

Work Simplification and Its Implications on Organizational Development: A Critique

07 Nov.
BE33

E. A. Y. D. Perera^{1(*)}, T. D. Weerasinghe¹

¹*Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka*

(*) E.mail: yohandperera@gmail.com

The current study reviews, summarizes and critiques on how modern business organizations could apply work simplification as a strategy in Organizational Development (OD), featuring job designing and redesigning as a dimension of OD. Building on the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), a qualitative content analysis of the relevant research papers which built on the same model was conducted. It was found that work simplification is not a novel concept in terms of job designing as it has been introduced by Taylor and Gilbreth in the earliest 1900's. Traditionally, it was foreseen as an industrial engineering technique which was defined as a tool of increasing the production per unit of time, and consequently, reducing the unit cost. However, afterwards it began to articulate as an Organizational Development (OD) strategy after the research conducted by Allan Mogensen (1937) across various industries and domains in the commercial world. Therefore, in today's business, work simplification doesn't demarcate only to division of labor and specialization, but also making the jobs as simple as possible with a greater degree of flexibility, recombining tasks and duties into more enriched and non-routine patterns. Ideally, the ultimate purpose of work simplification should be the Organizational Development, as well as creating more benefits for employees, customers, entrepreneurs and the society at large. In conclusion, this study elaborates work simplification from a different perspective of job designing to meet both efficiency and behavioral outcomes from the employees, leading the Organizational Development.

Keywords: Work simplification, job redesigning, organizational development