

## The Philosophical Foundations of Management Thought

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**Abstract:** Like other sciences, the science of management was included in philosophy at the beginning. However, in the course of time, science of management separated from the philosophy. It is still possible to see and find the extension of philosophers' ideas and thoughts in the applications of administration and organization at present. (e.g. information, existence, ethic, politics, religion and education). All these come to the fore mostly for the managers and employees in methods, techniques and behaviors. It is quite natural that automation, robotics, computers, some other innovations and creative and modern ideas formulated and still being formulated for human relations take part in the theory and practice parts of the science of management and they continue to their efforts to make the business world easier for the employees and administrators.

**Key words:** Management, Human, Philosophy

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### INTRODUCTION

The practices of management are old as social life. Management thought dates back to the ages B.C. Until the Industrial Revolution (second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> cent), it was composed of basically philosophers' ideas and thoughts about the job, labor and trade and also about administration and organization and of advices given to the statesmen. The management thought, with its content, might be likened to "philosophy" since dealing with metaphysical explanations and speculations based on mental and logical analyses.

### SUB-TITLES OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is an act; a creation and a setting up action. The things that it has created and established are called 'concepts'. Philosophy is different from objective and subjective idealism and communication. There are mainly seven sub-titles of Philosophy. These are: (4)

- a) Epistemology
- b) Philosophy of Science
- c) Ontology
- d) Ethics
- e) Politics
- f) Aesthetics
- g) Theology
- h) Educational Philosophy

If we are to analyze the sub-titles of Philosophy and thinkers on this topic:

#### a) Epistemology

**1. Philosophical Movement of Scepticism:** Following are the thinkers: Zenon (495-430 B.C.). He worked on developing new moral disciplines and principles to put the Greek City States together again.

**2. Philosophical Movements concerning the Source of Knowledge:** 'Philosophical Movements' concerning the sources of knowledge are in the following: (6)

- a) Rationalism
- b) Empiricism
- c) Critical Rationalism
- d) Intuitionism
- e) Positivism
- f) Logical Empiricism (Analytical Philosophy)
- g) Pragmatism

If we are to have a short look at these movements:

#### a) Rationalism

**Socrates (469-369 B.C.)**

He put forward the idea that the administration was universal, i.e. "There are some common points in every administrative instance however the differentiating features of the events and institutions are different from one another." (7)

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### **Plato (Eflatun)**

He says, "Wisdom is the virtue of administrators. They foresee the future better based on the knowledge they have and are going to make general policies and laws for the happiness of the people. (8) Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)

He tried to perceive the society and define it in a more systematic way. According to him, for people to be different from the other living creatures will be possible only if they form groups to lead a good life. (9) Farabi (870-950)

Though the source of dominance is as a result of looking for and finding human needs and necessities, he supports the idea that the dominant have to be just one person. He is not against the idea that the dominant is just one person on condition that this dominant person is intelligent, virtuous and a wise man. Descartes (1596-1650)

He was against the traditional logical conception. He wanted the logic to bring a much more active and productive method to the scientific field and to join the practical life in a more active way. (11) Hegel.

He believed in the idea that human beings can learn every thing. He worked on the concepts used in the act of thinking.

### **b) Experimentalisms (Empiricism)**

#### **J. Locke (1632-1704)**

Locke says, "The source of knowledge is our experiments. We can feel suspicious for all kinds of knowledge except for experiments. (13).

#### **D. Hume (1671-1776)**

He put forward the idea that our knowledge was gained by associating the past events with our thoughts. (14)

### **c) Critical Rationalism**

#### **I. Kant (1724-1804)**

According to him, human beings expressed their philosophy within the realm of Ethics and Historic Philosophy. (15)

### **d) Intuitionism**

#### **Gazali**

He is an Islamic scholar who has tried to explain the mind in some different ways. He named varied skills as mind. He also told that the mind was a comprehension skill of conceptual knowledge. He used the mind for the knowledge gained by experiments, as well. He defined the mind as the final thinking after all had been done. He recommended the use of mind in all the relations in the earthly life and in responsibility.

Bergson (1859-1941)

He says that knowledge is attained directly via the intuition, which is a type of instinct. (17).

### **e) Positivism**

#### **A. Comte (1798-1857)**

He contributed to the sociological idea. He talks about three-stage-law (theology, metaphysics and positive stages) (18).

### **f) Logical Empiricism (Analytical Philosophy)**

#### **LA Wittgenstein (1899-1951)**

He has worked on linguistic philosophy. He says that there is appropriacy between the language, thought and reality. (19)

### **g) Pragmatism \ V. James**

He became the forerunner of psychology in the U.S.A. He influenced the course of later events greatly in the field of behavioral studies. (20)

#### **John Dewey (1842-1910)**

He thinks knowledge is a vehicle providing practical assistance. (21)

### **b) Philosophy of Science**

#### **Lucca Pacioli (1340)**

He developed double entry bookkeeping and this invention laid the foundations for accountancy. (22) Sir Thomas More (1478-1536)

He perceives the state as a complete idea without a soul. He criticizes the economical and social conditions of Europe, especially of England. (23) F. Bacon (1561-1626)

He recommended the deductive method. He says that the inductive method should be a classification and elimination technique, not just the pure arrangement of all pieces of information. (24) Spinoza (1634-1677)

He supports the saying "The administration in the places where people live together and where there's no violation of laws is the best administration." (25) Adam Smith (1723-1790)

He envisages the psychosocial problems in the modern mass production society and this is seen in his thoughts on the division of labor. (26) Sir James Stewart (1767)

He said, "The production of compulsory devices to meet the human needs opens the way for the production of never ones. Varied ways and social cooperation of meeting the needs requires never productions. (27) Robert Owen (1771-1858)

in his time, the labor standards of workers in factories were poor and their level of income was too low. Among the workers were many women and children. They were employed under the worst

conditions until they became exhausted and had no energy. The daily working hour was 13 hours.

Owen surprised everyone by making varied studies on the improvement of the labor conditions.

He brought down the working hour to 10.5 hours a day. He did not employ the children aged under 18 and increased the wages. He conducted productivity studies and gave importance to education. (28)

#### **Charles Babbage (1792-1871)**

He approached scientifically towards the division of labor, work analysis, work necessities, specialization, time and motion studies, cost accountancy and productivity studies. (29) Eli Whitney (1799)

He worked on the development of productivity methods. Interchangeable parts were found out in the applied quality control and cost accountancy test. (30) James Watt-Mathew Robinson Boulton (1800)

They are known as the pioneers of the scientific management. Watt dealt with the organization and administration and Boulton dealt with the sales and trade activities. (31)

They applied a number of management techniques in a machine foundry. These techniques were planned machine for better workflow, production planning and standardization of production, market research and forecasting. Apart from a statistical system, which would find the cost and benefit of each machine, they also developed schemes for developing executives of both the workers and the administrators and paid according to these results. (32) Henry Metcalfe (1847- 1917)

He was the manager of a military dock in the U.S.A. In his book called "The Cost of Manufacture Administration of Workshop: Public and Private", Metcalfe suggested the recording of observations and experiences and the art of management should be based on these recorded observations and experiences. (33)

#### **Frederic Winslow Taylor (1856-1913)**

He was an American engineer who sought to find the most efficient way, that is, "One Best Way" to perform specific tasks. His ideas and rules came together under the name of a movement called "Scientific Management School" and his methods on more effective engineering to improve industrial efficiency had a great impact on the subsequent studies.

#### **Elton Mayo (1880-1949)**

He spent most of his productive years in Harvard Business School. His previous studies in Hawthorne factory laid the foundations for the Human Relations Movement. He believed in the idea that the industrial adaptation is of great importance for the continuation

of a decisive society. He also asserted that the recognition of the needs of both the workers and the management opens the path for social stability. (35)

#### **c) Ontology**

##### **Heraclitus (540 B.C. - 475)**

In his opinion, nothing stands still in the universe. He emphasizes that everything is in the continual process of flow. This phenomenon results from the clash and unity of the opposites. He says, "it would never exist if the unity of opposites hadn't occurred. (36)

#### **d) Ethics**

##### **Yunus Emre (1238-1320)**

He believes that the real existent is God. The truth knowledge is attained by the recognition of God and love is the only way for the recognition of God.

##### **Hacı Bekta Veli (1209-1271)**

He made the humanistic love one of his main principles. He worked for the spread of Turk-Islamic thought. He established a powerful moral system and defined the God as a lovely existent. (38)

##### **Mevlana Celaleddin (1207-1273)**

He interprets the Islamic philosophy from a mystical point of view. He lays considerable emphasis on divine love, tolerance and virtue.(39)

#### **F. Nietzsche (1844-1900)**

Opposing to the moral values, he defends self-discipline, power and individualization instead of mind.

#### **e) Politics**

##### **Camparella (1568-1639)**

He defended the dominance of science and philosophy.

##### **Max Weber (1864-1920)**

The German sociologist, Weber, tried to formalize a system, which he called "bureaucracy." (42) In his time, the administration (military, church etc.) had been offering bureaucratic features.

Weber's model and formulas are good criteria to understand the bureaucratic structure. According to him, the continuation of an organization depends on the designated rules and the line authority. He also says that the administrators of varied line authorities should take the responsibility for the exploitation of sources under their own authorities. All relations and procedures should be determined by written documents.

**M. Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938)**

He expressed the necessity of legislative, executive and judicial bodies, that is, the necessity of separation of powers.

He emphasized that the government should be based on the principles of Republicanism, Nationalism, Statism, Populism and Secularism.

**f) Aesthetics**

**A.G. Baumgarten (1714-1762)**

He contributed the theory of beauty in arts to the philosophical sciences under the name of aesthetic intelligence.

**g) Theology**

**D. Hume (1771-1776)**

He represents a kind of scepticism and his type of scepticism is the one, which is shown against all kinds of anti-experimental knowledge. (45) h) Educational Philosophy

**J.J. Rousseau (1712-1778)**

He has ideas about how and according to what principles the administrators, people or children should be educated in a good social regime (or in a good society).

**Conclusion:** The main aim of philosophy is to attain general and comprehensive knowledge by making use of the pieces of information in the other fields.

There is an interaction between the philosophy and science. They contribute to one another's development. In a historical process, philosophy is divided into four parts. These are Antiquity (sixth cent. B.C.), Middle Ages (476 -1453), New Age (nineteenth cent.) Modern Philosophy (from twentieth century up to the present day).

At the very beginning, science and philosophy was together. A philosopher was seen as a scientist at the same time. In the course of time, all sciences separated from philosophy. In the eighteenth century, the science of management separated from philosophy, as well.

Science does researches to get information, but philosophy studies what information is.

Science makes use of Deductive and Inductive methods while the philosophy uses intuition and combined methods.

It is inferred that up-to-date methods, principles and models concerning the science of management are in the realm of philosophy and all these had been recommended, thought and put into practice by the philosophers and thinkers.

Though we see a lot of innovations, variations and transformations, the human element still comes to the

fore. Because science and scientific research and development studies are planned, designed and put into practice by humans. Intervention and manipulation of all the other components in this process seems easier when compared to that of humans. Philosophy makes every effort to make human beings perceive themselves and the outer world.

**FOOTNOTES**

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