THE FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS FOR ROLE AND
ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES*

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This technical note has two objectives:

(a) To present some of the communalties and continuities of the individual role processes and organization processes;

(b) To explore how the role processes set by the larger cultural milieu which an individual internalises during the process of becoming an adult, influence emergence of the organizational processes.

The term 'organization processes' has a very wide connotation. For example, Professor Khandwalla's note on "Techno-Social Processes" describes some of the organizational processes. In the literature of management, other authors have talked of processes of leadership, communication etc. We here are restricting the use of the term "organization processes" to six basic role acts and organizational tasks which have to be carried out in an organization. These are:

1. Process of decision making
2. Process of exercising authority
3. Process of communication
4. Process of evaluation
5. Process of reward and punishment
6. Process of scanning and control

* This draft of the "Framework for Analysis for Role and Organizational Processes" is based on the organization development work of the authors in industry and from their research on "Cross Roads of Indian Culture" (to be published soon).
The literature on management deals with these six processes largely in terms of - (a) Styles of leadership: This very often subsumes the manner of exercising authority and the style of making decisions. (b) Communication network: Under this heading the literature discusses the network of formal and informal communication; the content and levels of communication; the channels of communication and occasionally the style and form of communication such as, verbal, written etc. (c) Incentives and motivating activities: This very often subsumes the categories of reward and punishment and of the evaluation process. (d) The other two processes of evaluation and scanning and control also are dealt different than we propose.

We, however, prefer to treat these role-acts of a manager as processes - both as his own role processes and as organization processes. Our hypothesis is that the role-acts emerge only as an end product of a process. It may be true that many of these role-acts may be related to the kind of processes such as, leadership etc., as discussed in the management literature and indicated above. Our experience makes us believe that leadership is only one of the factors and perhaps not as significant factor as the definition of a relationship between the individual and the system.

In terms of communality it can be said that an organization usually has an objective, a task or a set of tasks to perform, means and resources to carry out the tasks, and finally targets to achieve in a time span.

In order to fulfill these tasks and targets organizations have people, technology, structure and other resources. However, it is the responsibility of the people to manage the achievement of the tasks, targets and the objectives. For this purpose, the total task of the organizations is broken into a set of sub tasks and differentially allocated to the people in the organization. The differential allocation to people and the dovetailing of their interactions produce the characteristic form of the organization structure.
Organization structure, then, at one level can be defined as a set of interacting positions or roles (occupied by people) to whom the total task of the organization has been differentially allocated. What these positions or roles (that is the people) do is very often listed in the job description. How they do these jobs—and how they interact with people could also be listed in the job descriptions, but very often it is not. The acts that the individual performs such as (he decides how many people he needs for a particular job) can be called the contents of his role or his role tasks. How he actually makes this decision within himself and the organization can reflect either his role process or the dominant organizational processes.

Once an individual has been allocated differentially a part of the total task of the organization, he comes to have a role in the organization. The role is stated in terms of objectives and tasks listed in the job description. The organization very often defines and lays down the role tasks of the subordinates also. However, it seems that in Indian organizations each superior tends to redefine the job description, its boundaries, and the manner of its performance. In this connection, we are reminded of some of our interviews with Indian managers. We found that a job description invariably existed in writing. The managers, however, always stated that the job description is only a ritual—"We really do what our bosses tell us, not what the job description says." In many cases, a formal job description did not exist.

Consequently though the organizations have a formal i.e., a laid down organization structure, individuals tend to vitiate this structure by their own behaviour. Thus, all organizations tend to have operational or emergent organization structure which can be very very different from the given ones.

The emergent or operational organization structure comes into being by the virtue of "role processes" that individuals bring from their cultural milieu. Organizations,

* This is a word which we are introducing to distinguish between the tangible role-tasks as listed in the job descriptions and the type and kind of transactions that an individual initiates and participates in order to perform the role.
as such, need to institutionalize the process of "in-organization" socialization. This has to be done in order to establish a congruence between desirable organization processes and the role-processes that the individual brought from the cultural milieu. This also necessitates the introduction of process of coordination and integration.

However, the governance or management of the interconnecting transactions of the different roles involves setting in motion six basic processes which were listed above.**

The individual member in order to perform his role makes decisions; exercises authority; communicates; evaluates task, situation and people; rewards and punishes the behaviour of his subordinates; and scans and controls his role field. Supposedly there ought not to be any incongruence between the individual role processes and the organizational processes. However, there are sources of difference.

The sources of differences between the individual role-processes and the organization processes have to take into account the technology, the task and perhaps the size and other aspects of the organization. For example, in a continuous process industry, decision making at the shop floor level may be more relevant and perhaps necessary against assembly line or departmentalised technology.

It would be an idea condition if the nature of the task and technology were taken as significant determinants of the six organization processes as identified in the note.

** Just to remind you we list here:
1. Process of decision making
2. Process of exercise of authority
3. Process of communication
4. Process of evaluation
5. Process of reward and punishment
6. Process of scanning and control
In our experience with Indian conditions it is the top people and their particular role processes which tend to determine how decisions would be made and at what level; how authority would be exercised and how much and which people would communicate. They also influence the various other processes of evaluation etc.

As such, it is the top people who initiate and legitimise by their behaviour how these six processes will work and what form they would take. If you do a survey of managers, the most persistent problems they refer to in their organizations relate to delegation of authority, problems of evaluation, reward and punishment and problems of motivation. In their discussions it seems to be clear that these persistent problems revolve around the top people's own role-processes. In a manner of speaking we believe that by far and large the top management in India disregard the consideration of technology and task in determining the organization processes. They either give significance to their own role processes or to the legal commitments.

Like all other individuals in organizations the top people also bring their role processes from the cultural milieu of their family and the larger society. As such it is important to understand the determinants of these processes as operating in the cultural milieu. In our experience the following are the parametric anchors of the cultural milieu determining these processes.

These are:

(1) Role-boundeness
(2) Lack of equals in relationship
(3) Single authority for tasks (One person system)
(4) Dual membership
(5) Social Identity

Broadly speaking, each society defines the role boundaries as well as the boundaries of the relationship between the system and the individual. It is in these definitions that cultures differ, and as such the managerial role field and behaviour patterns differ. It means
that each culture generates a role-concept of how to be a manager. For example, trained Indian personnel who have had some years of work experience in America get very quickly disenchanted, frustrated and start talking about how Indian organizations do not know how to carry out their tasks. It takes them some time to adjust. Many of them fold up and leave. We are not trying to replace fatalism to cultural determinism. We accept that it is the task of the individual and individual alone to break through the envelope of culturally promoted boundaries and start acting in consonance with real tasks of the system. However, our objective here is to provide you with a framework for assessing organizational processes and their managerial acts and to be able to design the level of intervention for growth.

In the next few pages we define these role boundaries of the individual in Indian society.

Role-Boundedness

Hypothetically in any organization all role levels can have three kinds of responsibilities:

i. Immediate job responsibility
ii. Link responsibility
iii. Corporate responsibility

In Indian organization individuals are trained to do their immediate job responsibility. Link responsibilities and corporate responsibilities are either neglected, dis-owned or left to other people. For example, teachers have the responsibility of teaching in the classroom. They also have the responsibility of interacting with peers in their own subject areas and across other subject areas. They also have to contribute to the task of the total corporate system such as the University. We suggest that most of the teachers do the first well and neglect the other two in the name of preoccupation, lack of time and some other legitimate reason.
In Indian organizations this is a common phenomenon. Each person does his job well, but avoids the responsibilities of link and corporate tasks. This is what we call role-boundedness. This is a product of peculiar Indian ethos where membership by birth, emphasis on immediate duties of the role and exclusion of representational membership is held up and reaffirmed over and over again. In this ethos individual's freedom to act upon the system, to question it, to review it and to initiate action to modify it is not only denied but condemned as rebellion.

Lack of equals in relationship

Membership of an organization and delineation of relationship in traditional India including the work is determined by birth. The characteristic of the social organization of India—whether it be family or caste—turns all relationships of an individual with others as elder (that is superior) or younger (that is subordinate). There is no position in the social system which is that of an equal. All linkages are on the linear, vertical line. All lateral linkages are either nonexistent or discouraged. As such, the individual in Indian society has no model to internalise the attitudes of relating and coordinating laterally and thus developing patterns of cooperation.

The transposition of the social attitude toward the elder and the younger to the superior and the subordinate in the Indian organization makes an interesting study. One such study that of Sudhir Kakar establishes that most common authority pattern in Indian organization is paternalistic.

Lack of equals in a system (besides breeding intolerance for equality and creating some interesting patterns of power dynamics in the middle management vis-a-vis the top management) has a very significant impact on the six role processes such as, decision making etc. We will explore these in our discussions.
Single authority of tasks (One person system)

Indian social system is based on a principle of multi-purpose single group membership. For practical purposes the individual belongs to only one group. Within this group role specializations are allowed but a cooperative multi-authority system is not allowed to develop. In the final analysis all Indian systems are one person systems. This one person controls all the resources and their allocations. He legitimises all role boundaries. In effect, every member in the system is only an extension of his person and role. In mythological terms he is the 'Virat Purush' of the system. All other members are like hands, eyes, feet etc., coordinated in him as his parts. They do not exist in their own right.

Like the other two boundaries of the individual with his system this dimension also has significant impact on the working of the six role processes of the individual in an organization. Its primary impact revolves around the delegation of authority, communication and evaluation.

Dual membership

The Indian society having developed a very comprehensive allocation of total tasks into roles of groups known as caste* developed an organization where the entire focus was the maintenance of interpersonal relationship between the various role groups. The task of the leadership of the society was largely to manage these relationships. If one looks critically and deeply at the Indian social system one would notice that this kind of social stratification conferred two kinds of membership on an individual.

One of the memberships is socio-psychological and the other is socio-temporal. The socio-psychological membership ties the individual to the broadest blood and kinship relationship. In this he finds an emotive security. The socio-temporal membership is in the village community where multiple groups of kinship and caste co-exist. In

* Here the caste refers to the socio-occupation and the techno-occupational sub-divisions of the population.
one membership the emphasis is on filial and relationship tasks, in the other the emphasis is on interpersonal transactions. Both of these memberships can either synchronize to provide for a dynamic community of individuals or can leave an individual in an ambivalent indecision.

It seems that today this dual membership provides an escape hatch from any commitment. The individual can escape the responsibility of the socio-temporal membership by emphasizing the socio-psychological community and escape the responsibility of socio-psychological membership by emphasizing demands of socio-temporal community.

In organizational setting this dual membership operates in various ways:

(a) It reinforces the dynamics of formal and informal groups creating a tendency of counteracting processes.
(b) Revitalises the parochial groups versus task groups.
(c) Both of these also influence the communication process and reactivate the culture of personalisation.

Sources of the Meaning of the Self

In terms of the Indian context an individual derived his meaning (that is, his identity) primarily from his social role and the ethos and the mythology of his particular group. As we earlier indicated, the differential allocation of the total task of the society was done in groups organized around occupations and further broken down around the differential technology of the same occupation. Individual's total identity involved a work role but his meaning was derived from the mythology of his group (caste).
Work identity which could have promoted an achievement motivation and mobility beyond the family or caste boundaries was never encouraged. One could always transcend by spiritual development one's individual status but abrogation of one's work role or social belonging is not permitted.

The implication of this process for organizations today are many. It can reflect in the motivation aspect of people, attitude to work and attitude to social relationship. Its direct relationship to the basic six role acts cum processes can be stated in terms of conceptualization of one's own role as a manager. For example, in a certain foreign owned company people who succeed and go beyond middle management are always public school products or children of a certain kind of bureaucrat families. An equally well trained, highly motivated, productive individual coming from middle class average Indian home without public school education rarely broke the barrier. In a way, it was the social identity rather than the work identity which operated in the situation.

In the attached sheet we provide a matrix of the six role processes and five role boundaries between the individual and the system.