

Organizational Behaviour
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Lecture - 43
Power and Leadership - Part 1

Warm welcome to this lecture series on Organizational Behaviour. We are on the chapter on Power and Leadership.



OVERVIEW

- Defining Power
- Sources of power
- Empowerment
- Organizational Politics
- Leadership
- Leader Vs Manager
- Approaches to Leadership
- Managerial Grid
- Leadership Theories
- Contemporary Issues



So, this is going to be the outline of the chapter. Initially we will be defining what is power and also different sources of power and we will be discussing about the concept of empowerment. We will also talk about one of the negative effects of power in organization, which is organizational politics and then, we will talk about leadership, difference between leaders and the manager and also different approaches in understanding leadership.

We will talk about the model called Managerial grid and discuss various theories in leadership. We will also discuss at the end the contemporary issues in leadership. If motivation is central to the individual dynamics of organizational behaviour leadership and power, this chapter is going to be a very popular chapter or a very central chapter in interpersonal dynamics aspect of organizational behaviour.

So, the motivation chapter is a very application oriented chapter in individual dynamics. Similarly, leadership and power chapter is going to be a central theme through which we can

understand the organization and the organizational dynamics. So, that is why leadership is considered to be a very important concept in organizational behaviour.



POWER

- Ability to influence others.
- The capacity to change the behaviour or attitudes of others in a desired manner.



So, we will start with power because power and leadership are interconnected; because a leader is a one with who has power. So, without power leader cannot exist, but again there are different forms of power.

When you say power, usually we think about someone who is strong or strength is considered to be power, something which is very forceful or something which is very coercive is considered. That is what comes to our mind when we need think about power, but power is not necessarily something coercive or something which is forceful; some power can also be very gentle.

So, how do we define power? Power is the ability to influence others. So, if someone has the capacity to change or to control others behaviour, then it is power. So, the second definition in fact talks about that power is defined as the capacity to change the behaviour or attitude of others in a desired manner.

So, in an organizational context if someone is able to change the behaviour or attitude of others in a way that he or she wanted it to be, then it is power. So, I spoke about power can also be gentle, power may not necessarily be coercive or forceful. I will give an example friendship. Friendship can also be a power. Your friend has a power to influence you or change you, if you have children you know or infants. Do infants have power? They are so small and they are so helpless.

Do you think they have power? Yes, they do because they are able to change our lives. You know we modify our lives depending on the necessity which arises from having a child. Is not it? People quit their jobs because they have children, they change their lifestyle because they have children and people modify their day to day activities because they have young children small infants.

So, even an infant being so gentle and so you know weak and meek can control our life. So, in that sense the infant also has power. So, power is not necessarily means you know you have to you have to be forceful or you have to be coercive, you have to be big and you know strong. Even the weakest can have a different sort of power. So, from a very commonsensical point of view like I said earlier power is considered to be something which people at higher level of the organization has not necessarily.

Power can also be found in lower levels of the organization or people at the lower levels of the organization can also have power or your colleague can also influence your behaviour. So, in that sense colleague is not higher than you in terms of the organizational hierarchy, but even then your colleague at the same level can also influence your behaviour. So, in that sense your colleague also has power over you. Similarly, you have a certain influence on your colleague.

So, in that sense you have also powerful. You may not be able to influence everybody in the organization, but at least few people you are able to influence. So, in that sense you also have power. Similarly, you know in the organizational context people at the lower level can also influence people at the top. So, we assume that power flows from top to bottom, through orders or through reinforcements, but not necessarily people at the bottom can also influence people at the top.

You know through filtering the information which goes to the top or by you know by the virtue of numbers by the virtue of you know coerciveness people at the bottom when they come together as a large group, they can influence people at the top.

So, the objective of explaining the idea of power here is to make you understand. Power is a very complex factor or power is something which is not very linear. Power as idea can be very dynamic and you cannot in very simple words or simple ways understand power in organization.

Power can exhibit or power can manifest in different ways in organizations. Having said that like I said power can be of different types, different forms, different ways it can be exhibited or manifested. So, how do people get power or what are the sources of power? Like I said in an organization everybody has some level of power and some form of power. In a group it is not like only leader has power; each member has some form of power or the other.

So, how do people get power or what are the sources of power? For example, let us say in a classroom whose more powerful or whose who has power from a very commonsensical point of view? You may think the teacher or the you know or the instructor has more power. Why? Because if the instructor wants he or she can cancel the class or he or she can fail the students, he or she can give good marks to the students.

So, whatever the teacher says the students listen, ok. So, in that sense teacher is powerful, but where does this power come from? One, it comes from the fact that teacher is designated as someone who can control the class, someone who can make decisions. So, it is a formal power ok. Teacher also can fail students or teacher can also pass students, give them good grades. So, through that he or she can control the students ok. So, ability or capacity to reward or punish, ok.

Sometimes teacher can also get power; because the teacher is considered to be a good teacher or a favorite teacher by the students through his or her good teaching skills, the way in which he or she teaches he gets acceptance from he or she gets acceptance from the group. So, in that sense the acceptance from the students gives the teacher power. Sometimes the teacher can be the best teacher, he or she may not try to get acceptance from the students, but through his or her expertise in that area he or she can get power ok.

So, that kind of expertise gives a person power. So, it expertise is also a kind of a very important source of power. So, what about students? How do students have power? Students have power in terms of numbers you know they can the teacher teaches because to help the students learn. So, in that sense the purpose of the teacher is learning of the students. The existence of the teacher can be justified only through learning which happens among students.

So, if there are no students, there is no teacher the meaning of teaching exists because of the students. So, by giving purpose to the teacher, students become powerful. Two, like I said earlier when they come together collectively as a group, they can influence teachers behaviour. For example, when teacher when the students everybody shows disinterest, so the teacher has

to change his or her style of teaching. So, the teachers behaviour changes; because certain behaviors or certain group dynamics exhibited by the students.

Three, students can also decide the teachers behaviour through by creating teachers need, teachers need for acceptance. So, like I said teachers teach in a certain way, so that they want to be a good teacher or they want to be considered as a good teacher among students. So, in that sense teacher behaviour is driven by students you know level of acceptance of the teacher.

So, indirectly they control the teachers behaviour. So, in a simple classroom dynamic itself, there can be many ways in which power can be exhibited and they can be different sources of power ok.

SOURCES OF POWER

- Legitimate: based on formal position.
- Coercive: capacity to administer punishment to others.
- Reward: capacity to administer reward to others.
- Expert: based on skills and abilities.
- Referent: the degree to which one is liked and admired by others.



So, according to Organizational Behavioral theories, sources of power or through how a person gets power or what gives a person power in the organization can be classified into five different types.

In fact, they are not very mutually exclusive. It is not like one person will have only one source of power. A person can have different multiple sources of power like I said a teacher can have multiple sources of power. And also, it is not like one person will have complete power through one source. He or she may derive different sources and use them in different ways depending on the context to control the followers or control people around them ok.

So, the first kind of power is Legitimate power. Legitimate power means power somebody derives through the position formal position, ok. For example, if I am a teacher in a class or if

I am a manager, I have certain powers which is defined by my organization. I can do these things which are allowed under my job description. I can you know fire someone, I can reward someone. So, all those things are defined by my position.

For example, if you are a judge in a court. So, you have clearly defined powers think in terms of how much control you have in terms of making judgment and things like that. This is legitimate power, but again legitimate power may not necessarily be a true power because sometimes people may override informal power.

For example, in an organizational context CEO might be a very powerful person. CEO is, in terms of formal power, CEO is the most powerful person but the CEOs assistant or the personal assistant of a CEO can also be powerful because the personal assistant can access the CEOs emails. Or the personal assistant can decide how the CEOs time is utilized because he or she decides the schedule of the CEO. And the personal assistant also decide who can meet and who cannot meet the CEO; because everyone who makes a CEO, most of them goes through the personal assistant.

So, in that sense even without a formal position, the personal assistant can also be powerful in the organization. So, legitimate power not necessarily means it is the most powerful source of power; because they can be other forms of power which can also be effective.

The second important source of power is Coercive power. Coercive power means capacity to administer punishment to others. So, if you have this source of power, you can you have the ability or the capacity to punish someone, but not necessarily reward them like I said sometimes people can have multiple powers. You cannot have purely one source of power so, but let us say a policeman or police personnel police personnel. If you violate the law, they can punish you, they can fine you or they can take you to the court.

They can you know take away your vehicle, take away your license, but they cannot reward you if you follow the traffic rules, they may not give you know rewards in terms of your followed the rules ok. But if you do not follow the rules, they can they can lead you to punishment. In that sense police personal have more coercive power that is why we fear them.

Reward power is capacity to administer reward to others. It is opposite of coercive power. You may not be able to punish someone, but you can reward someone in the group probably you know teachers in higher education institutions. So, in higher education institutions all your

students are adults you know. You cannot treat them like children and you know punish them, but even punishment beyond a point it may not work.

So, in colleges or higher education institutions what you can do is, you can control people by saying if you study well or if you know if your class participation is good, I will give you extra marks, I will allocate certain you know marks for class participation, so that they will behave well in the class or attendance. In fact, some institute attendance is not compulsory.

Institutes like IITs attendance you cannot you know fail someone because they do not have attendance; but what you can do is you can have certain number of marks, certain percentage of marks for attendance. If somebody attends all the class, you can give them marks for attendance. So, reward power is somewhat similar to this. You cannot punish someone, but you can reward for good behaviour.

The fourth source of power is Expert power. Expert power means you have certain skills and abilities which is very which nobody else has which is very rare. So, if you have certain rare skills and abilities, you are considered to be powerful because people will come to you for advice and people will in an organization the end if it is a very unique power unique skill and ability somebody possesses, the entire organizational tasks structure or the process flow will be centered around these niche skills or unique skills and abilities.

For example, certain departments are considered to be more central to the functioning of an organization because they have unique expertise. So, the entire organizational processes will be centered around those departments. So, in a way those departments through the through their expertise become powerful.

Similarly, in some cases in organizations even if you do not have formal power in terms of position through your expertise because you on expert in that area or you are there for many years through your experience you gain expertise power because you know how things work. So, that gives you some amount of expertise higher levels of expertise. So, people depend on you even if you do not have formal power. So, this is what we call expert power.

The fifth power is referent power. Referent power in very simple words you get referent power when people prefer to get attached to you or people want to be close to you or people want to identify themselves to you, then you get referent power.

For example, you know if somebody likes to say I am a follower of that particular guru or I am a fan of that movie star or I am a you know follower of that political leader. So, if people are proud to say that, then that particular leader gets some amount of power the particular you know spiritual leader or the movie star gets power.

So, having a follower base or a fan following gives this person the one whose is followed the power, ok. So, again you know it is like a reverse power. It is like a mutually convincing or mutually influencing power.

So, what if all the followers at one day think or one day feel 'no, we are not going to follow this person' or what about you know suddenly this person loses his ability to attract people towards him ok. So, let us says it is a huge fan following. A new person who comes to this fan base will be willing to join this fan base because there are so many people who are following. Not necessarily because the one whose followed is attractive. So, sometimes even the size of the fan following will decide the power of the leader or the one who is followed.

Suddenly one day if everybody decides not to follow, then the one who is followed may lose the followers and lose the power. So, what should the one who is followed on the leader should do to gain this referent power? Keep satisfying the followers you know keep that close touch with them or you know make them feel that he or she is also one among them.

If you see many of these charismatic leaders, movie stars especially in their movies, they will act in roles which can be easily identifiable with the mask like someone who is an auto driver, auto rickshaw driver, someone who is a you know common person someone who is a you know local you know local person, someone who is like a very poor person and things like that ok.

So, this is what gives referent power. It can be in in other cases like you know someone like a powerful political leader can also create this referent power by saying you know I also came I am also from a simple background; I am also like you because I am also a very simple person. So, all those things create referent power because it creates a mass fan following.

So, these are some of the powers which individuals can have in organizations. Like I said earlier a person can have multiple powers. You can be a manager, you get power through your position, but also you influence people in a positive way by creating you know acceptance another, so that you get referent power and also as a manager you are an expert in the area you know you have you know more about certain areas.

So, you get expert power. Similarly as a manager, you can have coercive power and reward.



EMPOWERMENT

- Power as a cooperative concept
- Benefits of empowerment



So, when we talk about power like I said earlier we assumed power as a top down generally, commonsensically, we assume that power flows from top down. So, higher you go in the organization hierarchy, more power people have you know like it is like a hierarchy.

So, it is like a pyramid. When you go to the top, you get more power. In other words, you can influence more people than the one who are the bottom. If you are top, there are more people at your bottom. So, you can have more control over people who are at the bottom and also more people are under you; and also whatever decisions you make are going to affect more people in the organization.

So, usually organizations are seen as pyramids in terms of structure. Power is concentrated at the top, bottom more people with less power. This is how societies or you know organizations are seen as power structures, but they can be organizations which are flat also which means everybody has equal amount of power and everybody you know depending on the context can become a leader. It is not like only few people are leaders. Anybody can become leader at any point in time. So, very flat kind of organizations.

So, recently or you know past few decades the understanding about power is, power should be distributed or organizations should acknowledge everybody has power. It is not like many people at the top has power like I said there are different forms of power. It is not like only position gives you power. The one at the top has positional power, but the ones at the bottom

can have other sources of power and organizations or managers should acknowledge the you know the power of the majority who are in the organization.

So, power should be distributed. Power is not necessarily means it flows in one direction. It can flow in both the direction like I said in a classroom, the teacher can influence the student, the student can influence the teacher. Similarly, in organizations the manager can influence the subordinates, the subordinates can also directly or indirectly influence the manager. So, you have to understand that power is a cooperative concept. So, similarly like this referent power if there are no followers, there is no leader.

So, when one fine day people stop following the leader, the leader loses his or her power. So, for a leader to retain his or her power, he should he or she should ensure that the followers power is acknowledged. Followers power to change the course of or the change the fate of the leader. So, power is a cooperative concept. You should acknowledge that the other person on whom your you are exerting your power or the one who's the one who are influencing also can influence you.

So, that is a very important concept manager should understand. So, if you do not acknowledge the power of your subordinates, what will happen? So, at some point, they may revolt or you may not even know when you may lose your power.

So, what is the importance of empowerment in organization? So, what I mean to say is instead of having very tall structures which are very power centered at the top; to some level organization should acknowledge people at the bottom and distribute some level of power. So, this is what we call Empowerment. Empowerment means distributing power or giving power to people, so that they decide on certain decisions.

So, in organizational context most of the times power means how much decisions you can take and what are and what is the intensity or what is the importance of that decision. So, like I said in organizations when you go to the top, you can make decisions which are more influential which can influence more people to a very great extent ok.

For example, the Head of the State, a Prime Minister of the country can make decisions which can affect many people in very in depth ways, ok. In that sense the position is very powerful. Similarly, in organization the CEO can do that, but empowerment means you can you should allow people or you should distribute the power, so that power is not centered at the top, so that

people at the bottom can also make decisions which can influence their own lives. You cannot take all the power from them and you make all the decisions. You should distribute decision making authority.

So, why is it important to do that? One, it gives a sense of ownership of you should if you empower people will feel they are so part of the organization, otherwise they will feel you know that these are boss, these people are like managers, we are like workers. You know they do not feel attached to the organization, they will feel as if they are slaves.

So, making people feel like slaves is a dangerous thing for organization because like I said earlier at some point, they may revolt, they may you know they make they may stop following the orders ok.

Similarly, when people feel they are very powerless, they will feel they do not have anything to lose. So, that gives them power. So, there is this concept called power of the powerless. When you take away all the power of people at the bottom and most powers are centered in one position, the powerless the ones who are powerless, they feel they do not have anything to lose and that gives them a lot of power and they can the revolt. They can take violent measures to revolt. So, that is why many dictators fall at the end through revolution; because they have taken away all the powers from the public or from the mass.

So, one, if you empower people, you will avoid these kind of negative situations. Two, it will make people feel sense of ownership in the organization. Three, if you empower people instead of focusing all the power in one position or one person, it will help in leadership succession planning.

So, if you see many countries or many organizations when there is a very powerful leader who does not distribute the power after him or her, the organization will fall because the leader did not create enough leaders in the organization. If you do not create enough leaders in the organization if you focus all the power in one place after that person or when that position fails, the organization will also fail ok. You should have many leaders in the organization. If you want to have many leaders in the organization, you should distribute the power through empowerment ok.

So, I will stop here. In the next slide, we will talk about the negative aspects of power and also concepts on leadership. Till then take care. We will meet in the next lecture.