

**Question No. 3 Why is job design important in an organization? Discuss various models of job design that influence the process of job design.**

**Solution:** According to Taylor 'job design is complete written instructions describing in detail the task to be accomplished. The task specifies what is to be done, how is it done and exact time allowed for doing it.' Job design is making components and sub components of job clear, so that employee understands the goals of the job. The paradigm of job design has changed remarkably over years. Traditionally job design is viewed as designing standard procedures, clarifying specific job descriptions for increasing productivity and efficiency.

The job design is viewed from the perspective of total quality management. The jobs are designed to involve innovation, empowerment, autonomy and teamwork. Thus, job design as a quality of work life is concerned with the product, process, tools and techniques, design, plant layout, work measurement, standard operating procedures, human process, machine interaction and other activities related to job performance. The major features of job design are as follows : Job design is structuring of job tasks and responsibilities.

Job design and quality of work life are related. Job design is both technical and managerial. It is concerned with job, motivation and behaviour of individuals. It is concerned with standardisation of job functions. The goal of job design is to maximise human efficiency in jobs.

#### Importance of Job Design

1. Job design is essentially a strategy of human resource management. It has a number of potential benefits. They are:
2. Job design clarifies the tasks and roles. Thus, it avoids ambiguities in the performance of jobs.
3. Job design removes overlapping in responsibilities. This leads to rationalisation of tasks. Conflicts among personnel are avoided.
4. Job design allows proper placement of employees. Thus, an appropriate job fit may be achieved.
5. It allows operational control over work performance and results.
6. Job design allows incorporation of environmental changes in the job.

7. It provides flexibility. Thus, employees are prepared to accept changes without much resistance.
8. It inculcates work motivation. Job design allows managers to understand organisational behaviour.
9. Proper job design leads to better quality of work life among employees.
10. Job design relieves stress and improves performance and organisational effectiveness.

### **MODELS OF JOB DESIGN**

Job design is a continuous process. It aims at increasing the harmony between human effort and job. A number of factors influence the process of job design. Several models are developed to explain the influence of these factors. These are explained below:

1. **Task Characteristics Theory** : Task Characteristics theory was the outcome of the studies conducted by Turner and Lawrence. In these studies, an assessment was made about the effect of different kinds of jobs on employee satisfaction and absenteeism. The task characteristics were identified and scores were given. Higher scores on the characteristics indicate that the jobs are more complex and vice versa. The major findings of the theory reflect that employees prefer complex and challenging tasks. The challenging jobs provide more satisfaction. The result is lower absenteeism rate. In the process, the theory identified certain task characteristics. They are : variety, autonomy, responsibility, knowledge and skill, social interaction and optional social interaction.

2. **Job Characteristics Model**: Based on the pioneering work of Turner and Lawrence, Hackman and Oldham propounded job characteristics model. The model identified certain job characteristics. It also identified the relationships between job characteristics and motivation, and performance and job satisfaction.

The model showed that core dimensions viz., skill variety, task identity and task significance determine the meaningfulness of the work. The presence of these characteristics leads to the importance and valuability of the Jobs. While autonomy provides a feeling of responsibility for the outcome, feedback provides them an opportunity to evaluate their

performance. According to the model, internal rewards are obtained when employees learn that they have performed well on a task.

The more of these three psychological states are present, the greater will be employee's motivation, performance and satisfaction and the lower their absenteeism and turnover. It should be noted that employee's need for growth determine psychological state and corresponding motivation and satisfaction.

3. Motivating Potential Score Model: Motivating Potential Score Model was developed based on job characteristics model. The model stated that three potential scores on the three core dimensions of job characteristics model possess additive property. The autonomy and feedback are multiplicative in nature. Thus, a motivating potential score is calculated. The motivating potential score is equal to the product of the average scores of skill variety, task identity and task significance and autonomy and feedback. Accordingly, the model proposes that people who work on jobs with high core job dimensions are generally more motivated, satisfied and productive. Job dimensions operate through psychological states in influencing personal and work outcome variables rather than influencing them directly. The model received appreciation for its mathematical properties.

4. Social Information Processing Model: Individuals are part of the society. They have inherent desire to associate and belong to others. Obviously, they wish to work in the groups rather than in isolation. Moreover, individuals focus on observational learning. They develop attitudes by social learning. According to the Model, Employees adopt attitudes and behaviour in response to the social cues provided by work and other groups with which they associate. The groups are co-workers, superiors, subordinates, reference groups, friendship groups, family and customers. Therefore, information provided by the group on job aspects is more relevant than the basic job characteristics, employees' psychological states and outcomes of the jobs. Thus, the managerial strategy of job design is to consider information shared by the groups about the job. They can also influence the employee's attitude positively even to the poorly designed job by continuously counselling them about the jobs. Socio Technical Model: Socio-technical model emphasised on

the assumption that employees are important in organisations. They should be given a good quality of working environment. Individual's development is essential for organisational development. Thus, the model suggested that jobs should be designed and redesigned to the needs of the employees. The central tenet of the model is that job design should be developed based on the technical as well as social factors. Technical factors relate to the factors in the input, processing and output mechanism. Social factors relate to the relationships prevailing among employees and management. An appropriate job design makes a best balance among employees, jobs, technology and environment. Further, the model assumes that these factors change continuously. Thus, job design should include three important elements. They are socio-technical impacts, work teams and flexible work schedules. The model was considered as appropriate in developing job design because it considered technical and structural aspects along with human aspects. It was also found that labour management conflicts reduced and quality of the product improved. The cost reduction, increased turnover, quality of work life, innovation and creativity, product quality and positive behavioural changes are some of the benefits of this model. However, the model was criticised for the assumption that employees are matured enough to work as teams and adopt flexible work schedules.

5. Contingency Model: A contingency model of job design was developed to explain the impact of job design on the performance and satisfaction. It considered quality of work life as a significant factor. The model suggested that techniques and knowledge be given more emphasis in job design. The model identified that certain factors considered in the job design lead to satisfaction. They are:

- Job scope perceived as simple or complex.
- The high or low degrees of individual need strength.
- The nature and type of overall organisational design. The two organisational designs are organic or mechanistic. Thus according to this model a combination of perception of job scope, the degrees of individual needstrength and the type of organisation structure determines the performance and satisfaction. Therefore, job design

should be developed considering a number of permutations and combinations of these factors. The model has been used in developing social information processing model.

6. Employee Development Model: Modern organisations considered that organisational development is possible with employee development. They considered employees as human assets. They have a need for career growth and development. Therefore, it is not just enough to consider technical and social issues in the job design. Accordingly, jobs are designed keeping in view the long run interest of the employees. The central tenet of the model is that employees should be competent, responsible and satisfied. It identified several aspects in the redesign of jobs. Some of them are scope for alcoholism treatment, non-discrimination, encouraging discipline, creating consciousness, responsibility and providing generic monitoring and direction.

7. Integrative Job Design Model: Integrative job design model considered that job design is dynamic. The purpose of job design is to make the work interesting and employee satisfying. Thus, the model developed an integration of all the factors such as cultural, social, technical and other situational factors in the process of job design. Some of the factors of the job design are : core design factors; individual factors; organisational factors and situational factors. Overall, the model suggested that job design is developed based on the contingency of a situation. Jobs designed ignoring situational factors do not produce effectiveness and satisfaction.