UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA,
SHRI LANKA.

SIR PONNAMPALAM RAMANATHAN
MEMORIAL LECTURE

SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES
IN
MANAGEMENT

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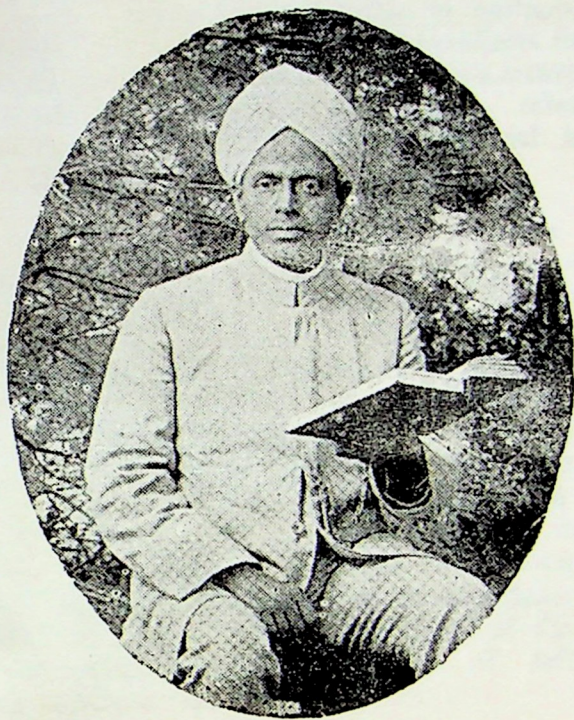*Head, Department of Commerce and Management Studies,*
University of Jaffna, Shri Lanka.

14, September 1993.

Sir. Ponnampalam Ramanathan

Mr. Nadarajasundaram has published Research Articles in the field of Management and Banking. His extra curricular activities include football, athletics and cricket. It is noteworthy, that he represented Prime Minister's Cricket XI against England, Australia and India in 1970's.

The title of his lecture today is *Socio Cultural Perspectives In Management*. It is but appropriate that we address our minds to our specific socio-cultural milieu in the present context of turmoil, crisis and confusion. It is my sincere hope that Mr. Nadarajasundaram's lecture today will be a fitting tribute to that eminent statesman in whose memory we are assembled here.

I have great pleasure in inviting Mr. Nada - rajasundaram to deliver his lecture.

University of Jaffna,
Thirunelvely, Jaffna.   Professor A. Thurairajah
14th Sep. 1993.   Vice-Chancellor

SIR P. RAMANATHAN MEMORIAL LECTURE

By

Mr. M. Nadarajasundaram,

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Vice Chancellor, Professor A. Thurairajah, Dean Faculty of
Arts Prof. P. Balasundarampillai, Members of the Parames-
wara Trust, Members of the University Council, Colleagu-
es and Ladies and Gentlemen

I consider it a great honour to have been given this op-
portunity to deliver this year's Sir. P. Ramanathan memo-
rial Lecture.

Sir. P. Ramanathan, one of the most illustrious son's of
this country, was an outstanding national leader and stat-
esman and one of the greatest Tamil leaders, who domi-
nated the political and national life for nearly five decades
from the latter part of the 19th century till the early part
of the 20th century.

With his entry to the Legislative Council as a nominated
member representing the Tamil speaking people at a relati-
vely young age; his public life for the next fifty years was
marked by excellence, dedication and outstanding achieve-
ments. A major land mark in his political carrer was his
election for the first time to the educated ceylonese in 1911.

Sir. P. Ramanathan and his brothers Sir. P. Arunachal-
am played an active role in the Ceylon National Congress
and were part of the accepted national leadership, until
the split that occurred between the Sinhala and Tamil lead-
erships in the early 1920's.

Sir. P. Ramanathan distingushed himself in many spheres-
as a legislater lawyer and Jurist, pateriot and statesman.
a man of deep learning and culture, educationst, author
and writer and philantheropist: He had few equals.

Sir. P. Ramanathan greatest attachment has been in the fields of religion culture and education. Both Parameswara College (the nucleous of the University of Jaffna) and Ra - manathan College were monuments to Ramanathan's achie - vements in the field of education.

It is appropriate that Jaffna University joins in perpetuat - ing the memory of this great man. I have decided to add - ress you, Ladies and Gentlemen, on ''Socio - Cultural Pe - rspeclives Management''.

SOCIO - CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES IN MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT

Management is one of the most eclectic of all discip -
lines and like the medical and engineering professions, it
relies on other precise knowledge oriented discipline for
its basic scientific foundation. The rise of management as
a field of study occured within this century. Due to its
broad nature it is dependent on other more specialised dis-
ciplines for much of its theoritical thrust. Management also
involves decision making regarding resource allocation, wh-
ere vital concepts have been contributed from fields such
as economics mathematics and statistics. Many other disci -
plines are also involved. Even today after nearly a centu -
ry of development, there is still disagreement over fundame -
ntals like the scope of the discipline and the basic found -
ation of principles and concepts.

The current status of management thought is easier
to comprehent using this approach than sequentially identi -
fying each individual who had has significant influence on
management theory or practice. The three sources of mana -
gement thought are known as classical, behavioral and ma -
nagement science schools. The classical school evolved aro -
und the turn of the century based on contributions pri -
marily from practioners. The behavioral school stated in the
1920's as the human relations movement and gradually broa -
den through the contributions of sociologists, social psych -
ologists and cultural anthropologists. The management sci -
ence can be traced to early practitioners but it is normal -
ly associated with the use of quantitative methods during
world war II when it became known as operational resear-
ch. It has expanded into the management science approach

resulting from contributions by personalities trained in ma - thematics. statistics, economics and engineering

Recently there have been attempts at aid managers in accomplishing some type of integration of the above three approches to management. One of these attempts, the sy - stems approach, stresses that organizations must be viewed as total systems with each part linked to every other part . The other the contingency approach stresses that the corr - ectness of a managerial practice is contingement upon how it fits the particular situation in which it is applied depen - ds on the situation.

Management may be defined as the process to effect - ively utilise human, technological and other materal resourc - es through an organization in such a manner that comm - on predetermined goals are achieved with optimum efficien - cy, minimum conflict and greatest possible individual and group satisfaction.

Webster argues that ''management is the judicious use of means to accomplish an end''. After reviewing all the existing literature and analysing the concepts implicit in the actual behaviour of a large member of individuals and groups who have been successful in managing their affairs, the American Institute of Management concluded that ''Management is the art of bringing ends and means to - gether - the art of the purposeful action''. This definition was held to include every form of human activity cover - ed by any of the term used to refer to management.

One recognizes that this approach to management is more purpose oriented. A definition in common use today proposed by Larry Appley, preseident of the Ameri - can Management Association holds that ''Management is getting things done through people.'' This concise definition has advantage of brevity and of emphasizing the importance of people in any concept of management. Those

subscribing to the former definition, suggest that deciding
what to get done and appraising the results are integral
parts of the management process. They would then sugge-
st that the former definition (the art of bringing ends and
means together) implies equally appropriate emphasis on
the human resources as an integral elements of the means.

MANAGEMENT AN ANCIENT ART AND A NEW SCIENCE

Since times immemorial there have been men who labour -
ed and men who managed. Great historical monuments,
forts canals and irrigation system temples and highways
built in distant past in many countries of the world requ-
ired great organizational ability and management of vast
rosources. In ancient Shri Janka system of Raja Kariya
work for the community and the king - served the nation
well for a very long time. Under the system there was a
fairly well recognized set of duties and responsibilities im-
posed by custom and law on the governors and the peo-
ple. some great public works were built under that arran-
gement as well as under other conditions where wages
were paid in commodities, services or currency of the
realm or kingdom.

Some of the earliest experimentations in manage-
ment through hierarchical organization occured in the
military establishment and Roman Catholic Church. In
fact the ideas of authority, delegation, responsibility and
chain of command all management terms current today -
are directly taken from the organizational vocabulary of
the army and Church. In the Roman Catholic Church
there are specialists who interpret not only the scriptures
but also the precise nature of hierachical authority
responsibility relationship all the way from the top to the
bottom.

In view of the long history of management, it would be incorrect to assert that the art was discovered only recently. It is, however, valid to claim that the greatest development in the organized study of the subject and its, widespread systematic application is the outcome of the Industrial Revolution generally and the changing approximately since the turn of this present century. Industrialization necessitated division of labour. By the 1920's the art of business and industrial management had acquired sufficient thoretical depth and practical veri – fication that it could justifiably be called a scientific discipline. The conceptual framework of management that evolved by the first quarter of this century had the following salient features:

1. A theory of bureaucracy outlining its main characte – ristics of hierarchical authority and responsibility, rules, rationality, documentation, impersonality, coun – tinuity, separation of ownership from administration discipline and replaceability of administrator function - aries with - out succession crisis. This conceptualframe- mework offered by the German sociologist Max weber (1864 - 1920) continues to be the backbone of the theory especially of public administrative organizati - on.

2. In industrial administration a series of interdepen - dent concepts of long term planning, requisite administrative ability viz - a viz technical competen- ce, organization structure, unity of command (auth - ority), co - ordination, control, division of labour, and delegation of authority popularize by the french industrialist and intellectual Henri Fayol (1841 - 1925). He was the most notable writer in management in Europe at that time.

3. An American engineer Frederick W. Taylor (1856 - 1915) the '' Father of Scientific Management '' -

introduced a systematic approach to planning, production by piece rates, job analysis, work measurement and output standards, wage incentives, work simplifications, proper recruitment and training. Taylor was the most prominent figure in a whole galaxie of engineers, scientists, and managers on both sides of the atlantic and contributed a great deal to the organization and management of technology.

4. In addition to the socio - economic interpretation of human history provided by the German Socialist Karl Marx, (1818 - 83 who originally mooted the issue of worker alienation in industrial society) and social reformers like Robert Owen (1771 - 1858) who called for improvement of welfare facilities in factories, there were a number of other scholars and practitioners who provided important insights into the sociological and psychological problems of industrial workers. The most notable among them were: Hugo Mintzberga German - born American immigrant (1863-1916) whose pioneering research in the relationship of physical working conditions and productivity gave birth to a whole field of study which later became known as Industrial psychology. Around the turn of this century French intellectual Emile Durkheim advanced the idea of anomie (normlessness, a lack of identity) of the industrial worker due to excessive division of labour and other conditions of factory work Mary Parker Follet - An American political and social philosopher (1868 - 1933) - forcefully and creatively dicussed the role of conflict, power, and integration of interests in industrial management.

By the end of 1920's the perspective of management encompassed four distinct streams of thought and action: i. Sociological theory of bureaucratie organization. ii. '' Scientific Management'' with particular reference to industrial production. iii. Industrial administration compris-

ing the distinct function of planning, organization, staff-
ing, co - ordination and control. iv. Personal psychology
and sociological explanations of the impact of industri -
alization, excessive division of labour and the separation
of labour from the means of production (Additionally,
there was a whole school of thought about social reform
and a socialist oriention for a new order of society.
However, this particular area dealt with aggregate issues
rather than management of individual enterprises). The
integration of these approaches and subject - areas
transformed management from an intuitive process to a
reliable scientific discipline.

The decade of 1930's proved to be the watershed in
the evolution of management as a discipline. The famous
Hawthorne works of the Western Electric Company, last -
ing over a number of years, at the Hawthorn plant near
Chicago resulted in a new orientation for management. A
new school of thought known popularly as " Human
Relations " replaced " Scientific Management " and help
away for almost three decades. The main thrust of this
school is to view a factory not simply as a technical
system but rather as a social system, and replacing the
" economic - man " with the human being who often
acts according to the logic of his emotions rather than
he logic of economics and the market place.

It highlights the " extra - legal " in formal organiz-
ation which springs spontaneously and has distinct status
and communication systems apart from the formal struct -
ure and managerial process. The informal organization
comes into being because the formal bureaucratic structure
is inadequate and unable to cope with many of the
human needs of the workers. The informal organization
determines the quota of production each member is
expected to produce and develop informal system of
sanctions which keeps the errant members in line with

the group norms and thinking. This school also innovated interviewing and counselling techniques and emphasized the role of group effort.

It is generally recognised that for a branch of knowledge (discipline) to acquire the status of a science it must to a large extent meet the following criteria. " It must be an organised body of knowledge with a conceptual frame - work for the study of phenomena. Its research data must be amenable to experimentation, description, explanation, generalisation, measurement, inference, prediction and control. A theory evolved through this process purports to explain and furnish the basis for principles and laws of a subject. Thus, science is a process of inquiry - methodology, scientific investigation.

Unlike the " hard " science, theories of organizational behaviour are younger and provide relatively less exact data darticularly for prediction. This is so because not enough is known about individual and group behaviour in a variety of situations and environments. Despite this limitation there is enough empirical data on the subject that can form the basis for rational decision making and instruction. It is this underpinning of experience and empiricism that has encouraged the development of Organizational behaviour as an acceptable and coherent field of research and action. It is not by coincidence that many of the most well known theorists of management have also been the practitioners of management. Theorists, such as Taylor, Gantt, the Gilbreths, Fayol, Barnard and Urwick were all managers of various business enterprises in which they learned their lessons which on, they crystallized into theories.

Peter Drucker, one of the most well known management theorists. also came through the business world. But more books in organization and management are now being written by theorists many of who were not practicing managers.

In other sciences the theorists and authors do their research and teaching without necessarily being involved physically in the phenomena they study. For example, the physicists who worked on the spece programe of the U. S. did not go up in spece with the astronauts; most theorists on bureacucracies are not government servants, and most economists do not hold jobs involving economic decision marking at the national levels. But whether or not a person is actually physically involved in the phenomenon he describes is an irrelevant question. The only important and relevant fact in this regard is to see whether his theory works in practice.

CULTURE:

Culture is the narrow sense - 'Pattern of norms roles, embedded in paramount values'' (Lammers / Hickson, 1979, p402) becomes more and ;more important for organizational research, within single organizations for intra and international organizational comparisions. The problem in organizational research is the definition of culture and the seperation from other environmental variables like legal, political and social aspects. Mostly culture is a residual and is not explained by theory (Beres / portweed, 1981, p 308). Another problem is the level of cultural analyses. A common specific culture of a nation is only recognizable at a relatively high level of abstration within a nation there exist numerous cultural differences between regional tribes, classes professions and also organizations,

A German scholar (V. Keller 1982) has made the attemt to define culture comprehensively on the basis of a survery by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952). He found out eight main features of culture: 1. Culture is that part of environment which is man-made, and it includesboth physical and immaterial products. 2. Culture isn't bound at one individual). It is passed down by social groups form one

generation to the next generation. 3. Culture isn't part of man or his inborn equipment; it must be learned by each new genration; therefore it is a form of learned behaviour. 4. The learning process takes place in form of symbols. The ablity to use such symbols is limited on human beings. only they can "work" with ideas, beliefs, languages, tools, customs, sentimetns or intuition. 5. The symbols can be used as instruments to control behaviour like ideal norms they function as standards which are widely accepted by the members of group or community, or country. 6. Culture can only be identified as a well defined constructively if its elements are part of a consistent and integrated whole. 7. Culture could be an instrument for societies to handle environmental challenges and to increase the capability for adaptation-process. It provides a helpful traditional grid for individuals to solve their problems, and it satisfies sbasic biological needs and secondary needs derived therefrom. Or as Kluckhohn have put it; '' Culture consists of learned problem - solutions''. (1972, p. 1C7). 8. Culture has a high degree of adapta - bility. It alters according to changes in climatic, physi - cal. technological, economic, and social circumstances.

In organizations, management is primarily concerned with human |relations. It is concerned with the wholestic and biological character of organization, and therefore, the life, growth and decay of organization are important for management. It is concerned with interactions: interactions within, and with the environment of organization. Even with some difficulty, one could try to isolate the political, economic, and legal components of environment from the socio - cultural component of environment. By doing so, one could manage to studay the relation between management and culture in a given environment.

However the view of culture here goes beyond the mere physical expression in art, dance, sports or drama.

It embraces the various means of communication, tradit-
ions, beliefs, habits, and perceptions of the material,
biological and spiritual goals of life which are considered
worthy of achievement. Therefore, culture signifies the
spectrum of the responses of a group to its environment
which provides a sense of purpose and a reason for exi-
stence (venture, 1981: 22). It is the fundamental ethos
of every society which bring self – awareness and deter-
mines aspirations for dignity and success (UNESCO, 1978:4).
Indeed, a strong culture carries with it national pride, self-
awareness, confidenc and the flexibility necessary for the
creative and innovative spirit to meet changing needs and
situations of organizations (Japanese are example today).

On the basis of common usage and understanding,
and with regard to the special interests of students
of management, the following definition of culture is
proposed here: " A culture is the configuration of learned
behaviour and results of behaviour whose component ele-
ments are shared and transmitted by the members of a
particular society ". Like all definitions, this requires
some amplification and explanation.

Learned behaviour is important here because neither
the instinctive behaviour nor basic needs or tensions
which provide the ultimate motivations for behaviour in the
individual has ever been regarded as parts of culture ins-
pite of their obvious influence upon culture The term
behaviour in the phrase under discussion is to be taken
in the broadest sense to include all the activit.es of the
individual, whether overt or covert, physical or psycholo-
gical. Thus, for the purpose of this definition, learning,
thinking, and so on are to be considered quite as much
forms of behaviour as are the co - ordinated muscular
movements involved in technological or organizational
processes

It is said that the behaviour and results of behaviour
are shared and transmitted. It will be pertinent to ask

what should be the of extend of sharing in order to reg-
ard a given behaviour as cultural. One could say that " it
shared by many than it is part of culture,"

THE CONCEPT OF VALUES:

In culture, value is usually considered from the stand -
point of how the group acts feels or thinks. A cultural
value may be defined as a widely held belief or sentim -
ent that some activities, relationships or feeling or goals
are important to the community 's identify or well being;
we may be in a position to summarise the [value orienta -
tion for any country by taking into consideration the
cultural bacground. The value themes are generally active,
mastery, than passive acceptance, individual identity rather
than group identity, interpersonal relationship - horizantal
rather than vertical, primarily follow on rationalism rather
than traditionalism. Therefore, the whole cultures are
sometimes characterized by values that reinforce each
other and effect the most varied and important kinds of
behaviour. Generally the norms are based on cultural
values. Norms are guidelines to conduct specifying what
is appropriate or inappropriate, setting limits within which
individuals may seek alternative ways to achieve their
goals. Norms are framed as rules, prescriptions or [standards
to be followed by people who occupy specified roles.
Value is more general than a norm.

When we discuss cultural aspect of management we are
concerned with values of the members of the organization,
specially of the managers themeselves. We have to reco -
gnise that not all western oriented values in a certain
country are infact western. A lot of such values are rela -
ted to the technological progress; they are simply techno -
logical. But numerous other values within a country and
particularly within an organization are culturebound and
have to be regarded when analysing this organization. Fea-

tures of an Asian value system are (Mendoza, 1978 APDAC, 1979. Hofstede, 1980) tendency to collectivity, group orientation, superiors and subordinates to smooth interpersonal relationships. Indian managers have a high moralistic orientaticn, Japanese and Korean managers are more pragmatic, Indian managers follow more personalistic goals and status orientation whereas Japanese managers place high values on competence and achievement. But values in a developing country are not in every region the same, there are for instance great difference in the value structure between urban and rural areas. Other differences come from different races, tribes or languages and also from certain religous variants.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The basic question in management research was the controversy between the universalists and the culturalists. Universalists emphasise that culture has no dominant influence on organizational variables. The culturalists argue culture has infact its influence on organization (Lommens/ Hickson 1979) There is still an unresolved dispute about the culture - free and culture – specific thesis. But it seems that most of the studies give support to the presumption that contingencies associated with industrialisation such as economic of scale technological development could influence all countries – but together with cultural factors.

Cultural influences in organization can be indentified at different organizational levels. i. The whole organizational structure, ii. Organizational process (decision making etc) and iii. The individual behaviour. One of the most important studies has been done by G. Hofstode (1980) who emprically measured cultural differences in 40 industrial as well as developing countries. He found four main diamensions of cultural differences :- Power distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism, Masculinity.

The power distance index (PDI) as measure for autocratic structures and behaviour, is high in most developing countries (eg: Phillippines, India) and mostly low in industrial countries (eg: Germany, Australia). Organization with a high power distance index has greater centralisation and larger number of supervisors. The uncertainity avoidance is related to anxiety need for security (eg: Planning and control) dependence upon experts. It differs remarkably between countries. Countries with high uncertainty avoidance are Greece, Japan, Peru and those with low avoidance are USA, India and Singapore. This avoidance can be interpreted in terms political social and even religious factors.

The individualism index measuring relations between individual and collectively - is an important factor explaining differences between organizations as a result of different cultural background. It shows remarkable differences between western and Eastern countries and is based on the orientation on work goals eg: how much time the job is leaving for personal life. Countries with a high index are the USA, Great Britain and other Western Countries. A low index applies to most developing Countries.

The masculinity index also measured by work goal orientation of managers. In countries with a high masculinity index - as Japan and Mexico - advancement and earnings are important; in other countries with more feminine orientation - like Sweden or Thailand — interpersonal relations or physical environment are more important.

We have to realise that our organization theories and our management concepts are culturally conditioned.

1. The US - oriented motivation theories (Maslow, Herzberg) are working in cultures with similar power distances, uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity. For instance the self - actualisation

motive of Maslow is most relevant in individuali-
stic societies but not so much in more collective
situations. Thus motivational structures are cultu-
re – bound.

2. The popular US - leadership theories (Mcgregor
Likert, Blake, Mouton) range power - distance
background to improve participative management
through initiative by the superior. In other coun-
tries - with high as well with low PDI - these
theories do not find much acceptance.

3. Planning] and Control: are highly correlated with
uncertainty avoidance. Strategic Planning Systems
do not work within organizations with a high
uncertainty avoidance. The experiences with PPBS in
different countries are a good example.

4. Organization design is also depending on culture.
Hofstede identifies four cultural areas.

- the personnel bureaucracy in most [South "Asian
countries.

- the full bureaucracy in Latin and Mediterranean
countries.

- the work flow bureaucracy in German - speaking
countries.

- the implicity structured organization in Anglos saxon
and Nordic coutnries.

SOCIO - CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT
IN SRILANKA

Culture was defined earlier as a configuration of learned behaviour. The present day SriLankan culture has a long history of over 2500 years in this country. Characterised by feudal and semi - feudal features, this dimension is often seen as traditional or conservative in its orientation. The conservative local culture was system-atically and increasingly subjugated to western cultures after the 16th century. This second dimension cuts across the first dimension in almost every sphere of concern here, including economic, religious, educational and social.

The most important cultural aspect is the family. Family is the basic social unit in any society. It performs a number of important roles of which the following are relevant for our purposes. Control over individual, sociali-sation, economic role and kinship. The child learns a system of control through the family. SriLankan tradition-al family is organized hierarchically in which the right to authority in the family is limited to those having the ascriptive qualification of the oldest married male. The child begins socialisation in the family. The family enfo-rces behavioural norms on the individual such as respect for elderly, importance of time, scheduling, making comm-itment etc. These norms are often a function of economic life of the family concerned. Family is a distinct econo-mic unit to which every member is expected to contri-bute. While parents bear the final responsibility to econo-mic well being of the members the elderly members are supposed to take a greater responsibility than younger members. Family membership is extended through the device of kinship. The social structure of a community is organized primarily on the basis of kinship in addition to caste, religion etc.

SriLankan culture is mainly based on religious philo-sophies such as Buddhism and Hinduism our country is less urbanised. The western industrial culture consists of more urban and bureacratic elements. Therefore in SriLankan context there is the main problem of adaptation to industrial culture. The conflicts are due to mainly

different norms, values and beliefs of the two cultures. The important elements of the two cultures are given below.

Shrilankan Socio-Cultural Set Up	Western Industrial Culture
☆ Patron - client relation ship	☆ Set Hierarchical relation- ship pattern
☆ Family System	☆ Impersonal relation - ship
☆ Personal positions within their community	☆ Not family based but role based employer employee relationship
☆ Religious - ethnic identity	☆ -
☆ Social hierarchical system	☆ Class oriented hierarchical system
☆ Individual expectation	☆ Organization expectation
☆ Group expectation	☆ -
☆ Family expectation	☆ Organizational reward system to fulfil employee expectation
☆ Freedom for interpersonnel relation ship	☆ Set limited interpersonel relation ship
☆ Individual to fulfil his group requirements	☆ Organization needs employee to fulfil organizational requirements.

There is an inherent conflict between the two cultures. The adaption to the Western - Oriented industrial culture depends on to what extent people are going to be benefitted.

Though the country was under the Western colonial rule for a long period. people (more or less tried to) maintained their own culture and related values and nor ms. It is during the British period that the country under went a lot of changes both in the field of economy as well as in the structure of administration The British social values brought in changes in the organization and they are a fusion of both traditional values and acquired values which predetermine the management scere. A brief analysis may be necessary to find out the values fundamental to the traditional society in SriLanka.

The first important aspect is the person's individual independence while at the same time accepting the respon sibilities of his family, of kinship of neighborhood group and village community. In the SriLankan family unit, the authority of the father is accepted. That the children dep end on the father to give guidence direction and support. As a result, the authoritative pattern brought in by the Western rule didn't have much impact of influence in the organization. The hierachical Pattern and the authority of the supervisor was very common in any traditional society. In Sri Lanka we cannot consider authoritarian assertive supervisor as a dominant form in the existing authority relationship except in the case of traditiona type of management found largely in the plantation sect or. The British planters in colonial Sri Lanka were highly authoritative and assertive and this model was followed by the local planters who succe the British. However, it is difficult to find a positive correlation between the assertive supervisor and the performance and satisfaction of subordinates. Due to the introduction of progressive liberal values the authority pattern of the manager in the public

·sector is under going a gradual change from the parental assertive leadership mode to parental Nuturent mode of leadership.

One of the cardinal concepts in western management is the principle of delegation of authority. One must en – sure that the reponsibility is pin pointed. But in the case of Sri Lanka the managers are more influnced by their traditional values and are very reluctant to delegate their powers to the subordinates. The traditional values of centralising power in the head of the family is contradictory to the principles of delegation of authority. The subordi – nates also don't like to accept responsibility. As this value has not influenced our system, this can lead to the ineffective functioning organization.

Value of interpersonal relationship is another factor to be considered. In the western management setting a man can divorce in his mind his role as a worker in factory from his role as a volunteer worker in a civic organization or as a complete person in whatever situation he is ·in. In the work place, the leader insists on that the super – visor sees him not only as a worker but as a complete person. Even in the communication process, in the traditional family setting upward communication was restricted and shaped by respect of other family related values. This is reflected in the organisational setup. Top management is overburden with undue communication and for even minor things the subordinates tend to ask the supe rvisor· for instructions and approval. Even during the colo nial period, the social structure gave prominane to rela.tionship. The society was divided into various carders and (the function), their relationship position was well defi ned. Even the British allowed the social stratification to remain the same. (with the Donoughmore constitution, and the social and political changes that followed, the elite dominance came undermined.

In Sri Lankan management science status and position play important roles. The managers are status conscious and will try to maintain their position. We have acqui - red the western value of task orientation but this has not got rooted in our organizations, managers are more con - cerned with maintaining status and always like to have that type of relationship wtih subordinates. A high power distance exists between the supervisor and the subordinates. Eventhough the high power distance was very marked during the early stages, it is now diminishing due to the liberal values that are being incorporated in the system. The quality cirches had been introduced in some organi - zations which help a participatory management, where the power distance will be narrowed down.

In Sri Lanka, we can see a great deal of transference of family values to the organization. Gernerally firms requirements are productivity, efficiency and effectiveness. We generally feel that ''Nepotism'' is bad ''paternalism'' is backward and counter productive. These two are very effective and functional in our own cultures for furthe - ring the interest of family, firm and society. At present in both private and public sectors we can see this trend development, and one of the reasons for this is the politi - cal patronage. Judged on the standard of western values these two are said to be unacceptable. There is no per - sonal relationship in the office and is seperated from one's family. He or she is not expected to mix his/her private matter with office matters. Here in Sri Lanka such west- ren values couldn't penetrate much into the organizational set up.

There is another important value in our ogranizati - onal set up relating to the smooth interpersonal relation - ship with all those around. As a result, for anything they never wish to express disagreement, they tend to say ''yes'' even where they mean ''no''. But in the western content there the social values are different if they say

'yes' they will do it. if 'no', they won't do. This value has not influenced much in our social setting, though we were under the colonial rule for many years.

Religious values also play an important part in the management process. Western management principles show the importance of time management and planning decision making in every aspect of organizational life. They are deeply rooted in the organizational system. Each and every one who is working in the organization is aware about his / her importance. Our religious values take view that everything in the world subject to change and have a casual relationship with events. So these things leave our individuals in a precarious position. We always tend to be passive and always think that things are predetermined. People are more worried about their status. Western values are quite different. They always have a motivational out - look and are active and never think that all are pre-deter - mined. Plans prepared by them have specific idea and thoughts.

Our religion promotes the value of leisure and never en - courages accumulation of wealth. But in contrast the ma - nagement social values discourages leisure time at the sa - me time encourages accumulation of wealth. our society has a relaxed way of doing things and very less concer - ned about time management. Due to our religious influ - ence, eventhough we had acquired the techniques of time management still we believe in the auspicious time and delay our work.

In our traditional society one of the important values i[s] inequality. the caste system and administration structure prevailed earlier clearly showed this inequality of status. But with the western values influencing our society, these things gradually changed . Appointments, promotions and recruitment systems were changed and equal opportunites were given to all. But in actual Practice there are devi -

ations. Arising out of our social values, some appointments are given taking into consideration the factors like socialstanding, caste etc. Traditional social values of Nepotism where you help your kith and kin plays in important role and works against the principle of equality for all.

We have absorbed the western values in parts in our organizational and social setting and not fully due to some of the rigid cultural values that exist in our society.

MODERN LEADERSHIP STYLE IN – SHRI LANKA

It is appropriate for us to look into some of the aspects modern management and leadership style as prevailing in the public sector institutions iu shrilanka and to assess the influence of socio - cultural factors. It is proposed to divide this into two sections.

1) The leadership styles of the government agent / District secretary.

2) The leadership style of the public sector officers in general.

Government agent is still recognised as the head of the district administrater and as the arm of the government in the district He has both traditional and development functions to fulfil. The values he has inhnritted bring an expectation that the government agent must be paternalistica and authoritarian. Traditional values give priority te relationship. But there are acquired values which have been inheritted. from the British and from the conventional weberian bureaucratic model on which shrilankan government institutions were structured. The weberian model insists on hierarchy, impersonal relationship, appointmeno by merit, authority delegation and division of functions. The leadership style adopted by the government agent is a fusion of both these values. Also with Political moderni-

sation a number of new liberal ideas had crept in and they have also influenced the leadership style of present day administrators.

If we analyse the position of the Government agent and the authority he presently enjoys it can be said that there has been a progressive change from authoritarianism to participatory leadership. Especially after 1956 the bureaucracy has become more representative of society and the creation of the S. L. A. S. has changed the elitist nature of the Government Agents.

Earlier the Government Agents power was derived form both the traditions and the legality of his position and perhaps his charisma. Now he has to depend more on legality and his charisma. GA's prominent position in the district is still accepted. The tradition of having an office, in charge of the district as representative of the king Govt. still exists in the minds of the common people. But the authoritarian and paternalistic leadership has given way to an indigenous leadership approach which is more par – ticipatory. Sinha (1980) describes the leadership style of modern Indian administrators and managers as nurturen. task leadership style. They care for their subordinates and show affection and take personal interest in the well being of their followers.

Unlike an authoritarian leader who is essentially self oriented the nurturent task leader is primarily concerned with his subordinated and the performance. The leader - ship style adopted by the present Government Agents is almost a kin to the leadership mentioned above. The pre - sent Government Agents are expected to be ' committed ' in their task and also with the number of development projects they have to implement. They are pressurised to be task oriented.

The absolute authority enjoyed by the Government Agents have now diminished. He shares power with politicians

and the officers. In many of his decisions he has to consult the local politicians. So we can say that a participatory leadership has evolved in this process. Due to political suppression economic and social necessities, he has to be vigilent in expediting the development programmes. So he has to combine participatory approach with task orientedness.

Now we will look into the other public sector organizations and the leadership style adhered to by the Heads of Government Institutions. Here also as observed in the case of the Government Agent some of the traditional valued and acquired values continue to have influence. But at the same time there has been a gradual change from the authoritarian to participatory leadership style.

If we look into the traditional influences, Shri Lanka public sector managers are supposed to be authoritarian in their dealings with subordinates and followers. Hai. B. P. Sinha in his ariticle "a model of effective leadership style in India" gives 3 specific expectations of subordinates in Indian management setting.

1) A preference for personalised over a contractual relationship with a leader.

2) A tendency to depend on a leader for guidance, direction and support.

3) A willingness to accept the superior status of the leader i. e. preference to work in a superior-subordinate rather than a peer relationship.

The above characteristics existed and continue to exists in the ShriLankan public institutions. These expectations of subordinates are reciprocated by authoritarian pattern of leadership. This has led to centralised powers in the superior. While the superior officers are resentful of delegating authority to subordinates they don't

want to accept responsibilities. Relation - ship plays an important part in the public sector. Officers like to maintain their status. Managers are more 'reletionship oriented than task oriented. The traditional father child relationship has been translated into management practices where authority of the superior is accepted w'thout question. The uncritical difference to authority is also a reflection of the traditional value of respect for age. Managers readiness to consult subordinates may be seen as demonstrating ignorance or weakness.

In some instances the superior himself takes decisions not because of lack of confidence in his subordinates but becuse of the desire to help the subordinates. He also has the fear of losing superiority over the subordinate if he delegates power.

Our traditional family system is more dependence rather than independence. Our system promoted acceptance of the status quo than undertaking challenges. So in the management setting the Shri Lankan public sector managers try to maintain status quo and avoid risks and uncertainities.

As far as the planning process is concerned the concentration of powers in the superior office makes it difficult to prepare an effective plan. The monitoring of the plans are also effected by the same reason. Unless officers at the periphery are delegated with powers and a participatory system of management is evoled successful planning or plan implementation cannot be done.

As stated earlier Shri Lankan managers in their leadership style combine authoritarianism and maintenance of status quo. In modern management innovation and management of changes are important functions expected of a leader. In the public sector there seemed to be a negative attitude towards innovations. Innovations and new ideas are thought to be some thing relevant and possible only in

western societies and private sectors. The experience of introducing reforms in the public sector has not been encouraging. The first serious attempt to review the entire problem of administration and development was made in 1966 by the committee on administrative reforms (known - as the Rajendra committee). This was followed by the appoinment of a task force on administrative reforms consisting of local as well as U. N. officials. Yet the basic approach to reforms remained as before and whatever changes were introduced from time to time were adhoc and piece meal.

The behavioural syndrome of the Shri Lankan manager does not allow for collective effort in organizations. G. Nanayakkara after conducing a study on group processes at the Bank of Ceylon, states that individualism as an important behavioural characteristics. He concludes that individualism presides over collectivity and it promotes centralisation and importance of hierarchy.

We have discussed the general leadership characteristics observed in the Shri Lankan public sector. These are characteristics which have brought about by the social and cultural influences. There has been strong criticism of public service attitudes, and the continued authoritarian reactive leadership style adopted by Shri Lankan public sector managers. There has been complaints that public sector managers have not adopted themselves to changes in the political and economic fields and are not responding effectively to public needs. When – ever a major programme of scape goat and has been condemned. It is interesting to read what government failed the administrator becomes the Mr. Susil Sriwardene who himself is a bureaucrat says about the government officers. ''They are not used to trusting the people, trusting the poor. Their perception of the role of the people in society is different. Their approach to the problems of the people is not a democratic, participatory approach, but a top down one. Therefore they have a hostile attitude towards Janasaviya. I see

this conflict between elite and Janasaviva as a conflict between old thinking. and new thinking. We h ve to bring about a change in these old attitudes in this old perception because an awaring and enlightened bureaucracy is the need of the hour. The struggle against the old attitudes and approaches is an important aspect of our struggle against old thinking in our attempt to create a new thinking.''

CULTURAL SYNERGY :

Cultural synergy is an approach to managing the impact of cultural diversity, and allows organizations to solve problems effectively when working in cross - cultural environments. Synergistic solutions create new forms of management and oganiz ition by recognizing and transending the individual ethnic cultures of employee and clients.

The synergy approach to problem solving involves three fundamental steps; situation description, cultural interpretation, and cultural creativity. Org inization mem - bers first define the problem from the perspective of all cultures involved. Secondly they analyse the patterns that make each culture's behaviour logical within its own pers - pective. Third they create solutions that foster the organi - zations's productivity without violating the norms of any culture involved.

PROBLEM SOLVING

STEP J : - SITUATION DESCRIPTION : What dilemma faces the organization ? Can organization members describe it from each of the cultural perspectives represented ? Situation description involves one of the most difficult and critical steps in finding solutions to complex problems. A cross - cultural values and perceptions magnify the diffi - culty in problem definition. Some examples involving North Americans include;

JAPAN

An American sales manager conveyed the following concern : ''I''M an 'open - door manager'. I expect my employees to come to me when they have a problem. But these Japanese never come to you until it's a crisis until it's too late to do anything''. To the American mana - ger, the ''problem'' had hegan weeks earlier. To the Japanese sales representative. the situation only became a ''problem'' that morning. When questioned later about his behaviour the Japanese salesman repl.ed that ''Ameri - cans see everything as a problem''. In analysing the situation, it became clear that one's cultural perspective determines the definition of a problem. Westerners often see life as a series of problems to be resolved, where as non - Westerners frequently view life as a series of situa - tions to be accepted. Americans therefore define situations as problems much earlier than do the Japanese.

EGYPT

An Egytian executive, after entertaining his Canadian guest, offered joint partnership in a business venture. The Canadian, delighted with the offer, suggested that they meet again the next morning with their respective lawyers to fill in the details. the Egyptians never arrived. Was the problem that Egyptians are not punctual, that the Egyptian was expecting a counter offer, or that lawyers are not available in Cairo ? None of these explanaticns was true, although the Canadian executive suggested all of them. At issue was the perceived meaning of inviting lawyers. The Canadian saw the lawyer's presence as facilitating the successful completion of the negotiation; the Egyptian inter - preted it as signaling the Canadian's mistrust of his ver - bal commitment. Canadians often use the impersonal forma - lity of a lawyer's services to finalise an agreement, Egyp - tians more frequently depend on a personal relationship develo - ped between bargaining partners for the same purposes.

The first step in the cultural synergy process involves recognizing that a conflict situation exists. Organization members must recognise that a potential problem exists even when the problem does not make sense from their own cultural perspective. they must then describe it from each culture's perspective while refraining from interpreting or evaluating it from any one culture's point of view.

STEP II : CULTURAL INTERPRETATION : Why do members of different cultures think, feel, at d act the way they do ? What historical and cultural assumptions must be made to understand the present situation ? Once organiz ition members recognise a problem, the synergy approach can be used and analysed from each culture's perspective. During cultural interpretation members of each culture attempt to understand the underlying assumptions that lead those in other cultures (''foreigners'') to behave as they do; During this process, the group identifies similarities and differences between their culture's assumptions and behaviors and those of the culture. For example;

IRAN

An American engineer who was teaching persians to use a complex machine was disappionted in the achieve ment of his trainees and therefore gave them poor reviews. One persian came to the American and said, ''But I thou - ght that you were my friend. Why don't you give me a better review ? '' The American was furious. In analysing and interpreting the underlying cultural assumptions. the American came to understand the importance persians place on Frindship relative to task accomplishment, while the persian came to recoguise that Americans base their system of equity on competence rather than relationship. While both cultures value friendship and achievement. they differ in the relative importance they attach to each.

STEP III : CULTURAL CREATIVITY : Organizations create synergistic alternatives by searching for ways to solve

problems - that is, for ways to help people from different cultures enhance their productivity and -job satisfaction. The question ' What can people from one culture contribute to people from another culture ?'' in itietes the search. The answer should be compatible with, but not imitative of, the cultural assumptions of all represented groups. It should be novel and transcend the behavioral patterns of each of the root cultures. Selecting the best alternative evaluation - only becomes possible when preceded by adequate description and interpretation for example :

URUGUAY AND THE PHILIPPINES

A Uruguayan doctor at a major California hospital became concerned when he realized that a Filipino nurse was improperly using a particular machine for patient treatment. He instructed the nurse on the proper procedure and asked if she understood. She said she did. Two hours later the patient was doing poorly because the nurse had continued to improperly administer the treatment. The doctor again queried the nurse, and she again affirmed her understanding of the procedure. What went wrong ?

INTERPRETATION : In analysing the situation the doctor came to understand that many filipines will not contradict people in respected positions. To the Filipino nurse, the doctor's status was clearly above her's. He was a man; she was a woman. He was older; she was younger. He was a doctor; she was a nurse. Based on her cultural assumptions, she could not tell the doctor that she did not understand, without implying that he had given on poor instructions and thus causing him to lose face. The doctor; based on his cultural assumptions, expected ''open communications'' he expected the nurse to say whether she understood his instructions and to ask questions if she did not. He considered it a sign of incompetence to assume responsibility for a patient's care without fully understanding the manner of treatment.

SYNERGISTIC SOLUTION : After analysing the situation, the hospital administrator suggested a culturally synergistic solution. Upon giving his initial instructions, the doctor was to ask the nurse to describe the procedure that she would follow. As the doctor listened, he could assess the accuracy of the nurse's understanding and identify areas that needed further explanation. The nurse, never having been asked directly if she understood, would not be forced to say "no" to a superior. The hospital administrator solved the problem without violating either culture's assumptions. The organization could achieve its goal - the delivery of excellent medical care without violating the norms of either culture.

I like to thank the Vice - Chancellor, Dean/Arts, chairman of the Convercation Committee for giving me this opportunity to deliver this year's memorial lecture and for the members of the audiance for your kind presense this evening.

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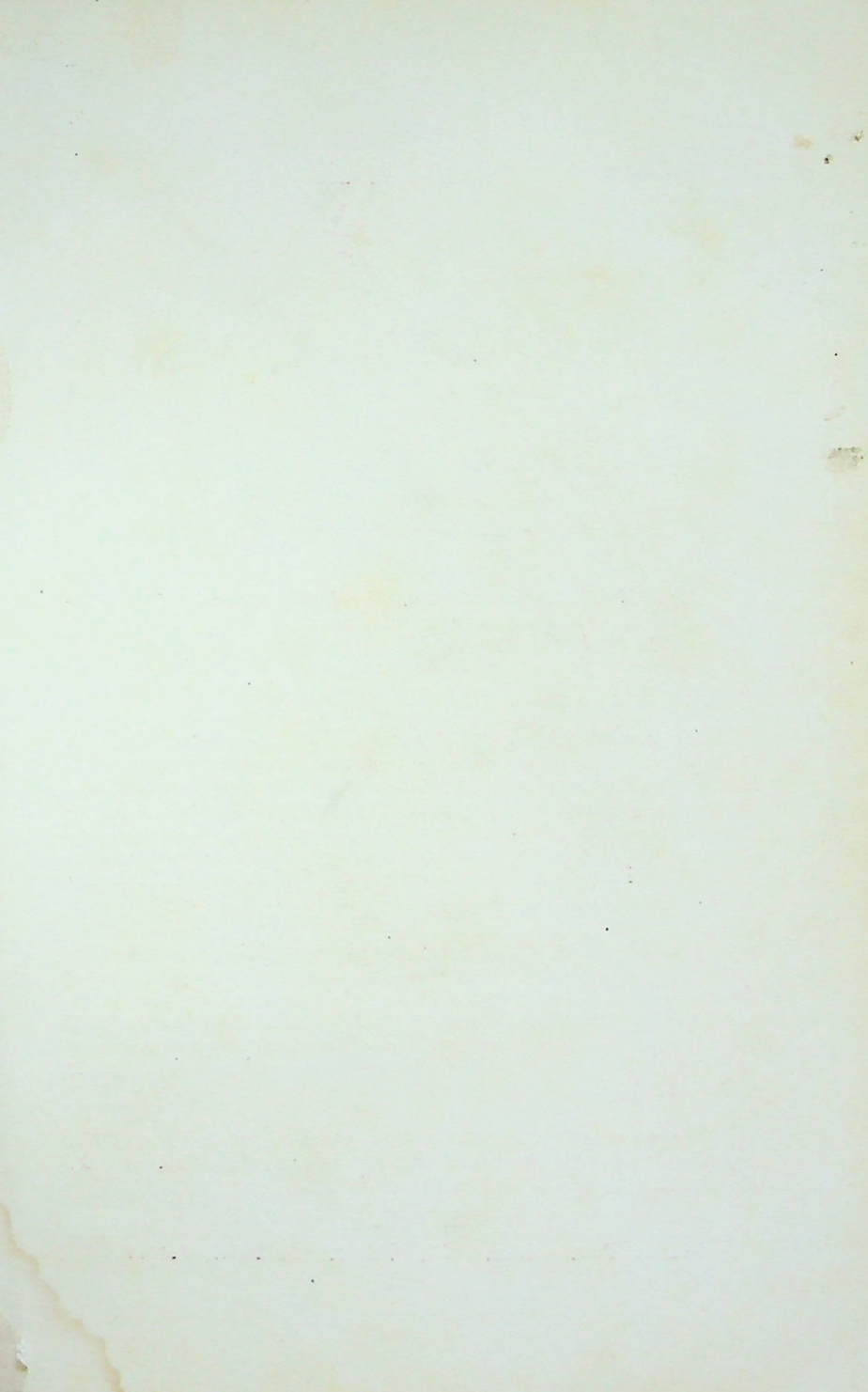
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