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Organizational Behavior in a Discontinuous World

Managerial and Workers Perspectives

Organizational behavior as a field of study grew out of the history of industrialization and the need to know how to manage workers. The field was historically largely one-sided serving the interests of management as research focused on increasing productivity and efficiency. This book is a response to the ethical issue of research that in effect is conducted primarily in order to manipulate worker attitudes and motivation. Four international researchers with a background in social psychology and organizational behavior and teaching at major universities have provided a new look from the perspectives of both managers and workers.

Research must be reevaluated in the context of a world where change is rapid, global in nature and discontinuous. The authors sought to achieve this goal by systematically examining past and current research in ten chapters covering the major variables in organizational behavior. The research reviewed cover both individual factors affecting organizational functioning like personality, but also broader group concepts including norms and culture. Although early studies supported the importance of human factors they did not herald workplace democracy. However, rapid social change and the diversity of the workforce have encouraged new managerial practices. Thus the book examines in detail work related attitudes and job factors that produce job satisfaction including skill variety and the autonomy to perform work. Personality factors are also identified including neuroticism, locus of control, self-esteem, and the need for personal growth.

Major conceptual areas discussed in addition to work related attitudes include motivational theories; worker well-being focusing on social and occupational change and stress; organizational group processes and team work; leadership in organizations; organizational power in politics, gender differences and culture; organizational processes and structures; social culture and organizational culture and change; and organizational behavior from a cross-cultural perspective. The literature that point to consistent differences between individualistic and collectivistic societies is evaluated. Important new developments focus on equity and justice theories that are essential to worker motivation. Work is central to our lives and worker well-being is supported by the characteristics of the job as well as the social climate at work.

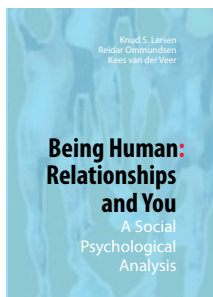
Globalization has produced significant stress as workers have not only to adjust to new and varied cultural values, but also abiding job insecurity. Stress results also from the continuous emotional labor required in an increasingly service based economy. Cultural differences are manifested in salient group processes and structures. The role of gender differences in the use of power is evaluated as these have changed in recent years. Recent research has shown the many benefits to both organizations and workers from self-management, worker autonomy and democratic leadership. Organizational change and development are prominent factors in the globalized world that has produced rapid technological and social change requiring adaptation to the knowledge explosion. The affect of culture has brought about a notable interest in the field of cross-cultural organizational behavior. Economic uncertainty, rapid change, and major restructuring characterize modern society. This book examines the most salient cross-cultural research results reflecting these developments keeping in mind that the context of all research is ubiquitous change.

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