Vocational Education in Japanese Companies: Bridging the Individual and Social Approaches of Motivation

Tielsch, Markus

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Markus Tielsch

Abstract

Psychological, sociological, and inter-individual-process-theoretical (process-theoretical) approaches towards individual motivation in organizations are discussed and related with the organizational requirements towards individual behavior, and patterns of vocational education in German and Japanese firms. This paper claims that German patterns are foremostly based on the rational approach of motivation, leaving behind the motivational potential of social processes. Whereas the Japanese patterns of vocational education are bridging these two controversial approaches of motivation also applying effects described in the process-theoretical approach. In doing so, Japanese firms not only enjoy the benefits of less micro-management, but also gain higher levels of fit between employees and the organizational requirements towards their behavior.

Introduction

Since motivation is not directly observable, it is only a hypothetical construct. Therefore, motivation research can only describe the conditions from which motivation is qualitatively and quantitatively dependent, and the behavior in which motivation manifests itself. The question whether individuals are motivated to act individually, socially or somehow in between, has important implications for vocational education. Motivation is related to the three behavioral requirements of organizations towards their employees : First, individuals must be attracted not only to join but to remain in the firm. Second, individuals should not only perform in the tasks for which they are hired, but, third, should also go beyond performance and engage in creative, spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work (Steers & Porter, 1979, p. 3). From the perspective of these organizational requirements towards individual behavior, vocational education can not only be reduced to the training of "functional" (technical) skills but must also consider the training of "non-functional" (social) skills. Therefore, rather than the current term of "vocational training" which is usually related with blue-collar employees, focusing on basic skills, and having only a relative short-termed meaning, this paper prefers the term of "vocational educa-

tion". This term enables to focus also on the permanent development of skills of all regular employees who participate in organizational efforts of vocational education. The individual, his social environment and his tasks are three main variables that define an individual's work environment. Focusing on the motivating potentials of vocational education in Japanese firms, this paper leaves out the characteristics of the task, thereby not considering, for example, just-in-time-production which some authors see as one aspect of other coercive means of Japanese management (e.g., Suzuki, 1995) in order to force rather than motivate fit between organizational requirements of behavior and the actual behavior of employees. This paper then focuses on the individual, social, and process-related motivational approaches as they are related with vocational education.

Ⅰ. Approaches to Motivation

1. The Individual-Based Approach to Motivation

In organizational psychology humans are seen as having needs, desires or expectations, which create a disequilibrum, i.e., tension within the individual. Motivation is interpreted as the driving force to act in order to reduce that psychologial tension to regain a psychological equilibrium. Action is learned and executed only through motivation. Action itself sets up series of cues in the individual or its external environment which gives feedback to the individual concerning the impact of its behavior. Thus, the individual may reassure, modify or cease his present behavior.

In the following, this paper will focus on the theories of the rather biologically determined need theories, and the more cognitive approaches of equity and expectancy theory.

Need theories assume that humans have a set of rather innate than socially acquired needs. If an individual's needs are not met, a tension emerges which he tries to reduce or eliminate (Mitchell, 1997, pp. 65-66). Management should create a proper climate (e.g., by job design or leadership styles) in which employees can satisfy their needs for greater autonomy or task variety to achieve higher-order need satisfaction. If not, management creates frustrations, poorer performance, or lower job satisfaction (Steers and Porter, p. 38).

Need-satifaction concepts assume that persons have inherent needs, but even needs like hunger or sex are in part socially conditioned. Thus, people engage also in behaviors that are not related with satisfaction of needs. There is hardly any proof for an relationship between need satisfaction and behavior, e.g., productivity (Landy and Becker, 1987, p. 26). Also, relating needs to job satisfaction is not well specified, since job characteristics, need statements and attitudes towards jobs themselves as described by employees can be shaped by social influence and conformity pressure (Pfeffer, 1982, p. 59).

According to Equity Theory employees evaluate fairness by comparing their inputs (like effort, skills) to the firm with received outcomes (like income, recognition) compared to other employees. There will be tension, if the result of the comparison is perceived as unequal, which will motivate the individual to reduce this tension by changing his perceptions, behavior modification, switching comparisons, or by leaving the relationship. Employees want consistent and accurate, bias-free judgements. If realized, management could achieve more acceptance of organizational decisions, higher organizational commitment, and trust from the employees. (Mitchell, pp. 88-99). Managers have to find ways to insure that employees believe, they are being fairly treated, since their perception of the situation is more important than the objective "reality" (Steers and Porter, p. 105).

But it is difficult to determine what constitutes input, output, and the standard being used for comparison, because standards and referents change over time and context in the organization. Equity theory does not tell us which behavior the individual will choose. It neglects the instrumental uses of inequity in interpersonal relations, with which individuals may purposely create perceived inequity to improve their situation or achieving their goals. To maintain social relations in order to gain information it may be necessity to conform to social norms that prevent us from maximizing our outcomes without regard to the outcome of others (Mitchell, pp. 91-93).

Expectancy Theory views individuals as thinking, reasoning beings who have beliefs and anticipations concerning future events in their lifes. Thus, human behavior is a function of interactive processes between charateristics of an individual (e.g., personality traits, needs) and his perceived environment (e.g., supervisor's style, task requirements) (Steers and Porter, pp. 210-211). A person thinks about his alternative actions, calculates the extent to which each action leads to valued outcomes, and will finally choose the behavior which will lead to valued outcomes (Pfeffer, p. 45).

But not all individuals have the cognitive ability to choose behavior based on their perceptions of whether the behavior is likely to lead to valued outcomes (Landy and Becker, pp. 20-21). Expectancy Theory rather ignores the influence of normative social control since the model predicts the choice of an action only for a single individual (Pfeffer, pp. 46-47).

But there are other problems of individual-based approaches to motivation : First, motivational processes are very complex, since motives can only be inferred. Any single act may express several motives, several motives may be expressed through similar or identical acts, similar motives may be expressed in different behavior, and cultural and personal variations may moderate modes of expression of certain motives. Also, an individual has a host of needs, or expectations which can not only change but also be in conflict with each other, which makes

motives difficult to observe or measure. Or there are individual differences of how we select motives over others and the intensity with which we persue such motives (Steers & Porter, pp. 7-8).

Second, researchers consider behaviors of individuals (e.g., effort, performance) to be "motivated". But instead, our behavior ranges from reflex to consciously initiated patterns of behavior to overlearned and automatic patterns or habits (Landy and Becker, pp. 4-5).

Third, emphazising (intendedly or boundly) rational or cognitive processes, preexisting needs, attitudes, and intentions are to be served by selection of some actions from a set of possible options. Thus, these theories presume foresight and behaviors that are largely cognitively mediated. But there is also the possibility of meaning being retrospectively inferred from action and that goals are formed from action rather than guiding such action prospectively.

Fourth, social context factors like group effects and conformity pressures are systematically ignored to explain individual attitudes and behaviors, which makes it difficult to explain collective behaviors. So it is doubtful, whether theories from the level of individual rational cognitions can ever explain the aggregation of behavior that occurs in larger social systems (Pfeffer, pp. 72-79).

Fifth, another practical limitation is their demand of extensive micro-management. Need theories require the fit between employees and their job or organization, equity theory requires organizational procedures to achieve and maintain distributive justice. And, expectancy theory implies the creation of multiple reward systems and precise performance criteria to bring about effective motivation by providing different outcomes for different individuals.

2. The Sociological Approach to Motivation

Individual-based motivation approaches have problems to explain the formation and effects of socially determined values. Due to internalization and socialization processes, individuals permanently reconstruct their motive systems. Internalized values are expressed in individual value orientations, which are integrative and central elements of motivation. Values finally decide which stimuli (sanctions, gratifications) are important for the individual (Hillmann, 1994, p. 579).

In the following we will focus on motivation as approached by Parsons' system theory. The perspective of the individual as being socially constrained provides the opposite perspective on individual motivation of the psychological approach.

Parsons analyzes the conditions that provide processes with structure, whether these conditions contribute to the preservation of a system ("functional"), or whether they hamper the system's efficiency ("dysfunctional"). According to Parsons' functionalistic Systems Theory social action

only occurs in constellations ("systems"). Personality, organism, and society are independent
systems, which embody mutually related environments : The organic system provides the organ-
ism with energy for its basic psychological and physical functions. The psychological system
steers these energies into socially permitted ways, so that a personality is characterized by the
internalization of social control. Finally, the social system consists of the relational patterns of
different actors, who perform certain social roles. These roles are defined by normative expec-
tations of group members and institutions towards the individual actor. When these roles are
internalized through socialization, they become effective motivational forces and goals of individ-
ual action.

For Parsons social action is created by the stable coordination between the systems of
organism, personality and society, expressed, for example, by the conformity of the motivational
structure of an individual with that of the social system (where the expectations of the cultural,
political, economical systems are institutionalized). For Parsons, a stable equilibrium is the
optimum state of every system in relation with its environment. After internalization and
socialization, individual motives become the reflection of those subsystems with which the
individual is related through his role set.

Parsons himself and his defandants claim that no individual could ever be totally or simultane-
ously socialized into all features and aspects of the social system (e.g., Parsons, 1954, p. 145 ;
Holton & Turner, 1986, p. 19), since there are various contradictions between individual needs and
social control. But since Parsons views the individual personality as the reflection of the social
structure, he rather ignores individuation as an integrative element of the socialization process.
His system-oriented argument of equilibrium tends to ignore conflicts between the organic system
and socio-cultural expectations. Due to Parsons's strong orientation towards roles, individuals
are perceived as passive and not as active interpreters and creators of their environment (Hurrel-
mann, pp. 41-45).

But there are organizational patterns that support the view of the socially constrained individ-
ual. The social context of organizations like firms can affect motivation in two ways. First,
there are mechanisms of normative influence on the group level. Individuals want to be accepted
by the members of their reference group, and will conform-as a change of behavior-to real or
imagined group pressure to obtain these outcomes (e.g., Feldman, 1984). Thus the normative
influence of groups can have more powerful effect on motivation and performance than tradi-
tional supervision (e.g., Barker, 1993). And there are mechanisms of informational influence.
An individual is influenced by accepting information obtained from other individuals as evidence

about reality, since work organizations display a lot of ambiguous communication (Pfeffer, p. 85).

Socialization is a potent form of informational social influence that typically occurs at time of organizational entry, but also throughout the career in an organization. It furthers the understanding of an organization's culture and ways of doing things that will be internalized by the individual. This internalization makes external control less necessary (Pfeffer, pp. 96-97). Besides formal orientation, training programs and subsequent coaching, group norms and key co-workers informally shape beliefs and expectations that impact motivation (Mitchell, p. 103). Organizational culture-here in a rather functional sense-is viewed as a powerful social control system of normative order, operating in groups and organizations. Based on shared norms and values through informational and social influence, the behavior of people in collectives is guided and constrained towards the members' focus on attention, commititment and attainment of organizational goals (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1996, p. 160).

Compared to the individual-based motivation approaches, controlling individuals by social contexts does not afford as much costly micro-management. Once established correctly normative influences by a functional organizational culture tend to have their own life, are hard to change and can have powerful and enduring motivational effects (Mitchell, p. 105).

3. Process-Theoretical Approaches to Motivation

Organizations like firms require from their members that they remain in the organization, and that they should not only perform their tasks but also engage in creative, spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work. Rational individual behavior to gain more outcome for their input can drive individuals to leave the organization or not to participate in necessary actions beyond their task fulfillment. External control on behavior on the other hand can produce similarities in response regardless on any individual differences, but can hamper creativity of individuals in the organizational setting. Approaches that consider action and motivation as emergent from, and in, social processes offer ways to overcome this controversy. There are various sociological approaches which focus on the meaning-and goal-oriented action of the socialized human.

Action-theoretical approaches go back to Max Weber, who states that actions are meaningul oriented, based on value and goal choices of individuals. "Sociology [...] is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects. In 'action' is included all human behavior when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it" (1947, p. 88).

Weber then classifies social action into the following four 'ideal' types according to its mode of orientation and decreasing degree of rationality : First, instrumental or means-ends rationality is the type of action in which the actor is trying to accomplish something by calculating how to

arrive at some end.   Instrumental rationality constitutes economic action at its highest, ideal-
type level.   Second, value-rationality is the type of action that is an end in itself, i.e., the action
itself embodies its own value.   Weber puts emotional, and traditional action on a lower level
under the other two types of rationality, because they are not based on conscious reflection, and
thus are obstacles to the rational development of the social world (1947, p. 115).

Although Weber's action theory puts more emphasis on the subjective creation of meaning than
Parsons' system theory, both approaches ask for the motivating factors of social action.   Unlike
the individual approach of organizational psychology, their focus lies not on internal, but rather
on given external stimuli that elicit individual response (like norms, expectations).   In contrast,
the following approaches ask not for the factors but processes by which existing norms are
internalized by individuals, through which individual motivation and social expectations become
integratively correspondent.

In his phenomenologcial approach Schutz states that Weber's concept of social action shows
theoretical limitations.   "Weber makes no distinction ［...］ between the meaning of my own
action and the meaning of another's action.   ［...］ He does not try to indentify the unique and
fundamental relation existing between the self and the other self (Schutz, 1967, p. 8).   For Schutz,
Weber took for granted the meaningful phenomena of the social world as a matter of intersub-
jective agreement, but there are big differences in the meaning structure of an individual's
behavior and that of others (Schutz, pp. 8-9).   Humans are meaningfully acting and interacting
subjects, who are always born into a pre-structured cultural and social world, but who reconstruct
and further create this world through own interpretations of meaning.   Intersubjectivity, i.e., the
mutual orientation and relatedness of subjects is a basic fact of human existence in the world of
every day life.

The Symbolic Interactionism approach of Blumer is influenced by the phenomenology of
Schutz, but puts more emphasis on communicational aspects occurring between individuals.
Blumer defines three premises of symbolic interactionism.   "［First, ...］ human beings act
towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.   ［... Secondly ... ,］
meaning of such things is derived from ［...］ social interaction that one has with ones' fellows.
［Third ... ,］ these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process
used by the person in dealing with the things he encouters". (Blumer, 1969, p. 2).   Thus, humans
not only live in a natural but also in a symbolically mediated world.   Symbols (e.g., languages)
of certain meanings which are widely shared among individuals enable the definition and redefin-
tion of social situations, and a mutually oriented social action.   Socialization is viewed as a

process of learning of symbols where individuals become competent to act socially and inter-actively.　Individuals become able to take the role of other individuals, to anticipate and inter-prete their expectations and reactions, and to consider these for the control of their own acting. Symbolic communication is seen as the means that liberates the individual from the determina-tion through the social and material world.　Social conditions influence, but not determine the structures of human conscious and action (Hurrelmann, 1995, pp. 48-52).

In the approaches of Schutz and Blumer individuals are not viewed as as a reflexive organism behaving in rule-like manners or as passive elements of a system.　Rather an individual is seen as personality that meaningfully and consciously inter-acts with others through commonly shared symbolic systems of orientation.　The social structures are not given as in the Parsonian view, but the product of interaction and interpretation of individuals, which implies that there is no necessary or natural order to social arrangements.　Consequently, these approaches can repre-sent a threat for stability of social order for organizational management.　Another problem of the phenomenological perspective stems from its emphasis of the situation-specific frame of reference and cognitive sense making of individuals.　There seem to be less use for symbols, ideology, or language.　Consequently, it is difficult for management to influence these processes. But important managerial implications dervive from the symbolistic interaction approach. Management can influence the individual perceptions of the organization and employees' behavior by managing myths, images, and symbols (e.g., Weick, 1995).　Under this perspective, organ-izational culture appears to be less rigid and functional than in the sociological approach to motivation.

Another source of managerial influence is language, because cognitive processing uses language as a category system.　Language strongly influences beliefs and can integrate individual experi-ences into a meaningful whole.　Managers can improve their leadership effeciency when their language overlaps with that of their subordinants, and thereby create cohesiveness and reduce opposition.

Another implication for management derives from the view, that actors in organizations must rely largely on tacit assumptions and routines, and on other individuals, who they assume to be similar than themselves.　The mechanisms linking people together and forming social structures appears then emotional rather than cognitive.　Thus, management can expend influence by emotionally affecting subordinate behavior (Pfeffer, pp. 208-223).

Compared to effectively controlling individuals by social contexts like a functional organ-izational culture, managerial influence here seems to be ambiguous and assumptions about the costs of management to take influence on employees is difficult.

Summarizing the different broad approaches to motivation, which can be applied to individual behavior in organizations like firms, it is clear that no human behavior is only motivated by either individual rationality, social constraints, or inter-individual processes.   Motivation is always the result of a combination of these approaches.   There seems to be no "best way" of how to motivate employees to meet the three basic behavioral requirements stated in the introduction. But for reasons we will explain below, we assume that vocational education in Japanese firms is a pivot of effectively bridging, i.e., integrating these motivational approaches.

II. Vocational Education and Motivation

Besides making employees capable to fulfill job or task requirements, another goal of vocational education is they are motivated to remain in the organization, and to engage in creative, spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work.

At this point of the discussion it is necessary to emphasize that the three approaches towards motivation have different views about the nature of the organization and consequently imply different approaches towards profession and professional education.

The first perspective of motivated action as being rational and goal-directed presumes that the tasks of management, the organizational design, and the incentive and control system are virtually engineering problems (Pfeffer, p. 10).   Organizational form and control resemble bureaucracy, which has the implications for professions and professional education as we can find them in German firms.   The second perspective on action as being externally controlled or situationally constrained (by group processes and functional organizational culture) and the third perspective that actions emerge from, and in, social processes have different implications for organizational form and professional education.   Since the former perspective relys more on controlling action through group processes, the organizational form seems less "mechanical", but rather "organic" (Burns & Stalker, 1961).   The later perspective achieves control over behavior and action by creating social reality in the bridging range somewhere between the "individual" and "social context" by an organizational culture that is less functional than rather cognitive and symbolistic (Smircich, 1983).   Therefore, also the view on professions and professional education strategies in Japanese firms are differing very much from vocational education in German firms.

1. Vocational education in a "mechanistic" organization
"Mechanistic Bureaucracy"

In "community" (Gemeinschaft) and "society" (Gesellschaft) Weber sees two basic forms of social relations (1947, p. 43, 70).   Community is achieved, when social action is based on emotional

and traditional togetherness (e.g., family), and society is achieved, when social action is based on rationally motivated connection of interests (e.g., firm). If legitimacy is based on rational grounds, rational-legal authority is achieved, resting on a belief in the legality of patterns of normative rules and impersonal order. Where rational-legal authority involves an organized administrative staff, it takes the form of a "bureaucratic" structure. Offices are organized in terms of a stringent hierarchy of authority, and fitness for an office is determined by technical competence. For Weber, bureaucracy is the most efficient instrument of large-scale administration, dominant over any other organizational form due to precision, speed, continuity, or costs. (Weber, 1995, pp. 238–239).

From Weber's bureaucracy model it is not far to the definition of the "mechanistic" management system according to Burns and Stalker. Its characteristics are for example, the differentiation of functions which are specialized by rights, obligations and technical methods, the commitment to the firm is rather limited to functional position, and there is a hierarchical structure of control, authority and communication. And there is the tendency of vertical interaction between organizational members, or the tendency of work behavior to be controlled by superiors (Burns & Stalker, p. 120). But concerning the patterns of vocational education in Germany, we do not share their opinion in two other points. First, we do not think that the condition of membership in mechanistic organizations is loyalty to the firm, but rather the professional qualificiations of individuals. And secondly, we do not think that employees' skills are dependent to the respective firm, but that they are rather independent. Below, we will show why.

Skilled Work as bureaucratic pattern of qualification

In the second half of the 19th century, the antiquated craftsman model of vocational education was revived in Germany to counteract social tensions due to the industrialization. Along with a growing bureaucratization, occupations (Berufe) became standardized according qualification and tasks. Professionalization and specialization made the work organization independent from single persons, but skilled workers became independent from the companies. The professional patterns and educational regulations today determine the income and position of skilled workers in the organizational and social hierarchy. Characteristic for the German vocational education system (the socalled "Dual System) is that the companies regulate the supply of training opportunities and that public regulations strongly influence the contents and methods for vocational training, which guarantees for the inter-company utility of skills (Georg, 1994, pp. 166-170).

Bureaucratic patterns of qualification and motivation

Along with a growing bureaucratization, the medieval-confessional term of occupation ('call-

ing') had changed into a secular-technical term only related to criteria of content and economical performance. Consequently, the organizational integration of individuals also changed. In the medieval German society individuals were socially integrated into guilds if they wanted to gain skills. Here, normative integration was achieved by processes of structuring motives and interests of individuals. But today, the patterns of vocational training in German firms do not follow this "social integration" logic any more but one of a "system integration" (Bergmann, 1991, p. 96). Integration is not achieved by normative means of a "community" anymore, but through institutional arrangements which has totally different consequences for motivation.

From the rational perspective of motivation we can assume that individuals in the German setting choose careers according professions and specialization to fulfill their personal needs and goals. The social context of work groups affects motivation effectively, only if management is able to establish groups against the concerns of individuals as specialists at all. Socialization and organizational culture have only weak normative influence on specialists in German firms, since there exist only very few shared organizational norms and values through informational and social influence. If there are any shared norms and volues among specialists, they are mostly reduced to certain professional groups.

If we come back to the behavioral requirements towards individuals, specialists then seem to be less guided and constrained towards attention, commitment and attainment of organizational goals. Also, specialization supports the performance of tasks for which employees are hired, but it seems to reduce the motivation to remain in the organization. Specialization enables task-related problem-solving, but also creates horizontal as well as vertical segregation of skills within an organization. This effect can oppose the organization's behavioral requirement to engage in creative, spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work.

After having gone through the vocational system in Germany, a specialist is rather committed to his profession than to his employing organization. It is exactly here, were we see the motivational limitations of vocational education in Germany, and the motivational potential of the system in Japanese firms.

2 . Vocational Education in an "organic" organization

"Organic Bureaucracy"

Instead being "mechanistic", Japanese firms resemble rather what Burns & Stalker call "organic" organizations. The differentiation of functions are less specialized, and the commitment to the firm goes beyond any technical definition. Instead of a strict hierarchical form, we

find rather a network structure of control and communication, and the tendency of a lateral rather than vertical interaction between organizational members, or the tendency of superiors controlling work behavior not only by instructions but also by advice (Burns & Stalker, p. 121). But concerning the patterns of vocational education in Japan, we again do not share their opinion in two points. First, we do think that in organic organizations loyalty to the firm is a condition of membership, rather than professional qualificiations of individuals. And secondly, we do think that skills are dependent to the respective firm.

Why Japanese organizations can be called organistic, derives from the following characteristics. First, since organizational control is rather group-based, there is no thorough specialization of individuals. Thus, the content and range of tasks of organizational members is flexible. Secondly, authority and responsibility are isolated from individual tasks. Which means that authority is shoulderd by the group and responsibility is spread among all group members, since the task content of individuals are fluent. Third, the groups integrate personalities, because the relationships between individuals in the group transcend the simple relationships of qualifications and the groups become the individuals' living space. Fourth, organizational activity is based on the competition between groups, what derives from the internal cohesion of groups and their defensive attitude against external influence (Outa, 1994, p. 68).

The image of Japanese firms is that of an enterprise community comprising personalized and diffuse work roles and relations permeated by a strong culture. But the degree of bureaucratization is not low, since Japanese firms rely heavily on codified procedures and written communication. Also, the image of an enterprise community veils the fact that Japanese firms depend on employee competition to achieve higher status in the hierarchy as the primary incentive device to counterbalance against the nonhierarchical tendencies of the operational coordination, and to maintain organizational effectiveness and integrety (e.g., Aoki, 1994).

Skilled work in an "organic bureaucracy"

During the industrialization in Japan there was no comparable revival of the antiquated craftsman model of vocational education like in Germany. Industrial work and vocational training became means not of individual independence, but of social integration into the companies. Today, the public vocational education system in Japan plays an insignifant role compared to Germany. There has been no "professionalization" on the level of the skilled employee, but rather turning him into an "generalist". In-company vocational education is integrated in the working processes and exclusively a matters for the personnel policy of the respective companies. Neither state nor the public expect the firms to achieve training efforts which transcend their

in-company utility.

The work organization is characterized by group work and permanent rotation. There seem to be neither lines of demarcation between the single work places, nor between the various qualifications. Thus, OJT becomes necessarily the most important training method. Compard to the German patterns there is neither a clear line to differ between work and training, besides OffJT, nor a line between further in-company training and newcomer training. (Georg, 1994, pp. 178–180).

Vocational education as social integration

Besides the reliance of groups, Japanese management applies the following mechanisms of social integration. Careful recruitment and socialization through introduction into the organizational philosophy, intiation rituals, group activities, OJT through experienced coworkers or seniors, etc. Organizational socialization creates firm-specific potentials by incorporating the whole person.

Personnel evaluations in Japanese firms are not only considering the level of qualfications, quality and quantity of performance, but also the evaluation of social-moral attitudes and behaviors of subordinates by their direct superiors. Combined with seniority, evaluations define income and position within the company status hierarchy, and further socialization by social control, which guides the development of firm-specific individual skills. Criteria like work attitude and performance have moral quality which translates into diligence, discipline, or cooperations (Bergmann, pp. 97–100).

Rotation of employees enables departments and areas to take advantage from various skills, and it serves for accumulation of experiences which creates the basis for a flexible allocation of the employees. Rotation is not only decisive in sharing tacit knowledge. (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), but can be viewed as putting the rotated employees under permanent newcomer socialization influence.

Management further influences behavior of organization members by manipulting images and symbols, or by overlapping language. During education, trainer and trainee share common symbols and language especially in relation to specialized tasks. Since senior colleges are more familiar with the company's history and are often the trainers for their junior colleges in "man-to-man" fashion, there is not only a transformation of stories into action likely to happen, but also emotional affection.

These mechanisms of social integration in Japanese firms incorporate employees into a "community of fate" (Cole, 1979, p. 240). Their aspect of socialization is central. In the Weberian sense, organization community is not growing from somewhere, but is created by

"action". It is important to note that these institutional arrangements of social-integrative processes were created through conscious action of management. Community controls the processes of creation of opinions and articulation of interests of employees.

Qualification and motivation in an "organic" organization

In opposite to the German patterns, vocational training in Japanese firms do not follow a "system integration" but a "social integration" logic. Integration is rather achieved by normative means of a "community", than through institutional arrangements which has different consequences for motivation.

If we connect the three approaches to motivation with the patterns of vocational education in Japan and the behavioral requirements of organizations, we find following characteristics. According to the rational perspective of motivation in the Japanese setting more individuals choose careers not according professions and specialization to fulfill their personal needs and goals, but rather by seeking employment in respective companies, than individuals in Germany. Due to the normative integration of individuals in Japanese firms, the social perspective of motivation and also the process-theoretical approach become very effective. The social context of work groups affects motivation effectively, because groups rather than individuals are the essential units of work organization and control. Socialization and organizational culture as social contexts have relatively strong normative influence on generalists in Japanese firms, since there are many shared norms and values through informational and social influence. Consequently, skilled workers in Japanese firms are very much guided and constrained towards attention, commitment and attainment of organizational goals. After having gone through the in-company vocational education, a skilled worker is rather committed to his employing organization, than to a profession, or professional group.

Coming back to the organizational requirements of individual behavior, the Japanese patterns of vocational education seem to stimulate not only the performance of tasks for which employees are hired, but it also to integrates the motivation to work from the behavioral requirement of the organization to remain in the organization. Also, lower degrees of specialization enable task-related problem-solving, without creating horizontal as well as vertical segregation of skills within an organization. The organization's behavioral requirement to engage in creative, spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work is easier to meet.

3. Bridging the motivational approaches in Japanese vocational education

Before we continue our summary, the following should be noted. In this paper we argue that

the "mechanic" and "organic" organizational forms ask for different ways to obtain behavioral requirements. But it is also possible to assume that different behavior of individuals requires different organizational forms. We tried to avoid the latter assumption, because it would lead us too far into speculations about ethnic and cultural differences. The argumentation then, continues with the assumption that the differences between German and Japanese companies derives from different managerial strategies that create proportional variations between these motivational aspects, which has different implications for how the three behavioral requirements are met by the individual employees. Our goal was to show, how these proportional variations are reflected in the vocational education in both countries.

For our understanding the modern German patterns of vocational education are foremostly based on the rational approach of motivation, leaving behind the motivational potential of social influences and inter-individual processes.   In the present German "culture of profession", identification with the employing company is insignificant, or at best, a product of coincidence.

The Japanese patterns of vocational education, on the other hand, are bridging the rather controversial individual and social approaches of motivation by drawing on effects described in the process-theoretical approach, thereby having the benefit of less micro-management and achieving higher levels of commitment to organizational goals. In-company vocational education in Japanese firms is not just one institutional arrangement besides seniority, permanent employment etc., but an important instrument, by which management can translate its strategy of employee integration in a planned and effective way. Vocational education in Japanese firms seem to overcome the limitations of the individual-rational-approach as well as the social-constrained-approach towards motivation.

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