification. So, that may be that is the it satisfies the multiple needs our emotional need or financial need and you know career needs. So, so that is it is compatible to the extent that we go beyond this productivity level towards the creativity being more creativity creative. And and our activities all the activities and engagements are very satisfactory, very fruitful, very successful and you know very complementary to our needs.

So, Abraham Abraham Maslow is was a psychologist he has actually clearly defined the human needs in a hierarchical model that is so many theories of motivations needs are

there, but his theory is that primarily is called as the human need hierarchy theory. It is like it is a pyramid it is a pyramid. So, where he has categorized classified the human needs in different levels. For example, first thing that first primary level is our basic basic basic needs basic needs and food shelter etcetera, then thereafter that our safety needs safety needs safety and security needs, then thereafter that belongingness needs and after that So, because belongingness we want to be the member of the particular group, we need we need social affiliation, social belongingness etc. After that then self esteem need which is much higher than belongingness.

After getting all this all these basic needs and belongingness safety needs fulfilled, then we aspire for social status, self social status, prestige, self esteem that is it is a self esteem. And after that again it is a self actualization state. So, that is beyond this mundane affairs, beyond the beyond this you know social status, pay package, affluence all these things it is beyond that is more related to our you know spiritual conscience, spiritual development that is the self actualization. And later on the other researchers they have added another one more level that is called the transcendental level. needs that is the beyond this life.

So, this is as per the Maslow's need hierarchy theory. So, for the most workplace these you know the unless and until even in the in the workplace also unless and until our basic needs are fulfilled. Basic needs like the basic like income we have we are earning a earning the we have earning for the some for sustainable living for meeting our you know day to day life living needs etcetera. So, unless and until that is fulfilled we cannot aspire for the higher needs. So, in the same way for example, in the in the labour force you can see the main different categories of the workers are there.

So, the laborers the those who are the you know ground level workers in the factory etcetera their primary thing is that the pay package income etcetera etcetera because that is the main source of income that through which they can you know meet that daily needs. So, once they are secure once they are very much sure that yes now it is not is my pay package my salary is not going to be affected etcetera. Then they look for then social inclusion, then social inclusion other platforms for socializing themselves or to be a member of the committee groups or networking etcetera. So, these are the other needs later on comes in. So, in this a Maslow's need hierarchy theory actually fits into this workplace situation.

And most of the organizations, institution and even in the management courses also, this Maslow's need hierarchy theory is being referred to, is being studied, is being taught for you know for justifying this workplace situations and the factors. So, now these are what makes me feel happy at the work, which are the which jobs are happier, does money buy the can happiness because you know when we when we you know select a job we look for

many aspects not just the pay package, salary, postings, the nature of the job, job profile and who are the that means, what would be the climate, what would the what would be the working hours, terms, conditions many things. So, all these all these questions we need to ask ourselves. So, can the job satisfaction high the low levels of the engagement is sometimes what happens of if so, that is a that is a challenge that the job fitness. Like the employees employees their skills, knowledge, potentialities and the what the job requires actually there must be perfect matching of the employees the employees employees and the job that requires.

So, these these things. So, many things that that means, many questions that we need to ask ourselves before joining a particular job or in a company. whether we do by opting for for a particular job do we can we really be happy what what does it mean how happiness can be defined. Nowadays in the news also you can find out many you know many doctors engineers are leaving their job and joining the UPSC. Similarly, many UPSC successful candidates now after working for 3, 4 years, 5 years etcetera they quit their job then they start their own NGOs own business or join some other social organization etcetera. So, it depends on the human needs and human needs are so diverse that we cannot and it is dynamic in the sense that it keeps on changing we cannot.

So, we are flexible we are dynamic. So, and we are the leading organizations and our needs are also it keeps on changing. So, now the most important factor in the workplace is that is the workplace work culture. So, positive work culture and human resource well being. So, that is the most important factor because as we expect a positive work culture, healthy work cultures which cannot just make us keep us sustainable, keeps us keep us motivated, keeps keep us engaged, but it also it also encompasses many values, beliefs, attitude, positive attitudes that mobilizes that guides and organizations.

So, positive work culture you know how the employees they should behave it defines the positive work culture the organizations having the positive work culture they clearly defines how the employees should be treated, how the employees should behave, what is their practices, some of the things are very formalized and some of the informal things are how should they interact with each other, what is the day to day responsibilities, how they are going to you know report to the report to the seniors and how they are going to deliver the things. So, and so, what is the and how they are going to you know going to. work for the for the goal achievement of the organizations many things. So, in the beginning that is a you might have observed that is in the beginning in the initial job that is in during the you can say orientation period, training period etcetera though. So, they will the all the employees they will be oriented regarding the organizational goals, their reason, their values, their missions, goals, objectives, work practices, even the case studies histories of that things and their objectives.

and their partners so many thing A to Z of the company. So, why is work culture important that is a because it has this profound impact on the Several significant aspects of the employees experience starting from his you know job satisfaction, to his well being, to his you know you know career development, to his the workplace engagement, to his you know future the possibility the scope of his future growth, career growth all kinds and team and team moral team value team moral because nowadays we are supposed to work everywhere in the teams. So, team cohesiveness, team dynamics it is also very important factor and moreover employee employer relationship that the job that the manager and the manager and the manager and employee manager the subordinates relationship. And so, that is a so, all this that is a workers it is very important because it relates to many issues. So, and at the same time if the it has if the negative workers it can It can create havoc, it can create you know you know it can create bad experience, very traumatic experience for the for the employee as well as because it creates a kind of toxic situation, toxic environment.

So, which is very difficult to you know difficult to sustain in that situation and retains that is the many of the good employees may they may leave the companies, they may you may face face you know setbacks from the customer side, from the investor side. So, negative workplace can have the many hazards can you have the many side effects negative impacts. So, that is a you can say work culture is very important. So, work culture not only guides the employees in the workplace, but also it also guides customers like suppose if an employee is very happy. So, automatically he can make the customers happy, he will be more dedicated, more committed.

So, and he will be you know thus he can he can provide the service very quickly. So, prompt services nowadays that is a customer service is more important in any sector. And so, and the work culture and work culture develops over the period of time, it is not just one day's affair. It naturally form within every organization over the years and either it can it can go on improving in a growth stage, but it can also suddenly affect the business in the negative way. But yes primarily it depends primarily it depends on the leader leadership or the leaders how the leader have nurtured the values and the ethics and the values.

work ethics values and the social relationship among the how the leader has developed, how the leaders has nurtured and you know has developed this kind of work environment from the basic unit of that from the starting point of the organizations. So, from its inception how the leader they have leader or the group of leaders how they have nurtured this their employees from very beginning. So, that is only every company they have the workers or when we talk about these private sector, public sector, you know public sector, suppose Tata group they are how they are their vision and missions and objectives and the goals,

humanitarian activities, they reflect in their practices, reflect in their workshops, in their practices, in actions, in the in their contribution etcetera. So, these in this way the workplace will be will be developed over a period of time, it is not just one day's affair. And the elements of the workplace cultures are like for example, factors that you know that come under the workplace work culture comes in under that employees primarily it is socio-emotional needs.

Fulfilling the socio-emotional needs that the employee should feel happy, should feel satisfied and you know and everybody again not just the financial needs etcetera, but also they must have some experience and feeling of you know as if they are very important, they are valuable and they are contributing significantly not only towards the towards the company, but towards the society. So, a sense of satisfaction is a sense of meaningfulness, deep happiness, deep satisfaction comes within the employees that yes I am doing something significant, I am contributing significantly not just to the company, to the organization, to for making it more profit oriented, but also So, again here the boss and the subordinate approach, the employee-employer relationship, the you know the organizational structure, however, it is a very vertical kind of thing or very horizontal kind of thing that means power hierarchy. Power hierarchy that is also important. If it is more informal, more democratic, on more open minded, more flexible, more dynamic, then everybody feels that yes they are equal, they are valuable, valuable and they are and they are contributing significantly. There is no one is in the superior, in the inferior category, everyone that is the employer is is is approachable in the sense that it listens to everybody's problems and And he is very much informal, he is very much cautious and vigilant about the things and how it is going on not just not that means, he is not constantly monitoring or supervising, but also facilitates the work culture.

So, that is a the happy work culture, a positive work culture and they are very flexible and they are inclusive in the sense that. It they embed the includes the takes into account everybody equal they treat equally, they are very friendly, they are very collaborative, they are you know very fun seeking that means, they want to make the work environment enjoyable, enjoyable experience that is fun oriented activities ideal workplace to culture. So, so that means, all the employees should feel you know relaxed. and they enjoy whatever they do. So, enjoy the work, enjoy their own work both the individual work assigned as well as the when they work collaboratively in the group.

And so, if they not only the sense of group cohesiveness, group team building or togetherness, but also to be to be very productive, creative, constructive and enjoying their success and enjoying this or celebrating their success together together that sense of belongingness also develops. So, a culture of open and transparent of course, in the in the positive work culture the first thing is a transparency and accountability should be there,

transparency that everything should be very clear. A to Z everything there is no hidden agenda, there is no superficial thing there is everything is clear in terms of communication, in terms of their vision mission statement, in terms ah document they are providing in terms of their job profile in their all kinds of thing documented things. So, culture of open and transparent communication so, that employees feel physically safe ah and they report trust ah trust over their supervisor their boss and they love their job. If everything like the job that is the you know in the initial stage if you get all the all the things ah clear your job profile your working work schedule your your leave rules, your salary package, your promotion everything is very clear.

So, then it keeps a kind of confidence among the employees that yes they are safe and sound in this job. So, in this way if you are more structured, more disciplined, more thorough etcetera then automatically it attracts the talent. So, it encompasses values, behaviors and attitudes definitely for every job for every job. positive values and ethical behaviors positive attitude these are the basic things. So, you know attitude skill behavior a mindset these are the very important things.

So, dedicate as much of as much as time as necessary to ensure that everyone is aligned and everyone is aligned. So, first thing is that they need you need employer they need some kind of some time to orient everybody to make the things. streamlined in a particular in a particular structural way. So, necessary to that is a to how to know about everybody to align them and to streamline them that they assess their needs their strengths and weaknesses again and how to engage them assigning the different tasks everything. So, starting from the leadership to the long term employees those who are already there and who are again representing the HR departments and what should be training what should be the thing all kinds of thing initial stage in the initials it takes some time, but it has to be streamlined.

Then the then you have to that means, you have to circulate that manager HR manager primarily they have to circulate the list of values that reflect their their culture their company's culture their long term goals when because it relates to their brand name. So, brand image. So, what is the cultural practices their values ethics ethical standard principles laws etcetera that these things must be apprised to the employees new employees. Now, everything and starting from the physical layout to the ambience to the you know to the you know sitting arrangement to the infrastructure to employee relationship that is employees how do they you know interact and the schedule timing and how they spend that time along with the with the colleagues all the things a to z and what is the relationship manager and the team how the team functions everything comes under this work culture. So, the leaders who are working to improve the workplace culture, they need to be ready to follow a thorough follow a thorough and thorough on investing in the initiative that

matters

most.

So, what are the initiatives this must take it requires the leaders should make effort for consistent communication, accountability and transparency. Communication that is repeated communication, communication through multiple channels, communication all the effective channels is not just once in a week, but also continuously constantly. And communication channels should be very clear transparent and all channels they must they must say the same thing, they must communicate the same thing that there is no there should not there should not be any ambiguity, there should not be any kind of double meaning communication, clear communication, consistent communication. And from the top to bottom everybody should know about should know about the about the work culture, about the vision, mission, goals, projects, setbacks, challenges everything A to Z must be clear to every worker every employee that organizations. And accountability that is the accountability we know for every and for any grievance for addressing any conflict for addressing any grievance etcetera.

So, the leaders the employer they are they must have the accountability to deal with all kinds of the controversies etcetera and transparencies would be there. So, that is the first thing is the set the departmental goals after the vision mission then the departmental goals, unit goals and promote the national goals also like you know and promote nowadays to promote diversity and inclusive because when you are hiring the employees they must come from different background with the globalization you know diversity is there you cannot it is inevitable, but rather you have to leverage the diversity because you are hiring the people all across the globe. So, diversity is then strength is the strength, but how to identify it manage it and leverage it that is also a challenge and inclusivity that means, irrespective of any So, any discrepancy etcetera you are providing the workplace, you are providing the resources, you are providing the thing to equally the resources to be distributed equally providing the opportunity equally. So, how to address diversity and inclusivity both the things they must coexist to strengthen. So, allow the lightheartedness that means, you know it should not be that means, a kind freedom is there it kind of you know casualness is that that everybody is you know there is no serious you know even if you would deviate something because deviate something or commit a mistake it will it can be it can be rectified it can be corrected by others suggestion etcetera.

So, there is no serious you know blunder in that prioritize the respect human respect every employee here his self respect he has to be restored. Then zero tolerance policy again any discrepancy any then no there is no issue of you know or religious bias or any ethical bias. So, there must be policy and of zero tolerance policy. Then employee recognition you know after the towards the end of the year every team's team's effort the projects the every individual's efforts would be recognized would be you know should be should be

recognized should be rewarded like you know incentives you know different incentives, the prizes etcetera. So, every employee again every employee requires and a cognition for his effort and for his dedication and work.

So, that is employee recognition program should also be there, employees feedback is also very important, appraisal system is very important and appraisal on the basis of that your training program which are training program. So, environment should be very flexible, very transparent and very growth oriented. So, celebrating sometimes also after you know annually every organization they have the annual day, they have the annual cultural event, annual phase, sports so many things. So, celebrating different success parties and the social outings these are also a part of the work culture and developing healthy work culture. So, a positive work culture not only boost the employees moral and engagement, but all it plays a very crucial role in attracting and retaining the talent.

So, even when you are hiring not only you are hiring the talented people, but to retain them to retain them to get keep them motivated to stay back with you that is also a very important factor. So, HR professionals that is a they play a very crucial role. pivotal role, very key role and actually they are the change catalyst because they actually bring very reforms, they actually bring innovation, they actually initiate and foster a very kind supportive kind of inclusive work culture and engage the work environment. They listen to every employees. employees you know needs their you know needs and any kind of if they have any kind of face any kind of problem then any trouble any issues they are facing then they are they are the first people to address it.

So, they and they that they spread the disseminate a very clear vision and values about the organization. And because that will help them in decision making policy and it is that means, how to align the individual employees career goals along with the national goal that is very important factor. So, that is a individual efforts to contribute to the bigger picture like he the HR professional or the people in such a way that the individual employees can also clearly see their growth of their own career. At the same time how they can align their individual growth professional growth along organization goals and values. So, aligning the individual goals with the company's broader objectives and and how HR can inspire the employees to contribute their best and in this process how their career growth takes place their personal you know personal ambitions get fulfilled.

So, and their you know that so, all the employees they can foster a sense of meaning purpose or leading a meaningful life. that is very important. So, how to align both individual needs, individual employees career needs, job satisfaction etcetera along with the organizational goals and objectives. And besides that there are n number of external factors. So, it is the HR professional to deal with it to handle all these things.

So, transparent communication becomes very important because it promotes the trust and effective channel of communication in whatever the company's organization the leaders they want to communicate they must use the effective channels and multiple modes to communicate the things. Employees should be empowered in the sense that they are not. Therefore, they have the autonomy and freedom of choice there to you know to look for or to select the job of their liking. So, employees are empowered to select their own jobs and they must feel valued, they must have a sense of ownership. So, in this way when they are being assigned they are being given the autonomy and freedom and sense of you know.

worthiness etcetera automatically they become committed that is the committed and committed to the workplace. So, that is called the employees that is citizenship behavior. So, they now as because they gradually slowly feel that they own the organization it is their ownership because they are contributing. So, the sense of ownership makes slowly makes them more committed and that increases their job satisfaction, their motivation and then organizational citizenship behavior behavior takes place. So, the recognition reward system you know these are these are the HR practices to strengthen the strengthen the employee well being, strengthen the employee employee well being, their contribution, their dedication and their commitment.

So, I am just stopping it now. In the next class we will continue with this. Thank you.