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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – INITIATIVE AND  
DRIVE.

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## **HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – INITIATIVE AND DRIVE.**

**I.INTRODUCTION:** Initiative and Drive is the source of change. It is a behavioral component of an individual. Human Resource Management intends to harness its power and potential through consistent organizational efforts. The nature and scope of initiative and drive is influenced by its environment. Public Administrative Systems in general and Indian Administrative System in particular functions in an environment different to private administrative systems. Governments aim at Good Governance for its people. In the underdeveloped world, PI impacts directly on the survival and the positive development of societies and cultures alike<sup>5</sup>.It is increasingly being realized that the Good Governance could be achieved through the initiative and drive of its stakeholders, and Civil Servants are the important participants in realizing this objective.

Today, India is witnessing rapid and dynamic socio economic progress in all walks of its life. Public Administrative Systems are expected not only to cope-up with this pace but also to emerge as its champion. However, the public administrative system in the country has been reeling under its past and at the receiving end of the dissatisfaction of the public. The Government of India has been engaged on transforming its civil servants into people centered, result oriented, accountable, innovative, efficient, effective and dynamic in discharging public functions and addressing their problems. It is now increasingly being recognized and emphasized that initiative and drive require constant caring and nurturing to realize its potential in the public systems. The role of Training is emphasized in capacity building of the civil servants in order to make them initiative and drive in performing their role.

## **II.CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND:**

Traditionally, public personnel were considered as passive actors in performance of their function. They were expected to complete their job within the scope as prescribed and defined. Hackman & Oldham (1975) had rightly observed that work characteristics such as autonomy, feedback, task significance, task

identity, skill variety tend to be conceptualized as organizational givens to which the person adjusts. Their finding could be found true for the Public Personnel also. They work in the environment where-in goals, objectives procedures and processes of a function are laid-down in a rule book. All levels of higher to lower in the administration fall broadly under the same line of thought and were expected to carry out their function with due conformity to the rule and as directed by the higher authority. Their minds and actions were deeply ingrained with the idea, through the formal and informal training all through their carrier, that they were responsible for their duty not for the outcome. Fulfilment of rule was considered fulfilment of job and any deviation was a question raised at their morality. Their ideas and actions were insulated from the pain and grief of the subjects, and their anonymity was protected.

However, today, the modern society is undergoing rapid socio economic development and unprecedented technological advancements. Public Administration is expected to be dynamic, innovative, progressive, productive, efficient and ethical. Now the Public Employees are not only expected but also demanded to be innovative, drive, and a proactive performer in discharging ones duties and functions. Acting mechanically is being increasingly questioned; outcome is becoming yardstick for one's actions and in-fact for their very existence in their organisation. This became need of the hour to bring in qualitative transformation in its practices and procedures at all levels of Administrative System as to make it relevant to the changing times. This emerging phenomenon and in view of its need for establishing Good Governance for its people, Government of India has been bringing various policy and executive measures to transform the administrative systems into that of people centric and role based systems.

The Government of India has been embarked upon Good Governance and Citizen Centric Administration for its people. Good Governance aims at providing public services effectively, efficiently and equitably to all its citizens and with concern for economy in utilization of the public resources. According to 12<sup>th</sup> Report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission the entire edifice of the Good Governance rests on the pillars of Ethos, Ethics, Equity, and Efficiency. The

Report emphasizes that the Constitution of India embody the concept of Welfare State, and the endeavor of Government at all levels has, therefore, been to provide for a citizen centric administration. The Tenth Plan defines Good Governance as management of all such processes that enables individuals to raise their capability levels on one hand and provide opportunities to realize their potential and enlarge the set of available choices, on the other. The Tenth Plan also acknowledges that the State is responsible for creating an environment conducive for building individual capabilities and encouraging private initiative.

### **CONCEPT OF INITIATIVE AND DRIVE:**

Human Resource Management is increasingly becoming specialized and gaining deeper insights into the human behavior at the work place. The Private Organizations are largely credited for the advancement in the human resource management research strategies. These findings and solutions of the human resource management in private organizations could be studied and suitable modified to suit the work environment of the public organization. One of those theories and strategies is initiative and drive at the work place. Initiative and Drive is one of the skill and attribute emphasised by Mission Karmayogi for developing a competent civil servant, and to enhance their efficiency levels in the public service delivery.

### **INITIATIVE THEORY:**

Initiative is being defined as a particular behaviour that results in an individual taking an active and self-starting approach to work goals and tasks and persisting in overcoming barriers and setbacks. It is said that one of the consequences of such an active approach is that the environment is changed by the individual. This is in contrast to a passive approach mentioned in the paras above. This Theory also assumes that human beings with certain personal traits are influenced by their environment and the behaviour they possess. The thinkers Michael Frese and Doris Fay<sup>5</sup> have argued that personal initiative has a number of dimensions which include; innovation, resourcefulness, creativity, dedication,

vision, resilience, and optimism among others. People with personal initiative obtain better results, perform better tasks, are more innovative and entrepreneurial in nature.

Initiative is said as a Self-starting behaviour<sup>5</sup>. It implies that the goals are not given or assigned by someone else, but that the person himself or herself develops these goals. If a manager pursues a strategy to enhance effectiveness that is obvious, that is not difficult to do, about which other managers also talk, or about which is discussed in business publications, the actions are not initiative. If the strategy was suggested from one of the rank-and-file workers, this would be considered to be initiative from that person<sup>5</sup>. Likewise, if the manager assumes a strategy that is not “in the air,” or is unusual for his or her company, the thinkers said there is initiative<sup>5</sup>.

Initiative implies proactive action. This is also implied that where there is initiative in an employee, he attempts to get feedback, develops signals that signify future problems, and develops plans to actively prevent these problems from occurring. Implementation of long-term goals often leads to new problems, barriers, and setbacks. Because new suggestions for work improvement, new procedures to do things, and so on have not been tried before, one will experience difficulties. If one does not overcome these difficulties or gives up quickly in the face of barriers, there is no initiative<sup>5</sup>.

Environmental Supports are said to be the third dimension of the concept of initiative. The above two thinkers have discussed that three environmental conditions are posited to influence the development of Initiative: control at work, complexity of work, and the support for personnel Initiative provided by the company and the immediate supervisor. All three are proposed to activate people and, therefore, to stimulate self-started behaviour and to overcome barriers, once they occur<sup>5</sup>.

Another factor contributing to Personnel Initiative is work stressors. Stressors imply that something is not adequate about a process, a procedure, or a design. Therefore, stressors contribute to the feeling that one ought to do

something about the work situation to improve it; this leads then to a higher degree of Personnel Initiative<sup>5</sup>.

Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive Ability are also found to influence the initiative of a person. To be able to take initiative, one needs a good and thorough understanding of what one's work is, that is, one needs job-relevant knowledge, skills, and cognitive ability. Individuals who have a long-term perspective on work are better able to anticipate future demands and actively seek to prepare for them. Empirically, Personnel Initiative is positively related to job qualifications. Important personality factors for Personnel Initiative are needed for achievement, action orientation, and psychological conservatism<sup>5</sup>.

### **Drive Theory:**

Drive refers to increased arousal and internal motivation to reach a particular goal. Psychologists differentiate between primary and secondary drives. Primary drives are directly related to survival and include the need for food, water, and oxygen. Secondary or acquired drives are those that are culturally determined or learned, such as the drive to obtain money, intimacy, or social approval. Drive theory holds that these drives motivate people to reduce desires by choosing responses that will most effectively do so. For instance, when a person feels hunger, he or she is motivated to reduce that drive by eating; when there is a task at hand, the person is motivated to complete it<sup>6</sup>.

Clark L. Hull is said to be the most prominent thinker who has postulated comprehensive drive theory of learning and motivation. He has theorised that drive and habit equally contribute to performance of whichever behaviour is instrumental in drive reduction<sup>6</sup>. Howard Business School professors Paul Lawrence and Nitin Nohria in their Book viz. Driven: How Human Nature Shapes Organizations, 2001<sup>7</sup> has put forward a theory that we all are driven by four biological motivations: acquiring, bonding, learning, and defending. In the organizational context, the four-drive theory implies that every person, from the Head of the Department or a Chief Executive Officer to the most junior employee will bring a predictable set of mental equipment to work each and every day. This mental apparatus would be engaged in every item of behaviour that takes place at

work. Therefore, the thinkers have argued that every job must provide an opportunity to fulfil, to some reasonable degree, all four drives. They emphasises that a job that fulfils only one or two drives, no matter how lavishly, would not be a substitute for a job that provides a balanced opportunity to fulfil all four drives. They reasoned that all managers and business leaders need to get things done through people, and that it is hard to be a great leader without understanding what drives and motivates the people. Organisations need to provide opportunities to reasonably satisfy all four drives. They must also allow people to interact and bond with each other—to feel the camaraderie of being a part of a team. They must enable people to keep learning and to find ways of exercising their curiosity and expressing their own ideas—to feel like they can innovate and grow. Finally, people must feel assured that they can defend their achievements—that they will be listened to if they feel aggrieved or abused. Jobs that reasonably fulfil all 4 drives are the building blocks of healthy organizations. It is also important to make sure that all other social relationships inside and outside the organization is responsive to the four drives. To maintain a reasonable balance among the drives requires hands-on steering by the leadership of the organization<sup>7</sup>.

As seen from the above theoretical construct, Initiative and Drive is a concept of human resource management. It is drawn largely from the private management practices. The concept requires recognising and imparting wide variety of skills and attributes to public servant to maintain and make him initiative and drive. Besides knowledge of domain subject, procedures and process, it also requires deeper understanding and knowledge about the dynamics of human personality. So that organisation can take measures for fulfilment of their higher order needs and aspirations at work place. But the public administrative system and behaviour is more complex and more diversified.

### **Initiative & Drive – Role of Training Institutes in Capacity Building:**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Reforms Commission in its 10<sup>th</sup> report elaborated on the capacity building and provided a road map for the training of the civil servants at all levels. Some of the recommendations of the Commission are included of that every government servant should undergo a mandatory training at the induction stage and also periodically during his/her career, and that the

objective of mid-career training should be to develop domain knowledge and competence required for the changing job profile of the officer, and that to this end, mid career learning opportunities relevant to specific domains or specializations should be made available for officers.

The National Training Policy, 2012 is one of the major initiatives of the Government of India vision for capacity building of civil servants. This policy has aimed at matching the individuals' competencies with the jobs they have to do and bridge competency gaps for current and future roles through training. In furtherance of the initiatives, the Government of India has conceptualised another major programme called National Programme For Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) which is also called Mission Karmayogi in the year 2020. The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has envisioned of the Mission as follows:

*Mission Karmayogi is a new experiment of its kind in the direction of capacity building. Through the Mission, the government employees have to modernise their thinking, approach and improve their skill set. It is to give them an opportunity to become a karmayogi."*

The Document of Mission Karmayogi has highlighted the challenges being faced by the Capacity Building Programme of the Country as follows:

- 1. Existing training policy interventions were sporadic and largely confined to individual and intermittent innovations.*
- 2. Stereotyped working in silos or compartments, rather than all overall unifying vision and understanding of national priorities.*
- 3. Lack of lifelong and continuous learning environment for all civil servants.*
- 4. Barriers to exchange of knowledge preventing collaborative working.*

This Mission has envisioned the Civil Servants to move from Rules-based to Roles based Human Resource management system. It is said that the scheme aims at radically improve the government's human resource management practices to augment the capacity of civil servants. The Mission aims to prepare Indian civil servants for the future by making them more creative, constructive, imaginative,



innovative, proactive, professional, progressive, energetic, enabling, transparent and technology-enabled.

Further, the Mission has put forth the vision of Civil Servant- Karmayogi for the Nation. Every Civil Servant is expected be proactive & polite, professional & Progressive, Energetic & Enabling, Transparent & Tech enabled, creative & Constructive, imaginative & Innovative<sup>4</sup>.

The Civil Service Competency Dictionary<sup>8</sup> delineates the following competencies under different levels of initiative and drive:

*Level-1: Takes Actions on Immediate Priorities:*

- Addresses present issues immediately without waiting to be told to act on them
- Is action-orientated and self-motivated towards his/her work
- Makes more than one attempt to resolve issues

*Level 2: Identifies Opportunities and Responds Adequately:*

- Spots opportunities and is quick to respond to them
- Overcomes obstacles to ensure completion of work
- Tries to predict clients' needs (internal and external) before they are voiced and addresses them
- Uses own judgement to escalate issues

*Level 3: Creates Opportunities for the Short Term:*

- Proactively engages in new initiatives and partnerships with the objective of creating a future opportunity or bringing about an improvement
- Introduces process changes that alleviates pressure during busy periods
- Anticipates potential problems and keeps superiors informed about developments
- Acts quickly to seize an opportunity or address a crisis by drawing on required resources and similar experiences

*Level-4: Anticipates and Acts for the Medium Term :*

- Takes initiative in creating solutions that would support organisation in future
- Acts proactively by planning ahead, and pursues specific opportunities
- Anticipates situations up to a year in advance, in order to plan action and build in contingencies
- Encourages others to take initiative Level.

*Level – 5: Nurtures Environment that is Conducive to Taking Initiative:*

- Plans for long term to anticipate and take action on possible opportunities or crises
- Creates an environment where individuals are willing and able to take initiative without fearing consequences of failure
- Persists at the problem to overcome obstacles
- Creates and supports environment that allows team members to make mistakes and learn from them
- Nurtures an environment of accepting mistakes and learn from them.

*Discussion:* At the theoretical level, it is understood that Initiative and drive could be considered as a Universalistic concept. It could be there in every person, and it is required for every human action. It is required at executive level, and require at policy formulating level. At work place, it is required from attender to higher authority for successful running of their organisation. It is required at decision making level, at supervisory level, or at clerical level. A Village Assistant is required to be innovative and drive to address a village pension's issue, and the Secretary to Government is required to be innovative and drive while drafting and framing the pension policy to make it address the right people. Initiate and Drive brings transformation. It challenges and questions the existing idea, construct, knowledge, and leads to creation of a new one.

But, the concept could also be understood as more complex and seems dominantly subjective. It is a human behaviour, and lies in the complete control and dispensation of its holder. And at the same, time, it is more fragile, vulnerable to external conditions and most of the times it is very easily influenced, constrained and marred by external forces. Therefore, it finds valuable and unique place in Private Administration, and taking their organisation to new heights. Whereas in Public Administration, initiative and Drive is limited by unique and complex nature of the environment.

At the empirical level, Public service Delivery system is expected not to act as a cog but as a wheel to achieve socio and economic progress of a Country. The ultimate objective of the initiative and drive is effective and efficient public service delivery with concern for economy in using of resources. It is the major concern of every public administrative system whether developed or developing

system like in USA, and India respectively. President Clinton introduced the 'National Performance Review' with the goal to make the entire Federal Government both less expensive and more efficient and to change the culture of their national bureaucracy away from complacency and entitlement toward initiative and empowerment<sup>2</sup>.

In the above background set forth, it would be pertinent to discuss the limitations which are plaguing the Indian administrative system with specific reference to initiative and drive. Despite having great heritage, strength of Constitution, and vibrant policy direction and strong administrative traditions, and practices, the perception about Indian civil service system has been cause of concern. The Sixth Central Pay Commission's had also made the following Comments worth relevant to the present context<sup>1</sup>:

*"for the common man, bureaucracy denotes routine and repetitive procedures, paper work and delays. This, despite the fact that the Government and bureaucracy exists to facilitate the citizens in the rightful pursuit of their legal activities. Rigidities of the system over centralization of powers, highly hierarchical and top down method of functioning with a large number of intermediary levels delaying finalization of any decision, divorce of authority from accountability and the tendency towards micromanagement, have led to a structure in which form is more important than sustenance and procedures are valued over the results and outcomes, and the subjective and negative abuse of authority have eroded trust in governance system which needs to be restored urgently".*

The 12<sup>th</sup> Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ARC has observed that the public administration in India is perceived to be unresponsive, insensitive and corrupt. Citizen complains of the poor quality of services, indifferent attitude of government servants, corruption and abuse of authority and lack of accountability<sup>1</sup>.

It is no secret that managing in the public sector is different from managing a Business Firm. Often the environments in which government managers operate can actually make it more difficult to succeed. In their study, Killefer & Mendonca, 2006<sup>9</sup> have found that there is significant evidence that productivity advancement in government organizations has not kept pace with the increases

found in the private sector. They have further mentioned that workers expressed strong appreciation for positive aspects of their jobs, including the autonomy and freedom, the job itself, a sense of achievement, and being able to work as part of a team. They related the favourable factors with the higher order needs of Maslow's hierarchy and Herzberg's satisfiers in his two-factor theory of motivation (Bounds, Dobbins, & Fowler, 1995; Griffin, 2002). The limiting factors relate closely to Herzberg's hygiene factors (supervision, interpersonal relationships, organizational policies, compensation, and working conditions) as well as to the two key elements of leadership as defined by Fleishman (1973) initiation of structure and "tolerance by the leader for two-way communication with the followers. With due caution, these findings could be explored for application for our public administrative systems.

Many external factors affect the initiative and drive at a work place. To put it in the words of Robert Lavigna, Chancellor and Director of HR at the University of Wisconsin and Author of "Engaging Government Employees: Motivate and Inspire Your People To Achieve Superior Performance" government offices are suffering from prevailing negative attitudes about government and government employees, frequent and abrupt changes in leadership, hard-to-measure achievement, an older workforce, Strong civil-service rules and employee protections, constraints on the use of financial incentives, strong union influence, public visibility of government, different employee motivations etc. All these factors are also limiting the culture of initiative and drive at work place. How to made public employee initiative and drive against all these limitations is the critical and pertinent question in the Capacity Building Programme.

In addition, initiative by employees is not always welcomed by supervisors or colleagues. Often high personnel initiative people are perceived by their environment as being tiring and strenuous. Every initiative "rocks the boat" and makes changes. Since people tend not to like changes, they often greet initiatives with scepticism, as the literature on organizational change has shown. Supervisors may even think of high Personnel initiative employees as being rebellious. As, they do not accept suggestions or orders by their supervisor without asking why; they are also less likely to do things one way just because that is the way they have

always been done in the past. In short, many supervisors may actually think of high-Personnel initiative people as a “pain”<sup>5</sup>. Further, psychological conservatism signifies a preference for a society characterized by stability (lack of change) and predictability (lack of uncertainty).

The Indian public administrative system has another issue for special consideration that is aiming for social equity and welfare. It is expected to work for social advancement, social equity and welfare of the disadvantaged sections in the country. This requires a separate set of skills, attitudes and set of competencies for civil servants. The challenge for the Administration and capacity building is how to model the initiative and drive concept so that the civil servants become more proactive, empathetic and dynamic in their problem solving and serving delivery approach towards these sections.

Any organisation to be successful and dynamic, initiative and drive is expected to be shown by every level in the hierarchy of an organisation i.e individual employee level, supervisory and middle level, and at the Head of the Department and at the Organisational level. This approach make the concept holistic one. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Reforms commission has pointed out that training for Group B and C services are not up to the mark<sup>1</sup>. The Commission has also pointed out that inadequate capacity building of personnel who are to implement the laws results in policies and laws not being implemented properly<sup>1</sup>. The Prime Minister of India Shri Manmohan Singh has made a resounding thought on the occasion of Civil Service Day, 2007 as follows<sup>1</sup>:

*“Effective and efficient institutions form the backbone of a successful development and governance process. The Founding fathers had the foresight to create the necessary institutional framework which has brought us thus far. We need to think whether this framework is adequate in the years to come; whether past mode of functioning will address the demands of the future in fast changing world; whether skills and capabilities that were relevant in the past have outlived their utility? It is only by asking and answering these questions will we be able to identify institutional reforms which will meet the needs of the times”.*

**Expected Role of Training Institutes in Transforming the Nations Civil Servants into the Force of Initiative and Drive – Few ideas:**

The National training Institutes and State Level Training Institutes are to emerge as the Public Administration Laboratories wherein case studies are thoroughly studied, discussed, analysed and assessed its outcome so as to derive some principles and ideas. Such ideas and principles could be experimented in public service delivery system in a controlled manner for observing results.

1. Case study approach is to be largely encouraged in the Mid Career Training Programmes. It disseminates ideals and outcomes of initiative & drive practices for their replication in other parts of the administrative system.
2. There should be balanced convergence of theoretical and practical knowledge in the training programmes. Inviting Retired and Service officers to give their insights on various administrative issues and practices would enhance fresh and practical approach to the administrative problems.
3. There should also be exchange of resource persons between Public Administrative Systems and Training Institutes. It could enhance understanding and exchange of ideas and practices.
4. Maintaining initiative and drive at work place is a continuous activity which requires constant mentoring and nurturing by the Organisation. One set of skills and traits of initiative in one context may not suit in another context. Constant and dynamic interaction between public administrative systems and Training Institutes should be rolled out to assess the needs and requirements of administrative systems as per the changing times.
5. It is visible that Human Resource Management Practices are more advanced and dynamic in private organisations. The Training Institutes shall act as a bridge in getting those successful and best practices into the public administrative systems.
6. A constant interaction between the administrative systems, and training institutes should be developed so that the Training institute can be transformed into expert Bodies and can aid and advice and offer solutions to the real and onsite problems of the human resource practices of the public administrative systems.
7. The concept of initiative and drive requires different set of skills and traits to administer social welfare policies and social equity policies. Training Institutes may take lead in identifying and developing these traits and skills.
8. A system of compulsory Research paper submission by in-service civil servants from their work experience would develop indigenous thought and knowledge in the human resource management practices in the country. This practice may be encouraged from different levels in the system instead of limiting to higher levels.

9. Identified Training Institutions should be made In-charge of continuous Monitoring and Evaluation of Training needs of the civil servants.
10. Training Institutes may need to emerge as the principal Human Resource Management Consultant for the Governments, and collaborate with Private Human Resource Management Consultants, if required.

**Take Away Points:**

Initiative & Drive plays an important role in making the Public Administrative Systems effective, efficient, and economical in their service delivery. It has special relevance to the Public Administrative systems in India. An initiative civil servant can make change in the processes and procedures and is driven by work motive. His proactive and problem solving approach can offer alternative and effective solutions to the administrative problems. It imparts long term perspective to his organisation's goals and objectives. Training has the potential to bring out one's initiative and drive hidden in a civil servant. National Training Policies have been increasingly emphasising the role of training programmes in human resource practices at levels in the system. Initiative and Drive explicitly occupied an important place in the Mission Karmayogi of the Government of India. There is huge scope for the Training Institutes to play a leadership role in developing and imparting best human resource management practices for catering the training needs of the civil servants in the area of initiative and Drive.

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