

# Contribution to the Art and Science of Administration by Mc Gregor

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## INTRODUCTION

Professor Douglas **Mc Gregor**, a household name in the world of professional managers, will long be remembered for his creative contribution to the art and science of management. No wonder his monumental classic *The Human Side of the Enterprise*<sup>1</sup> marks the watershed in the history of management thought dominated by the writings of his predecessors. Douglas Mc Gregor's celebrated classic *The Human Side of the Enterprise* published in 1960, has been hailed as the most original and seminal book on industrial psychology in the two decades. Smashing all superstitions and proverbs about scientific management, it seeks to answer the perennial question whether successful managers are born or made: Facing the question quite squarely Mc Gregor wrote: It seems clear to me that the marking of managers, in so far as they are made, is only to a rather small degree the result of management's formal efforts in management development. The main argument of this book (which is more popularly known for its two important suppositions called theory X and theory Y) has been that 'the theoretical assumptions which the management hold about controlling its human resources determine the whole character of the enterprise'<sup>2</sup>

### **Theory X: The Corrective Compulsions:**

Douglas **Mc Gregor** has been an astute student of human psychology and social behaviour. His empirical researches in organizational conflicts and maladjustments in human relations led him to believe that control in human affairs can be viewed as an integration of human behaviour either through coercive compulsion or through motivational self-control. What Mc Gregor calls his theory X is the traditional view of direction and control, which has been based on some of the assumptions, implicit in the literature of organization and in much current managerial policy and practice. According to Mc Gregor these remarkably pervasive traditional assumptions of theory X are:<sup>3</sup>

- (i) The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it, if he can.
- (ii) Hence most people must be corrected, controlled, directed, threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort towards the achievement of organizational objectives.
- (iii) The average human being prefers to be obsequious, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, wants security above all.

His conclusion is that 'so long as the assumptions of theory X continue to influence management strategy, we will fail to discover, let alone utilize the potentialities of the average human being.'<sup>4</sup>

### **Theory Y: The Alternative Assumptions of Integration and Self-Control :-**

It was Maslow who developed the theory of hierarchy of human needs.<sup>5</sup> Looking positively in the area of human needs and man's psychological quest for satisfaction of them as a wanting animal Mc Gregor formulates this theory Y which offers a number of alternative assumptions for the integration of the individual and organizational goals. The assumptions of theory Y are:<sup>6</sup>

- (i) The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest.
- (ii) Mass exercises, self-direction and self-control in the services of the objectives to which he is committed.
- (iii) Commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement.
- (iv) The average human being learns under proper conditions not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
- (v) The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of creativity, imagination and ingenuity in the solution of organizational problems is widely, not narrowly distributed in the population.

The theory implies that if the employees are lazy, indifferent, unwilling to take responsibility, indigent, uncreative, uncooperative, the cause lies in management's method of organization and control. The control principle implicit in the assumptions of theory Y is that integration of behaviors is the key process in conditions conducive for the members to

achieve their own goals best by directing their efforts towards the success of the enterprise Douglas McGregor calls his theory Y an open invitation to innovation.<sup>7</sup> It was a philosophy of management based on theoretical assumptions entirely consistent with theory Y. The two central features of the Scanlon Plan were:<sup>8</sup>

- (i) best reduction sharing and
- (ii) effective participation. McGregor found that the proverbial task of selling refrigerators to Eskimos has been also easier in Scanlon companies rather than in other companies selling traditional incentive plans or merit rating programmes.

Clinton Golden once remarked that, "by and large and over the long run, management gets the kind of labour relations it deserves."<sup>9</sup> Organization research demonstrates that **McGregor** gets the kind of labour relations it was right when he stated that, "formal policies, programmes and procedures to be administered and in turn perceived by management reflect this managerial climate of human relationship."<sup>10</sup>

### CONCLUSION

The theory Y approach, according to McGregor, stresses upon the team work at each level of organization. It further helps improving staff-line collaboration, which is a natural corollary of maximum utilisation of the contribution of all the available human or action strategies. If the human side Enterprise resources in reaching the best decisions or problem solutions or action strategies if the human side enterprise represents Douglas McGregor's concerns to educate future managers his last book *The Professional Manager*.<sup>11</sup> Posthumously published, reflects his commitment towards developing the profession of management through bridging its goals, with the aims, values and methodology of behavioural science. McGregor believed that the manager's view view the organizational reality exerts profound effects upon managerial acts. In McGregor's view the managerial cosmology should meaningfully address itself to the understanding of the manager's behaviour his identity and his role perceptions of the industrial organization.<sup>12</sup>

While having a professional manager in his mind, **McGregor** realized that emotional reactions (to which most of the managers are vulnerable) interfere with the managerial perception of reality. He has argued that theory X and theory Y do not lie at extremes of the scale. In place of representing polar opposites they should be viewed as two different cosmologies.<sup>13</sup> One of the major contributions of Douglas McGregor to management science is his concept of transactional influence.<sup>14</sup> His theories X and Y do not represent any neat categories of human behaviour or human relationship, rather, they are analytical tools of reference through which managerial behaviour can be analysed, studied, predicted, and still more, corrected in terms of changing social values and organisational goals.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. Douglas McGregor, *The Human side of the Enterprise*, New York, McGraw-Hill book company, 1960
- [2]. Ibid, P.7
- [3]. Elton Mayo, *The Human side of Enterprises*, op. cit, pp. 33-34
- [4]. Ibid, p.43.
- [5]. See, A.H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1954.
- [6]. Ibid, pp. 47-48
- [7]. Elton Mayo, *The Side of Enterprise*, op. cit, p. 57.
- [8]. Ibid, pp. 111-114.
- [9]. Outed in *ibid*, p. 143.
- [10]. Elton Mayo, *The Human side of the Enterprises*, op. cit, p. 144.
- [11]. Douglas McGregor, *The professional Manager*, edited by Caroline McGregor and Warren G. Bennis, New York, McGraw-Hill book Company. 1967.
- [12]. Ibid, pp. 32-42.
- [13]. Ibid, p. 80.
- [14]. Ibid, especially ch. 9, pp. 136-155.