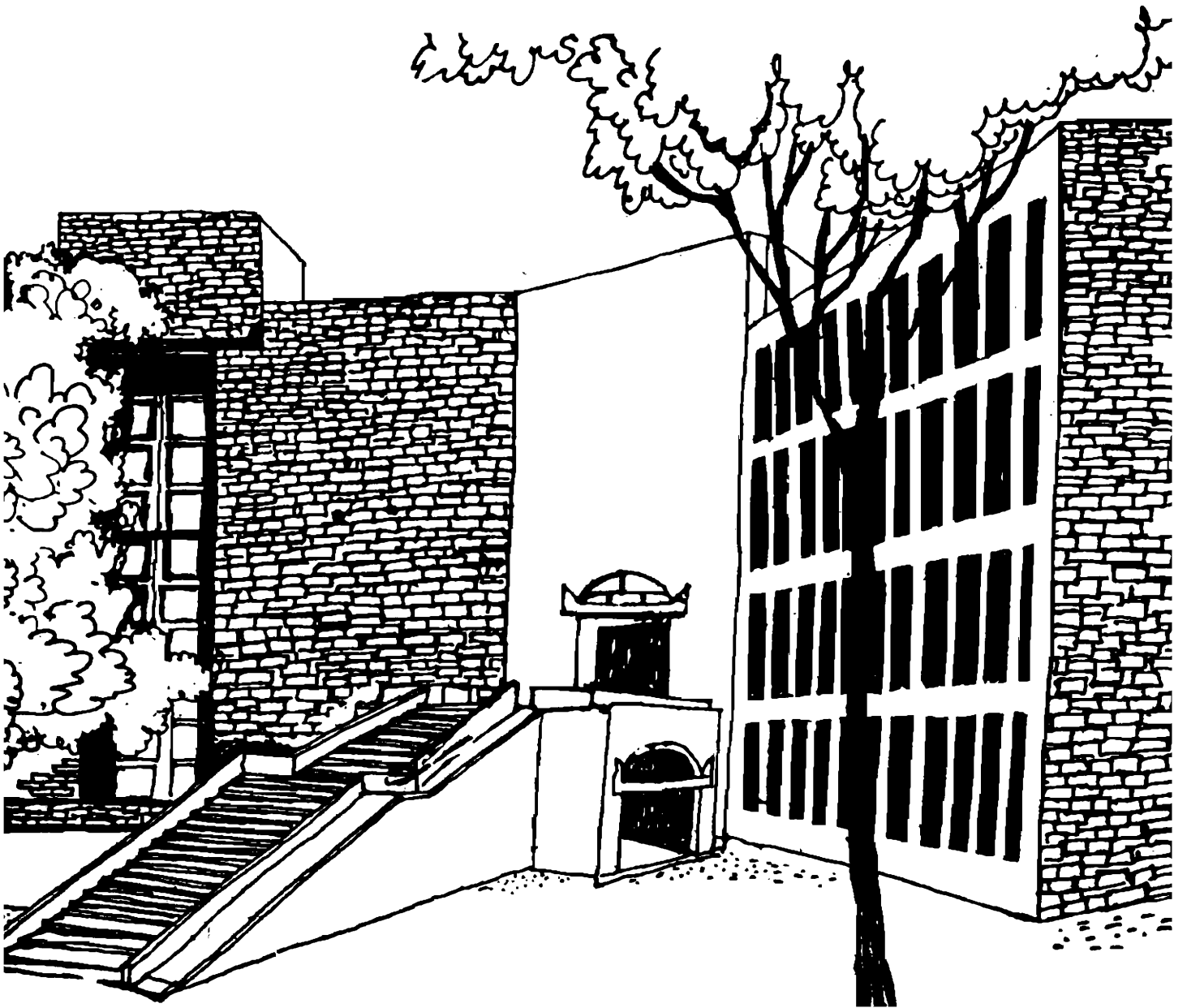




Working Paper



**BASES OF WORK MOTIVATION
IN DEVELOPING SOCIETIES: A FRAMEWORK
FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

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BASES OF WORK MOTIVATION IN DEVELOPING SOCIETIES: A FRAMEWORK FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Sasi Misra & Rabindra N. Kanungo

INTRODUCTION

In developing societies, work motivation as a topic of serious concern persists. This concern is largely due to flagging worker productivity and chronic organizational inefficiency in the industrially and economically disadvantaged countries, euphemistically called the Developing world. Intensification of competitive pressures on a global scale has further underscored the need for pragmatic approaches to increasing productivity and performance in these countries.

Two main factors are singled out to account for low productivity in many developing countries: (1) obsolete technology and poor infrastructure like roads, electrical power, communication networks, and so forth and (2) an "unwilling to work hard" or poorly motivated work force. However, despite heavy borrowing of capital and costly transfer of technology from the First world nations and international financial institutions, organizations in developing countries continue to be plagued by low worker productivity and performance deficits rendering many organizations unviable. That is when a variety of causal attributions about worker motivation in developing countries are made along with suggestions for enhancing employee motivation and creating competitive organizations.

Points of view as to why there is a lack of "will-to-work hard" among workers in

the developing countries differ widely. These tend to be general in content and sweeping in form. What follows is a set of comments and observations by top level executives and administrators which typify the preferred causes of demotivation among workers in India.

"Indians lack the 'protestant work ethic' as it exists in western societies. Instead, they believe in leisure-ethic". "Passivity pervades the Indian society and most Indians are indifferent to the attainment of work objectives". "Unconditional job security enjoyed by most employees in various organizations is the root cause of low work motivation". "Authoritarian management style, repetitive and boring jobs are the main causes of the malady of demotivation among employees".

Equally general are some of the remedial actions prescribed in order to motivate workers.

"A moral belief about the goodness of work and industry should be instilled among workers". "Apply the carrot and the stick approach. Be a good paymaster to good workers; fire or punish them for being otherwise". "Jobs ought to be redesigned and supervision should be participative so that employees become satisfied and thereby motivated to perform".

The foregoing statements concerning the nature and causes for demotivation among employees reflect varying personal experiences, training, and to an extent,

simplistic conclusions derived from one or another Western assumptions about work and human nature. These managers' theories of work motivation are at best idiosyncratic and their approach to understanding it piecemeal. This is not to undermine the scientific assumption that motivation and behaviour are powerfully influenced by job design and its underlying technology, organizational control and reward systems. What is needed is a systematic analysis of the antecedent conditions of motivation to work or lack of it and an explanation of how they affect performance. In order to achieve this objective, we shall first, clearly delineate the domains of various terms such as productivity, performance, and motivation because there appears to be much looseness in the use of these terms while attempting to explain worker demotivation. We shall then endeavour to bring together relevant explanatory models of work motivation to bear upon practical reality associated with performance management in developing countries.

PERFORMANCE, PRODUCTIVITY, AND MOTIVATION IN PERSPECTIVE

The term "performance" refers to an employee's manifest behaviour at work, whereas the term "productivity" refers to the net outcome of employee performance. Performance outcome or productivity is a consequence of a set of three factors: (1) the employee's attributes such as his/her aptitudes and abilities, training, experience, and psychological make up (2) his/her inclination or motivation to expend the necessary effort to perform and (3) organizational support system that include the physical and social environment at the work place, technology, and the administrative policies and practices. Simply put, the employee attributes relate to dispositional capacity to perform, employee inclination to put in work effort relates to willingness or motivation to perform,

and organizational support given to employees at work relates to opportunity to perform. These three factors when combined multiplicatively, determine performance outcome. The individual performance equation may therefore, be stated as follows:

Productivity or Performance outcomes = Individual attributes X Motivation to put in effort X Organizational support.

In order to understand and explain performance among workers and address our concerns to enhancing performance outcomes, the realities of factors other than motivation to work as stated in the performance equation are useful reference points in so far as they inhibit or boost employee motivation. Performance outcomes would be poor not only for low employee motivation, but also for low employee capacity to perform (as in the case of lack of job training or poor recruitment and placement practices), and lack of organizational support (as in the case of poor, technical, financial, and maintenance support systems). Lack of organizational support and employee capability to perform in turn lowers employee motivation to perform. Figure 1 summarizes the relationships among various components necessary for our understanding of the work motivation constraints and the performance deficits.

Figure 1 about here

Although as presented in figure 1, the performance equation involves several components, it is the employee motivation to perform that is the most critical antecedent variable determining the level of performance. Hence in the following sections we will discuss the major environmental and organizational factors that affect employee

motivation assuming that employees have the capability to perform. Before such discussion however, we need to define work motivation.

Broadly, work motivation pertains to "the conditions and processes that account for the arousal, direction, magnitude, and maintenance of effort in a person's job" (Katzell & Thompson, 1990, p.144). In order to put in effort to perform, effort initiation or arousal is necessary. Such arousal of employee effort depends upon appropriate assessment of employee needs and expectations and meeting these needs and expectations through organizational systems of rewards and sanctions. Once work effort is initiated it needs to be directed and maintained to achieve organizational objectives. When effort is meaningfully directed to achieve task goals, it becomes performance behaviour and not just random effort without any task relevance. Again, performance behaviour of employees has to be maintained over a period of time until productivity targets are achieved. Initiating and giving direction to employee work efforts and maintaining employee performance over a period of time are major management tasks, and we believe, that this conceptualization would help management to diagnose the conditions and practices affecting work motivation in the organizational contexts of developing countries.

ROADBLOCKS TO UNDERSTANDING WORK

MOTIVATION IN DEVELOPING SOCIETIES

In developing societies, helmsmen of organizations and other concerned members often pose a short and direct question-- how do you motivate employees? Management gurus and behavioural science pundits usually offer one or another

theoretical explanation of worker motivation based on models and constructs developed, tested and refined (or laid to rest) in the industrially developed and culturally separate West. Then, corrective measures founded upon uncritical acceptance of such models are put to practice. In the main, they are rooted in one of the three classes of motivation theories: the moralists' theories based on an optimistic view of man (McGregor, 1960; Herzberg, 1968; Likert, 1967; Argyris, 1957); the behaviourists' stance that behaviour is a function of its consequence and is completely determined by external stimulus events--selecting the right stimuli to induce desired behaviour is all you need (Skinner, 1974); and the pluralist position which tend to emphasize that people differ from one another in fundamental ways and therefore, can be defined and grouped into a relatively small number of classes, and then treated according to the characteristics of the classes in order to produce high levels of motivation and effective job performance (McClelland, 1961). It has been found time and again that motivational techniques based on any one of the above approaches that had proven success in the West are often a failure in the developing country context. For instance, McGregor's Theory Y suggested employee participation to be motivation enhancing and hence, an important factor in performance management. However, Dayal (1992) in his recent diagnosis of behaviour pattern in Indian organizations comments that employee participation in a society characterized by high power distance (Hofstede, 1980) does not work. In Indian organizations, higher management generally discourages participation and is casual about the process of consultation. Instead, it places high premium on personal loyalty and relationship based on pecking order. Taking a radically different stance behaviourists a la Skinner believe

that motivating employees is a matter of creating an environment with physical and social rewards (positive reinforcement) to increase performance. Management has to select the right reinforcer to induce desired employee behaviour. Once again, reinforcers like direct task-centered feedback that work in the West may not be appropriate in the developing world context where employees often consider such feedback as attacks on their ego-esteem. Finally, from the pluralist like McClelland's stand-point, individuals in the business environment can be classified according to three kinds of needs -- achievement, power and affiliation. By determining and reacting to an employee's pattern of these three needs, his motivation and behaviour on the job can be influenced. However, the achievement motivation training programme conducted in India (see McClelland and Winter, 1969) to foster entrepreneurship was not sustainable and a little effect that it may have had was ephemeral perhaps owing to lack of social support for personal achievement orientation in the cultural setting. Machungwa and Schmitt(1983) have reported limited usefulness of western constructs in understanding motivation to work in Zambia, a developing country. Simplistic adoption of specific western formulations on work motivation is grossly inadequate because they exclude critical variables indigenous to specific cultural contexts. This is not to promote the Kiplingish notion "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet" and advocate rejecting western motivational formulations like throwing the baby out with the bath water. We are however, convinced that adequate diagnoses and explanation of work motivation in developing societies is impossible if our conceptual noses are stuck rigidly in one class of theory or another developed in the West. Any meaningful

analysis of work motivation in developing societies has to be juxtaposed with an analysis of the physical and socio-cultural environment as well as the stable attributes of the individual who is a product of such environment.

In this chapter, we shall first seek to identify several indigenous variables critical for analyzing and explaining work motivation in the socio-cultural milieu of Indian organizations in particular (and we believe, many developing societies in general). In doing so, we shall draw upon relevant features of more than one western model of work motivation. We shall then identify action levers for improving worker motivation and performance which will enable us to evolve strategies and programmes that aim at creating organizations where employees are both more productive and better satisfied.

A "master" theory that meaningfully integrates the critical indigenous variables associated with work motivation in developing societies does not exist nor does a magic formula to enhance employee motivation. However, our search for these critical variables lie in two domains: socialization practices in the context of the culture of the developing country (socio-cultural environment variables in Figure 1) which influences habitual modes of behaviour of employees and predominant organizational practices which employees at most levels experience (organizational support system variables in Figure 1). The former, we prefer to term exogenous variables and the latter endogenous variables. Thus, in our analytical scheme, the causes of worker demotivation in the developing country context can be identified both in the past socialization process of workers (i.e. to reveal historical or predisposing cause) and their present perceptions of the need satisfying potential of the job illustrating the contemporary or precipitating

causes. In the following sections we illustrate the two sets of variables as they affect motivation of employees in Indian organizations. First we will we explore the nature of exogenous variables in terms of influences of Indian socialization on the individual worker and then we will analyze the prevailing organizational practices in Indian organizations affecting worker motivation.

INDIAN SOCIALIZATION INFLUENCE: THE EXOGENOUS VARIABLES.

The early socialization or conditioning process involves several key social institutions and their agents, such as family and parents, educational institutions and teachers, religion and political milieu. As individuals learn modes of thinking, feeling, and doing they are shaped by such institutional and cultural influences. Early interactions with social institutions and their specific representatives form the basis of many enduring psychological characteristics of future personality. The influences of socialization in India manifest at two levels -- as stable behaviour disposition and as instrumental value systems of the individual. We refer to three distinctly identifiable value systems. These are: (a) a personal ethic of helplessness, (b) an organizational ethic of personalized relationships, and (c) an idealized, family centred work ethic. These value systems, singly and jointly, are developed on the basis of stable behavioural dispositions, such as dependency , external orientation, lack of futuristic thinking, and over emphasis on meeting obligatory demands. Let us analyze these in some detail.

Workers at all levels of organisations in India seem to manifest a personal sense of helplessness. In their day-to-day work and non-work spheres of life, they exhibit a passive attitude toward their environment . They have inculcated an external orientation--

a belief that the external environment controls them and they can do nothing (in a direct manner) to bring about any change in their environment. Thus they become insecure and demonstrate a strong need for dependence on others to reduce their feeling of insecurity. As individuals, they feel that they are insignificant, powerless particles of humanity and, therefore, believe in the futility of their actions. These beliefs create an attitude of fatalism and they become indifferent to work and work organizations. As individuals therefore, they do not strive for challenge and excellence but rather remain content with status quo and mediocrity. They become the victims of 'what can I do' and Chalta hai syndrome (a commonly and frequently used phrase to express a mixture of feelings -- ready acceptance of status quo, mediocrity and even resignation).

Some social scientists (Kapp, 1963; Weber, 1958) have argued that the passive helplessness attitude of the Indian worker may result from the influence of Hindu doctrines of (a) Moksha (salvation) through renunciation of all material possessions (Sanyasa) as an ultimate goal in life, (b) illusory nature of material world (Maya) and (c) the experience of present life resulting from the actions in previous life (the 'law of Karma' in an endless cosmic causal chain). Although such beliefs may play a role in the development of certain attitudes toward life in general such as, contempt for competitive acquisitiveness or equanimity in the face of extreme sufferings and hardships in life, they certainly are not the sole reasons for the helplessness feelings in an individual's work-a-day life. The helplessness feeling and the attitude of fatalism or external locus of control orientation (Rotter, 1966) are acquired primarily through socialization practices related to performance non-contingent reward allocation in family,

school, work organizations or other social institutions. In all spheres of life the individual experiences that actions on his/her part very often do not yield anticipated results. Consequently a state of personal helplessness develops and causes apathy and inaction.

The organizational ethic of Indian workers is shaped by a strong sense of insecurity and dependence on others. Their work relationships are personalized rather than contractual. They work for their superiors, friends and relatives, rather than for accomplishing the task or organizational goals under contractual obligations. Personal loyalty takes priority over organizational efficiency. Within the organization, seeking and maintaining personal status becomes the primary objective for which organizational interests can be sacrificed. Most supervisors provide personal rather than institutional leadership. Their leadership behaviour is directed towards maintaining their status or saving their skin by pleasing everyone, avoiding conflicts or confrontation, and by not taking any risk that might rock the boat even if such actions are desirable for protecting organizational interest.

Indian workers also manifest a family centered work ethic. Most workers believe that work is necessary and good, primarily for maintaining one's family, providing for the well-being of aging parents, spouse, and children. Work for the sake of mastery over the job, or for personal sense of task accomplishment is somewhat alien to many. They have, however, an idealized form of work ethic derived from Bhagavat Gita. They tend to subscribe in the abstract to the norm: 'Your right is to work only. But never to the fruit thereof. Let not the fruit of action be your object. Nor let your attachment be to inaction'.

Such abstract principles guide actions only in the family context and are hardly ever practised in real working life. Duties are performed generally in the family context, but the same sense of duty does not prevail at work place. In fact, Indian workers subscribe more to the leisure and to family ethic than to work ethic. They are more familiar with the sneha(fondness), shradha(affection), and aram(relaxation) culture than with Karma culture. There is an emphasis on idle leisure pursuits that satisfy security and affiliative needs, rather than creative leisure pursuits that achieve work objectives; on maintaining status positions rather than task goal accomplishments; on performing socially approved duties in interpersonal contexts rather than in the job contexts. These are the typical characteristics of the Indian personality shaped subtly and influenced powerfully by the socializing agents in various institutions.

Four key elements in the socialization process in India are responsible for the formation of the three types of ethic that we have identified. First, the authoritarian practices in the family, the educational system, and the religious institutions act to create a strong sense of dependence. This is reinforced by the hierarchical authority structure in all of these institutions. Those who are in authority positions tend to over-control their subordinates through the use of formal authority and rule-minded supervision. Unconditional obedience by surrendering to authority is considered a virtue. Personal initiative, originality, and independence in thinking and decision making in every sphere of life meets with social disapproval. As a result, independent critical thinking and reasoning (i.e. to solve one's own life problems) diminish. Positional or status authority rather than personal informed reason, forms the basis of blind conformity and

compliance.

Second, the performance non-contingent reward systems within Indian social institutions tend to promote helplessness and external orientation. Very often people in authority positions (parents, teachers, political leaders) promise valued rewards for the desired behaviour of subordinates but do not furnish these rewards. Such broken promises create a state of uncertainty of goal attainment, a deep sense of insecurity, external orientation, powerlessness and, finally, low self-reliance. Furthermore, pervasive attitudes of negativism (searching only for what is wrong with an individual) and pessimism about outcomes of every action on the part of superiors, discourages risk taking and responsibility-seeking behaviour, eventually leading to passivity in one's dealings with the environment.

Third, the religious traditionalism of the Indian culture has created a time perspective that has an emphasis on the past rather than on the present. Emotional gratification of one's desire to maintain self-esteem through the recollection of past achievements is quite a commonplace happening. In a sense, most individuals live physically in the present, but psychologically in the past, and are unconcerned about the future. Emphasis on the past and a lack of futuristic orientation leads to a lack of planning while trying to achieve task goals. Thus jobs are handled as they come up, and problems are seldom anticipated ahead of time for making adequate preparation to solve them. Without prior preparation to solve anticipated problems, most problem solving behaviour becomes chaotic, unplanned, and unorganised. Failures to solve problems are then attributed to the complex and unanticipated nature of the problem,

rather than to the lack of futuristic thinking of the individual.

There is another aspect to Indian time perspective. Time is often considered in an abstract philosophical way as being eternal, i.e. ever present but never passing. Thus, delays in actions or slowness at work are easily tolerated as normal. Deadlines, time targets, punctuality, etc. are meaningless. People are very much used to taking in their stride, the familiar, "foot dragging" bureaucratic response: action/decision will be taken in "due course" of time.

Finally, the tradition of the extended kinship network in joint family systems, creates problems of meeting obligatory demands from relatives, friends, superiors, coworkers, and subordinates. Such demands often conflict with organizational and task requirements. For instance, jobs are offered to candidates not on the basis of their job competency, but on the basis of demands from superiors, relatives, and friends. Conflicting demands from significant others lead to misplacement of priorities in job activity and mis-allocation of resources. Planning gets disrupted and personal effectiveness is lost. Besides, under the constant influence of conflicting demands from significant others, the individual experiences dissonance, and, to reduce such dissonance, develops hypocritical habits of "showing an honest face" but actually doing something else. Pressure from relevant others in a tradition-bound family culture forces the individual to sacrifice organizational and task objectives for the sake of maintaining personalized relationships. Work ethic is sacrificed for family ethic. The exogenous variables identified in the above discussion and their effects on work motivation are summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2 about here

ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES: THE INDIGENOUS VARIABLES

In addition to the exogenous variables that operate as predisposing factors responsible for low work motivation of employees, there is another set of indigenous variables inherent in organizational practices that precipitate low worker motivation in employees' day-to-day work life. Employee experiences of organizational practices that contribute to low work motivation can be divided into four broad categories: those related to management philosophy (experiences of how managers view employees) those related to the nature of tasks performed on the job (task-related experiences), those related to the nature of rewards or compensation system (reward-related experiences) and those related to the nature of superior-subordinate relation (supervision related experiences). Employees' work behaviour is mainly determined by these four sets of perceptions: the management assumptions about employees, the requirements of what the employees are expected to do on the job, the returns of material, social, and psychological benefits the employees are going to receive in return for their work, and the manner in which the employees are treated by their superiors.

Experiences related to management philosophy

In most organizations in India, managers still hold the 'economic man' assumption about employees (McGregor, 1960). The management considers workers to be primarily working for themselves to meet their personal needs rather than to be working for the benefit of the organization. Such attitudes toward workers on the part of management

leads to a related assumption that 'labour' is a cost and cost of labour has to be minimized to increase profit. Much of what we find in low productivity figures, in worker demotivation and in related phenomena such as problems of worker alienation and employee morale can be accounted for in terms of 'economic man' and 'labour is a cost' attitudes of the management.

It is the classical accounting convention to record labour as a cost factor in the profit and loss account. Over time, this attitude has quietly evolved into a subtle but powerful management ideology. When the employer views the employees as costs, the latter become things to be minimized, controlled, and allocated. As a result, work tends to be regarded as a commodity meant to be brought and sold. In this process, the seller (the employee) becomes motivated to give as little of the commodity (work output) for as much return (salary, perks, overtime, etc.) as possible. For the buyer (the employer), it is just the opposite. When employees are viewed as 'things' to be brought at a bargain price, they lose all self-esteem and do not develop organizational loyalty. Therefore, those who in exasperation, pose the question: how do you motivate employees, should ask themselves: Do we regard our employees as human assets? Employees from the organizational stand point should be viewed as human capital (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1978) and necessary costs incurred on account of them represent investments in human capital. Although many a chairman in their speeches make it a point to mention people as their "main" resources, we suspect they still continue to view labour as costs to be minimized. This "labour is a cost" mindset can be inferred from many organizations giving short shrift to such activities as systematic

manpower planning, recruiting, and training and developing employees through continuing education, and multi skilling. Lack of manpower planning in many organizations in developing societies results in over staffing and within organizations one often observes poor fit between the job and the employee -- many a square pegs in round holes. Thus, before one can meaningfully deal with low employee motivation, one has to change form "labour is a cost" to "employees are an asset" mindset.

Task-related experiences. Work motivation suffers if there are no clear job expectations regarding what the employees are supposed to do on the job, and whether they can get what they value most through their job behaviour for the satisfaction of their important needs. No one would perform adequately on the job when one lacks job clarity, and is unable to satisfy one's pressing needs.

Many employees do not have clear task objectives. Very often, they have confused knowledge of what their responsibilities are, what task goals or targets they should be aiming for, what paths or procedures they should be following to reach such targets and how they are moving on these paths. Lack of job clarity in the employees' mind is caused by the management. Very often Management fails to develop adequate job descriptions and job standards which might clarify employees' duties and responsibilities. Supervisors often fail to provide their subordinates with concrete task goals, and specified time periods for completion of the job.

Furthermore, neither supervisors nor subordinates receive proper feedback of work progress because of the absence of a systematic reporting system and feedback procedures. Reporting and feedback systems at work are simply absent, and the

employees know it. When standards of performance are an unknown quantity in the organization (in the minds of all employees including management), the problem of increasing motivation for improving performance becomes meaningless. Employee motivation and performance can improve only when the employees have a clear job perception with regard to what is required of them for attaining very specific task goals within some prescribed time by following some well tested paths (i.e. a work method). Task clarity, goal specificity, and targeted time for task completion constitute the minimal condition for improved work motivation and performance.

Reward-related experiences. Even if job clarity is a necessary condition for worker motivation and productivity, it is not sufficient. What is also needed is to provide employees with job outcomes or rewards and compensations that the employees consider relevant for satisfaction of their needs. It must be kept in mind that not each and every reward is effective in inducing greater work motivation among employees. Rewards valued highly by employees are more effective than less valued rewards. An employee who values job promotion more than increased salary will not be motivated by more money. Management must determine how the employees value various rewards before utilizing them for increasing motivation.

Several other characteristics of rewards also come into play. For instance, while receiving a reward, if an employee perceives the situation to be inequitable by comparing himself with co-workers, his work motivation will be lowered. If an employee finds that a junior co-worker with an inferior work record gets a promotion along with him, then promotion as a reward will act to lower rather than increase his motivation.

Thus perceived equity of a reward is an important source of increased work motivation.

Another important characteristic of rewards that make them motivationally effective is its contingency on job behaviour. A reward that is received as a result of high performance is more effective in inducing high performance in future, than a reward that is not dependent on performance. If the money one gets at the end of the month is not dependent on one's day to day job performance, an increase in salary is not going to increase motivation for higher job performance. On the other hand, since the receipt of one's salary depends on one's being present on the last day of the month, the attendance record on that day would be higher than any other day of the month.

Besides the perceived value or importance, the equity among coworkers and contingency of job outcomes, two other reward characteristics seem to influence motivation of employees. They are reward visibility or concreteness and reward immediacy following job performance. A job outcome that is highly concrete and tangible becomes more visible and salient in the minds of employees. Such outcomes like money, tend to be pursued with greater vigour or create higher levels of work motivation than less tangible outcomes like job autonomy or job responsibility. Finally, an outcome or reward that immediately follows high performance is more effective in maintaining the performance, than a reward that is delayed. Recognition of one's work immediately after its accomplishment is more motivating than its recognition two years later when the employee has already forgotten that for which he is being rewarded.

In many Indian organizations, compensation schemes are set up and administered without any consideration of their value, equity, contingency, visibility, and

timing. Employees are hired with the understanding of receiving a compensation package that is largely time-based, rather than performance or skill based. Employees know that their skills and performance have no relation to the salary and benefits they receive from the organizations. Many so-called performance or merit based rewards are clearly perceived as arbitrary and inequitable since the employees work in an inadequate (mostly non-existent) appraisal system. They are often ill-informed about the reward system and consequently perceive a state of randomness or arbitrariness in reward allocation. Since job performance does not bring in the sought-after reward, they feel impotent in controlling the reward through their job behaviour and consequently develop apathy toward their job. They withdraw their energy from the job and engage in organizationally dysfunctional activities (gossiping, ingratiating supervisors, etc.) hoping that such activities will bring in the valued rewards (status in the eyes of co-workers, or perhaps a promotion or accelerated salary-increment from superiors). Organizationally dysfunctional behaviour among Indian employees is so pervasive that like the black money crippling Indian economic system, blackmailing at work (through deliberate inefficiency and apathy) is destroying the moral fabric or Dharma and Karma ethic of the Indian society.

Supervision-related experiences. In addition to the lack of task role clarity and inadequate reward system, many Indian organizations emphasize bureaucratic practices with excessive reliance on rules and regulations. Such practices create an organizational norm that is perceived by employees as cold and impersonal. Workers in these organizations see themselves as legalistic robots guided by rules and

regulations of a depersonalized organization. An impersonal and legalistic environment alienates workers from both their job and the organization. Organizational interests are seen as separate and distinct from the interests of the workers, and workers behaviour is often directed toward meeting their own interests even at the cost of organizational interest.

Supervisors and executives within organizations who engage in such bureaucratic practices are often more interested in lording power over others than in achieving organizational objectives through their subordinates. Such lording behaviours of people in authority position within organizations often manifest in the forms of personal and public criticism of employees, condescending or patronizing attitudes shown toward subordinates, maintaining a certain psychological (and physical) distance from subordinates, and using rigid, legal and coercive styles of supervision. As several researchers (Ashforth, 1986; Kipnis, 1976) have argued, through lording power over others, supervisors and executives use power for personal aggrandizement and devaluing the worth of other employees. Employees in subordinate positions in turn feel low in self-esteem, consider themselves to be powerless and show low levels of involvement in their jobs and low commitment to their organization.

The endogenous variables responsible for worker demotivation in the Indian context as discussed above are summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3 about here

CONCLUSION

In this essay we have endeavoured to analyse and understand variables that adversely affect level of motivation and performance of people within work organizations in developing societies. For illustrative purpose, our analysis was focused on organizations in the Indian context.

We would argue that like our analysis of the Indian context, the endogenous and exogenous variables affecting worker motivation need to be identified in the case of each developing country. Indigenous explanation of worker motivation becomes necessary in view of the number of inadequacies in the Western explanatory models when they are applied in the form of various motivation enhancing techniques in the organizational contexts of developing societies. The framework of work motivation suggested in this essay can help managers and leaders to understand the nature of employee motivation in their respective developing societies. The framework will help them to examine the nature of exogenous variables obtaining in their broader social contexts and of indigenous variables limited to their own organizational contexts.

With respect to exogenous variables, it is apparent that employees, owing to enduring influences of past socialization, bring with them habits, norms, and expectations that guide their behaviours at work place. It is this cultural baggage they carry that is stubbornly resistant to change. This has to be accepted as given while attempting to improve employee motivation and performance. It is the set of endogenous organizational variables that need to be looked at more carefully for identifying action levers for improving worker motivation and performance. These action

levers have to be designed in such a way that they become compatible with the socio-cultural norms of the employees. With particular reference to Indian organizations, we have formed these into the following imperatives.

- (1) The management ought to be guided by the dictum: "Labour is an investment" and develop an organizational culture that values and promotes human resource as an important asset. Top management must demonstrate a commitment to establish such a culture with proactive policies in human resource management areas such as recruitment, training, placement, job design, supervision etc. It is not enough to remain merely at the level of pious pronouncements, but to go further in demonstrating that pronouncements are translated into actions. Establishment of a culture that values human asset will go a long way in enhancing employee self-esteem and loyalty.
- (2) The management must undertake systematic manpower planning, evolve recruitment criteria and procedures based on behaviorally and /or skill anchored job analysis.
- (3) With respect to tasks, job definitions should be unambiguous and performance standards clear. Such job clarity would be welcome by the employees who belong to a culture high on uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980).
- (4) Rewards, financial or otherwise, should be valued and must be perceived as based on performance. Perhaps there is no hitch in acknowledging this principle. But most organizations have far to go in implementing them. We have alluded to several management practices such as time-based compensation, inadequate

performance appraisal etc. that hinder reward - performance contingency and equity in the Indian context. Such practices have to change if management wants organizational rewards to have motivational effects. What is needed is a systematic evaluation of both compensation and appraisal systems on the basis of two criteria: culture congruence and motivational effectiveness. On the basis of such evaluation, the systems can then be redesigned to ensure that whatever rewards are offered by the organizations are needed and valued by employees, and perceived as equitable and are contingent on performance desired by the organizations.

- (5) Finally, appropriate supervisory support and guidance are necessary for the employees to be motivated to perform. Mendonca and Kanungo (1990) have proposed several concrete organizational interventions for effective performance management in developing countries. They also suggested that in the Indian context the manager must adopt a nurturant-task leadership style (Sinha, 1980, 1990) which is congruent with the employees familial and cultural values.

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FIGURE 1: RELATIONSHIPS AMONG VARIABLES AFFECTING PRODUCTIVITY

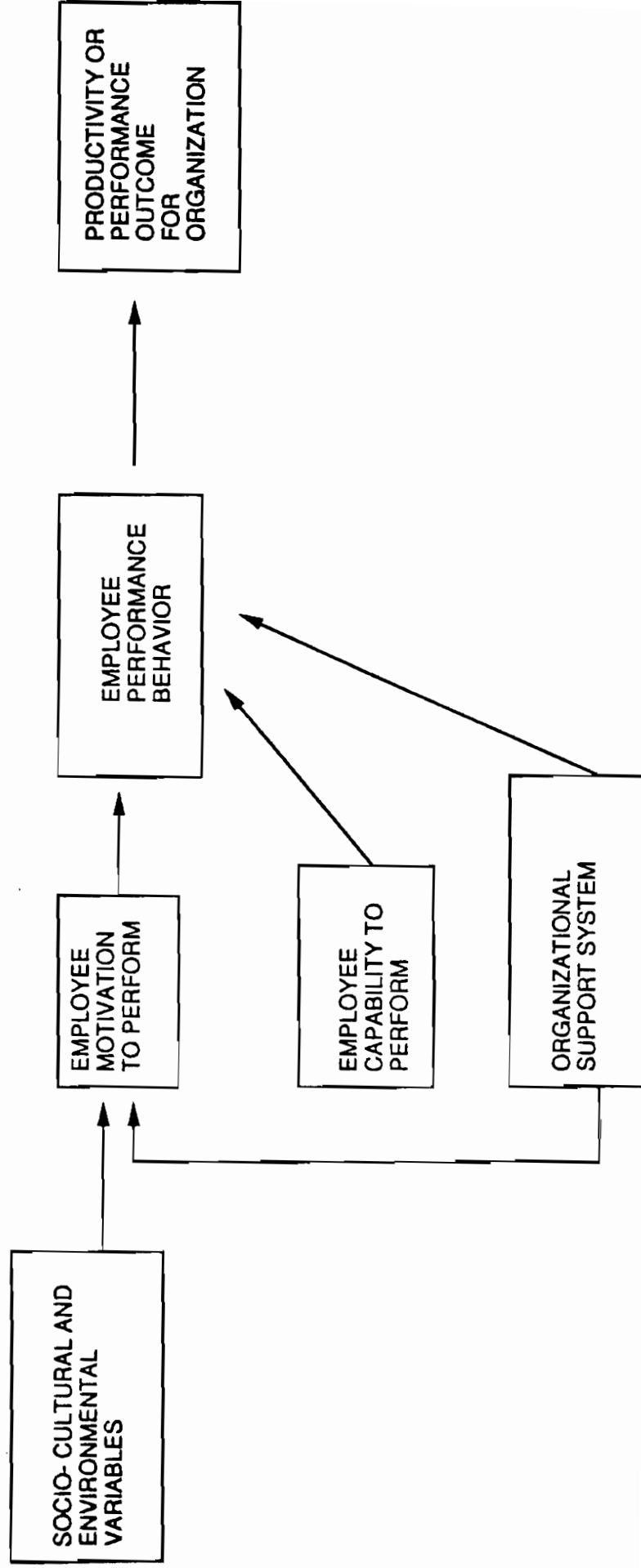
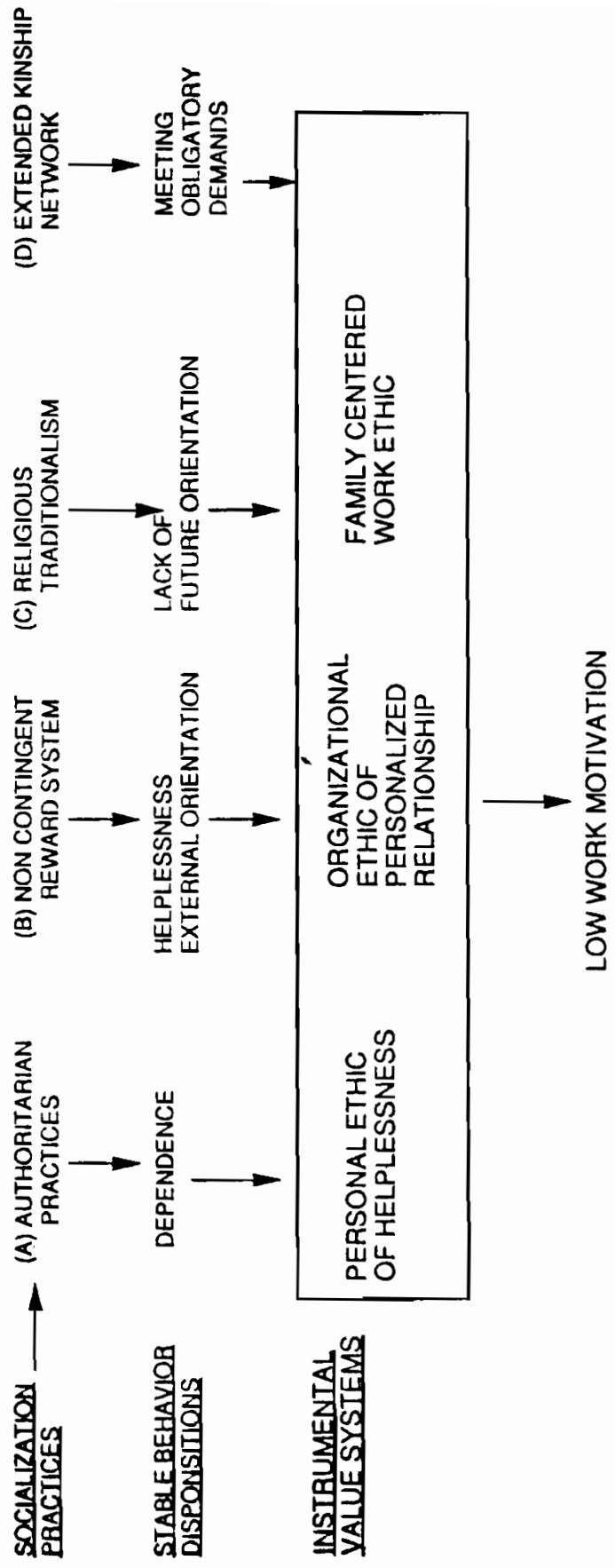
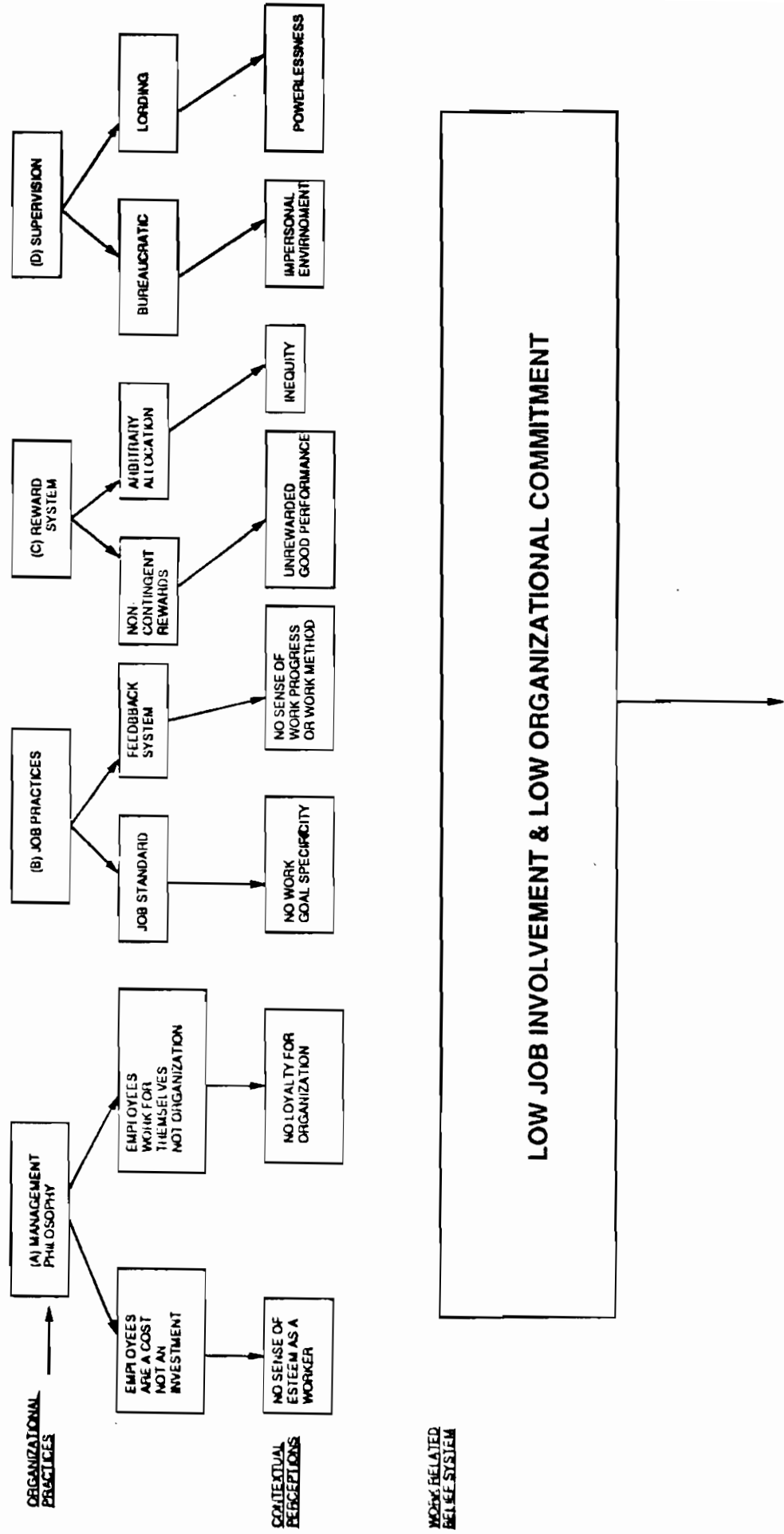


FIGURE 2: EXOGENEOUS VARIABLES INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN INDIA



(Adopted from Kanungo, 1990)

FIGURE 3: ENDOGENOUS VARIABLES INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN INDIA



(ADOPTED FROM KANUNGO 1990)

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