

Book Review, Likert, Rensis (1967) The Human Organization: Its Management and Value

By
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Abstract

The main focus of this work provides guide on how best organizations can be designed to work efficiently with democratic coordination. To Likert, a democratic organization will bring about greater motivation, loyalty, better production and higher profits. The work seeks to improve human organization by calling for a participatory decision-making process. It emphasized that organizational goal can easily be attained if employees' psychological and social needs are satisfied. It as well calls on managers to be proactive in solving problems because early awareness of problems with accurate diagnosis of the causes can easily provide appropriate solution to the problems before they get out of hand.

Keywords:

Human organization, Organizational goal, Motivation, Democracy, Efficiency, Human Relation, Participatory decision-making, Psychological and social needs.

Book Review

Likert's work sees the human component of organization as something that organizations must treat with great caution if they must attain their goal efficiently. It calls for organization to implement democratic organizational practices where every organizational member is given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process of the organization. The author highlights four different types of systems (1, 2, 3, and 4 - *Exploitative Authoritative (System I)*, *Benevolent Authoritative (System II)*, *Consultative (System III)*, and *Participative (System IV)*) that depict the way organizations function differently and emphasized that system 4 organizational pattern is the best style to adopt because it calls for participatory approach in the decision-making process and as well gives room for good motivation, organizational loyalty and better production.

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In placing more focus on satisfying employees psychological and social needs as way to accomplish organizational goals, the book emphasized the implementation of good human relation in every part of the organization. This implies that a special attention must be paid to human needs so as to better understand organizations because for any organization to succeed, the human component must be well managed and considered. Likert emphasized that in trying to address the worries of employees in the organization, managers must address their worries individually not collectively to ensure that they are addressing the right problems that each employee face. It is on this basis that he emphasized that individuals must be treated as important element in the organization such that the organization always give them support in order for them to be committed to the goals of the organization.

The distinction provided in the different systems of organizational procedures help to guide employee's behavior in their daily activities as they interact in the organization. These systems depict the different levels of functionalism and advancement in human relations found in organizations. To classify these systems chronologically, I would say that system, 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively explain level of organizational advancement from poor state to advanced state with system 1 showing least performance and system 4 showing best performance. Likert emphasized that organizations must try to adopt a particular system to ensure consistency in their pattern of operations (p.116). He emphasized that with systems 4 organizational procedures being the best that would yield better output due to its democratic approach, organizations can efficiently make use of this approach; Likert opposes the use of system 1 procedures for being too dictatorial. Organizations that implement other systems are encouraged to train their employees to have mastery of systems 4 procedures and start implementing them. Special attention was made in comparing system 2 and systems 4 and it was found out that system 2 restrain organizational improvement while system 4 calls for organizational improvement in all facets (p.112-113).

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In advancing a human relation approach as an ideal way to administer organizations, Likert posits that it gives managers the ability to be proactive in discovering problems within organizations quite in advance and address them before they get out of hand. Likert advocates for an interdependence interactive pattern of organization where organizational members gain experience through such interaction which in the long run become helpful to the organization. While calling for an interdependence relationship in organizations, he charged managers to treat both formal and informal groups within organizations in same manner because by doing this there would be reduction of conflictual issues in organizations.

The human organization sees humans as the main source where organization can derive their goal such that if humans are poorly treated, organizations are bound to fail. Likert's work calls for a participatory organizational atmosphere where everyone within the organization is seen as important element that contribute to the success of the organization and this implies that the opinion of everyone count for the success of the organization.

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