Enhancing Integration of the Person and the Role through Role Efficacy

Dr. Ashutosh Shukla

Associate Professor & Head (Management), Department of Management, Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, Indian Navy, Ministry of Defence, Government of India., Kannur, Kerala - 670310

Abstract

The complexity of modern life is reflected in the multiplicity of roles that man has to perform in society. The major problem that confronts man today is that of managing the multiple roles effectively by achieving an integration of the self with the various roles that he occupies. Such integration is not only necessary for the mental well-being and personal effectiveness of individuals, but also important for the organization in making the best use of an individual's creativity and maximizing it through the process of synergy.

It is only through the role that an individual gets linked with the system (of which he is a member). The integration of the two (the person and the role) that ensure a person's effectiveness in the organization. The integration of a person and the role comes about when the role is able to fulfill the needs of the individual and the individual in turn is able to contribute to the evolution of the role. The closer that role taking (responding to the expectations of various other people) moves to role making (taking the initiative and designing the role creatively so that the expectations of others as well as of the role occupant are integrated), the more the role is likely to be effective. Effectiveness of a person in a role in an organization will depend on his own potential effectiveness, the potential effectiveness of the role and the organizational climate. The potential effectiveness can be called 'efficacy'. Role efficacy would mean the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. It can be increased through a joint effort of the role occupants, their managers and the organization (top management).

Keywords: Role, Efficacy, Potential Effectiveness, Role Making, Role Centering, Role Linking.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of role efficacy is not a new concept in India. It has got its root in Baghwat Geeta which preaches an individual to feel pleasure to each and every process of work (Karma) and not bother for the results. Nevertheless, the concept of role efficacy in the Indian context has been pioneered by Pareek (1974, 1980, 1986 & 1993).

"All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players" Shakespeare's quotation states that everyone is playing a role. The complexity of modern life is reflected in the multiplicity of roles that man has to perform in society. Life in the present times is characterized by the differentiation of roles and the increasing complexity of the role structure. One major problem that confronts man today is that of managing the complex structure of roles effectively by achieving an integration of the self with the various roles that he occupies. Such

integration is not only necessary for the mental well being and personal effectiveness of individuals, but also important for the organization in making the best use of an individual's creativity and maximizing it through the process of synergy (Pareek, 1987). This is possible when a higher level of collaborative work is achieved in an organization. The main problem for an individual is how to continue to live autonomously as a person and at the same time maximize the effectiveness of various roles, thereby integrating the self with the roles (which in turn need integration). It is important to understand Role in an organization and its effectiveness, as it is through the role that an individual gets linked with the system (of which he is a member). This linkage is a vital 'entity' which may help increase organizational effectiveness. In this sense, role becomes an important dimension for planning the effectiveness of both the persons and the organization.

MEANING & CONCEPT OF ROLE EFFICACY

The performance of a person working in an organization depends on his own potential effectiveness, technical competence, managerial experience, etc., as well as the design of the role that he performs in the organization. It is the integration of the two (the person and the role) that ensure a person's effectiveness in the organization. Unless a person has the requisite knowledge, technical competence and the skills required for the role, he cannot be effective. Equally important is how the role in the organization is designed. If the role does not allow the person to use his competence, and he constantly feels frustrated in the role, his effectiveness is likely to be low. The integration of a person and the role comes about when the role is able to fulfill the needs

of the individual and the individual in turn is able to contribute to the evolution of the role. The closer that role taking (responding to the expectations of various other people) moves to role making (taking the initiative and designing the role creatively so that the expectations of others as well as of the role occupant are integrated), the more the role is likely to be effective. Effectiveness of a person in a role in an organization will depend on his own potential effectiveness, the potential effectiveness of the role and the organizational climate. The potential effectiveness can be called 'efficacy'. Personal efficacy would mean potential effectiveness of a person in personal and interpersonal situations. Role efficacy would mean the potential of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. Role efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness. In short, role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of a role. It can be increased through a joint effort of the role occupants, their managers and the organization (top management).

Effectiveness of a person in a role in an organization will depend on his potential role effectiveness and the organizational climate. The term personal efficacy or personal effectiveness has been used interchangeably. Personal effectiveness may be defined in various ways. According to Sutton & Ford (1982) personal effectiveness from the problem solving perspective refers to the ability to solve four of the system problems, such as: (a) adaptation, (b) goal attainment, (c) integration, and (d) latency or tension management. It also refers to the ability to perform the job effectively. According to Rao (1985), a manager may be considered effective who understands his job and job requirements well, is aware of his own and his 'subordinates' strengths and weaknesses, utilizes his own and his 'subordinates'

strengths in performing the tasks, overcome weaknesses and acquire new capabilities through continuous learning on the job. Although effectiveness may be defined in many ways, one of the most important being is to consider how "well" a person does his job, whatever his job or role is. Role efficacy would mean the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. Role efficacy can be seen as a psychological factor underlying role effectiveness. In short, role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of the role.

The term 'effectiveness' according to the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary by (Geddie, 1964) means having power to effect, causing something, successful in producing a result or effect. On the other hand, the Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary (1975) defines the term 'effective' as able to bring about the result intended, making a striking impression. Effectiveness refers to the perfection characteristics of an individual that are described and worked for. This effectiveness is characterized by optimum levels of efficiency and productivity on the part of person concerned. Effectiveness could be taken as ones hold on the circumstances and himself befitting the best of his total adjustment. "Effectiveness is considered to be the finest trait and an attribute. It represents ones personality in its best form. It is related to both the means and the ends of the entire spectrum of activities and occupations of an individual" (Anand, 1981).

The role of a manager / supervisor is affected by: (a) his/her personality characteristics, (b) behavior, (c) qualifications and (d) job satisfaction. Behavior is the mirror of personality or it is personality in action. Research findings reveal that sympathetic, kind, loving, affectionate and impartial behavior of manager / supervisor towards their subordinates help in establishing good rapport with them, which contributes towards manager / supervisor's effectiveness. Role efficacy of the manager / supervisor means the effectiveness of the manager / supervisor's in their role. How far they are effective in their role? In the context it means to what extent manager / supervisor's can use their skills, knowledge, expertise in their role, whether they get an opportunity to take initiatives, their future prospects, and moreover, how far they directly or indirectly contributes to society.

DEFINITION

'Role' can be defined as the position one occupies in a social system, as defined by the functions one performs in response to the expectations of the significant members of the social system, and his own expectations from the position or office. The effectiveness of a person's role in an organization will depend upon his own potential effectiveness of the role and the organizational climate. Pareek (1987) defined role efficacy as "potential effectiveness of the role".

Each individual occupies and plays several roles. All these roles constitute the role space of that person. At the center of the role space is the self. As the concept of role is central to that of an organization, so also the interpretations the person makes about referent. It is a cognitive structure that evolves from past experiences with other persons and objects. Self can be defined as the experience of an identity arising from a person's interaction with the external reality—things, persons and systems. It has several aspects. The more aspects there are in the role, the higher is the efficiency. These aspects are classified into three groups or dimensions: role making, role centering and role linking (Pareek, 1987).

Enhancing Integration of the Person and the Role through Role Efficacy |
Dr. Ashutosh Shukla

ASPECTS OF ROLE EFFICACY:

Role efficacy has several aspects (Pareek, 1980 a&b). The more these aspects are present in a role, the higher the efficacy of the role is likely to be. These aspects can be classified into three groups or dimensions as under:

I. ROLE MAKING:

Role making involves active participation by the role occupant to define the role- the priorities, the ways in which they can be achieved, and ways of increasing the effectiveness of the role. The four dimensions of role making are as under:
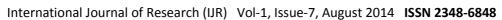
- *Self-role Integration (Vs. Distance)* – Every person has a particular strength, experience, technical training, special skills and some unique contribution that he may be able to make. The more that the person's role provides an opportunity for the use of such special strengths, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. This is called self-role integration; the self or the person and the role get integrated through the possibility of a person's use of his special strengths in the role. If the person occupies role in which he is not able to use his talents or skills, he experiences self-role distance. Because we want our strengths to be utilized so that we can demonstrate how effective we can be, integration contributes to high role efficacy. There are two approaches to self role integration: careful selection and placement help to place suitable individuals in roles. However, another approach is more proactive: an attempt within an organization to discover what strengths each individual has and how these can be utilized in the person's role. The organization can redesign roles to increase the responsibilities of the roles or to make the tasks more interesting or

more meaningful to the role incumbents (Pareek & Rao, 1981).

- *Proactivity (Vs. Reactivity)* – It means freeing oneself from, and taking action beyond immediate concerns. A person who is proactive functions at the feeling, thinking and action levels. It indicates a high level of maturity. If the person takes the initiative and does something independently to exhibit proactive behavior, his or her efficacy will be higher.

- *Creativity (Vs. Routine)* – An opportunity to try new and unconventional ways of solving problems or an opportunity to be creative is also important. When the role occupant perceives that he does something new or unique in his role, his efficacy is high. The perception that he does only routine tasks lowers role efficacy, as does the lack of opportunity to be creative. Creativity can be developed through the joint efforts of employees and management. It needs to be reinforced; criticism of innovative attempts stifles creativity.

- *Confrontation (Vs. Avoidance)* – The term 'confrontation' is used here in the sense of facing a problem and not attempting to escape from it. It does not mean shouting, express oneself aggressively, or being unwilling to explore. It does involve recognizing a problem, searching for alternative solutions (often with the help of others), and developing a higher level of collaboration. Openly sharing feelings is a necessary part of this process. The emphasis is on empathy rather than on aggression.

II. ROLE CENTERING:

A role occupant can take steps to increase his or her influence. One way to do this is to increase one's knowledge and skills. This

process is called centering (making the role central), in contrast to merely accepting the role and performing it (role entering). The dimensions of role efficacy concerned with role centering are as follows:

- *Centrality (Vs. Peripherality)* – Centrality is the perceived importance of a role. There are three ways in which a role is seen as important: if the role is linked with a larger cause, if the effectiveness of other role is seen as dependent on the performance of the role, and if the role occupants are identified as representatives of the organization, the role will be seen as important. If persons occupying various roles feel that their roles are peripheral, i.e., not very important, their potential effectiveness will be low.

- *Influence (Vs. Powerlessness)* – Role efficacy increases in proportion to the person's ability to exercise influence or power in his / her role. The influence may be in terms of decision making, scheduling, processes, implementation, advice or problem solving. In relation to super ordination, roles in the public sector may be more efficacious because they influence a larger segment of society. On the other hand, if a person feels that he has no power in the role he occupies in the organization, the efficacy is likely to be low.

- *Growth (Vs. Stagnation)* – The factor of self development is very important to role efficacy. When a role occupant has opportunities and perceives them as such to grow and develop in his or her role through learning new things, role efficacy is likely to be high. Similarly, if the individual perceives his or her role as lacking in opportunities for growth, role efficacy will be low. There are three dimensions of growth: current role, transition to the next role, and general development. Attention should be paid to all

three. If a person feels that he is stagnating in a role without any opportunity to grow he is likely to have a low role efficacy.

III. ROLE LINKING:

A role can be linked to other roles by interaction as well as by helping relationships. Linkage can be further extended to larger groups. The dimensions of efficacy concerned with role linkage are as under:

- *Inter role Linkage (Vs. Isolation)* – The number of linkages between a role and other roles is measured against the desired amount by the role occupant. The dimensions of inter-role linkage are the level, the basis and the type of linkage. A role occupant desires to have linkages with roles at all three levels in his/her role set with senior employees and managers, with subordinate employees and with peers. Such inter linkages can have several bases. At least four seem to be important: *common goals, interdependence, empathy and crisis management.* The organization can do several things to promote inter-role linkage and to deal with areas of role isolation.

- *Helping Relationships (Vs. Hostility)* – One important aspect of efficacy is the individual's perception that he or she is able to give and receive help. On the other hand, if no help is given when asked for, or if respondents are hostile, the perception of hostility or indifference decreases efficacy. A helping relationship requires both the expectation that help will be available when it is needed and the willingness to respond to the needs of others. A healthy helping relationship is a two-way process while a role occupant is ready to empathizes, support and sacrifice his time, is also prepared to seek help from the other role occupant. Such

mutuality should exist is all relationships, including the one between the boss and employees. The boss can (and should) also take the subordinates help various matters as much as he helps the employees.

- *Superordination (Vs. Deprivation)* – Concept of Super ordination comes from the concept of the super ordinate goals. Super ordinate goal is one that is valuable to two or more persons or the groups involved, which is sharable and which can not be achieved by a single person or a group working alone. The term Super ordination indicates the relevance of a person or role to a larger entity. Super ordination may take several forms. Roles that you people opportunity to work for super ordinate goals have the highest role efficacy. Many people have voluntarily accepted reduced salary to move from private sector to the public sector because their new roles provided them an opportunity to serve the higher interest. Super ordinate goals that serve larger groups can not be achieved without some collaborative efforts.

DETERMINATION OF ROLE EFFICACY (RE)

Role Efficacy Scale (RES) was designed by Udai Pareek (1986b) to determine how much role efficacy a person has, the strengths of the ten aspects of role efficacy. The ten dimensions of role efficacy are Centrality (C), Integration (I), Proactively (PR), Creativity (CR), Inter role linkage (IRL), Helping relationships (HR), Super ordination (SU), Influence (INF), Growth (GH), and Confrontation (CONF). It is a structured instrument consisting of 20 triads of statements. These three alternatives are pre-weighted. There are two statements for each dimension of role efficacy and the scoring pattern (+2, +1, or -1) is followed. Satisfactory reliability and a high validity

were found for the role efficacy scale. This is widely used by the authority and several scholars in various organizational setups.

ROLE EFFICACY SCALE

Name:
    Role:

Organization:
    Date:

In each of the following sets of three statements, tick the one (a, b or c) that most accurately describes your own experience in your organizational role. Choose only one statement in each set.

1.   ____a.   My role is very important in this organization; I feel central   here.
    ____b.   I am doing useful and fairly important work.

    ____c.   Very little importance is given to my role in this organization; I feel peripheral here.

2.   ____a.   My training and expertise are not fully utilized in my present role.
    ____b.   My training and knowledge are not used in my present role.
    ____c.   I am able to use my knowledge and training very well here.

3.   ____a.   I have little freedom in my role; I am only an errand boy.
    ____b.   I operate according to the instructions given to me.
    ____c.   I can take initiative and act on my own in my role.

4.   ____a.   I am doing usual, routine work in my role.
    ____b.   In my role I am able to use my creativity and do something new.

_____c.   I have no time for creative work in my role.

5.   _____a.   No one in the organization responds to my ideas and suggestions.

_____b.   I work in close collaboration with some other colleagues.

_____c.   I am alone and have almost no one to consult in my role.

6.   _____a.   When I need some help, no one is available.

_____b.   Whenever I have a problem, others help me.

_____c.   I get very hostile responses when I ask for help.

7.   _____a.   I regret that I do not have opportunity to contribute to society in my role.

_____b.   What I am doing in my role is likely to help other organizations or society.

_____c.   I have the opportunity to have some effect on the larger society in my role.

8.   _____a.   I contribute to some decisions.

_____b.   I have no power here.

_____c.   My advice is accepted by my seniors.

9.   _____a.   Some of what I do contributes to my learning.

_____b.   I am slowly forgetting all that I learnt (my professional knowledge).

_____c.   I have tremendous opportunities for professional growth in my role.

10.   _____a.   I dislike being bothered with problems.

_____b.   When a subordinate brings a problem to me, I help find a solution.

_____c.   I refer the problem to my boss or to some other person.

11.   _____a.   I feel quite central in the organization.

_____b.   I think I am doing fairly important work.

_____c.   I feel I am peripheral in this organization.

12.   _____a.   I do not enjoy my role.

_____b.   I enjoy my role very much.

_____c.   I enjoy some parts of my role and not others.

13.   _____a.   I have little freedom in my role.

_____b.   I have a great deal of freedom in my role.

_____c.   I have enough freedom in my role.

14.   _____a.   I do a good job according to a pre-decided schedule.

_____b.   I am able to be innovative in my role.

_____c.   I have no opportunity to be innovative or to do something creative.

15.   _____a.   Others in the organization see my role significant to their   work.

_____b.   I am a member of a task force or a committee.

_____c.   I do not work on any committees.

16.   _____a.   Hostility rather than cooperation is evident here.

_____b.   I experience enough mutual help here.

_____c.   People operate more in isolation here.

17.   _____a.   I am able to contribute to the company in my role.

_____b.   I am able to serve the larger parts of society in my role.

_____c.   I wish I could do some useful work in my role.

18.   _____a.   I am able to influence relevant decisions.

_____b.   I am sometimes consulted on important matters.

_____c.   I cannot make any independent decisions.

19.   _____a.   I learn a great deal in my role.

_____b.   I learn a few new things in my role.

Enhancing Integration of the Person and the Role through Role Efficacy |
Dr. Ashutosh Shukla

_____c.   I am involved in routine or unrelated activities and have learnt nothing.

20.   _____a.   When people bring problems to me, I tend to ask them to work it out themselves.

   _____b.   I dislike being bothered with interpersonal conflict.

   _____c.   I enjoy solving problems related to my work.

ROLE EFFICACY SCALE SCORING AND INTERPRETATION SHEET

Instructions: Circle the numbers to your response to each of the twenty items. Total these numbers and enter this sum in the box just below the key. Then compute your Role Efficacy Index according to the formula given.

Dimension	Item	a	b	c	Item	a	b	c	Total
Centrality	1	+2	+1	-1	11	+2	+1	-1	
Integration	2	+1	-1	+2	12	-1	+2	+1	
Proactivity	3	-1	+1	+2	13	-1	+2	+1	
Creativity	4	+1	+2	-1	14	+1	+2	-1	
Inter role Linkage	5	-1	+2	+1	15	+2	+1	-1	
Helping Relationship	6	+1	+2	-1	16	-1	+2	+1	
Super ordination	7	-1	+2	+1	17	+1	+2	-1	
Influence	8	+1	-1	+2	18	+2	+1	-1	
Growth	9	+1	-1	+2	19	+2	+1	-1	
Confrontation	10	-1	+2	+1	20	+1	-1	+2	

YOUR TOTAL [   ]

Role Efficacy Index

$$\frac{\text{Total Score} +20}{60} \times 100 = \boxed{\quad\%}$$

$$\text{Example} \quad \frac{36 + 20}{60} \times 100 = 93\ \%$$

Interpretation

Note that the scale (-1, +1, +2) allows a maximum score of +40 and a minimum score of -20. Your role Efficacy Index represents a percentage of your potential effectiveness in your organization role. A high percentage indicates that you perceive that in your role you have a great deal of opportunity to be effective.

The ten dimensions of role efficacy are each measured by two items. Look at each dimension to determine in what areas you perceive yourself as having less than what you think you need to be effective. Look for pair of items for which you have low score and compare these dimensions. You may want to discuss your findings with your colleagues and your supervisor.

CONCLUSION

It is the role that integrates a person with the role that ensures person effectiveness' in an organization. Unless a person has requisite knowledge, technical competence and the skill required for the role, he couldn't be effective. Equally important is how the role, which he occupies in the organization, is designed. If the role does not allow the person to use his competence, and if he constantly feels frustrate in the role, his effectiveness is likely to be low. Role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization it is the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness. Role efficacy has ten aspects (Pareek, 1980 ab). The more these aspects are present the higher the efficacy of role is likely to be.

REFERENCES

1. Beauchamp, Mark (2002) Role ambiguity, role efficacy and role performance: Multidimensional and mediational relationship within interdependent sport teams. Group Dynamics, 229-242.

2. Biswas, Urmi-Nanda (1999) A study of time management, role efficacy and Organizational commitment among different groups of professionals. Abhigyan, 17(1), 39-48.

3. Deo, T.T. (1993). A study of some psychological correlates of role efficacy in organization from the information technology industry. Unpublished doctoral dissertation in Psychology, University of Bombay.

4. Gupta, P. and Khandelwal, P. (1988) Role Efficacy and Organizational identification amongst Professional Groups. Productivity, 29. 31-37.

5. Godd, G.N. and Ganster, C.D. (1996): The interaction effect of variety, autonomy and feedback on attitude and performance. Journal of Organizational Behavior, Vol. 17, Pg. 329-347.

6. Graen, G. (1976). Role making process within complex organizations. In D.M. Dunnette (Ed.), Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology (pp. 1201-1245). Chicago: Rand McNally.

7. Gupta, P. (1989). Role stress, locus of control, coping styles and role efficacy: A study of first generation enterpreneure. Unpublished M. Phill. Dissertation, Delhi, University, Delhi.

8. Kumar, S. (1989). A study of role stress, role satisfaction and role efficacy among Indian commercial pilots. Udyog Pragati, 14(3), 70-75.

9. Mathur, Adjti and Dhillon, P.K. (1991) An investigation of some organizational and personal predictors of role efficacy: A study of Private sector Managers. Master Dissertation, Applied Psychology, University of Delhi.

10. Pandey, Ailirudh(1993) Prevention of Accident through Role efficacy Development in Driving Personnel on Indian Railways , Paper presented in the safety conference in staff college,"Vadodara , September 1993;and also in the National seminar on Human Resource Development in Gandhi Labour Institute Ahmedabad on December 13.

11. Pandey, Anlffidh(1995) Role efficacy and Role stress relationship: some

Enhancing Integration of the Person and the Role through Role Efficacy |
Dr. Ashutosh Shukla

experience with workers. Indian Journal 0f Industrial Relation. 31 (2).

12. Pandey, Anirudh(l995) Role Efficacy of first line supervisors -Experiences from Indian Railways. Productivity, 36 (2), 325-331.

13. Pareek, U. (1987) Motivating Organizational Roles: Role Efficacy Approach. Jaipur: Rawat.

14. Pareek, Udai (1980) Dimensions of Role Efficacy. In P flitter J.W. and Jones J.E. Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators, California: San Diego : University, 143-145.

15. Pandey, A.(1997). Role stress and role efficacy. In D.M. Pestonjee and U. Pareek(Eds.), Studies in organizational role stress and coping . Jaipur /New Delhi : Rawat Publication .

16. Pareek, U., (1980a). Role efficacy scale . In J.W. Pfeiffer and .J.E. Jones (Eds.), The 1980 annual handbook for group facilitators (pp. 100-105). San Diego, California: University Associates.

17. Pareek, U. (1980b). Dimensions of role efficacy. In J.W. Pfeiffer and J.E. Jones (Eds.), the 1980 annual handbook for group facilators (pp. 143-145). San Diego, California:University Associates.

18. Pareek, U . (1986b). Developing and increasing role efficacy. In J.W. Pfeiffer and L.D. Goodstains (Eds.), the 1986 annual: Developing human resources (pp. 121-133) San Diego, California: University Associates.

Enhancing Integration of the Person and the Role through Role Efficacy |
Dr. Ashutosh Shukla