

Analysis of management theories

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Analysis of Management Theories Daft addresses three theories of management The ical perspective, 2) The Human Relations perspective and 3) The Systems Perspective. The classical perspective stems from the late 19th century and the early 20th century with seminal contributions from F W Taylor and Henry Fayol. The thrust of these theories was on the division of labor into sequential, task-based and time-based steps. Management was clearly separated from the labor class. The human relations perspective emphasized better working environment for people in routine, mechanized jobs. It stressed the importance of participatory management. The systems perspective has just arrived. It utilizes mathematical tools and scientific principles. Predominantly, it discusses emerging sciences such as Operations Research and Management Information Systems (MIS). In today's environment, the Human Relations perspective finds more application and relevance. This is because, in a flat world, we are moving towards equal opportunity, the lines between the manager and the subordinate are blurring and we are tending towards the concepts of employee empowerment. Under such circumstances, the human relations perspective holds sway. However, we also discuss some of the merits and demerits of this school of thought. The advantage of adopting the Human Relations school of thought is that organizations are able to portray equal importance and opportunity to all classes of employees. It has become more relevant in today's business environment. Secondly, there is a win-win situation for both managers and subordinates. While subordinates enjoy greater freedom, managers are able to reap the benefits of an involved and committed employee. Thirdly, this theory stresses on providing good working environment to people who

handle routine jobs such as those of an assembly line operation or foundry. It gives them sufficient importance and treats them as valuable resources of the organization. On the negative side, the Human Relations perspective may fail where procedure, systems and rigor take precedence over everything else. For instance, take up the case of an accounting department in a large steel company. The roles and responsibilities are well defined and employees of this department have to work as per defined procedure. Giving them flexibility would reduce the efficient functioning and could be disruptive to the organization. A similar logic applies to people working in a Business Process Outsourcing unit, where employees need to follow strict code of conduct while answering calls or e-mails and providing customer solutions. In my organization, which primarily provides healthcare, the Classical perspective holds maximum relevance. This is because, while dealing with patients and health issues, there can be no chance for error. Every regulation, right from a dress code for nurses and doctors to the procedure for a patient's discharge is governed by a set of written rules. Every person needs to follow them meticulously. Consider the duties of nurses. They need to monitor patients' vital signs as per the prescribed instruction sheet, record them at timely intervals and report to the doctors on time. Additionally, they need to ensure that patients get their medication and food on time. However, not every department falls into the classical school of thought with regard to its work content. We discuss it in our next section. Take the case of doctors and surgeons. While the timings for doctors are fixed, they still cannot go home and tune out of the work-mode completely. In the event of an emergency, they need to report immediately and solve the patient's

problem. Besides, while they perform their consulting role, their prescription and advice depends on the patient's medical condition and context. There cannot be fixed rules. For a surgeon performing a complex surgery, while the set of instructions remain in his mind, he may have to approach it in a different way if complications develop during the operation. Hence, by and large, the role of doctors and surgeons do not fall within the classical school of thought. The Human relations perspective is more relevant for this class of professionals. Taking the stream of reasoning forward, consider the medical supplies purchasing department. For them, following rules and procedure are more important. To a great extent, they order drugs and medical supplies based on computed past histories of consumption. The only variance arises in the case of special drugs. Hence, we can adopt the Classical perspective for this department. A similar line of logic applies to the nursing field, where the written procedure and rules are strictly followed. Even within the nursing department, minor differences can be observed. While staff nurses' roles are well laid out, falling within the classical perspective, the Head of the department may have a more complex role. For instance, the Head Nurse determines the allocation of nurses to different patients based on the availability and skill sets. He / She may need to interact with other departments and doctors for specific requirements. In a sense, the Head nurse's role may fall within the human relation school of thought. Going over our recent discussions, we can infer that no single theory would provide a perfect explanation. One of the reasons is that a department is bound by its specific roles and responsibilities. While roles across departments and individuals vary, accordingly, one single theory cannot explain all of them.

We saw specific examples of this kind. The second reason is that management theories are patterned after real-life situations in organizations. Pre-20th century work roles were defined through the nature of organizations. Each organization was characterized by an owner-manager and he operated with a handful of employees. Obviously, there was not much scope for flexibility since work roles were well defined. Moving ahead to the information age, which is the 20th and 21st century, work definitions have changed considerably. Knowledge workers have come to the forefront. They cannot be governed by mere rules and task sheets. However, old economy functions such as manufacturing still hold dominance, implying that the classical school of thought still retains relevance. Besides, the classical school continues to serve as a foundational tool for management education (Carroll & Gillen, 1987). Similarly, for departments and functions such as logistics which can be governed by mathematical tools proposed by the Operations Research discipline, the Systems perspective holds special significance. Hence we can conclude that the theories of management need to be applied with due regard to the context and functional domain of the organization. Reference List Daft, Richard L. (2010). Management. (9th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning. Carroll, Stephen J. & Gillen, Dennis J. (1987). Are the Classical Management Functions Useful in Describing Managerial Work? *Academy of Management Review*, 12(1): 38-51.