

Course Name: Organizational Behaviour: Individual Dynamics in Organization

Professor Name: Prof. Dr. Abraham Cyril Issac

Department Name: School of Business

Institute Name: Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati

Week – 08

Lecture – 01

Lecture 36: Job Design and job characteristics model

Hello students, welcome back to the course on organizational behavior: Individual Dynamics in Organization. We move to module 8. In this module we look into motivation, application at its workplace. When we have looked into motivation in module 7, we have consistently looked into what motivation is. We have tried to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic part of it.

We have also tried to establish some of the learnings with respect to the theoretical footings especially with respect to the earlier theories and the contemporary theories as well. So today we will move to the application part and the lecture one would be job design and job characteristic model.

I am Dr. Abraham Cyril Issac. I am assistant professor at the School of Business, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati.

Let us move into today's class. Internal rewards are obtained by an individual when he or she learns that she or he personally has performed well on a task that he or she cares about. So, this is what the crux of today's presentation is, today's class is all about. So, we will look into that in detail when we discuss that in job design model.

Let us look into the application part of motivation through job design which is today's agenda. If you look into job design specifically, job design may be defined as the methods that management employs or uses to develop the content of a job. The content of job could be anything if you are in an HR department, your content could be anything from recruitment towards training, towards learning and development that could be your verticals. There would be other aspects like if you are in let us say in sales, your content could be how to boost the sales revenue, your content would be the sales penetration across a particular geographical area, your content could be to look into what the competitors are up to. So, all this could be the different parameters or different content parameters within the job design model.

Based on that the nature of work is changing, we all know that because of advanced information technology and globalization. When you are looking at a situation where there is a rapid change in terms of technology, in terms of the business environment, in terms of the transactions happening across, in terms of the mode of transactions that are happening across you, there could be a possibility that the job design has to get modified. Now motivation is implicitly observed when you look into job design model and this is where the first application of motivation theory comes into picture. All the recent trends create new challenges and they also try to elicit a new job design model.

You must have observed that when we had this COVID-19 or we were reeling under the threat of COVID-19, suddenly new work contracts, new work styles, new employment arrangements came in where online took the front seat and people started even working or learning for that matter in a very asynchronous way. So, motivation application through job design could be understood by having a clear understanding of what specifically job design is.

Let us look into job design. Job design is embellished by three aspects, one is job rotation, the second one is job enlargement and the third is job enrichment. If you look into any of the job design applications specifically whether it be in your organization, whether it be in your competitor, whether it be in a casual discussion with your friend in his or her organization, you will see that job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment has happened to come out as a Trinity when you are looking into job design. Let us understand one by one particularly.

Job rotation is nothing but the periodic shifting of an employee from one particular task to another with similar skill requirements that is very critical with similar skill requirements at the same organizational level which is also known as cross training. Now interestingly if you see, job rotation is considered as one of the key aspects even without a proper understanding of job design or job design model as such organizations tend to do it. One, it might be because of the lack of manpower they are having the scarcity of manpower. Two, embolden, to understand, to equip the workforce with different types of understanding across various departments. Let us look into a case of a new recruit.

He or she might be a graduate engineering trainee or a graduate management trainee. The moment he or she comes into the organization they are given training at all different places, in all different functional departments, all different let us say verticals of the particular organization. This is the onboarding process but when you are looking into a person who is into the job for some time, maybe the initial management days or the middle level management, you will try to understand that the organization would require him or her to acquire certain skills not only with respect to his or her department but also

with other functions of the particular organization. To equip the particular person or enable the particular individual with certain skills or abilities or know-how of other areas within the organization, job rotation happens to be the key factor. So, this is one of the most convenient as well as effective way of making a particular job design to enriching the experience or the level of understanding or expertise of the particular individual within the organization.

Now let us look into job enlargement. Job enlargement is the job design process which involves the increasing number of tasks each employee performs. Let us say your portfolio, your work profile has a certain number of tasks assigned to your job. You might have let us say x number, let us quantify it. You have 10 tasks assigned to a particular job.

So when you are trying to or when the organization is hoping that you are going to do a particular job, the organization would require that or would actually expect you to do the particular ten tasks that is assigned to you. If the organization feels that you are more capable, you are more let us say energetic, you are more let us say futuristic and the employment or the employer sees a future of you within the organization, the higher management, they will try to give you more tasks which is more relevant, which is more critical and will be able to expose you to different environments, business environments with which the company is always dealing with. So, this will essentially act as a breeding ground, a training ground for you to pitch it up, to notch it up as per your understanding or as per your expertise within the organization. So, job enlargement is adding on to the activity of the particular individual. Let us say you are given some 8 tasks, those set of 8 tasks within the particular job is being increased to 10.

Let us look into a practical scenario. You are being made in charge of a particular team where you are delegating, where you are supposed to, the organizational bylaw says that you are supposed to delegate the particular activities to 8 set of people. Now over and above the company or the organization asks you or mandates that you have to be a supervisor for all the collective decisions made within the 8 tasks or within the 8 members who are performing the task, then it is an added responsibility which comes under job enlargement. So initially you were responsible only to the delegation of singularly the 8 jobs, now you are getting an additional work profile or additional work load in its positive sense which is known as job enlargement.

And the third aspect is job enrichment. Job enrichment expands jobs by increasing the degree to which the worker controls the planning, execution and evaluation of the work. An enriched job organizes tasks to allow the worker to do a complete activity. So, there is one word if I can replace the entire job enrichment with, it would be autonomy. You are being given context to do the job, also you are given the authority to take up the job and complete it in a holistic manner. You are being given the comprehensive authority over

the particular job.

You are being given the complete autonomy over the particular job right from conceptualizing the particular job to setting or planning the entire execution of the job to executing the job and finally to evaluating the job every single activity you are getting a final say within you are allowed or within you are allowed discretion. This is what is job enrichment. So, you feel, you tend to feel that your activity does not restrict yourself to only to do the job but also take ownership whatever comes with it, whether it be credit or whether it be the blame. But the moment you are engrossed into the particular job you are more involved in the particular job and this is something called as job enrichment. So, when you are looking into job design applications there are three aspects, one is the job rotation, two job enlargement and three is the job enrichment.

Now let us understand it from a detailed perspective with the help of Hackman-Oldham characteristic model. Now this is something which goes step beyond the normal OB class and I would like to invite your undivided attention because this needs a little bit of focus. When you look into the Hackman-Oldham characteristic model you have the different core job characteristics like task variety or skill variety, you have the task identity, you have the task significance, autonomy and feedback. These are specifically the job characteristics.

Now the Hackman-Oldham characteristic model says that all these job characteristics they go through a certain level of psychological states. The first and the foremost one is meaningfulness. So here if you look into the task variety, task identity, task significance it goes through a psychological state of meaningfulness. How meaningful the task is? Let us look into a job scenario where you are doing a mundane activity, it does not have any variety, it does not take any particular identity. You are supposed to do it, it does not create a level of satisfaction in you with respect to the significance the task is providing. It could be mundane as let us say moving assembly line activity, it could be as mundane as let us say a blue-collar clerical job.

So any particular aspect leads to a psychological state and this is the meaningfulness that comes into picture. When your job characteristics goes to a psychological state, let us say responsibility, you are given certain autonomy in the job. If you recollect our previous discussion, you will see that right from the conceptualization to the planning, to the execution, even to the evaluation if you are given a certain level of autonomy, you feel that you are moving into a psychological state where you are taking the responsibility also. So, this is the crux of today's lecture.

If you are being given let us say the responsibility, please try to take the authority also. Vice versa, if you are given the authority, please try to take the responsibility of the job

also. Nowadays what we feel in organization, people tend to shy away from either of the one. Either you may be given the responsibility, so people might not be ready to take the authority. So that becomes or that creates a situation where it becomes a headless chicken. It becomes a situation where you are being dumped with lot of other duties because you are not ready to wheel or ready to take the particular authority.

The reverse scenario or the other flip side of the coin is that you are being given the responsibility, you are taking just the authority, but you are not ready or you are not willing to take the responsibility. So, this makes you look as a bad leader. This makes or reflects you as a person who is not willing to take the responsibility for that particular job. So, in organizations we see mainly these two types of people who are there to take the responsibility, but they are not ready to yield the particular authority. There are also people who are only there to take the authority, but not ready to take the responsibility.

So this is where the job characteristic model becomes relevant. The autonomy leads you to a psychological state of responsibility and interestingly when you are looking into the particular job, you will see that it gives you a positive input or a negative input whatever it is, but it gives you an input how the job is being executed and that leads to knowledge of results. Basically, if you look into the psychological state, meaningfulness, responsibility, knowledge of results, it gives you a certain internal motivation, it also gives you a satisfaction with the particular job. So, this is something which is termed as the outcome of the particular model. So, when you are looking into job characteristics like let us say task variety, you are looking into task identity, significance, autonomy and feedback, these particular activity leads you to a particular psychological state namely meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge results which ultimately yield certain outcomes like internal motivation, like satisfaction etc. which is what is which totally or finally leads to the efficient performance.

So basically, job design model is a model which shows how certain critical job core, job characteristics can lead to certain positive outcomes like effective performance or efficient performance.

Let us look into job characteristic model in particular words. Certain job characteristics lead to critical psychological states. I have already mentioned the model postulates that internal rewards and this is the crux of today's lecture.

The internal rewards are obtained by he learns the knowledge of results. This is what his personal psychological state is that he personally experienced responsibility, has performed well on a task that he cares about. So, there is certain level of autonomy which takes him to a psychological state of meaningfulness, takes him to a psychological state of responsibility. So, there is nothing much impressive, there is nothing sort of a situation

which gives me much of happiness if I learn that something which I generally care about, something which I would like to own responsibility for, for that particular job I have excelled or I have done excellent performance in that work and if this understanding is coming to me at a personal friend there is nothing like that and this is what the crux of the job design model is. To be high on motivating potentials, job must be high on at least one of the three factors that lead to experience meaningfulness and high on both autonomy as well as feedback.

So much evidence in the job design model supports the job characteristic model concept that the presence of a set of job characteristics could be a variety, could be identity, could be significance, could be autonomy and feedback does generate higher and more satisfying job performance. So, this is where the importance of job characteristic model JCM comes into picture. You have certain particular characteristics; those characteristics lead you to a particular psychological state. Those psychological state will essentially push you to certain internal satisfaction which could be understood as the natural application of motivation which in turn gives you a positive feedback or positive outcome which is enrich or effective performance within the organization. So, if we look into the entire JCM job characteristic model and we try to elicit certain practical guidelines for redesigning jobs to make the jobs more interesting, to make the jobs more creative, to make the job more lucrative in its essence we will try to call out these few points.

One is skill variety, another is task identity, the third one would be task significance and the fourth one would be autonomy and finally feedback from the job itself. Many a time we tend to overestimate the feedback we get from our co-workers or co-employees or other stakeholders or sometimes people who have no stake in the job, but seldom do we try to take feedback from the job itself. How do you take feedback from the job?

Let us look into a particular practical scenario. Let us look into a case where you are being assigned a particular task within the day-to-day affairs in the organization. Now interestingly you will see that at the end point, let us say your work hours end at 5.30 or 6 pm, at 5.50 if the end time is 6 pm you tend to recognize that there is lot of activities left in that particular task that is assigned to you. So somewhere the job is giving you feedback that you had to be efficient or you should have followed a more efficient manner of disposal of the particular task, especially in the initial first half of the entire day you tend to do the job, but in a least effective or efficient manner. So, this is how job gives feedback in itself, but many a time it is fact that we tend to undermine the job feedback and we tend to overestimate the feedback given by our co-workers and people who sometimes do not have any stake in that particular job and that is detrimental to your entire existence in the organization.

So let us look into a particular scenario when we are talking about job design, we are talking about the job characteristic model, many a time in this present world we see that people need to be multitaskers. So let us look into a scenario of multitasking whether it is a good use of your time.

Multitasking is nothing but doing two or more things at once or rapidly switching from one task to another is a characteristic of the millennial generation. One recent study revealed that during a typical week 81% of young people report media multitasking, at least some of the time multitasking nicely illustrates our point that motivation is not just effort, but also the way you direct your efforts. However, is the direction of efforts in multitasking efficient or inefficient? Many people who multitask say it makes them more efficient, it makes them more efficient. Why not do two things at once if I can accomplish about as much as if I only did one thing? So, this is the pertinent question that every single people who are the millennial generation would typically ask if they are pro multitasker. Research however suggests that multitasking is inefficient that it actually makes longer or takes longer to do two things at once than to do one thing first and then turn to the other.

David Meyer, a University of Michigan psychologist who has studied multitasking argues you wind up needing to use the same sorts of mental and physical resources. So many a time we tend to undermine the mental resources that are at deployment. We tend to only estimate the physical resources, but we tend to avoid or we tend to ignore the mental resources that are coming our way for performing each of these tasks. So, you are having to switch back and forth between the two tasks as opposed to really doing them simultaneously. So, multitasking appears to result in adverse outcomes beyond inefficiency.

Another study found out that multitasker absorb material more superficially. So, if you are looking into the depth of understanding, if you are looking into the depth of knowledge or expertise gain that happens within multitasking, it is relatively not that much. So, they notice more things in their environment, but are able to learn material less deeply. So, it is not that they cannot focus says one researcher is that they focus on everything. So, when the focus is not undivided, when the focus is not on something specific then the focus is tend to be a word which exists or ends up as oxymoron.

So they hear everything even things they would normally be able to block out because they are now so used to attending to many things at once. Others note that multitasking can damage productivity and social relationships as individuals devote less concentrated time and attention to the task they are working on and conversations they are having. This scattered attention is especially damaging for tasks that require deep insight or creativity.

So multitasking though there are a lot of advocates of that, multitasking if it should be employed at any cost if multitasking is something that has to be done then my suggestion would be to do best the task in your hand at that particular moment. So essentially it does not qualify all the detail nitty-gritty of multitasking as such, but still, I would not suggest as per research that multitasking would be the way to go ahead.

It would be always better if your focus is undivided. If your focus is on one particular thing which you want to focus, which you want to succeed on. Once that is obtained then you can switch on to the next task. So many a time as the case study also points out there are situations where you tend to correctly understand the need of physical resources. For an execution of task, you might require a particular let us say physical resources deployment of particular physical resources, but many a time we tend to undermine the actual need of mental resources. There might be some level of mental peace, there might be some level of concentration you might require, there might be some level of let us say readiness or a prepared mindset for articulation.

Let us look into a situation of an academician, a professor, teacher. If he or she might be talented but it would be very challenging or demanding to ask him or her to let us say give a lecture for let us say for 4 hours or 5 hours continuously. Not only that the audience is not ready to absorb those many things, but also the fact that it not only requires he might have great or she might have great physical stamina, but more than that they need to have a cognitive capacity so that the concentration remains intact and that cognition or that level of preparedness or prepared mindset would come only if the focus is deployed in a very sensitive manner. If the resources are regulated, if the resources are put in use for the first one hour, then you take a break then another hour, it needs certain replenishment. So, this is where not only the physical resources, but also the mental resources are important

And if you ask me what are the issues pertaining to multitasking it is first lack of focus and attention. Your resources are scattered, your focus is also scattered, you tend to be putting a lot of things everywhere, you are not focused, you are not interested in one single activity, your singular concentration is absent. So, lack of focus and attention, second is inefficiency. When you are doing too many things in single time it obviously leads to inefficiency. Inconspicuously there cannot be a person who can render multitasking with let us say unlimited time frame. There could be some restriction in terms of physical resources, but there is always restriction with respect to mental resources as well.

The third important aspect could be superficial learning. Many a time you must have seen there are some self-motivated people who join the organization, they want to learn this, they want to learn that, suddenly they feel that everything they want to learn. There is

some software being installed there, they will run into that. There is some discussion that is happening with respect to some factor which is not at all related to their department or not at all related to their profile, they will be available there as well.

So many a time though it creates an image of learning, what is exactly happening is superficial learning. Another important aspect could be when you are trying to do many things without proper concentration, it leads to reduced productivity. You tend to not deploy your resources in an efficient manner which ultimately reduces your productivity. Impacts on the creativity and deep insight, sometimes you need to be very focused, very concentrated, you need to have a very clean pristine mind. Sometimes let us say people start with a blank slate so that things get orderly placed, your schema arranges things in a very proper orderly fashion.

So these are some of the things which you should understand when you are entering into multitasking. You might be not able to execute a creative task as per the demand, you might not be able to develop or initiate the insight that is warranted. There could be also situations where you are overwhelmed because you are doing so many tasks, you are not at the moment concerned about the results, you might be simply overwhelmed that I am doing this, I am doing that, a lot of tasks are coming together and you are ready, you are doing it. So that could make you overwhelmed in that particular situation but ultimately it will lead you to stress. There are also situations where multitasking essentially affects your social relationship.

You might not have time for others let alone for yourself. There might be situations where you cannot interact with others, you cannot see what is happening around you in terms of the world around you because you are too much obsessed with the work and that too not one single work, many works at a single time in either of which you cannot focus.

And finally, there is a short-term gratification. You have done a job, you might get you focus, you had undivided attention for a particular project, you executed it nicely, the management or your authority or your boss congratulated you, there is a long-term gratification, you tend to see that you are being recognized in the organization, you are getting a higher let us say appreciation because of that, you are becoming a senior manager from manager because of your stunning work, you are becoming the employee of the particular month, you are getting lot of accolades, you are getting lot of appreciation because of that. But because of multitasking let us say you tend to do a small task in a particular department, the department boss might just appreciate you, alright good thank you. In another case there will be another appreciation but these are all short term, these are all short-term gratifications.

So please do understand multitasking may look rosy, may look interesting, may look too much of appealing or has lot of favour or attention to it but it always takes its toll because it can deplete your resources both physical as well as mental.

So, today's session we looked into what motivation is in terms of the practical understanding. I tried to give you some inputs into the job design model, job characteristic model specifically. Please try to understand that certain aspects like the variety, the skill set etc will lead you to a particular level of psychological state and if the work requires or gives you autonomy in the sense that you tend to conceptualize the work, you tend to initiate the work, make the action plan for that particular work, try to execute that work and finally even evaluate the work after that, you tend to appreciate it more deeper. There is a lot of sense of belongingness applied to that particular work, there is a sense of ownership you can take for that particular task.

If you are multitasking you might be good at something but in case of multitasking you are putting all your eggs in different baskets. It might sound prudent in terms of an investment scenario but in terms of your resource deployment it is not a wise decision. Please understand your undivided attention, your focus is being challenged. You are rendered inefficient because your focus is divided, your focus is not streamlined to a particular cause.

So in that note we will end today's class. See you all in the next class, till then take care, goodbye. Thank you.