

Application of Administrative Theories in the Working of Schools in India

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Abstract

Administrative theories provide a better way to understand the challenges of school education system in india. Teacher motivation and school efficiency can be better understood through various organizational and management theories. The study provides detailed examination of not just the issues surrounding the educational system using these various theories but also how these administrators asks for a more inclusive, participative, humanised educational reforms.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs focuses on fulfilling teachers' basic requirements like salary and security before expecting higher-level motivation of self-esteem and self-actualisation. Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory asks for improving hygiene factors such as adequate facilities, fair pay, and healthy work environments while simultaneously enhancing motivators like recognition, professional responsibility, and meaningful teaching experiences. Henri Fayol's management principles, particularly initiative and esprit de corps, can strengthen teamwork and innovation within schools, providing a collaborative and motivated teaching culture.

Chester Barnard's concept of cooperative systems highlights schools as networks of collaboration among teachers, parents, students, and school administration. It focuses on a balance between satisfaction and contributions of teachers. Fred Riggs's prismatic model explains how formalism and overlapping authority hinders school functioning through rigid school rules and regulations. To address this, Rensis Likert's participative management theory provides for moving from an authoritative leadership style (System-1) to a participative one(System-4), where school administration actively involve teachers, parent and community in consultative decision-making.

Therefore, application of these theories in school education system fulfils the objectives like understanding the need of linking administrative theories with school administration, evaluating the issues faced by school administration and application the administrative theories suggesting reforms for making school system more inclusive, participative, professional and motivating which are also reflected in National Education Policy 2020.

Keywords: Administrative Thinkers, Administrative Theories, School Administration, Participative Management, Motivation, Educational Reforms

Introduction

School administration includes the effective management of teachers and staff, ensuring smooth curricul-

um implementation, maintaining better infrastructure at school and financial resources. It also involves promoting student welfare, discipline, and promoting active engagement with parents, governments and the community to achieve overall educational goals.

The education system in India faces several challenges, such as lack of motivation among teachers due to lack of incentives and recognition[1], a rigid hierarchical and bureaucratic structure which is restricting the innovation[2], and poor infrastructure along with inadequate teaching resources, particularly in rural areas[3]. Low community or parents' participation in school administration reduces accountability. Also the absence of proper leadership to initiate reforms and management training for principle/headmaster and teachers affects school governance. Further, over-centralization of authority harms local initiatives and flexibility, resulting in an struggling education system that fails to response to the diverse needs of students and communities/parents[4].

To deal with all the challenges given above, we are going to study the theories of various administrative thinkers such as Fred Riggs, Henri Fayol, Chester Barnard, Frederick Herzberg, Maslow and Likert and correlating it with the school administrative system to initiate reform in the system.

Fred Riggs is the founder of comparative public administration[5]. He uses the ecological approach in studying public administration explaining how administration is affected by its social, cultural, political, and economic environment. This approach is very important in understanding school administration.

In a similar manner the 14 principles of management and 5 functions of management given by Henri Fayol are used in the research paper to analyse the school functions.

Moreover, Chester Barnard in his "The Functions of the Executive"[6] provided the theory of cooperative systems. In this theory he focused on motivation and leadership. Also the zone of indifference and importance of communication in organisation is helpful in improving school management.

Also, the two factor theory of Frederick Herzberg focuses on hygiene factors and motivators[7]. In school educational system these factors are important in understanding the motivation level of the teachers and management in schools.

Similarly, the pyramid of needs is very relevant to motivate the school functionaries where the psychological to self-actualization needs are required to be fulfilled to observe changes in the working of school employees[8]. Along with that, the 4 systems of management (Exploitative-Authoritative, Benevolent-Authoritative, Consultative, Participative), and Linking pin model given by Rensis Likert is also important in analysing the decentralisation and participation in school system.

Hypothesis

Application of administrative theories of thinkers like Fred Riggs, Barnard, Hertzberg, Fayol, Maslow and Likert addresses challenges associated educational system india leading to more effective, motivating and participative management system needed for educational reforms.

Objectives

- To understand the need of linking administrative theories with school administration
- To apply the administrative theories suggesting reforms for making school system more inclusive, participative, professional and motivating

Understanding Issues in Government Schools Through Administrative Theories

1. Fred Riggs -- Prismatic Society and Multiplicity

If we apply the Fred Riggs theory, India's school system reflects the characteristics of a prismatic society, where formal structures coexist with overlapping and conflicting roles[5]. Teachers are often burdened with non-teaching responsibilities such as election duties, census taking, and health surveys. This multiplicity of roles dilutes their core function as educators. It leads to leaving them less time and focus for effective classroom teaching and academic development.

2. Chester Barnard -- Contribution-Satisfaction Equilibrium

Barnard's theory highlights that the effectiveness of an organization depends on the balance between Contribution and satisfaction[6]. In government schools, teachers often go beyond their prescribed duties, working in challenging environments with limited resources and administrative burdens. However, the lack of adequate appreciation, recognition, or professional satisfaction disrupts this balance, leading to demotivation and disengagement.

3. Herzberg -- Overemphasis on Hygiene Factors

Herzberg's two-factor theory differentiates between hygiene factors (like salary, job security, and working conditions) and motivators (like achievement, responsibility, and recognition)[7]. Government education policies largely focus on hygiene aspects but neglect motivators. Without meaningful opportunities for personal growth, job enrichment, or career advancement, teachers often feel uninspired.

4. Maslow -- Neglect of Higher Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs suggests that once basic and security needs are met, individuals seek fulfillment through belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization[8]. In many government systems, policies ensure job permanence but fail to nurture teachers' aspirations for recognition, and professional development. This leads to frustration, emotional fatigue, and low morale among teachers.

5. Fayol -- Centralization and Unity of Direction

Henri Fayol emphasized the importance of balance between centralization and local participation in administration. Indian school policies are often formulated centrally without considering local needs or inputs from teachers and school administration. This top-down approach undermines ownership and innovation at the grassroots level. This reduces the sense of unity of direction and weakening collective commitment to educational goals.

6. Rensis Likert -- Overuse of System 1 and 2

Rensis Likert's management systems range from authoritarian (System 1) to participative (System 4). Many government schools still rely on Systems 1 and 2 i.e. top-down decision-making and limited consultation with staff. Teachers and principals often have less say in curricular or administrative decisions. Promoting a participative culture, where teachers' inputs shape school policies, can significantly enhance motivation and performance.

How Theories Can Be Used to Initiate Reforms

1. Fred Riggs -- Prismatic Society and Ecological Approach

Drawing from Fred Riggs' prismatic model, Indian schools must clearly distinguish between teaching and non-teaching responsibilities. It avoids the role confusion characteristic of prismatic societies[5]. Teachers should focus primarily on pedagogy, student engagement, and academic development rather than being overburdened with administrative or governmental duties like election or census work. This clear role demarcation will enhance educational effectiveness and accountability.

2. Chester Barnard -- Contribution-Satisfaction Equilibrium

Chester Barnard's theory focuses on the need for balance between employees' contributions and the satisfaction they derive from their work[6]. To maintain this equilibrium in schools, governments should institute fair inducements like incentive systems, performance-based promotions, and recognition awards that reward dedication and effectiveness as suggested by Barnard. Improving working conditions through adequate facilities, reduced administrative stress, and supportive leadership will work as strong inducements, motivating teachers to contribute more willingly and productively.

3. Herzberg -- Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's theory application suggests combining hygiene improvements with motivational strategies to enhance teacher satisfaction[7]. Schools should go beyond basic provisions and implement job enrichment programs that allow teachers to design lessons creatively, use innovative teaching methods, and participate in educational research. Recognition programs such as annual awards can further reinforce positive performance and build excellence among teachers.

4. Abraham Maslow -- Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's framework can guide holistic teacher motivation by addressing different levels of needs[8]. Fulfilling Belongingness need can be promoted by forming teacher networks, peer groups etc. Also Self-Esteem needs can be fulfilled through regular acknowledgment and appreciation of teachers' efforts. For self-actualization, teachers should be involved in curriculum framing, pedagogical innovation, and policy consultations which allows them to realize their full professional potential.

5. Henri Fayol -- Principles of Management

Henri Fayol's management principles can provide structural suggestions to school administration. Encouraging initiative by involving principals and School Management Committees (SMCs) in policymaking will promote accountability and innovation. Applying principles like equity, stability of tenure, and coordination as suggested by Fayol will create a balanced administrative environment that values fairness, job security, and teamwork, thus enhancing both efficiency and trust within the educational system.

6. Rensis Likert -- Participative Management (System 4)

Rensis Likert's System 4 model advocates participative leadership where decisions are made collaboratively rather than imposed hierarchically. Indian schools need to move toward this inclusive approach i.e. applying System-4 by involving teachers, principals, and parents in consultations on curriculum, assessment, and resource management. Leadership training for principals should focus on building participatory skills, empathy, and open communication, strengthening the culture of participation and cooperation.

In nutshell, administrative theories reveal key problems in India's schools, like teachers having too many extra responsibilities than and lacking motivation due to poor incentives. Thinkers like Riggs show role confusion in our prismatic society, while Barnard focuses on balancing work effort with job satisfaction. Herzberg and Maslow highlight the need for real motivational efforts than just salary. Fayol pushes for initiative and Esprit de corps for participative governance. Likert calls for team-based decisions to boost participation. These ideas also reflected in NEP 2020's focus on inclusive schools with motivated staff.

Conclusion

Educational institutions are considered as first platform for social interaction of children and teachers are called as engines of this educational system. Even connotational provisions (Article 21A, Article 45 and

Article 51A) provides for availability of quality education for the children. This paper is an effort to provide ways to fulfil these objectives. Application of administrative theories not just study the challenges associated with education system but also provides long term solutions to make indian education more inclusive, participative and adaptable. Applying them in school administration means fewer non-teaching tasks, better facilities, awards for teachers, and parent involvement. Such changes create happy, effective schools for all children leading to their overall development.

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