

In Search of a Model for the Unification of Individual and Organizational Goals

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Abstract:

One of the greatest problems for managers during the last century was the diversification between individual and organizational Goals

Management scholars was always looking for a solution for this conflict. Although these goals sometime are convergent but in many cases this problem results in low degree in performance of the organization.

This article is trying to present a model for unification of goals. For this, hierarchy of a worker's goal (individual aspect) and that of an organization's goal (organizational aspect) were described. At the end of the article, desired model is presented.

key words:

Individual goal, Organizational goal, Unification of goals, God's consent.

Perhaps the oldest challenge in management is the historical dispute between the employee and the employer, the superior and the subordinate, the individual and the organization, that has thus far occupied the minds of managers, organizations' officials and management analysts. They have thus far thought of getting to a sort of compromise between the goals of the individual and the organization. This kind of thought has influenced all organizations and management theories. In other words, most of the theories of organization and management are a direct or an indirect endeavor towards the integration of individual's and organization's goals.

For instance, process and content theories of motivation have tried to give a manifestation of work in the organization and man's motives. Based on some of these theories, individual is motivated when his needs, either physical or spiritual are satisfied. (Alderfer, 1972). In such a situation, working that is the organization's goal is also considered as the individual's goal, because his needs are satisfied through work. In other theories, work itself is considered motivating. In such theories, the effort is to design work in a way to be motivating for individual. In this circumstance, work motivates the individual and thereby the goals of the organization are fulfilled. (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). In theories called expectation theories, management tries to motivate the individual to do what the organization aims at, through increasing the level of expectation of what he is looking forward to occur. (Parter & Lawler, 1988)

Here, work is considered as a means by which the individual can attend the results he expects and the organization's goals are fulfilled too. The more the level of expectation of occurrence of the desired result increases, the more interested the individual will be to accomplish the organization's goals. Thus, the organization ought to try to know the desired results and then increase the probability and expectation of its occurrence for the employees in order to create a sort of atmosphere in which the individuals see the satisfaction of their needs possible and probable(Lothans, 1990).

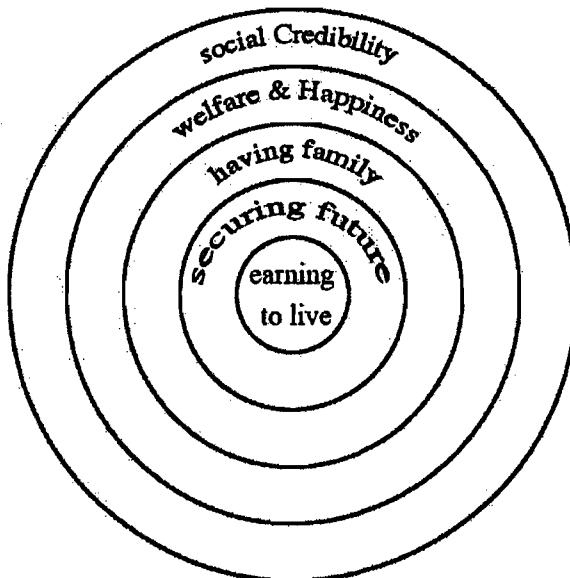
Peacework plans, and in more general words, accord compensate systems also try to unite the goals of individual and organization. In such plans, there is a relationship between doing work that is the organization's goal and earning income which is the individual's goal; and by working more, individual earns more. Having a share of profits and income of the organizations products and services, on possessions some of the

organization's stocks are all the means that help the individual's organization's goals come together and become similar. Participating in decision making also makes workers feel more closed, loyal and belonged to the organization. The feeling of belonging and relatedness to the organization brings congruity between the organization's and the individual's goals.

Accordingly, participating management and group decision making are other general ways to make the individual close to the organization. An individual who is asked to share his ideas and participate in decision making feels that the organization belongs to him and they have common goals. However, as it can be found out about each of these theories and other similar ones, the individual's and the organization's goals will never be alike. But, there is an effort to make their goals as close as possible and decrease the conflict between them. Thus, the theories and models that are mentioned don't lead to the unity of the goals; they just provide an opportunity for their closeness. The cause of this conflict and disagreement between the individual's and the organization's goals, resides within their values or, in other words, within their ultimate goals. If we can make their ultimate goals similar and equal, unity and agreement will be possible and thereby the individual and the organization will be one. Before we deal with the discussion, it is necessary to explain the hierarchy or priority of goals.

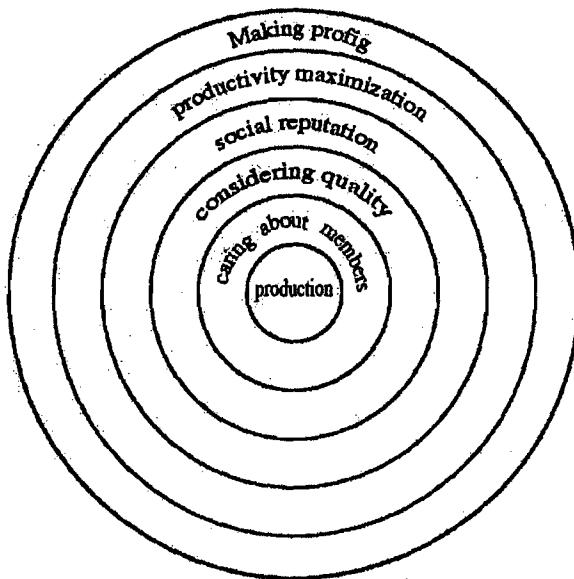
For any individual, there exists a hierarchy of goals. In this hierarchy their priority and relative level of importance are shown. More important goals are put at higher levels and less important goals are categorized at lower levels of this hierarchy. For instance, if you ask a worker why he works, he may answer because he needs some earning to live.

Now if you continue and ask him, you earn money for what, he may refer to the goal of having a family. In response to other questions, he may point out some of his higher goals such as welfare, happiness and social credibility. Thus, his first need is earning money to live and his ultimate goal is social credibility. The assumptive hierarchy of this worker's goals is displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: A worker's goals hierarchy

The characteristic of goals hierarchy is that it determines the importance of each goal in comparison with other goals. It is clear that higher level goals affect and dominate lower level goals. In the previous example, social credibility is the most important goal for the worker and if any of the lower level goals put obstacles in the way to achieve this goal; they will be ignored. If earning money to live doesn't lead to happiness and welfare as a higher level goal, he will ignore the former. Thus, the higher level goals are determinant; and in contradicting situation, lower level goals are ignored.

For organizations, there is also a hierarchy of goals. As an example, an organization may be established with the ultimate goal of making profit; and such goals as production, caring about the members of the organization, considering quality in production, as well as gaining high credibility and reputation in the society may all be considered as less important goals compared with gaining profit.

Figure 2: An organization's goals hierarchy

In such a situation, any of the lower level goals is dominated by the ultimate goal. Thus, gaining social credibility is as a way to gain more profit, or caring about the organization's members is as a way to get to higher quality in production and thereby gaining higher social credibility and reputation.

As it can be concluded, ultimate goals have overshadowed lower level goals as an umbrella and lead them. Furthermore, ultimate goals harmonize lower-level goals and put them in the same direction.

Ultimate goals are also as a criterion for the appraisal of lower-level goals in such a way that every secondary goal is evaluated according to the criterion of the higher goal. For instance, in the previous example if the production doesn't lead to more profit, it is not justifiable.

As it was pointed out, ultimate goals affect and lead lower-level goals in the hierarchy, put them in the same direction or omit them., In our present society, that the values of Islam and achieving to them is ultimate goal in the hierarchy and overshadow all other goals for Muslims, managers, workers, individuals and organizations, we can simply find out how

possible and probable is the agreement between the individual's and the organization's goals under the light of these values. For a Muslim, religious values control all lower – level goals. Supposedly, in the previous example, our question of the Muslim worker's ultimate goal will lead to this response that, "I work for the sake of God's consent" In other words, this high religious goal for faithful worker is ultimate goal and shapes and directs all of his other goals. Thus, in a society in which divine values rule, management will take "God's Admittance" and "God's Consent" into account, as ultimate goal of organizations and individuals (Alvani, 2006)

It can be easily concluded that even if differences exist between all individuals and organization's lower level goals, their common ultimate goal makes apparently contradictory lower level goals convergent. And this is how the problem of contradiction between individual's and organization's goals, still existing in western management, is easily solved in an Islamic society. The sovereignty that exists in the relationship between employees and employers in the West and the East is absent in such a situation; instead, all the relationships are founded on the goals that they both have in common.

Employee and employer, individual and organization, and subordinate and superintendent won't be against each other; instead, all of them will try in the same direction to achieve their common goal

Figure 3: How Ultimate goal makes contradictory goals convergent



In this case, since both sides believe in the ultimate goal, their secondary goals become balanced and harmonious under the

influence of their general common goal. Changeable goals are changed and those secondary goals that are unchangeable will be omitted if they contradict with the ultimate goal.

Although the worker wishes to have more salary and profit, he tries to the extent not to spoil the ultimate goal that is God's consent. Besides, although the organization wishes to get the maximum use of its work force and achieve a high level of output, it tries to remain faithful to its ultimate goal that is also God's consent. Thus, it is crystal clear that the dimensions of discrepancy in lower level goals are all superficial, and all try to attend their common and ultimate goal.

The meaning of an Islamic society and unified nation is based on the principle that in spite of having various roles and professions, all people move in the same direction due to their common values and beliefs. The difference between roles is not the main aspect of discrepancy, since the goal and destination is common. Of course it needs to be pointed out that the occurrence of such a situation is possible only when all members of the society have strong belief in values and follow them; otherwise, such a situation won't be possible to occur.

Under capitalist ideology and individualism, every one tries to fulfill one's own goals as far as possible and since the nature of ultimate goal in their ideology doesn't provide any possibility of agreement, some measures need to be taken to relieve this conflict. Some motivating mechanism such as encouraging people by giving bonus are examples of tranquilizers that are temporarily effective and don't lead to permanent solutions. In the Western management, the ultimate goal of the worker is to get higher income, more comfort and better life; and the organization's and employers' ultimate goal is also more production, more income and more profit. It is clear that the unity of these ultimate goals is not possible due to the contrasts existing among them. Consequently, it is impossible to put the individual's and the organization's goals together. Even in such societies there may be seen some apparently similar dimensions among lower level goals, but these similarities are all superficial. As an example, considering some of welfare programs in the Western management, it can be found out that in providing comfort, the organization's ultimate goal is to achieve more production, to exploit the workers more and consequently to get more profit. Thus, the workers' welfare is not the main and final goal. The clear reason is that as soon as the workers' comfort and welfare turn to

be harmful for the organization's interests and income as higher-level goals, the achievement of workers' welfare as a goal is stopped or omitted.

**Figure 4: Contradictory ultimate goals
don't let secondary goals**



Furthermore, in programs such as sharing organizations' profits for members, the organization follows such a policy to the extent that it not only doesn't damage its interests but also turns to increase profitability of the organization. And if a plan decreases its profit, it is not considered an acceptable plan. Also in peacework plans and system of compensation, the workers are beneficiaries due to the increase of organization's productivity to the extent that it doesn't damage the organization's interests. This principle is the axis of all plans in organizational societies to unify individual's and organization's goals. Accordingly, the plans and measures mentioned above lead to a blind point in which they remain unable to achieve the goals for which they are applied and thus don't lead to the unification of individual's and the organization's goals.

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