

Maslow's Eupsychian Management

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INTRODUCTION

Humanistic Psychology has had a considerable effect on the fields of organizational development and management theory. Some pioneering theorists of organizational development such as Chris Argyris, Douglas McGregor, Edgar Schein, were deeply influenced by the writings and works of Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Kurt Lewin and Rollo May. Maslow is unquestionably the central figure in the nexus between organization development and humanistic psychology. His theories on the hierarchy of needs, motivation, synergy, creativity, self-actualization and Eupsychian Management continue to be enormously influential (Schneider, Bugental & Pierson, 2001).

The most influential part of Maslow's theory was his model of the hierarchy of need, which includes the full range of human motivation. His most important concept was self-actualization, the highest level of human need. He was interested in people who achieve a lot, were happy with themselves, and their lives, and who were '*fully-functioning*'. From studying such people, he proposed that human needs had a hierarchical structure with the most basic need being to satisfy one's physiological requirements for food, drink etc. Once these are adequately satisfied, the next set of needs become the motivating force: needs for safety/security. Once a person feels secure, then they become more interested in their social needs and strive to become accepted by those around them. Once socially accepted, people strive to be esteemed within the eyes of the other people, and when these needs have been satisfied, they become more concerned with being esteemed by themselves and strive to become self-actualizing. The amount of satisfaction of any of the needs varies across individuals, so some people never feel secure enough to want to enter a social group, whilst others require quite minimal levels of security, and the same applies to all the needs.

Eupsychian Management is a collection of notes made by Maslow (1965) on the application of his own theoretical work in the industrial setting, which he saw as a laboratory to test and verify his theories about motivation and the improvement of society. The notion of "*Eupsychia*" was coined by Maslow (1965, 1998). It comes from the combination of *eu*, meaning *good* (i.e., *euphoria*) and *psyche*, meaning *mind or soul*. Therefore, *Eupsychian* means "*having a good mind/soul*", "*towards a good mind/soul*" or "*the well-being of the psyche*". *Eupsychia* is "*the culture that would be generated by 1000 self-actualizing people on some sheltered island, where they would not be interfered with*" or putting it more simply, the society or organization where human beings naturally strive to become "*self-actualizing*". The term "*Eupsychia*" thus refers to an ideal society which could be developed by a community of psychologically healthy individuals. It would be a kind of selected subculture made up only of psychologically healthy people and their families. The good society is one, which is trying to improve itself through the self-actualization of all its individual members. If the members of an organization were more like Maslow's self-actualizers', this would not only improve the efficiency of the organization itself, but would also contribute to the aliveness of the society of which the organization forms a part. The term "*Eupsychian Management*" could, therefore, be applied to a broader perspective than just the management of industry. It could also be used in relation to economics, politics, sociology, religion, education, etc., since each aspect of the society is related to every other aspect. Maslow's Eupsychian theory covers not only the responsibility of employers for the psychological growth of their employees, but indirectly is also a responsibility towards society as a whole.

He insists that the ideal society will not automatically produce self-actualizing individuals, but will encourage or help each individual to actualize his own potentials and capacities. Maslow talks about the importance of "*fitting to the objective requirements of the objective situation*" to recognize the barriers existing in organizations (Maslow, 1998). Maslow sees the lack of self-actualization in many managers as being a barrier to achieving this fit, because authoritarianism and lack of openness make it difficult to identify what the objective requirements of the objective situation are. His more comprehensive list of barriers included: scarcity of goods/rewards; failure to satisfy basic needs; anti synergic organizational regulations/laws; things that increase anxiety; loss or separation of any kind;

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forcing change on the fearful; bad communication; suspicion; denial of truth; dishonesty; untruth; lying; vulgarization of truth; confusion of the lines between truth and falsehood; loss of freedom, self-esteem, status, respect, love objects, being loved, belonging, safety, physiological needs, value systems, truth, beauty, etc. The solution to removing these barriers is to have self-actualizing managers (Payne, 2000).

For Maslow, self-actualizing work, which is simultaneously a seeking and fulfillment of the self, and also an achieving of the selflessness, which is the ultimate expression of the real Self, was no longer based on mere gratification of needs, but included discipline, labour and sweat. Maslow listed several conditions for those who work in eupsychian plants. Most of these conditions can be attributed to the self-actualizing process extended into the social environment, i.e., mutual trust, an impulse towards perfection, challenge and responsibility, synergy in the individual and the organization, and a healthy individual as well as a healthy organization (Vrinte, 1995).

For the ideal Eupsychian worker, work is identified with the self, and the work they do might better be called their '*mission*' or '*calling*'. The literature suggests that more committed employees tend to be better performers (Riketta, 2002; Samad, 2005; Sinclair, Tucker, Cullen & Wright, 2005), the sense of calling induces employees to bring their entire selves to work (Gavin & Mason, 2004) and that better leader-member social exchanges may result in higher individual performance (Deluga, 1994; Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Wang, Kenneth, Hackett, Wang & Chen 2005). Furthermore, according to Fredrickson (2001), happier employees are more easily able to "*broaden-and-build*" themselves, becoming more creative, resilient, socially connected, physically and mentally healthy, and more productive (Gavin & Mason, 2004; Wright & Cropanzano, 2004).

According to Pfeffer (2003), people strive for:

- (1) Interesting work that allows learning, development and provides a sense of competence and mastery;
- (2) Meaningful work that provides some feeling of purpose;
- (3) A sense of connection and positive social relations with coworkers;
- (4) The ability to live an integrated life, so that work will not collide with the essential nature of the worker and her/his desire to live as a human being.

A healthy society depends upon a steady supply of fairly well-matured and high level personalities, and this in turn depends upon a healthy culture. In a healthily functioning society, there must be followers who are able to choose superior people as their leaders. Psychologically healthy management increases the psychological health of the workers and by moving toward eupsychian management policies, the managers, workers and the organization as a whole move towards synergy. Good management policy is, therefore, on the whole, almost synonymous with the ability to be synergic. Enlightened management policy points towards the fulfillment of higher needs within the work situation and encourages its people to become better citizens. This trend is not based on political, economic or moral consideration, but on the intrinsic necessity for truth, honesty and justice.

Maslow was mainly excited by the possibility that employment could provide people with the opportunity to satisfy their higher-order needs for self-esteem and self-actualization (Payne, 2000). In his view, this would require that organizations and human-resource systems should be designed according to 36 assumptions that enlightened managers would adopt. According to Maslow (1998), organizing in accordance with these principles was not only good for improving employees' health and well-being, but for the organization's performance. Some important principles of enlightened management according to Maslow (1965) are as follows:

1. Assume everyone is to be trusted.
2. Assume that everyone can enjoy good teamwork, friendship, good group spirit, good group harmony, good belongingness, and group love.
3. Assume hostility to be primarily reactive rather than character-based.
4. Assume that everyone prefers to feel important, needed, useful, successful, proud, respected, rather than feeling unimportant, interchangeable, anonymous, wasted, unused, expendable, disrespected.
5. Assume that everyone prefers or perhaps even needs to love his boss (rather than to hate him), and that everyone prefers to respect his boss (rather than to disrespect him).
6. Assume the preference for working rather than being idle.
7. All human beings, not only Eupsychian ones, prefer meaningful work to meaningless work.
8. Assume the preference for personhood, uniqueness as a person, identity (in contrast to being anonymous or

interchangeable).

9. We must assume that everyone likes to be justly and fairly appreciated, preferably in public.

10. We must ultimately assume at the highest theoretical levels of eupsychian theory, a preference or a tendency to identify with more and more of the world, moving towards the ultimate of mysticism, a fusion with the world, or peak experience, cosmic consciousness, etc.

11. Finally, we shall have to work out the assumption of the meta-motives and the meta-pathologies, of the yearning for the “*B-values*”, i.e., truth, beauty, justice, perfection, and so on.

It was Maslow's belief that organizing in accordance with these assumptions was not just good for improving people's health and well-being, but it was also good for the financial success of the organization, and for the society as a whole. An increase in a person's self-actualization increases the chances of enhancing another's self-actualization in a virtuous circle, but this depends on providing satisfaction of their physical, safety and social needs for the development of the higher order needs to occur. This development will not occur if organizations create lousy jobs and Maslow recognized that large organizations, in particular, end up with many lousy jobs (Payne, 2000).

Rego, Cunha & Oliveira (2008) suggested that enlightened managers, as Maslow called them, may contribute towards creating eupsychian islands, and presented some practices that distinguish these eupsychian leaders from their “*realist*” counterparts. Rego et.al. (2008), results suggest that leader behaviors help people realize how much their organization allows them to approach the level of self-actualization corresponding to Maslow's notion of Eupsychia. Their findings suggest that leaders who promote self-determination and employee personal development, show appreciation and confidence in employees, respect their personal and inner life, are courageous and open-minded, foster positive interpersonal relationships and a sense of team community, and who are kind, compassionate, loyal and respectful of their followers, engender several positive effects. Employees become happier, are more committed to work, and develop a stronger sense of calling, develop better social exchanges with leaders and experience a higher sense of self-worth.

Many scholars have emphasized the relevance of meaningful work for the employees' health and well-being and for organizational performance (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May 2004; Gull & Doh, 2004; Duchon & Plowman, 2005). As other studies suggest (e.g., Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002), the supervisory social exchanges developed as a consequence of supervisory (un)fair behaviors influence employee behaviors towards the organization, not just towards the leader. The study corroborates those positive organizational studies (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004; Gavin & Mason, 2004), suggesting that a positive deviance in leadership and organizational practices may lead to positive impacts on individual and organizational performance. Maslow also pointed out that the search for meaningful work is obstructed by a mechanistic view of the organizational world, with some scholars now claiming that workplace spirituality is a kind of cure to the “*ills of modern management*” (Brown, 2003). Others argue that workplace spirituality contributes to organizational performance (Garcia Zamor, 2003; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). It brings individual-level benefits, including increased physical and mental health of employees, personal growth, realization of full potential, enhanced sense of self-worth, more tolerance for failure, and less susceptibility to stress (Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Krahnke, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Mohamed, Wisnieski, Askar, & Syed, 2004).

Cacioppe (2000) argued that employees strive for meaning at work and desire to be authentic in what they do and how they do it. In his view, this requires that organizations care for the whole employee's physical, emotional and spiritual well being. He went further, claiming that leaders “*have a major role to provide the conditions where balance can be returned to employees' lives and to develop a purpose for organization activities that are in harmony with all of life.*”

Organizational theorists and practitioners are looking for new ways of making human organizations more humane, or more holistic. The recent examples of this “*Eupsychian turn*” are Ghoshal and Moran's (2005) *Good Theory Of Management*, the interest for Indian philosophies (Engardio, 2006), and the positive scholarship movement (Cameron et al., 2004). “*High performing organizations*” (Lawler, Mohrman, & Ledford 1995), “*truly healthy organizations*” (Kruger & Hanson, 1999), “*virtuous organizations*” (Cameron et al., 2004; Gavin & Mason, 2004), “*best places to work for*” (Fulmer, Gerhart & Scott, 2003) and “*authentizotic organizations*” (Kets de Vries, 2001), are conceptions impregnated by Maslow's argument that organizations must be designed and managed in order to create healthy states.

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