

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL**

**Motivation in Organisations**

**~The Need for a Critical Systemic Approach ~**

**being a Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**in the University of Hull**

**by**

**Ho, Yung-Hsiang**

**(BSc., MSc., Chinese Culture University, Taiwan)**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate by critical consideration the suitability of various approaches of inquiry for exploring and enhancing motivation intervention in contemporary organisations; in particular, to spell out the need for a critical systemic approach of inquiry in relation to a social context based on critical systems thinking ideas. The thesis explores the question concerning the inducements associated with motivation (to work) and what this may mean in different organisational contexts, while taking into consideration cultural differences that affect the way that motivation is addressed. Furthermore, it raises questions about power relations in terms of processes involved in developing motivation. It also poses questions about ideological differences in the way that performance orientations may affect general lifestyles and ways of working. It is suggested in the thesis that it is important to consider motivation by looking at a diversity of motivation approaches and by seeing what can be learnt from each, and how each can be developed. It is shown how critical systemic learning can be advanced as a way of encouraging learning by means of ideology-critique. The need for a critical systemic approach to motivation is also shown by drawing on aspects of critical systems thinking and extending such thinking to cover motivation explicitly.

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**PART ONE**  
**AN INTRODUCTION**

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background

As a manager who has to deal with staff on a day-to-day basis, I have concerns about how to motivate them, how to get the best out of them, how to help them to achieve their own potential. As an academic, I also have an interest in why certain researchers suggest this or that way of motivating individuals is best. Since my practice as a manager is based in Taiwan, where motivation is seen as a “big” issue, I needed to find out whether some motivation research could afford me any insights into managing my staff.

Taiwan has an older generation who still possess traditional Chinese cultural values, while the younger generation are moving increasingly towards individualism and its associated values. There can be seen to be ideology conflicts between the two generations which causes tensions when the question of motivation is addressed. Furthermore, the way in which the two parties see the world is distinctive. They often appear to live in alien worlds.

Questions that I wanted to explore for my doctoral research, then, included:


- What could Western motivation literature reveal about the best ways to motivate individuals?
- How (if at all) relevant might this be for the Taiwanese context?

To consider these questions, it was necessary initially to review the literature on motivation. From this, it was possible to infer that motivation in organisations refers to processes by which people are enabled and induced to choose to behave in particular ways. However, this formulation already raises the question concerning whether and to what extent it is legitimate to attempt to induce people to behave in certain ways (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995). It also stimulates questions about power relations and ideological differences (or conflicts) in terms of processes involved in developing motivation to work and to adopt certain ways of living (Sinha, 1994). Furthermore, it poses the question concerning the process of enablement as associated with motivation to work and what this may mean in different cultural contexts (Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994). Again it raises questions about wider social awareness that people might have and about the way that people in society may become motivated to explore these. These questions and surrounding issues in looking at the questions will be examined in the thesis.

My review of the literature on motivation revealed a wide diversity of approaches, each claiming to be the “best” way for motivating people. Given the wide variety of approaches, I felt that it was necessary somehow to evaluate the different methods, to assess whether, how and when any single approach might be better than another. By

examining the wider literature on management and organisation studies, I found that there were 2 main frameworks commonly referred to that were used to explicate the differences between approaches to organisational analysis (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) and to management problem-solving (Jackson and Keys, 1984; Jackson, 1987). Each framework appeared to provide some potential for illuminating the subject of motivation, so I undertook an examination of the motivation methods that I had identified, using each of the two frameworks.

Here I was trying to answer questions such as:

- How can we make sense of the diversity of motivation approaches?
  - How can we organise the range of approaches to make them useful for a practicing manager?
- 

Having looked at ways for organising the many approaches to motivation, and having shown that both frameworks have problems in answering the above questions, it was necessary to look for other means for handling the plurality of approaches that were available. My research here turned to critical systems thinking (CST)- a theoretical and practical approach to intervention developed in the 1980s and 1990s. It was clear to me that the question of motivating people required an intervention of some sort in a situation. I wanted to see whether CST offered a critical systemic view of learning that would take account of the differences in values that people might have in a situation. Did CST offer a view of learning that could indicate how people can be encouraged to achieve their potential, whilst still being part of a wider collectivity (i.e. preserving elements of both value-systems)? In order to consider these themes, it was necessary to review the literature

on critical systems thinking and to compare this with the literature on motivation. Here I wanted to enrich and expand upon ideas drawn from both sets of literature towards improving motivation interventions.

## **1. 2 The need for improvement in motivation interventions**

It is no longer sufficient to give employees simplistic, behavioural motivators. Employees today are better informed than ever before. They are too sophisticated for the quasi-manipulative tactics that have worked for managers in the past. Employees want greater satisfaction from their work. They are rarely bought with money alone or artificial rewards. Therefore, when considering the question of intervention in relation to issues of motivation much attention will be given to the idea of CST as it has been developed in the UK, which looks to develop holistic solutions to complex problems such as this (e.g., Jackson, 1983, 1991a, b, 1997; Flood, 1990, 1995, 1996; Flood and Jackson, 1991a, b; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b, 1996; Mingers, 1992, 1997; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a, b, 1997; and others). Other arguments about intervention which concentrate more on ideology (or powerful knowledge formations) and other forms of power are also looked at (e.g., Foucault, 1972, 1979, 1982; Habermas, 1976, 1982, 1984; Clegg, 1989; Thompson, 1990; Brand, 1990; Oliga, 1990; Mingers, 1992; Gregory, 1992, 1994; Rahman, 1993; Midgley, 1995a; Flood and Romm, 1996a; Oliga, 1996), and additional ideas about organisational (or individual) learning are a focus too (e.g., Katz, 1960; Nurius, 1991; Stryker, 1991; March, 1991; Brown and Duguid, 1991; Simon, 1991; Burrell, 1992; Gregory, 1992; Mullins, 1993; Cook and Yanow, 1993; Hassard, 1993;

Townley, 1994; Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Salipante and Bouwen, 1995; Midgley, 1995b; Argyris and Schön, 1996; Burgoyne and Reynold, 1997; Willmott, 1997). This research also looks at cross-cultural influences on motivation, and an attempt will be made to examine how motivation may not necessarily be the same in different cultures (e.g., Hofstede, 1980a, b, 1984, 1987, 1991, 1993; Cox and Blake, 1991; Sowell, 1991; Rivera, 1991; Schein, 1992; Huo and Steers, 1993; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994; Harvey and Allard, 1995; Brocklesby, 1994, 1995; Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995, 1996).

To successfully meet this new challenge, I argue that a manager should consider the following issues in motivation interventions, which I highlight throughout the thesis:

1. How to employ a range of approaches in motivation interventions;
2. How to understand the basis for ideology conflicts in organisations;
3. How to address issues arising from specific power relations in organisations;
4. How to facilitate critical systemic learning in organisations; and
5. How to recognise and effectively utilise cross-cultural influences on motivation.

In order to help managers to address these issues, I will develop a critical systemic approach to motivation which draws on some appropriate literature. I will argue that a wider literature base than only the motivation literature, can provide invaluable insights towards managing the motivation process.

### **1. 3 Organising for improvement in motivation interventions**

This thesis is primarily based on literature review. There is much literature on motivation theories and also much literature on the need for critical theories to examine social issues such as power formations, ideological legitimisation of social systems, the sort of systematic efforts needed to address the issues of social awareness etc., but none of this has as yet been compared with literature on motivation. There exists a gap between motivation theories on the one hand and critical theories about society on the other, with no connecting literature to tie up these separate bodies of thought. This thesis critically looks at the various literatures and seeks to fill this gap by pointing out along the way the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation.

I want to examine, from a critical systemic perspective, how world views (which necessarily have ideological aspects to them) will influence managers to choose particular approaches in motivation interventions. Commonly, managers are affected by decisions to use particular approaches but are not themselves involved in the intervention process. This means that we should not predetermine what approach will be applied without first understanding the current situation, especially who is included and excluded from the procedure by which approaches are selected. The question therefore arises, how can we escape from our own value assumptions (ideological traps) and socio-cultural judgements? Moreover, what can we do to deal with different ideological judgements and individuals' assumptions, in order to deal with or accommodate ideological conflict?

This thesis also desires to go some way towards providing an approach by which managers (who still, in Taiwan, tend to be the older generation) can make themselves aware of how to motivate employees from their positions for the benefit of all in organisations. Managers should have a new thinking that enables them to handle greatly increased complexity, change, and uncertainty and at the same time use fewer resources; and need to know far more about motivation than just how to use a specific approach in interventions.

This thesis argues that the current motivation approaches need to be critically appreciated, and different perspectives should be taken into account so that managers can gain an improved awareness of their own organisational circumstances and the likely effects of implementing the available approaches. In developing a critical systemic approach to motivation, I use some ideas from CST and relate these ideas to literature about motivation and to other literature where I felt that motivation approaches are falling short.

This thesis suggests that motivation intervention involves dynamic processes and should not be classified into fixed ways. Instead, the growing available approaches should be subject to critical appreciation and, as far as possible, be made transparent and open to change by those who will be affected by intervention. But attention is also given to ways in which subjects can act to transform themselves and the social formations in which they are embedded. Thus, we need to consider the problems of power relations and ideology conflicts in a given organisational circumstance, and attempt to see how new styles of working can be explored, in a way which is not considered to serve the interests only of certain individuals or groups. Within an organisational circumstance, we should be careful of just adopting motivation approaches uncritically. We also have to be careful of simply

adopting an ideological stance which accepts past habitual patterns without looking at alternatives - especially when there are cultural constraints of some sort which can be identified (e.g., Hofstede, 1980a, b; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994). This thesis assumes that sometimes it is necessary to extend the boundaries of what is taken as given in a particular cultural setting -- especially, if one is aware of tensions that are being caused by the restrictions of a culture (e.g., Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995). Therefore, the focus on intervention will form an important part of this thesis, where ideas from CST regarding intervention are thoroughly explored.

#### **1. 4 The research methodology**

Although my initial concerns were with how to improve motivation practice in Taiwan, the focus of my doctoral research was on what could be learnt from the literature. Whilst, on the face of it, this would appear to be a purely theoretical, desk-based piece of research, I wish to point out that much of the literature used (from both the field of motivation theories and the field of critical systems thinking) itself is grounded in empirical work. Thus, the development of a model of a critical systemic approach to motivation can be argued to bridge the theory-practice gap through the empirical work on which it draws.

The methodology used involved a thorough investigation (critical analysis) of the literature followed by some theory building with iterations back to the literature and further refinements of the theory being developed. Through several iterations and returns to critiquing the literature eventually an approach to motivation which, it is felt, is robust

and will stand up to the test of practical implementation, was developed. It is this approach that I term a critical systemic approach to motivation.

### **1.5 Aims of the thesis**

From the above explanation of my rationale for carrying out this doctoral research and the description of the problem-context and literature perused, it is evident that a number of aims are to be addressed in the thesis:

1. to critically analyse the literature on motivation;
2. to evaluate and organise the range of approaches available;
3. to develop a means by which managers can utilise the plurality of motivation methods available to them;
4. to show why managers need to be socially aware when seeking to motivate people;
5. to show why managers (and others) need to adopt a critical systemic learning approach during motivation interventions; and
6. to show how cross-cultural influences should be addressed in a motivation intervention.

Through tackling the third, fourth, fifth and sixth aims a further two aims were realised:

7. to show why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary; and,

8. to demonstrate the importance of each of the strands of the critical systemic approach to motivation.

These inter-related aims will be addressed through different parts of the thesis.

## **1.6 The structure of the thesis**

The thesis is divided into four separate, yet interlinked parts. Part One consists of the introductory material presented in this chapter and two additional chapters that examine prominent theories and research into human motivation in work organisations. Chapters 2 and 3 contain an extensive introduction which reviews and comments on the past development of the theories in this field. On the basis of the groundwork laid in Part One, Part Two looks at several central issues in motivation interventions. Included here are issues such as pluralism (e.g., the nature of pluralist systemic approaches), social influence (e.g., ideology conflicts and power relations), organisational and individual learning, and cross-cultural considerations, as each relates to motivation interventions. This is followed by Part Three which is concerned with why the new thinking (the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation which is underpinned by stressing concerns with critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, and critical systemic learning) is necessary for motivation interventions (especially, in Taiwan). Finally, Part Four provides some concluding implications and comments on motivation in organisations.

After this introductory chapter, the remainder of this thesis will be divided into the following chapters.

**Chapter 2:** Review of the literature on motivation -- In this chapter, a number of different approaches to motivation are discussed. Criticisms of the various theories from the points of view of other theories will be offered. The theories will all be classified according to the framework developed by Moorhead and Griffin (1995), in order to give some clarity to the discussion. Hence, the approaches discussed are seen as need-based oriented; process-based oriented; and learning-based oriented. The theories discussed by Moorhead and Griffin will form a starting point for the discussion -- but other theories will also be included.

**Chapter 3:** Critical commentary on the literature on motivation-- In this chapter, I concentrate on examining the assumptions of different motivation theories in terms of their implications for the organisation of working life in a society. In order to evaluate and differentiate the methods, I draw on the 'sociological paradigms' framework developed by Burrell and Morgan (1979), which defines different approaches to organisational analysis by intersecting subjective-objective debates in the theory of social science with regulation-radical change debates in the theory of society. They point out that people always hold a particular paradigmatic perspective, which is derived from their own experiences and personal beliefs. This model clearly shows how different social theories can be located according to their theoretical assumptions. Each paradigm represents a distinctive view of reality. This discussion of paradigms raises some difficult problems for motivation interventions. In particular, if we can learn about paradigms and make choices, can we be bound to a single tradition? Moreover, can we be based in different paradigms and yet communicate with each other, and if so, how? I will show that Burrell and Morgan's framework gives us one method for evaluating motivation approaches, but that as practising managers we really need a

more practical way to relate the approaches to the specific situations facing us. An alternative approach, that of Jackson and Key's (1984), later extended by Jackson (1987), provides a "system of systems methodologies" framework which focuses on problem-situation characteristics. In this framework, the assumptions made by a variety of methodologies in terms of the complexity of the problem situation and the nature of participation in problem solving are highlighted. However, I will argue that it ignores the importance of the role of manager (problem solver) in methodology choice, focusing too much on the problem context. In my view, managers need to reflect on their own assumptions about various approaches to motivation and their understanding of problem contexts as part of intervention. In this way the first and second aims, *to critically analyse the literature on motivation, and to evaluate and organise it*, will be realised. Finally, I highlight some key issues arising during motivation interventions that will be the subject of the rest of the thesis, and look at what can be learnt from my critical commentary on the literature on motivation.

**Chapter 4:** Issues in motivation interventions (1): Allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions -- In this chapter, I examine some arguments of critical systems thinkers who have contributed to the development of a number of pluralist systemic approaches for dealing with issues in interventions. CST as a field dealing with plurality will be introduced and it will be shown how this can enrich our understanding of social contexts and problem solving by providing a critical, theoretical basis for contextualising other systems ideas.

The motivation literature is cross-referenced with the critical systems literature in order to facilitate enrichment of them both. For example, from the motivation literature, MacGregor (1960) argues that managers view employees differently depending on the

assumptions that they make about human nature. CST shows us that it is necessary to understand the different assumptions that people make, as these influence what they do and how they behave. These assumptions, though, are not static and can change with the context. Through a discussion of the literature, I argue that pluralist systemic approaches allow managers (and others- e.g., researchers) to dynamically appreciate issues and questions, instead of expecting methods to be used “off the shelf”. Here I am beginning to address the third aim of *developing a means by which managers can utilise the plurality of motivation methods available to them*.

**Chapter 5:** Issues in motivation interventions (2): Power relations and ideology conflicts. --This chapter will take up the matter of intervention further. I will look at issues of power and ideology. A focus on human potentiality, social awareness, and emancipation will form the background for this chapter. Attention will be given to social-cultural patterns in societies (which include particular orientations to the more natural environment), considering when they can become defined as ideological and how this can be criticised. In particular, ideology is important in the choice of motivation interventions. Thus, to be critical, managers should not rely only on their personal understanding (their own ideology); rather, they should be open to wider perspectives. Through exploring issues about power relations and the ideological basis of many motivation approaches. I will show that *it is important for managers to have a critical social awareness when intervening in motivation situations* (the 4th aim).

**Chapter 6:** Issues in motivation interventions (3): The need for learning during interventions -- This chapter focuses on difficulties that have been isolated as issues of concern in various perspectives, such as the devaluation of certain languages, which will

be discussed in terms of a critical systemic view of learning. A view of “multiloguing” (communication taking account of multiple meaning and contexts) will be explored by relating this view to a discussion about self-society dynamics and by considering implications of such dynamics for organisational learning. It will be suggested that the self-society dynamic shows that the two cannot be separated, but that individuals are part of the community. When we look at personal growth as a motivator, we change the way our employees think about their work, we help them become more capable, and we give them a meaningful purpose in coming to work. Multiloguing is especially important because otherwise ideologies will not be challenged. In this way the fifth aim, *to emphasise critical systemic learning* will be elaborated.

**Chapter 7:** Issues in motivation interventions (4): Harnessing cross-cultural influences --

This chapter aims to answer the question, should cultural difference be considered in motivation interventions? This thesis argues that it is necessary to respect cultural differences, as an ideological adherence to any one perspective can lead to tension and also may lead to a form of decision making where the whims of certain powerful individuals rules. Thus, to judge the possible result of applying an approach in motivation interventions, we need to understand whether there is ideological harmony or friction between the various cultural differences. Here the sixth aim, to show *how cross-cultural influences should be addressed in a motivation intervention*, is realised.

**Chapter 8:** The need for a critical systemic approach to motivation -- This chapter aims to

introduce the substance of the new approach, by drawing together the strands from the previous 4 chapters. This approach helps managers gain an improved understanding of the different assumptions made in motivation interventions. It will be argued that

motivation interventions should be concerned with ideology-critique of the beliefs and assumptions which lie behind different perspectives. This thesis presents a critical systemic understanding of work motivation which it is argued, is ethically more sound than 'traditional' motivation approaches. From this perspective, I argue that individuals are not just motivated to maximise utility on the basis of some rational calculus. In addition, individuals are seen as motivated to maintain and increase their self-reflection and ideology-critique, and are seen as motivated to maintain consistency between self-society dynamics (the process through which individuals and societies are created and maintained) and behaviour. The critical systemic perspective to motivation that I propose is based on CST and the motivation literature and focuses on three commitments: critical awareness, pluralism, and critical reflexivity. In this way the seventh aim, *to show why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary*, will be detailed.

**Chapter 9:** Proposals for using a critical systemic approach to motivation for building a critical learning organisation -- In this chapter, all the aspects of the critical systemic approach to motivation developed throughout the thesis are brought together. A re-categorisation of the motivation approaches discussed in Chapter 2 is offered. It is shown that this categorisation helps us to spell out some views of humankind which in turn allow us to identify a view of people as complex beings. Complex beings, it is argued, are able to learn from alternative perspectives, from cultural diversity, from different experiences, and from different ways of working and are therefore able to contribute to a critical learning organisation. While this suggests that a critical systemic approach could be a useful approach for motivation interventions, there is an appreciation of discordant pluralist relations (persisting differences) between all

aspects of our experiences, thoughts and working practices. Finally, I explain why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary for managers of Taiwan enterprises to deal with problems of motivation, and some difficulties of implementing the approach will also be revealed, giving rise to proposals for future research. Through this discussion, the eighth aim (to demonstrate the importance of each of the strands of the critical systemic approach to motivation) will be satisfied.

**Chapter 10: Conclusion** -- The conclusion ties up and summarises all the chapters of the thesis, identifying the contributions to knowledge that I have made through my research. Contributions have been made through the critical analysis of the motivation literature (chapter 3) and through the arguments concerning plurality (chapter 4), power relations and ideology-critique (chapter 5), critical reflection and learning (chapter 6), and cross-cultural influences on motivation (chapter 7). Furthermore, the model of a critical systemic approach to motivation detailed in chapter 8 and evaluated in chapter 9 represents the most significant contribution of my research, and represents a substantial step towards tackling issues connected with motivation in the work place in Taiwan.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature on Motivation**

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of the Literature on Motivation**

#### **2. 1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a review of the literature on motivation. This forms the basis for Chapter 3, where I explore the prominent motivation theories that have been offered, by organising some platforms for critical commentary. I will try to broaden the idea of motivation by seeing how different theories of motivation have implications for the organisation of work life in a society. I also will consider whether it is possible to think about motivation as part of organisational learning in a society.

In this chapter, I undertake an examination of some prominent motivation approaches, considering their suggestions for enhancing motivation in contemporary organisations, and offering my own brief critical input. As a start, it is useful to infer from the literature and research that motivation in work organisations refers to processes by which people are enabled and induced to behave in particular ways. Thus, motivation is often associated with a search for the means by which people's job performance and productivity may be improved or maintained. Many theories about motivation begin by addressing the interrelated issues of human needs and how these influence the direction and maintenance of an individual's intentional behaviour.

## 2.2 What is the meaning of motivation?

Motivation comes from motive, which derives from the Latin verb *movere*, to move. So a motive is something that moves you to doing. However, this description is obviously an inadequate definition for our purposes here. What is needed is a definition which sufficiently covers the various components and processes associated with how human behaviour is activated. One way to arrive at an answer to this question is to look at the views of the various researches in this field of motivation. Several authors (e.g., Taylor, 1947; Mayo, 1949; Maslow, 1943, 1954; Drucker, 1954; Katz, 1960; Adams 1963; Vroom, 1964; Herzberg, 1966, 1968; Ryan, 1970; Beck, 1978; Kantrow, 1980; Mitchell, 1973; Hollway, 1983, 1991; Child, 1984; Lee and Lawrence, 1991) suggest that motivation refers to processes by which people are enabled and induced to behave in ways beneficial to the organisation. Motivation may be a need, desire or emotion, but it leads you to act and to act in a certain way. Pinder (1984) provides a good overview:

{ Some writers view motivation from a strictly physiological perspective, while others view human beings as primarily <sup>享乐主义</sup> hedonistic, and explain most of human behaviour as goal-oriented, seeking to gain pleasure and avoid pain. Others stress the rationality of humans and consider human behaviour to be the result of conscious choice processes (Pinder, 1984, p.7).

For instance, Mitchell (1973) proposes that motivation “represents those psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction and persistence of voluntary actions that are goal directed” (p.162). Beck (1978) states that motivation is “broadly concerned with the contemporary determinations of choice (direction), persistence, and vigour of goal-directed behaviour” (p.429). Bandura (1988) defines motivation as “a multidimensional phenomenon indexed in terms of the determinants and intervening mechanisms that govern the selection, activation, and sustained direction of behaviour” (p.158). Steers and

Potter (1991) suggest, people's motivation always confirms their own evaluations that their basic attitudes are the most suitable ones, partly because these attitudes have been moulded by the realities of their own particular paradigms and partly because they make sense of their experiences by managing to fit them into their own values. Johnson and Gill (1993) say that motivation refers to "the forces acting on and in an individual and that cause that individual to behave in a particular goal-directed manner" (p.38).

From the above descriptions, motivation can be understood in terms of personal needs, in a way that facilitates accomplishment of a specific performance. Motivation is the sum of all that moves a person to action. Motives can be mixed. They can range from consensus to unconscious. Motives are necessary for action but not sufficient in themselves. As Steers, Porter, and Bigley (1996) note, "when we discuss motivation, we are primarily concerned with (1) what energises human behaviour, (2) what directs or channels such behaviour, and (3) how this behaviour is maintained or sustained" (p.8). When reviewing the human motivation literature, we are confronted with what appears to be a diverse range of approaches that often seem to contradict one another. Each approach looks at organisations from different perspective and emphasise different issues. It is not easy to decide how we should classify different theories of motivation. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter 1, I believe it is useful to use Moorhead and Griffin's (1995) classification of approaches into need-based, process-based, and learning-based theories. Moreover, I will try to expand upon these theories in order to develop a critical systemic approach, which looks at problems of ideology in a society and tries to see how new styles of working can be explored, in a way which is not consider to serving the interests only of certain individuals or groups.

## **2. 3 The need-based motivation theories**

The need-based theorists of motivation (e.g., Taylor, 1947; Maslow, 1954; Herzberg, 1968) focus on the content of motivation and attempt to develop an understanding of personal needs which are not met or satisfied. The need-based motivation theories assume that factors exist within the individual behaviour that is initiated and sustained by an unfulfilled need, and concluded when the need is satisfied. These approaches to motivation are concerned with the identification of important internal factors and the explanation of how these factors may be prioritised within the individual. As Johnson and Gill (1993) state, “human needs are usually identified as being expressed through an individual’s feelings or experiences of physiological, psychological or social deprivation, deficiency or imbalance” (p.39). Moorhead and Griffin (1995) also suggest that “human motivation is caused primarily by deficiencies in one or more important need or need categories” (p.83). Thus, motivation is thought to be based on the desire to satisfy a range of extrinsic or intrinsic needs. In this section, I explain and highlight some of the need-based motivation theories, namely, the scientific management approach; the human relations approach; Maslow’s needs theory; and the motivation-hygiene theory as examples.

### **2. 3. 1 The scientific management approach**

Taylor’s (1947) scientific management approach is based on the assumption that people will be motivated to work if external rewards are tied directly to their performance. External rewards are thus conditional rather than unconditional. In short, this approach

assumes that people's needs are primarily economic ones, that they are motivated to work so as to earn as much money as they can. For example, the use of rewards as a means of motivating performance may be found in economic incentives. As Veen (1984) summarises:

{ The scientific management approach emphasises the problem of how the individual's working capacity can be utilised in the most efficient way possible, and how people can themselves be allowed to reap the benefits of this efficiency. The solution for this problem is sought in maximalisation of the structuring and instrumentalisation of the task, and in remuneration for work done. (Veen, 1984, p.721)

Morgan (1997) notes that closely associated with Taylorist ideas is the notion of bureaucracy seen in Weber's (1947) work. Weber views the bureaucratic form of organisation as aiding the processes of mechanisation and specialisation. Bureaucracy, as described by him, refers to an organisation where there is "precision, speed, clarity, regularity, reliability and efficiency achieved through the creation of a fixed division of tasks, hierarchical supervision and detailed rules and regulations" (cited from Morgan, 1997, p.17). We can see that these ideas of Weber supplemented Taylor's views on the possibility of scientific management. Both views imply the possibility of organising behaviour according to the dictate of efficient pursuit of goals by economic or rational beings (although as Morgan notes, Weber was not altogether confident that this was progressive).

The scientific management approach typically carries with it connotations other than that of merely allocating rewards based on performance. As conceived by Taylor, it also means maximum separation of the planning from the doing. People are effectively programmed from outside, eliminating any need for thinking or judgment on their part about how the work should be done. Such an external control system stems from its reliance on some reasonably objective method of measuring or assessing performance. This is sometimes

considered to be too materialistic to solve all the needs of people. Thus, the scientific management approach has been criticised by, for example, Lee and Lawrence (1991), who state that it neglects “the conflicts of interests and attitudes which exist in the organisation, and cannot explain complex human behaviour” (p.27). This opposing view means that motivation involves the interplay of a multitude of various elements within a very complex social system. In this view, the scientific management approach is thus found to be inadequate to motivate in complex social contexts, a weakness which led to the development of the human relations approach.

### **2. 3. 2 The human relations approach**

The human relations approach, according to Mayo (1949), places emphasis on the affiliate or social motives of individuals. It focuses on the intervening variable between the design of a job and its performance which advocates enriching jobs (or job design) as a means of enhancing personal motivation. For the same reason it highlights people’s needs to work (e.g., recognition, security, and sense of belonging). It emphasises that people’s motivation is conditioned by social demands from both inside and outside the organisation. It offers us a more thorough understanding of interpersonal relations in motivation. As Lee and Lawrence (1991) state,

{ the human relations approach tends to see the organisation’s goals in terms of more than just profit. It is suggested that management also have an obligation to provide social and psychological satisfactions to employees. (Lee and Lawrence, 1991, p.30)

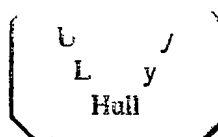
However, they note that the human relations approach is also subject to criticism. For example it can be seen as merely a more sophisticated way of management's gaining control of employees.

Aside from the scientific management approach which focuses on external motivation, and the human relations approach which focuses on internal motivation (the need for group belonging), Maslow (1954) portrays a range of human needs which have to be considered. He developed a hierarchy of human needs theory which assumes that there are at least five sets of goals which are called basic needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualisation.

### **2. 3. 3 The hierarchy of human needs theory**

The hierarchy of human needs theory was developed by Maslow (1954), which assumed that human beings are 'wanting' animals: they have needs arranged in a hierarchy of importance, with the most basic needs at the foundation of the hierarchy. In addition, Maslow argues that people are motivated by the desire to achieve and/or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest, and by certain more intellectual desires. He recognises that these basic needs are related to one another, being arranged in a hierarchy; and when a need is fairly well satisfied, the next higher need emerges.

However, there is a limitation stemming from the kinds of rewards sought. For example, it is clear from Maslow's analysis that there are an exceedingly large number of outcomes which are potentially favourable to human beings and only a small number of these



outcomes are under direct managerial control. It is particularly difficult for the external control system to encompass the higher order needs for esteem and self-actualisation. In addition, as Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) note, certain rewards relevant to social needs are under the control of the informal organisation. It is necessary to realise that the hierarchy of human needs theory accepts that these needs always appear in a certain order (from lower-level to higher-level). As Wehba and Bridwell (1979) comment,

The descriptive validity of Maslow's Need Classification scheme is not established, although there are some indications that low-order and high-order needs may form some kind of hierarchy. However, this two-level hierarchy is not always operative, nor is it based upon the domination or gratification concepts. (Wehba and Bridwell, 1979, p.52)

The possibility that needs of different levels can be met at the same time is not faced.

Maslow's needs hierarchy is also subjected to other criticisms. For example, Lee and Lawrence (1991) point out that

Maslow's needs theory does not apply neatly to specific individuals.....An ambitious manager will become unpopular to achieve advancement, sometimes taking considerable risks with personal financial security and even working to physical and psychological exhaustion.....And an equally difficult problem for the practicing supervisor is that employees often obtain need satisfaction outside of the work environment. (Lee and Lawrence, 1991, p.60)

Potter (1961) argues that Maslow's theory cannot reflect people's behaviour in the real world because it is shaped by pressures and rewards which are "often beyond the individual's control; choices are invariably compromises between desires and what is feasible", and fails to recognise behaviour "as a result of the interaction of individual and environmental characteristics" (p.2). Herzberg's (1968) motivation-hygiene theory attempts to overcome some of the deficiencies of Maslow's need theory, and proposes that more than one need may be operative to motivate people at the same time which allows

more flexibility than Maslow's theory. The differences underlying needs satisfaction at different levels are further elaborated by Herzberg, as will be discussed next.

### **2. 3. 4 The motivation-hygiene theory**

The motivation-hygiene concept of job attitudes, as developed by Herzberg (1968), states that, at the psychological level, two determinants of job attitudes constitute a two-dimensional need structure: one need system for the avoidance of unpleasantness and a parallel need system for personal growth. He suggests that this paves the way for the explanation of the duality of job attitude results. He notes that motivation factors are the work itself, achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and growth, which are the intrinsic elements of a job; while the hygiene factors, which are present in order to prevent demotivation but cannot motivate by themselves, are supervision, interpersonal relationships, pay and job security, and company policies; these are the extrinsic elements of the job. Herzberg's work thus considers both task and context factors which influence motivation.

Herzberg's work too is subject to some criticisms. For example, it merely seeks by distinguishing two factors to form a general framework of motivation, irrespective of personal characteristics and different cultures. Holloway (1991) argues that Herzberg's assumptions about motivation "are (intended to be) universalistic despite the fact that they are expressions of American human relations values and assumptions concerning personal commitment to work" (p.105). In other words, Herzberg fails to account for different cultural contexts in societies (I will discuss these issues further in the following chapters).

Above, I have reviewed motivation drawn from a need-based perspective. The scientific management approach (e.g., Taylorism) stresses the necessity of establishing the best method of doing each job through the application of principles and also of ensuring that people utilise that method. People are described as being induced to work effectively through money incentives established by time-and-motion study. Maslow furthermore points out not only that there are many needs beginning with basic physiological drives, but also that personal needs are arranged in a hierarchy whereby the lower-order needs must be satisfied before the higher-order needs come into play. The human relations approach places emphasis on the affiliative or social needs. Herzberg argues that people's motivation results first of all from the content of the job, whereas aversion results from the job context. All of these approaches are criticised primarily for sharing a universalistic orientation which is applicable to all issues of motivation regardless of different cultures.

As Lee and Lawrence (1991) state,

Human needs fall into many categories and vary according to stage of development and total life situation. These needs and motives will assume varying degrees of importance to each person, creating some sort of hierarchy, but this hierarchy is itself variable from person to person, from situation to situation, and from one time to another. (Lee and Lawrence, 1991, p.61)

For motivation, it is necessary for us to consider different values, and to capture the complexity of behaviour. One way in which we can broaden our understanding of this complexity is by looking at what the process-based approaches have to say about the subject.

## **2. 4 The process-based motivation theories**

The process-based theorists of motivation (e.g., Drucker, 1954; McGregor, 1960; Likert, 1961; Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964; Ryan, 1970; Klinger, 1987) attempt to describe how behaviour is directed and sustained. These approaches to motivation are concerned with certain psychological processes underlying action. In particular, the process-based motivation theories place heavy emphasis on describing the functioning of the individual's expectation as it relates to behaviour and on ways in which individuals become motivated by wanting fair practice, and seek to understand their values or attitudes in which motivated behaviour is the result of their own rational choices and conscious intention. Equity theory, expectancy theory, and goal-setting theory (e.g., management by objectives) will be explained by way of examples, in what follows.

### **2.4. 1 The equity theory**

Equity theory, according to Adams (1963), is based on the concept of potential, or future, perceived equitable payment. Adams' definition of inequality states that "inequality exists for a person whenever he perceives that the ratio of his outcomes to inputs and the ratio of others' outcomes to others' inputs are unequal" (p.22). This implies that an inequitable relation occurs not only when the exchange is not in people's favour, but when it is to their comparative disadvantage as well. Thus, a certain amount of over-reward may be seen as lucky, whereas similar deviations in the direction of under-reward will not be so easily tolerated. The presence of inequality creates tension which creates a drive to reduce the inequality feelings. As Adams notes, people will resist real and cognitive changes in inputs that are central to their self-concept. Moreover, people will be more resistant to

changing cognition about their own outcomes and inputs than to changing their cognition about others' outcomes and inputs. The tension of perceived procedural inequality lies in its relation to the objectives of people's value. Thus, the equity process is essentially an assessment of people's psychological contract with the organisation which is mainly based on a comparison with the external rewards for others in the organisation.

Equity theory offers a useful approach to understanding a variety of social relationships and interpersonal interactions in organisations. However, equity theory is subjected to some criticisms (e.g., Goodman, 1974; Adams and Fredman, 1976; Walster, Bercheid, and Walster, 1976). For example, 'it can be said that this theory fails to capture the complexity of the real world and to appreciate actual comparison standards, and that it also ignores the impact of different cultural contexts on people's perceptions of inequity. Walster, Bercheid, and Walster (1976) also note that people's response to an inequitable situation may be an expression of tension in a power inequality position and relationship (I discuss the issues of power relations and ideology conflicts in Chapter 5). Therefore, one of the major problems with which equity theory must cope is a large number of variables, the complexities of their interaction and the inadequacy of the operational definitions. As Vroom (1964) points out, the complexity of equity theory makes conclusive tests difficult, and "a great deal of theoretical and methodological refinement remains to be carried out before this approach can be properly evaluated" (p.172). Vroom proposed an alternative, expectancy theory, which will be considered next.

## **2. 4. 2 The expectancy theory**

Expectancy theory, according to Vroom (1964), is based on the assumption that employees make conscious and rational choices for their behaviour. He suggests that motivation is a function of the expectancy of attaining a certain outcome in performing a certain act multiplied by people's valuation of the outcome. He recognises that people evaluate various behaviours rationally and then choose what they recognise will lead to the rewards that they expect most. In other words, people have different kinds of desires, goals, and decisions, which are based on their perceptions of the degree to which a given performance will produce any specific outcome. So the value of expectancy theory lies in its ability to estimate how people perceive their circumstances on the basis of subjective processes. As Mowday(1996) notes, expectancy theory appears to say that "individuals attempt to maximise the attainment of valued outcomes and that motivation levels should be high whenever attractive outcomes are made directly contingent upon performance" (p.67).

However, expectancy theory does not specify which outcomes are relevant to a particular context. Moreover, people are assumed to calculate the rewards that they expect to attain when making a choice. It can be argued that people are not always conscious of their motives, expectancies, and perceptual processes. Potter (1961) thus modify Vroom's expectancy model, which emphasises that effort may not necessarily result in performance, and extend the relationship between valence and expectancies, and effort or motivation. They state that the personal performance of a task may be provided with intrinsic rewards, extrinsic rewards, or both. They suggest that intrinsic rewards can be more closely linked with good performance than extrinsic rewards, because intrinsic

rewards can result directly from task performance in which the rewards are assessed subjectively, and performance leads to satisfaction, whereas the external control system stems from its reliance on some reasonably objective method of measuring or assessing performance. Carter and Jackson (1993) consider that is why expectancy theory failed to come up to expectation in terms of postmodernism. In the following, I consider goal-setting theory to motivation in organisations.

### **2. 4. 3 The goal-setting theory**

The goal-setting theory, according to Ryan (1970), assumes that people's actions are directed by conscious goals and intentions, and that these goals influence what people will do and how well they will perform a task. Thus, this theory specifies the factors that affect goals, and their relationship to action and performance. However, goal-setting theory does not assume that people's actions are under fully conscious control. Furthermore, it suggests there are also actions that reflect a conflict between conscious intent and subconscious desire. As Klinger (1987) states, a goal does not have to be consciously apprehended during goal-oriented action in order for it to regulate action. Nonetheless, goal-setting theory provides a useful and meaningful way to understand how to motivate people towards the achievement of various goals. If goals are specific and fair and if people accept and are committed to those goals, they are likely to work towards them.

Management by objectives (MBO), according to Drucker (1954) can be viewed as goal-setting applied to the organisational level. MBO is a system for motivating and integrating the efforts of managers by setting goals for the organisation as a whole and then cascading

these objectives down through each management level, so that goal attainment at each level helps attain goals at the next level and ultimately the goals of the whole organisation (Carroll and Tosi, 1973). Thus, MBO is an effective and useful system for managing goal-setting in organisations. However, it must be handled carefully; in particular, organisations need to tailor it to their own unique circumstances. MBO does not specify why people may be motivated to fulfil the goals of the organisation. It only assumes that once goals have been set, these become a motivating force for people, as they orient themselves towards fulfilling the set objectives. Hence, MBO aims to be a process in which some interests rule. We should be aware of this problem, so that MBO does not become a tool which serves only some people's interests. What is here asked for is an effective 'clamp' on unhealthy and ambitious aspirations in organisations.

As I shall show in the following chapters, other critics have more to state about the operation of power in organisational life. The process-based motivation theories seem not to concentrate on power issues as such, although they do point out how people's sense of equity, development of expectations and desire to achieve organisational objectives, may be linked to political processes in organisations. By implication they begin to develop a concern for how these processes can be better understood. I will now introduce the learning-based motivation theories.

## **2. 5 The learning-based motivation theories**

Learning-based theories are not aimed primarily at studying needs or processes supporting motivation, but are instead directed towards studying how people's orientations are learnt

through their interactions with the orientations of others. Several authors (e.g., Argyris, 1972, 1973, 1990, 1992, 1993; Argyris and Schön, 1974, 1978, 1996; Luthans and Kreither, 1975; Bandura, 1977; Cellar and Barrett, 1987; Wooda and Bandura, 1989; Hulse, Deese and Egeth, 1992; Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992) observe that learning processes understand that people do not have fixed needs or a fixed hierarchy of needs, nor do they have expectations and goals outside of what they learn throughout their lives. As Hulse, Deese and Egeth (1992) note, learning is “a relatively permanent change in behaviour or behavioural potential, based on direct or indirect experience” (p.12). In this sense, people can be moulded by direct and indirect experiences which occur in their lives. However, this view cannot explain more complex forms of learned behaviour and cannot explain situations in which employees consciously and rationally choose one course of action among many. As Cellar and Barrett (1987) note, learning is a cognitive process which assumes employees are conscious in how they learn. For example, Wood and Bandura (1989) argue that there are four underpinnings of the cognitive view of learning as follows:

First, in the cognitive view, people draw on their experiences and use past learning as a basis for present behaviour. Second, people make choices about their behaviour. Third, people recognise the consequences of their choices. Finally, people evaluate those consequences and add them to prior learning, which affects future choices. (Wooda and Bandura, 1989, p.365)

Thus, people’s behaviour is seen as a social experience in relation to the potential for continuous transformation, which is based on interaction with others in different contexts. Learning processes are thus viewed as dynamic. Reinforcement theory is offered to help

understand the processes of people's learning in organisational settings. I discuss this theory first before proceeding with some other learning-based theories to motivation.

### **2. 5. 1 The reinforcement theory**

The concept of reinforcement focuses on the notion that specific behaviours are strengthened or weakened as a result of the consequences that follow those behaviours. Thus, reinforcement may be used to alter the probability of occurrence of particular actions. Through a learning process, reinforcement is a consequence which will increase the frequency of the behaviour that preceded it, thus, in any given situation, future behaviour choices are affected by the consequences of earlier behaviours. Therefore, learning plays an important part of the process which is based on the idea that some consequences when experienced as desirable can act as a reinforcement. This makes people decide to create a behaviour which will produce such consequences again in future. As Luthans and Kreitner (1975) state, organisational behaviour modification characteristically uses positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviours in employees. However, Moorhead and Griffin (1995) note that although organisational behaviour modification has considerable potential for enhancing motivated behaviour in organisations, managers should be aware of ethical issues that surround its use. They recognise the primary ethical argument that

its use has the potential to compromise individual freedom of choice. Managers may tend to select reinforcement contingencies that have advantages for the organisation, with little or no regard for what is best for the individual employee. (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995, p.146)

Bandura (1977) also notes the role that external events (e.g., consequences) play in influencing behaviour, and also pays specific attention to psychological processes; that is, people's behaviour is seen as being determined by their cognition and social environment. Thus, motivational behaviour is not only a function of the consequences but is also influenced by interaction factors (e.g., needs, expectancies, goals). So learning is being seen increasingly as an important component of motivation. This does not mean that all learning approaches treat people as 'objects' to be moulded by reinforcement. It is also necessary to show that other learning approaches have also been developed to show up the interplay of conflicting forces in an organisation and to suggest ways of dealing with them (e.g., Argyris, 1992; and Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992). Their arguments are briefly outlined as follows.

### **2. 5. 2 Argyris's organisational learning**

Argyris (1992) suggests that the problem with most theories of organisation and motivation is that they are congruent with what he calls "Model I type behaviour" which is not conducive to genuine learning in organisations (p.382). Therefore he subscribes to what he calls Model II type behaviour, which suggests that it is possible for people to learn in order to develop an organisational learning model. He recognises that the two models are not necessarily opposites; however, they do represent different orientations to the world. He states that the governing variables of Model II are

valid information, free and informed choice, and internal commitment.....Model II ...couples articulateness and advocacy with an invitation to others to confront one's views, to alter them in order to produce the position that is based on the most complete, valid information possible, to which people can be internally committed.....Every significant Model II action is evaluated in terms of the degree to which it helps the individuals involved generate valid and useful information (including relevant feelings), solve the

problem in such a way that it remains solved, and do so without reducing the present level of problem-solving effectiveness. (Argyris, 1992, p.384)

He is concerned that many motivation approaches see people as being as articulate as they can be about their own goals, simultaneously trying to control others and the environment in order to ensure that their own purposes are achieved. He believes that this is a flaw in these motivation approaches, because they assume that people always operate in terms of Model I behaviour (that is, directed to fulfil personal goals, rather than directed at learning with others). Argyris and Schön (1974) suggest that Model I type behaviour involves strategies of control, self-protection, defensiveness, smoothing over, and covering up, of which their users themselves often are unaware. In fact, Argyris (1982) believes that most managers utilise Model I type behaviour which is characterised by defensiveness, self-fulfilling, and escalating error --behaviour which it is difficult to change.

Instead, Argyris (1992) recognises that it is important for managers to be aware of Model II possibilities for learning in order to minimise defensiveness, through collaboration. He notes that the value of Model II behaviour is the way that it treats problems in such a way that “they can remain solved” because an important characteristic of such problem-solving is that the manager of a suggestion “feels responsible to present the evaluations and attributions in such a way that they will be confronted openly and constructively” (p.384). He states that, to date, the results of trying to intervene to help managers to bring about change from Model I to Model II type orientations are encouraging. He claims that managers may become accustomed to operating Model II type behaviour because it can be learnt, and Model I type behaviour which most motivation approaches now consider to be innate, is in fact learnt behaviour which can be changed. Argyris’s version of organisational learning is based on the idea that managers can learn new cultures and new ways to behave. He suggests that it is preferable to study people’s behaviour as if it can be

motivated by Model II learning, because this can encourage this kind of behaviour in organisations and in society more generally.

However, Argyris's organisational learning could be criticised for being too optimistic about the way that humankind can relate to one another. It assumes that even managers who have the most power in organisations will be willing to operate Model II, rather than try to control others' behaviour. But, what is important about Argyris's work is that it opens for managers the way to see how cultural patterns can become entrenched (Model I) unless they are challenged. Moreover, it suggests that managers may be able to learn new patterns, and it is not innate for managers to try to control others' behaviour. So it opens up new avenues to motivation.

### **2. 5. 3 Becoming a learning organisation**

Becoming a learning organisation, a process developed by Swieringa and Wierdsma (1992), emphasises collective learning which involves dealing with variety and thus involves contradictions and paradoxes. Furthermore, these authors isolate five ways in which variety exists in an organisation:

1. People: thinkers alongside doers, reflections alongside desires, individualists and team players, technically oriented alongside commercially oriented.
2. Strategies: planned rational strategies alongside pragmatic intuitive strategies.
3. Structures: simple lines alongside complex matrices.
4. Cultures: task culture alongside individual culture, role culture alongside power culture.

5. Systems: complex alongside simple, systems for action and systems for reflection. (Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992, p.77)

Considering all of these varieties, Swieringa and Wierdsma suggest that the best way to handle them in a learning organisation is to admit consciously and explicitly that there will always be contradictions and paradoxes that cannot be ironed out. Swieringa and Wierdsma recognise that the conflicts that may arise because of these paradoxes should not be seen as a threat to be avoided, but rather as a challenge to be faced. And they believe that this will allow ongoing debate among the managers concerned, about rules of the workplace, ideas, and principles. They propose that it is important that managers should realise that “a learning organisation is not a paradise” (p.78). They recognise that learning together while following the challenges set by the contradictions and paradoxes that arise in organisations can be “burdensome, difficult, and sometimes very painful” (p.78). Considerable effort has to be expended by managers to sustain the learning organisation that is able to deal with all these challenges.

Swieringa and Wierdsma (1992) offer a number of reasons why organisations should become learning organisations by considering the changing environment which companies have to confront. They note the rapid changes in the environment and summarise the most significant consequences of changes for the organisation as follows:

1. Companies have less and less time in which to build up carefully planned organisations.
2. Radical changes are taking place in working processes due to progressive automation and information structures.
3. In growth areas there is increasing emphasis on research, development, service and loyalty.
4. The significant increase in the level of education combined with the tendency towards individualisation means that people are beginning to make different demands in cooperation.

5. Individual and collective competencies acquired become out of date at an ever increasing rate. (Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992, p.79)

This environment creates ‘opportunities’ as well as ‘threats’, say these writers, and they suggest that both the opportunities and the threats can be better handled if managers can direct themselves to “learning to learn”. They recognise that learning to learn requires self-knowledge about how and why learning takes place, and demands that one learns to stand outside of oneself and not become too self-absorbed, so that learning can take place. But this does require courage. They summarise their views about the learning organisation:

A learning organisation is based on a philosophy in which its members consider themselves and each other as adults: as people who have the will and the courage to take on responsibility for their own functioning in relation to the other person, and who expect the same of the other person. (Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992, p.78)

They recognise that the quality that makes a learning organisation is the courage and commitment of managers to be able to learn together to deal with these. They suggest that people are not motivated merely by trying to fulfil their own needs or goals, or by trying to gain positive reinforcement, and they recognise that the process of learning draws on other qualities of people as part of their motivation to work together.

However, a possible criticism is that the learning organisation may be simply a sophisticated tool for those in control of these organisations to cause others to work better. A criticism such as the one Wright (1979) has of the human relations approach might be extended to the purposes of the learning organisation. The learning organisation probably can’t escape from so being. Or again, Foucault (1979) might argue that power relations in theories about learning organisations are still not explained or explored sufficiently. This is a possible weakness of these approaches. These comments by critics will be discussed

in Chapter 6, where I propose it is necessary to move towards critical systemic learning in organisations.

The learning-based motivation theories recognise that people's behaviour is not a function of the situation but is also influenced by both internal and environmental factors. So these authors encourage us to think about differing motivation factors, by relying on our own experiences of working with others and how we can learn from others. However, these approaches seem not to concentrate on ideology conflicts and power relations in given organisational contexts.

## **2. 6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have examined some of Moorhead and Griffin's (1995) classification of motivation theories. The first perspective views needs as socially acquired attributes of the individual, rather than as innate psychological characteristics. It suggests factors exist within the individual that energise, direct, and sustain behaviour. These approaches to motivation are concerned with the identification of important internal elements and explanation of how these elements may be prioritised within the individual. The second framework views motivation as a psychological processes. The process-based approaches attempt to describe how behaviour is energised, directed, and sustained. These approaches focus on certain psychological processes underlying action. In particular, process-based approaches emphasis on describing the functioning of the individual's decision system as it relates to behaviour. The third viewpoint conceives of intervening motivation as a learning process. This perspective identifies organisational features that impede effective

motivation and develops interventions for improving how organisations learn to change themselves.

These theories offer significant insights for improving motivation in organisations. However, there exist serious limitations, some of which have been outlined. These motivation theories have a common weakness, in that all of them tend to model organisations on their own particular assumptions, yet each of them claims to be ‘universal’. Therefore each downplays or excludes other equally important dimensions. While each of these approaches remains a useful tool to deal with the problems of motivation in organisations, there are three particular limitations which should be considered. The first is imposed by the presence of multiple views on the situation when defining motivation to be considered, thus, there is no best and all-encompassing approach in organisations. The second is present when the system in which a problem exists is of a highly complex character, for example, as in society that exist in different cultures. The third concerns social effects, for example, ideology conflicts and power relations embedded in given organisational contexts. In this thesis, reflection on such a view is essential both for the purpose of explaining the limitations of the existing motivation approaches and for the development of a critical systemic approach to motivation that can overcome these limitations.

Given the first limitation, we require some means for organising the plurality of motivation theories. In the next chapter, the theories discussed above will be further examined through an organisation analysis framework, such as Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) ‘sociological paradigms’ framework. Given the second and third limitations, it is also necessary to show how we can examine the different theories on the basis of

assumptions we make about problem situations through Jackson and Keys' (1984) 'system of systems methodology' framework, which is designed to classify methodologies according to the view they take of problem situations.

## **Chapter 3: Critical Commentary on the Literature on Motivation**

## Chapter 3

### Critical Commentary on the Literature on Motivation

#### 3. 1 Introduction

We have seen how there exists a diversity of approaches to motivation, each with its own particular assumptions. We have also seen that this variety presents a number of problems for practising managers. This chapter begins to look at ways for dealing with one of these problems, or limitations, as identified in the preceding chapter, namely the problem of plurality amongst the methods available for dealing with motivation issues.

Since the different motivation approaches are based on different assumptions, the question is how we are to make sense of that as practising managers. We have seen how Moorhead and Griffin (1995) classify motivation approaches, but this only shows us one means for differentiating them whilst not providing managers with a means for *choosing* between the various approaches. Other frameworks exist within the social sciences which could be put to use to provide further insights into which approach to use and when, and two such frameworks, that have been widely drawn upon, will now be used to see whether they will provide more guidance to people wishing to intervene in motivation issues.

In order to address this problem, I will firstly consider Burrell and Morgan's categorisation of different social theories based on ontological and epistemological assumptions and the nature of society. They suggest that there are basically four broad paradigms co-existing in society. Burrell and Morgan's framework will help to examine

paradigmatic assumptions to give us a deeper understanding of the differences between theories of motivation. However, questions arise such as, can the problems of motivation be solved by means of a single approach? If not, how can we relate different motivation approaches together? Pluralism suggests that theoretical and practical developments will be mutually informing. It recognises that different approaches address different aspects of the management task. The system of systems methodologies (Jackson and Keys, 1984; Jackson, 1987, 1990) will be given as an example to managing pluralism. Jackson and Keys's framework will give an indication of when theories are best applied, given that we can accept theoretical pluralism. Through the use of these two frameworks I aim *to provide a critical analysis of the motivation literature* and, furthermore, to begin *to organise and evaluate the many motivation approaches* in a way that will prove of use to practising managers.

In concluding the chapter I highlight some central issues arising during motivation interventions which are of concern for me, and for motivation theorists more generally. My discussions in this chapter lead the way towards the following chapters where I further explore the issues in motivation interventions and how the relations between the available approaches can be made more critical and systemic. I provide the background to an argument about this by indicating why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary.

### 3. 2 The concept of Burrell and Morgan's sociological paradigms framework

Burrell and Morgan (1979) developed a useful tool that should enable us to map different theories in terms of the sociological paradigms which underpin them. They believe that these paradigms can be identified by examining the kinds of assumptions made by the theories. In this regard, Burrell and Morgan suggest that “assumptions about the nature of social science can be thought of in terms of an objective-subjective dimension, and the nature of society can be thought of in terms of a regulation-radical change dimension” (p.21). They combine the objective-subjective dimension with the regulation-radical change dimension, and produce a matrix defining the four key sociological paradigms: functionalist, interpretative, radical structuralist, and radical humanist, as indicated in Figure 3.1 (p.23).

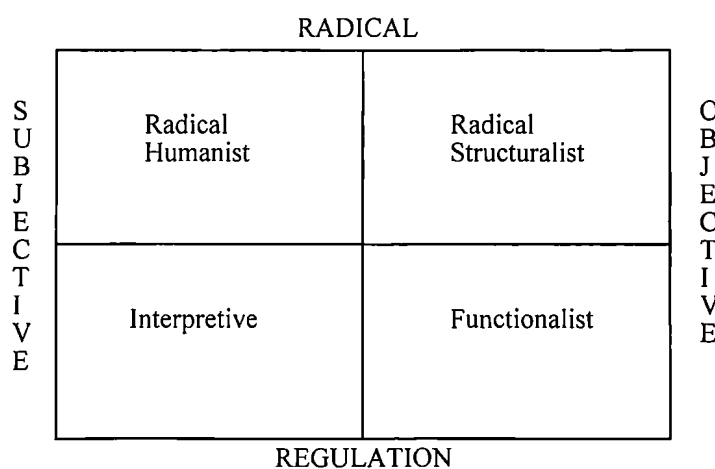


Figure 3.1. Burrell and Morgan's Four Paradigms for Analysis of Social Theory  
(Source: Burrell and Morgan, 1979; p.23)

They recognise that debate between theorists who adopt different perspectives within the problem context of any given paradigm is allowed, and each paradigm identifies an unique social-scientific reality. They argue:

To be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way.  
The four paradigms thus define four views of the social world based upon

different meta-theoretical assumptions with regard to the nature of science and society. (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p.24)

This framework provides us with a way of identifying the basic different assumptions between different motivation theories and the underlying frames of reference which we adopt. A point worthy of emphasising is that this framework stresses that the four paradigms offer alternative views of social reality. Burrell and Morgan suggest that: the functionalist paradigm rests on the premises that society has a real concrete existence and systematic character, is directed toward order and regulation, and is believed to be objective and value-free; the interpretative paradigm, the social world possesses a precarious existence, and social reality is the product of inter-subjective experience; the radical humanist paradigm shares with the interpretative paradigm the assumption that social reality is socially constructed, however, the social construction is tied to a situation in which the consciousness of individuals is dominated by ideological superstructures; the radical structuralist paradigm, social reality is considered to be objective, and the social world to be characterised by intrinsic conflict and contradictions.

As indicated, the four paradigms define fundamentally different perspectives for the analysis of social phenomena. Burrell and Morgan emphasise that “analyses based within mutually exclusive paradigms and relying on different theoretical assumptions would appear to be incommensurable” (p.25). This implies that sociological world is divided, splintered, and rived with internal dispute. However, Gregory (1992) recognises a number of deficiencies in Burrell and Morgan’s work, especially when considered from the perspective of critical systems thinking (CST), and drew attention to the limitations of their investigation into alien and different paradigms. She argues that their approach seems to imply that theories cannot communicate with and learn from one another.

But before going into a discussion of this, it is important to consider whether it might be worthwhile to apply a paradigm analysis to different motivation approaches discussed in Chapter 2. This may enable us to see how each paradigm offered important insight perspectives, as well as to consider the implications of the contradictory nature of many of the assumptions on which the different theories are based. For example, Burrell and Morgan's framework has been adopted and applied within the study of organisational behaviour (e.g., Forester, 1983; Holbrook, 1987; Hirschmann, 1990), and within systems science (e.g., Jackson, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991a, b; Flood and Jackson, 1991a, b). Ultimately, as I show in my thesis, some way of working with these contradictions must be developed, as an aid both to organisational analysis and to intervention.

### **3. 3 Using Burrell and Morgan's framework for analysis of the need-based motivation theories**

Need-based motivation theories (e.g., scientific management approach; human relations approach; Maslow's need theory; motivation-hygiene theory) assume that when employees' needs are not met or satisfied, then they experience tension which will motivate them to act in order to satisfy these needs and thereby reduce or relieve the tension. The assumptions behind the scientific management approach fit the description of a functionalist view which is believed to be objective and value free. The idea is that it is possible to study the way that humans behave and to organise patterns of work life which will be ordered and regulated. Critics (e.g., radical humanists) from other paradigms are critical of this way of seeing society, with its focus on establishing order through control

and with its suggestion (pretence) that this is an objective, value-free approach. Critics show that this is not value-free, because what is valued is the assumption of order and regulation as the basis for social relations.

Still classified under the need-based theory, the human relations school can be seen as fitting more into the 'interpretative' paradigm. The human relations school was aware that groups working together may be precarious, and hence they tried to develop suggestions for making this more feasible. As we saw in Chapter 2, some critics (e.g., some of the ones discussed by Rose, 1985) feel that this approach is still regulatory in some way. The criticism also concurs with the description of the interpretative paradigm.

Again under the need-based theory, I consider Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which suggests that people's lives depend on the way they interact with others, because he indicates that towards the top of the hierarchy, social needs (e.g., for esteem) become important. He also emphasises the importance of self-actualisation needs, freedom of enquiry and expression needs, and the need to know and to understand. I indicated in Chapter 2 that Maslow was influenced by humanistic values, and that he saw people's actions as initiated by attempts to satisfy changing needs. This might suggest that Maslow's theory bears similarity to the 'interpretative' block (being a voluntarist approach). Alternatively, it also could be seen to have links with the radical humanism. This depends on how 'radically' we wish to see Maslow's suggestions.

Probably, many critics (e.g., from the radical humanist perspectives) would argue that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is not sufficiently radical because it still may imprison people. It still can be used by organisational leaders as a way of getting people to fit in with the basic imperative of the organisation, even though some scope is created for them.

to self-actualise within it. Nevertheless, it can be argued that Maslow's theory can have more radical consequences for ways of organising in society. But, for this to be so, more 'radical' content would have to be put into the theory, thus moving it into the 'radical humanist' quadrant that the social construction is tied to a situation in which people find themselves the prisoners of the social world they create. To move out of this prison, Maslow's theory needs to be developed to provide more detail about how this may be possible. The same comments can be made in respect of the last need-based theory discussed in Chapter 2 (namely, motivation-hygiene theory). Motivation-hygiene theory has some radical humanist potential, that is, some potential to challenge the way that work life is currently organised, but this is, as yet, not fully developed in the theory. It could be suggested that because of its non-radical assumptions, it is unlikely that the theory ever will develop in a different direction. The theory will continue to see the needs that it has identified as capable of being fulfilled in work life, without needing radical changes in our cultural orientations. However, some sympathisers of the theory may support it by saying that the needs which it identifies already imply that radical changes need to take place in order to begin to satisfy those needs. This means that the theory has some radical potential.

Some of the critics whom I mentioned in Chapter 2, come from the 'radical structuralist' framework. For example, Wright (1979) criticises need-based theories because the theories have not explored the underlying structures that lead towards work being organised in the way that it is. For these radical structuralists, social reality is patterned in definite ways, and this leads to the intrinsic conflict and contradictions in work life. I have shown with reference to need-based theories how sociological paradigms can be useful to show some of the assumptions held by theorists and how they can be criticised by

invoking other assumptions. Below, I continue to use the sociological paradigms to examine the process-based motivation theories discussed in Chapter 2.

### **3. 4 Using Burrell and Morgan's framework for analysis of the process-based motivation theories**

Process-based motivation theories (e.g., equity theory; expectancy theory; goal-setting theory) explain work behaviour in terms of the cognitive process which the individual goes through before and during the behaviour. These theories seek to identify the process and examine people's needs, as well as their perceptions of their ability to perform the requisite behaviour and their expectations relative to the outcomes of the behaviour.

The equity process as seen by equity theory is essentially a personal assessment of one's psychological contract. People form perceptions of equity or inequity by comparing what they give to the organisation relative to what they get back and how this ratio compares with those of others. As a result of perceptions of equity or inequity, people can choose a variety of responses in an effort to maintain equity or reduce perceived inequity. From this description, it seems that we can place equity theory in the interpretative quadrant. The theory looks at people's subjective experiences of equity and their sense of whether they are being treated fairly. It also looks at the processes by which people come to define their own responses, as they interact with others. It is not in the functionalist theory, because it is not about maintaining social order through control mechanisms. It is more concerned with the way in which people act as a result of their perceptions of situations. However, it does not appear to be a radical humanist theory, except insofar as it would prescribe

changes to the culture which allow for more debate about how to generate equity. As with Maslow's theory (discussed in the previous section on need-based theories), further development of equity theory could perhaps lead to it being moved into the radical quadrant. At the moment, the way that it describes people's perceptions of equity as forming the basis for their motivations does not seem to suggest a concern with radical change. As far as radical change of a structural kind is concerned, equity theory has not concentrated on making structural suggestions for improved equity in the workplace and in society more generally. So it cannot be placed in the radical structuralist quadrant.

Critics of equity theory, especially more radically inclined critics, could suggest that a more radical theory, based on following-up the idea of social equity, needs to be further explored. Functionalist critics on the other hand, would say that the focus of equity theory is too much on the processes by which individuals come to see their world and make choices. They would say that social order depends on people being concerned about the way that the collective is functioning. People's perceptions of equity have to be modified in relation to a concern with the proper functioning of the whole system.

Expectancy theory, another process-based motivation theory, can be seen similarly to equity theory. It attempts to take into account humankind variability and complexity, and presents a model that allows the impact of human subjectivity upon motivational processes. The basic premise of expectancy theory, according to Vroom (1964), is that motivation depends on how much people want something and how likely they think they are to get it. Vroom suggests that the performance-to-outcome expectancy is the belief that performance will lead to certain outcomes, and that valence is the desirability of the individual of the various possible outcomes of performance. The theory, like equity

theory, places considerable emphasis on individual decision-making based on people's perceptions of what is desirable and their perceptions of the likelihood of their attaining the desirable. The comments made above about equity theory are similarly applicable to expectancy theory. It does not bear much similarity to the functionalist paradigm because the focus is individualistic and subjectivistic. It might have radical humanist potential, but only if changes to the culture were seen as something that needs to be explored by the theory. It is not a radical structuralist position. It would move in that direction only if it started to speak about the changes to the social structure that needed to be made to allow different people's expectancies to be met.

The goal-setting theory, also is a process-based theory, that I discuss. It assumes that behaviour is the result of conscious goals and participation. Therefore, by setting goals for people in the organisation, it should be possible to influence their behaviour. In this premise, the challenge is to develop a thorough understanding of the processes by which people set goals and then work to reach them. This theory, when linked to Management by Objectives (MBO) (as it often is) links up with some functionalist assumptions. MBO is a generalised method of using the goal setting process throughout an organisation in a systematic and organised fashion. As Flood and Carson (1993) note, the starting point in a successful MBO programme is top management support, and top managers must stand behind the programme and take the first step by establishing overall goals for the organisation. After initial organisational goals have been set, with the support of these top managers, supervisors and sub-ordinates throughout the organisation collaborate in setting sub-goals. From this description of MBO, we can see some functionalist assumptions. The assumption seems to be that order and regularity can be achieved if goals can be set for the system and if the various subsystems can be brought in line with

these goals, so that there will be no clashes between the whole and its parts. It also seems to suggest a scientific examination of how goals and sub-goals can be set so as to avoid disorder. Again, this links up with the functionalist view that value-free enquiry into the system is possible.

I suggest that MBO also could be linked up with the interpretative perspective. The theory can allow for subjective perceptions and group (coalition) definitions about how people may fulfil objectives in the organisation, for example, especially when it is combined with a theory such as that of Lee and Lawrence (1991), discussed in Chapter 2). Then, it bears some similarity to the interpretative paradigm. However, I do not see that as yet it can be described as falling within either radical humanist or radical structuralist paradigms. To learn from the more radical approaches, it needs to explore further some of the issues of power that I raised in Chapter 2.

### **3. 5 Using Burrell and Morgan's framework for analysis of the learning-based motivation theories**

Learning-based motivation theories (e.g., reinforcement theory; organisational learning theory) explain work behaviour in terms of studying how people's orientations are learnt through their interactions with others. Reinforcement theory offers us an understanding of human learning processes in an organisational setting. People can be moulded by direct or indirect experiences which occur in their life. Luthans and Kreitner (1975) suggest that reinforcement theory is based upon the idea that behaviour is a function of its consequences. Therefore, behaviour choices are affected by the consequences of earlier

behaviours. Organisational behaviour modification, as I discussed it in Chapter 2, represents a major motivational theory that guides managers in their application of reinforcement theory to the behaviour of subordinates. Organisational behaviour modification characteristically uses positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviours in employees.

From this brief description we can already see that reinforcement theory has some similarity with functionalism. The idea of reinforcement is linked to the possibility of taking control of people's behaviours to ensure that it fits in with the regular order of the whole system. It is not an interpretative theory (as I explained in Chapter 2, it is more positivist oriented, seeing people's behaviour as caused by extended factors, which condition their responses). It is also not radical humanist, nor radical structuralist. It is not aimed at finding a way of radically changing either culture or structure in society. Foucault (1979) shows that the way in which social order in society may be linked, in micropolitical ways, to the control and subjugation of subjects. Foucault's criticism is from a radical angle, because it criticises the order with a view to making people want to challenge this type of order.

Becoming a learning organisation was developed by Swieringa and Wierdsma (1992). They suggest that people are not motivated merely by trying to fulfil their own needs or goals, or by trying to get positive reinforcement. They recognise that a learning organisation is the courage and commitment of its members to live with the paradoxes and contradictions in the organisation and to be able to learn together to deal with these. At present, these approaches do not concentrate so much on the issue of power in work life, nor on the question of whether and what structural changes may need to occur for change

to take place. Perhaps, these approaches could learn from more radical perspectives. And likewise the more radical ones might learn from them. For example, the more radical approaches could become more aware of the processes of learning and the commitments that may be required by people before ‘change’ can take place. Perhaps, furthermore, interpretative and radical humanist and radical structuralist approaches can learn something from the functionalist approach about the need to have some kind of order. As long as none of the paradigms looks able to offer the final universal theory, it seems that there is room for them all: They may all have something to offer.

In summary, as I have shown above, different motivation approaches can be located according to their basic assumptions, and each approach represents a distinctive view of reality. It clearly shows that people in different paradigms view motivation differently; there is no *a priori* basis for deciding which paradigm has the better problem-solving ability and thus the right to substitute for other paradigms. But, it helps us to identify possible criticisms of a theory, seen from other perspectives which do not share its assumptions. Before we move on to argue the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation, the question arises concerning paradigm (in)commensurability. Burrell and Morgan tend to argue that the separate worlds into which they divide the paradigmatic world are incommensurable. Some authors (e.g., Reed, 1985, 1992; Gioia and Pitre, 1990; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Flood, 1995, 1996; Flood and Romm, 1996a) note that Burrell and Morgan’s framework overstates the extent of paradigm incommensurability.

As we shall see in Chapter 4, pluralist systemic approaches go further than do sociological paradigms in helping us to deal with the diversity of available approaches in interventions.

As Gregory (1992) notes, Burrell and Morgan's framework can be argued that the framework may not really help us to see how the theories can learn from one another (it leaves the issues of learning unanswered). But, at least it does help us to see the starting points from which the theories begin their analyses, by looking at some of their underlying assumptions.

Jackson and Keys (1984), following in the steps of Burrell and Morgan (1979), developed another way of seeing how room can be made for the various paradigms, or systems of thought, in their 'system of systems methodologies' (SOSM). This is discussed in the following section.

### **3. 6 Jackson and Keys' "system of systems methodologies" framework**

Jackson and Keys (1984) sought to provide a SOSM framework, later developed by Jackson (1987), which was designed to make sense of the interrelationships between methodologies. It is suggested that systems methodologies be examined along with their relative efficacy in solving problems in various real-world problems contexts. According to Jackson and Keys (1984), an ideal-type grid of problem contexts is made up of two dimensions: one defining the nature of the systems (mechanical and systemic) in which the problems of concern are located and the other the nature of the relationships between the participants (unitary and pluralist) who have an interest in the problem context.

However, according to Jackson (1987), if there is little common interest between the participants, there is fundamental conflict, and the only consensus that can be achieved is through the exercise of power, then the problem context is called coercive. His extended

version of the earlier framework yields a six celled matrix. He recognises that problem contexts can be seen to fall into the following categories: mechanical-unitary, systemic-unitary, mechanical-pluralist, systemic-pluralist, mechanical-coercive, and systemic-coercive, indicated in Figure 3.2 .

		PARTICIPANTS		
		UNITARY	PLURALIST	COERCIVE
SYSTEMS	MECHANICAL	Mechanical-Unitary	Mechanical-Pluralist	Mechanical-Coercive
	SYSTEMIC	Systemic-Unitary	Systemic-Pluralist	Systemic-Coercive

Figure 3.2 Jackson's Version of Grid of Problem Situations  
(source: Jackson,1991a, p.29)

Jackson suggests that these six ideal-types of problem contexts imply the need for different types of problem-solving methodologies. This provides a very convenient means of classifying available systems approaches, and matching them to problem contexts. Thus, the SOSM framework provides the interrelationship between different systems approaches and the relationship these have to ideal-type problem contexts.

I will briefly show the utility of this framework compared with that of Burrell and Morgan's framework. One difference between this framework and that of Burrell and Morgan is that it introduces six cells, which therefore may allow us to classify approaches with more richness (than a four fold framework). A second difference is that it begins to

offer us a way of thinking about how to apply the variety of approaches, instead of just being faced with the variety. By way of example, let us consider how the SOSM framework could be used to address some of the motivation theories that appear in the literature.

### **3. 7 Using Jackson and Keys's framework for analysis of the need-based motivation theories**

Let us first consider, within need-based motivation theories, Taylor's scientific management approach which believed that the best way of doing each task in an organisation can be established and, on this basis, a fair day's pay for a fair day's work can be calculated. Taylor also assumed that people are primarily motivated by monetary rewards in the work place. Using the six-cell approach of the SOSM framework, I suggest that this kind of needs approach falls into the mechanical problem context because it presupposes a relatively simple system, where the elements are the amount of work to be achieved and the amount of pay assigned accordingly. The nature of the relationship between participants that is assumed in this need-based theory, can be seen as unitary. The common objective of both managers and workers is for workers to obtain rewards according to their job performance. The suggestion is that if work can be organised in terms of a good piece work system, the participants (employers and employees) can reach agreement on objectives, because they share the common belief that work must be rewarded on the basis of a fair pay for fair day's work. So, Taylor's scientific management can be seen as applicable (ideal-typically) to a mechanical-unitary problem context. It means that if it is the case in a situation that all are agreed that a fair day's work demands

a fair day's pay and all can agree on how to organise this, then the need-based theory of Taylor could be relevant to this context.

Considering another one of the need-based theories, namely, the human relations approach, I would argue that it bears resemblance to the mechanical-pluralist position. Social reality in this theory is seen as the product of intersubjective experience. The relationship between the component parts of the system are seen as relatively simple by this approach of thought. It is a matter of organising team work to allow for people to work well together. This approach presupposes that there are differences between the subjects, hence the intersubjectivity may be precarious, but that agreements can be reached. Hence, because of this presupposition, this fits the pluralist cell. The implications of placing this approach here means that, if there is a situation which for the most part we can consider as having mechanical-pluralist features, then the human relations approach might be a relevant way of looking at motivation in that situation.

### **3. 8 Using Jackson and Keys's framework for analysis of the process-based motivation theories**

I now consider a systemic-unitary problem context and I consider motivation theories that might be applicable in such contexts. I suggest, by way of example, that the (process-based) goal-setting theory called Management by Objectives (MBO) fits in with the systemic-unitary cells. The connections between the components and the amount of components in the system are more complex than a mere simple system would have. MBO assumes that there are many interacting parts of the system, which means that goals and

subgoals have to be set at a variety of levels in the system. This leads me to state that a complex system is presupposed by the theory. In terms of the relationship between the participants, MBO normally assumes (unless it becomes linked with a theory like the coalition theory) that there will not be differing interests and objectives in the system. So this fits the unitary classification. The implications of placing MBO in the systemic-unitary category of the matrix is the following. If it is the case that there is a relatively complex connection between goals and subgoals of levels of a system and it is the case that participants can reach agreement on what these goals are because they share common objectives and ideas, then MBO might be a relevant theory to apply in this problem context. The theory could help people to see how they can become motivated to fulfil goals that have been set.

### **3. 9 Using Jackson and Keys's framework for analysis of the learning-based motivation theories**

We can see Argyris's (1992) theory of organisational learning as bearing some resemblance to the mechanical-coercive cell. I state this especially in view of the fact that Argyris describes Model I behaviour as relatively simple terms. The connections between parts of the system are built on a pattern of defensive responses on the part of people. People solve problems by being defensive about their solutions, and by defending mistakes made, too. Thus, they reduce problem-complexity. Argyris also appears to see Model I behaviour as linked to forms of coercion and control. For this reason, we may regard Model I in Argyris's view of learning as having some relevance in what Jackson (1987) calls the mechanical-coercive contexts. Of course, what he hopes to achieve is a

situation where the context can be changed (through learning) to a situation where Model II behaviour can take root. His hope is to change such contexts through his new theory of motivation. The theory opens the way for us to look at the way that cultural patterns can become entrenched (Model I) unless they are challenged. It suggests that motivation approaches which support defensive reactions need to give way to new forms of motivating people. If the radical importance of his suggestions for a change of culture and a challenge existing cultural patterns can be drawn out more fully, it provides a way of looking at what Jackson (1987) calls mechanical-coercive contexts. It also provides a way of challenging these contexts to create change.

The learning theory which has been developed by Swieringa and Wierdsma (1992) is similar to the one explained by Argyris (1992), but it emphasises more that collective learning involves dealing with variety and that this in turn involves contradictions and paradoxes. Because of this, it might be appropriate to see this theory as falling more in the systemic-coercive cell. Swieringa and Wierdsma suggest that the conflicts that may arise because of these paradoxes should not be seen as a threat to be avoided, but rather as a challenge to be faced. They propose that it is important that members of the organisation realise that a learning organisation is not a paradise. The idea behind their proposal is that conflicts are a result of the complex character of the connections among all the components of a system, and furthermore, we should not expect to resolve these conflicts. This seems to suggest that Swieringa and Wierdsma hold a complex view of the connections between parts of systems. It also seems to suggest that they do not uphold a pluralist view. They see conflict as taking place continuously between what may be incompatible ways of working, as well as incompatible ways of organising. They recognise that these conflicts can be resolved through coercion, if one way of working or

doing in the organisation becomes all powerful. Therefore, in some ways their theory is applicable to coercive contexts. Like Argyris (1992), they suggest a way of trying to address this. But as shown in my discussion in Chapter 2, they do not provide a full exploration of how this can occur. It is for this reason that some critics could argue that their theory needs a fuller exploration of issues of power. Also a theory of ideological forces in society, outside of specific organisations, might be needed to supplement the approach.

It is worth noting here that the SOSM framework can also be used to show that motivation theories to deal with either mechanical-coercive or systemic-coercive contexts are not fully developed in terms of the purpose of bringing about change. If we wish to bring about change, we may need to be supplemented with more detailed explorations of power and ideology in organisations and in society. I believe that if we want to develop a critical systemic approach to issue of motivation in organisations, we have to think more about such issues. But in thinking about such issues, it is also important to consider the ideas that have been offered by many motivation theories, such as theories discussed in this and Chapter 2, in coming up with a critical systemic of thought. In my following chapter I offer a discussion of pluralist systemic approach in systems thinking, and I relate this discussion to some of the ideas that I have developed in this chapter regarding different motivation theories.

In summary, I have shown above, by way of example, using a number of motivation approaches, how the SOSM framework allows us to consider the available approaches in relation to the types of organisational contexts at which they are suited to look. It also brings in the idea of intervention, that is, the idea that a approach can be used actually to

deal with the problem of motivation that it identifies. I showed this problem-orientation in relation to the examples. This may help us to see different problem-contexts in which the available approaches may be most relevant. The SOSM framework may provide a starting point for us to consider how the available approaches may have relevance in given organisational contexts. It helps us to see that not all the theories need to be applied in every context. It means that we do not have to reject any approach outright, as long as there is some context in which it seems to be applicable. As I showed, when discussing Burrell and Morgan's (1979) sociological paradigms, this does not mean that the available approaches cannot learn from one another. This framework helps us to see (as a starting point) the initial assumptions of different approaches. We can still go on to see how the available approaches can learn from one another, and thus expand their ideas as well as their usefulness. We can also see where we feel that more work needs to be done to develop a critical systemic approach to motivation. But, the current motivation approaches lack sufficient breadth of view to look at the problems of motivation (seeing only one theoretical position as valid).

Indeed, motivation is so complex that it is impossible to produce a satisfactory, unified body of thought that can assist with all its aspects. Social circumstances and individuals' understandings change constantly. Any review result needs to be seen as a reference point for the next critique. We should realise that we have to view the available approaches according to our shifting interpretations of current organisational circumstances, and constantly update our ability and knowledge. Thus, the diversity of available motivation approaches cannot be concretely fixed, but should be used dynamically according to the assumptions and knowledge among interventionists.

### **3. 10 What can be learnt from the use of the two frameworks?**

As Schön (1983) states, technical rationality (accepting ends as given and focusing purely on means) is unable to open to question the underlying understandings and assumptions by which decisions on end objectives are reached. He argues that assumptions need to be reflected upon and reviewed in order for us to improve our ability to learn and be effective. The process to critique our assumptions is to be open to external views, beliefs, and assumptions.

In considering motivation interventions, it is important to examine managers' experiences in combination with the influences of social contexts, and these concerns form a basis for our value judgements to choose from the available approaches in motivation interventions. Brown and Wilby (1996) point out that to make interventions effective, managers need to be responsive to the participants and various definitions of their situations; to be willing with participants to adjust not only their actions, but also their underlying assumptions; and to maximise the learning potential of the situation. They argue that managers may individually reflect on an intervention, but reflective potential is enhanced by also reflecting with the participants, to open managers to the challenge of their views and perspectives. Moreover, managers have a moral responsibility, concerned with individual rights and social responsibilities. This is because of the social and individual biases that inevitably affect the intervention process. Assessment or appreciation is a learning process which enriches our understanding through challenges to our underlying assumptions.

Before coming to a more detailed discussion about how to offer procedures to integrate all available approaches to motivation in a process which ensures that they are employed to tackle only the issues they are best suited to, it is worthwhile exploring the issues arising during motivation intervention. The preceding discussion suggests that following issues should be taken into account: Pluralism in available approaches to motivation, power relations and ideology conflicts in organisations, a critical systemic view of learning during motivation interventions, and cross-cultural influences on motivation.

This section aims to explore, in terms of self-society dynamics, how these questions influence managers when dealing with the problems of motivation. To begin with, let us focus on the issues associated managing with managing the diversity of available motivation approaches in a way which respects all their qualities.

### **3. 10. 1 The issues of pluralism in available approaches to motivation**

From Jackson and Keys's (1984) point of view, to choose a suitable approach(es) in interventions, managers firstly need to understand the problem situation. The question arises, how can managers choose from the available motivation approaches to suit their own organisational contexts? Some critical systems thinkers (e.g., Flood, 1989, 1990, 1995; Jackson, 1990, 1991a, 1997; Flood and Jackson, 1991a; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b, 1996, 1997a; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Flood, 1995; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a; Wilby, 1996; Ho, 1998) consider that managers should adopt pluralism in available approaches to deal with the wide variety of problem situations that face them. For example, Jackson (1991a) notes that each approach addresses different interventions in a specific problem situation, and states that "these alternative positions must be respected,

and different theoretical underpinnings and the methodologies to which they give rise developed in partnership” (p.186). Flood (1995) argues that no approach should be chosen and used in an arbitrary pattern, and available approaches need to be evaluated before intervention. Flood and Romm (1995a) recognise that pluralism is an attempt to preserve diversity in approaches which enhance our ability to deal with the diversity of problem situations. Flood and Romm (1996a) note that we should continually be open to accept diversity of discourse, and that we should permit different points of view about the choice of available approaches. However, we may ask, why an approach(es) should or should not be considered appropriate for a specific intervention? Wilby (1996) observes that different people might make different interpretations about the consequences of applying the available approaches for intervention in a particular time and problem situation. As she says,

....precise interpretation is still a subjective task dependent both on the individual’s biases and the context of the situation the individual is in at that time. The interpretation of any generated information is therefore open to both the internal limits of the individual in terms of skill, knowledge, and biases, and also to the external limitations of the influences of context and physical situation on the individuals. (Wilby, 1996, p.119)

Additionally, social contexts and our understandings change constantly. Wilby (1996) notes that any review result should be seen as a reference point for the next critique. She argues that the critical appreciation process is a “time-consuming” activity, and believes the available approaches cannot be concretely fixed, but should be used flexibly. Ho (1998) also claims that the appreciation of available approaches should be operated locally in organisations, and the procedure should extend to different perspectives. He

also emphasises that evaluation is “a never-ending learning process”, so that managers should be ready to reassess critically their assumptions in the light of new knowledge.

Each of the above perspectives have something to say about how managers should manage the diversity of available approaches in motivation interventions. In Chapter 4, I will explore ways of allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions which involve appreciating and recognising the differences and similarities between various motivation approaches, rather than reducing them to only one perspective. This is to say, motivation interventions should be interpreted critically and used in a pluralist systemic position according to organisational circumstances at a given point in time.

### **3. 10. 2 The issues of power relations and ideology conflicts in organisations**

It is problematic to tackle a problem context in which managers are aware of issues of the coercive use of power or ideological differences in interventions. Several authors (e.g., Foucault, 1982, 1984; Ulrich, 1983, 1991; Schön, 1983; Clegg, 1989; Rahman, 1993; Sinha, 1994; Romm, 1995, 1996, 1998; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a; Mingers, 1997) are concerned with analysing the exercise of power because they argue that these invariably exist in all social contexts and thus can be important social factors. For example, Schön (1983) expresses an awareness of the power relations involved in inquiry processes. He notes that the processes of developing knowledge are at the same time political processes, and that knowledge is an instrument of political power. Sinha (1994) indicates the influence of power relations in terms of the processes involved in developing motivation to work and adopting certain ways of living. Flood and Romm (1996a) observe

that knowledge and professional practice are constructed in ways which lead us to make particular choices in society. As Mingers (1997) argues, “all knowledge, and indeed rationality itself, is inevitably constituted through and intertwined with the exercise of power” (p.417). He considers that a universal

view of the reasoning subject can no longer be accepted. Our world is increasingly diverse, pluralistic, transitory, and local. We can no longer expect to be able to specify norms, values, and principles that hold for all people and for all time. (Mingers, 1997, p.418)

However, power can be polarised positively and negatively, so that managers must deal with different issues of power. As Clegg (1989) states, power can be considered as creative rather than necessarily limiting. Rahman (1993) also suggests that an analysis of power-knowledge formations creates possibilities for us to mobilise and self-develop. Midgley (1997a) indicates that we should preserve the notion of the “subject” which “can reinforce or challenge these formations, allowing us to evaluate the actions of subjects in terms of their perceived positive or negative effects on power-knowledge” (p.279).

By applying above ideas in motivation interventions, managers should see how organisational structures can create conditions that allow some employees to enforce their will on others, and those employees in turn have to respond to other powerful forces. The question arises, can managers critically-reflect on the inequalities of power during motivation interventions? For example, Mingers (1997) questions, “can intervention, conducted for and on behalf of (and paid for by) a powerful client ever be seriously challenging to the status quo?”, and “can we really expect any problem-solving/management approach that is critical towards the status quo to be universally applicable?” (p.415). Clearly, there are many issues (e.g., who, makes the commitment and why) surrounding the use of power in both organisations and society which are

relevant to motivation interventions. Before coming onto a comprehensive examination of these issues of power relations in Chapter 5.

It is also worth noting that the operation of power relationships does not occur in a vacuum: many authors (e.g., Foucault, 1972, 1979, 1982; Clegg, 1975; Hyman and Brough, 1975; Hindess, 1982; Oliga, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1996) do not write about power without linking the concept to issues around ideology, ideology conflicts, and its creation and maintenance. In discussing ideology conflicts in organisations, several authors (e.g., Habermas, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1976; Thompson, 1990; Gregory, 1992; Billing and Simons, 1994; Flood and Romm, 1995a; Oliga, 1988, 1990, 1996) are concerned with looking at how an ideology can become a dominant force, and with the need for an ideology-critique process. They recognise that managers need to have an idea of what ideology actually is and how it can be critiqued. As Habermas (1976) claims, it is possible to launch an ideology-critique process which prevents the complete colonisation of all thought. This is important in motivation interventions as, without such a critique, it could be possible that one way of seeing the issue of motivation could come to dominate (to colonise) all thought about how (and, indeed why) motivation should be improved. In a similar view, Thompson (1990) considers that the concept of ideology is concerned with the way in which ideas are “mobilised in the service of dominant individuals and groups”, and notes that we should offer an interpretation of different ideologies as a way to change our thinking and our lifestyle choices in society (p.73). Gregory (1992) observes that defining ideology as legitimating the interests of the dominant class does not look at the ways others define belief patterns in society. Billing and Simons (1994) also indicate that ideology-critique claims to reveal a hidden truth about the nature of ideas, disposing of false consciousness. From above point of views, these authors argue that our beliefs and assumptions are not naturally inherent, but are the results of interfaces between

individuals and the surrounding society. In particular, ideology is important in the choice of approach to motivation. Thus, to be critical, managers should not rely only on their personal knowledge and understanding (their own ideology); rather, they should be open to wider perspectives. Indeed, there are many different ideologies in our society. It is important to respect them, rather than reject them out of hand, and the process of ideology-critique will enrich managers' understanding and knowledge. Most importantly, individuals should communicate with and learn from different perspectives. This subject will be examined in depth in Chapter 5.

### **3. 10. 3 The issues of a critical systemic view of learning during motivation intervention**

An approach is created according to particular assumptions about motivation. By examining the philosophy of the available approaches, we need to critically appreciate these assumptions. This could enhance our understanding of the approach by means of an ideology-critique process. It is by communication and learning the different views that a more critical appreciation of the approach and its suitability for a given organisational context may be gained. Therefore, in order to improve mutual understanding and communication, I suggest that, wherever possible, a critical systemic view of learning during interventions is necessary.

Several authors (e.g., Salaman, 1983; March, 1991; Brown and Duguid, 1991; Simon, 1991; Mullins, 1993; Cook and Yanow, 1993; Hassard, 1993; Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Salipante and Bouwen, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Cohen and Sproull, 1996; Burgoyne and Reynolds, 1997) suggest that there may be a continuing dynamic between people's

perspectives. Salaman (1983), for example, states that the commitment and co-operation of employees is frequently regarded by senior management as problematic and uncertain, and consensus and control is then sought by selection and manipulation of perspective. He recognises that alien perspectives are indeed part of the substance that maintains the organisational integrity, because not everything can or should be controlled by senior management. He argues that perspectives may have a powerful influence on the maintenance of an organisation's integrity; yet people with alien perspectives are often not given due recognition in terms of their own value, to introduce new ways of being to the organisation. Sometimes it has to do with power dynamics, for often people cannot legitimise their social base and they thus become marginalised (see Midgley, 1995a). I believe dynamics in which alien perspectives are marginalised, need to give way to dynamics where all alien perspectives can learn from one another. This means neither that learning offers a fixed ideology (or perspective) for people to adhere to, nor that rebellious elements offer a treatment that tries to win favour among them. It also means that many alternatives are presented as ways of being in the organisation, so that everybody can become more appreciative of these ways. A critical systemic view of learning is possible because attitude is not simply individually formed but arises out of interaction with others. This theme will be examined in depth in Chapter 6.

### **3. 10. 4 The issues of cross-cultural influences on motivation**

People do not always in all cultures become motivated by the same things. In this sense, managers' view of motivation is based on their own ideologies which come from different cultures, and that their paradigmatic status guides them to adopt a particular perspective on motivation. Several authors (e.g., Hofstede, 1980a, b, 1984, 1987, 1991; Firestone, 1990; Gregory, 1992, 1994; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994; Brockleby, 1994, 1995; Brockleby and Cummings, 1995, 1996; Harvey and Allard, 1995; Brocklesby, 1995) note that managers should be aware of different cultures which might need different ways on motivation. For example, Hofstede (1980a, b) believes that there is much scope for intervention contrasts in different cultures. This is important when thinking about motivation, because cultural differences may mean that motivation approaches developed and effectively applied in the West may not be so easily and effectively applied in the East. However, cultural differences which prevent the exact replication of a motivation approach should not (I argue) be allowed to stand in the way of learning about the possibilities for intervening in motivation issues. Of course, such learning will not easily be achieved: Firestone (1990) states that it is very difficult for us (steeped in our own culture) to imagine doing things differently, and that alien paradigms communication is an alternative conception of cross-cultural understanding. Mendonca and Kanungo (1994), in talking of cross-cultural learning, observe that it is necessary to extend the boundaries within a organisational culture when there are cultural constraints which can be identified. Harvey and Allard (1995) point out that in order to deal with cultural diversity, we need to imagine ourselves in others' cultures to understand how

they view us and how they interpret our actions. All of these authors are pointing to the barriers to cross-cultural learning whilst also indicating means to overcome these.

The question I will be posing is, how can managers foster cross-cultural (or alien paradigms) learning? From the systems perspective, Brocklesby (1995) also asks the question, how can managers view the same situation from different paradigms without involving cultural influences? Mingers (1997) notes,

Given that paradigms make fundamental, reality-shaping, assumptions about the world, it is likely that individuals may find it hard to switch between different paradigms, and that cultures and organisations will tend to favour certain paradigms at the expense of others. (Mingers, 1997, p.413)

This is an issue of how alien paradigms in different cultures influence managers' choice of the available approaches on motivation should be considered. Furthermore, the argument between 'communication' and 'incommensurability' should be discussed. In particular, in relation to paradigm communication, the argument should be advanced that individual assumptions and interpretations of a approach will be influenced by social ideology. These are issues that will be explored in relation to the literature on cross-cultural influences on motivation in Chapter 7.

So far, I have examined some key issues which might arise during motivation interventions. This research suggests that personal and social ideology affect both our view of motivation and choice of approach in interventions. It emphasises that the diversity of available approaches should not simply be taken for granted; it is necessary to re-appreciate and understand various methods and problem situations on a continuing

basis. We need to take various perspectives into account and reveal the reason behind any assumptions that are made about organisational circumstances. The available approaches are built temporarily and within the limits of our understanding. This research suggests that people's views are not static, and believe that learning is possible. This may be a good starting point to discuss what the various approaches are proposing by looking at the starting premises of the approaches, and that different approaches might be more applicable in some contexts than in others, so that the diversity of available approaches complement each other because of their differences and their different applications. Therefore, in order to find the most suitable approach to motivation, we need to think about the following issues in motivation interventions: allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions, understanding power relations and ideology conflicts in organisations, needing critical systemic learning, and realising cross-cultural influences on motivation.

### **3. 11 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I showed with reference to Burrell and Morgan's (1979) 'sociological paradigms' framework how the different motivation approaches make explicit or implicit assumptions about the world they seek to understand. I also showed how they can be criticised from other perspectives which have different assumptions (potential paradigm incommensurability). Then, I used the SOSM framework of Jackson and Keys (1984), and later Jackson (1987), to learn about and to reflect on what different approaches are trying to do. The SOSM framework helps us to understand different ways to see assumptions of

the available motivation approaches, the complexity of organisations with which they deal and the relationship between individuals. With this preparatory theoretical background in place, I showed how the concept of pluralism (which tries to see the different motivation approaches as having specific strengths and weaknesses) allows for the notion that not all approaches can deal with everything, but on the other hand that all approaches might have something to offer. This thesis argues that it is necessary to respect the strengths and weaknesses of the diversity of available motivation approaches, promote critical awareness about the contexts of interventions, and pursue that individuals need the ability to examine and judge the surrounding ideologies which provide the context for their personal beliefs.

On the basis of the groundwork laid in this chapter, Part Two looks at several central issues (e.g. allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions, understanding ideology conflicts and power relations in organisations, needing critical systemic learning, and realising cross-cultural influences on motivation) in motivation interventions. In the following chapters, I offer a more detailed discussion about issues related to motivation.

## **PART TWO**

### **CENTRAL ISSUES IN MOTIVATION INTERVENTIONS**

**Chapter 4: Issues in Motivation Interventions (1):  
Allowing Pluralist Systemic Approaches  
in Interventions**

## **Chapter 4**

### **Issues in Motivation Interventions (1): Allowing Pluralist Systemic Approaches in Interventions**

#### **4. 1 Introduction**

This chapter will examine how systems thinking has progressed since the work of Jackson and Keys (1984) and Jackson (1987) which was utilised in the last chapter. In particular here, I will be looking at the literature in order to reveal any advances that have been proposed in how managers can deal with the diversity of (motivation) approaches available to them. I will set out to show a specific group of writers (generally known as critical systems thinkers) have made considerable advances in understanding and explaining the types of difficulties that people (theoreticians and practitioners) encounter when trying to solve problems (including the problem of motivation) in organisations.

The chapter will focus on how critical systems thinkers deal with issues in interventions, such as: (1) the issues associated with power and its use; (2) the related issues of ideology conflicts; (3) the issues associated with the sheer diversity of approaches from which to choose; and (4) the scope for communication and learning across cultures. By looking at these issues, I will show that the oblique use of methodology (Flood and Romm, 1995a), the process of ideology-critique (Gregory, 1992), the critical appreciation process (Gregory, 1992) and/or critical awareness (Flood and Jackson, 1991a; Wilby, 1996, Ho, 1998) together with a number of forms of pluralism (e.g., Mingers, 1992, 1997; Midgley,

1992, 1995a, b, 1996, 1997a; Flood, 1995, 1996; Jackson, 1997 etc.), all have something of value which can be built upon by adopting pluralist systemic approaches in interventions. To begin with in this chapter, let us consider the historical roots of critical systems thinking (CST).

## **4. 2 The historical roots of critical systems thinking**

This section aims to review the emergence of CST. It begins by introducing the concept of systems thinking. Emery (1969) states that systems thinking has been shown that living systems, whether individuals or populations, have to be analysed as “open systems” which cannot be isolated from their environment (p.8). According to Kast and Rosenzweig (1981), systems thinking within the domain of organisational problem solving is an analogy for the analysis and design of organisations, and its major implication is the necessity to revise or broaden our view of what constitutes science. Jackson (1991a) notes that systems thinking is an attempt to provide an integrated understanding of the complexity of the world and create a unified way of thinking about all systems, in order to get a better understanding of system complexity. Flood and Carson (1993) also argues that “ systems thinking is a framework of thought that helps us to deal with complex things in a holistic way” (p.4). In the following examinations, an attempt is made to focus on the application of various types of systems thinking in problem solving. I will look at the strengths and weaknesses (as they have been discussed in the literature) of hard systems thinking, soft systems thinking, and critical systems thinking, which will be examined.

Concerning hard systems thinking, as Jackson (1991a) notes, implies machine-like systems which are designed as means to achieve pre-determined ends. Keys (1991) also observes that the key assumption underpinning hard systems thinking to problem-solving is “the ability to construct and manipulate a model of a situation under study” (p.178). That is, hard systematic approaches (e.g., operational research, systems analysis, systems engineering) are concerned with engineering optimal goal-seeking strategies for manipulating complex systems through systematic techniques. Hard systems thinking can apply its engineering principles smoothly where there is agreement among participants about the objective to be achieved and the need to find an efficient method of achieving it. It views systems as organised wholes in the objective real world. With increasing empirical knowledge and expert judgements, it is suggested, the boundary between the system and environment can be clearly defined, components and contributions in the system can be identified, relationships, communication and feedback mechanism within the system can be modelled, the behaviour of systems can be predicted and controlled, the objectives of the system can be defined and the system can be engineered to achieve objectives by means of science and technology. As Tsoukas (1994) states

more specifically, it conceives of management as a regulatory process consisting of four elements: objectives for the management of an organisation must be explicitly spelled out; the outcome of managing must be measurable; the manager must have a predictive model under control specifying causes and effects, and deviations will subsequently be reduced via taking corrective action. (Tsoukas, 1994, p.3)

In this sense, human motivation could be another factor that has to be geared to reaching said objectives. This applies to engineering type approaches and also to some extent to cybernetics, especially when cybernetics (e.g., Beer, 1972, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1989) sees the people in the system as having the function of working towards a defined

objective. However, systems can be problematic, especially if we focus on systems in social situations, where different systems thinkers have different interests and presumptions. The formulations of hard systems thinking are less successful in unstructured problems, defined as problems which it seems do not admit easily of engineering types solutions.

Soft systems thinking opens up a new perspective which is based on inter-subjectivism which tends to respect various different perspectives and brings these into the problem-solving procedure. Soft systems theorists (e.g., Ackoff, 1974, 1979, 1981, 1988, 1989; Churchman, 1979a, b; Checkland, 1976, 1978, 1981, 1987, 1993; Mason and Mitroff, 1981) do not seek to study objective social facts or to search for regularities and causal relations in social reality. There is an increasing appreciation of language and, thus, interpretation in the shaping of social reality. The social world is seen as being the creative construction of human beings, and it is necessary to proceed by trying to understand subjectively the points of view and the intentions of human beings who construct social systems. Hence, the importance in soft systems thinking of probing the world view, that individuals employ in understanding and constructing the social world. However, several authors (e.g., Mingers, 1980, 1984; Ulrich, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1988; Jackson, 1990, 1991a, b; Schechter, 1991, 1993; Alvesson and Willmott, 1992) suggest that soft systems thinking seems to lack the abilities to deal with the effects of unequal status within the wider society, especially in coercive situations where power relations determine the outcome of debate. For example, Jackson (1991a) suggests that “the exercise of power in the social process can prevent the open and free discussion necessary for the success of work and interaction” (p.12).

Some systems thinkers (e.g. Jackson, 1991a; Flood and Jackson, 1991a) have realised that there are problems with all the systems approaches mentioned so far. CST was therefore developed to reflect upon and enhance the use of systems thinking. It was created partly because of the limitations of hard and soft systems thinking, and partly because of the perceived need to focus on human emancipation and power relationships. It arose as an attempt to harness the strengths of all of the ways of seeing that had been developed within the systems tradition and within other research traditions (for example, it also is able to look critically at various theories of motivation, as I showed in Chapter 2). It is a holistic concept, which aims to

1. deal flexibly and responsively with complexities;
2. learn from the strengths and weaknesses of different strands of systems thinking;
3. emphasise the importance of humanbeings' freedom from social constraints.

CST accepts the contradictions in social systems, the existence of conflict at many points and the domination of some groups over others, as they exercise power in definite circumstances. It is concerned when it sees reality becoming tied to the operation of ideological or other forces in society which express power relations. But, it also sees that there may be times when participation is not a matter only of coercion, especially if some kind of communication has been set up between them, and if they can exercise both ideology-critique and critical reflection to develop better ways of organising their work and other parts of their lives (this is discussed further in Chapter 5 where issues of power and ideology are explored in more detail).

What CST brings to our attention is that human beings face a wide range of complex problems which consistently interact with each other in an unforeseeable manner. It seems that no singular view or method alone, no matter how systemic it may be, is sufficient to

handle such situations. In this sense, we no longer have such things as the systems or the only feasible and effective way. We should learn to think systemically, not to reduce the whole into separable part(s), isolated from contact with other ways of doing things. An essential prerequisite to the competence of systems science as a whole, is to recognise critically the richness in the diverse whole, and not to accept a particular part alone. CST is thus powerful, both because of the strength and diversity of its various strands and because those strands can be seen as complementary/discordant pluralist -- at least as able to support each other through their differences, so that interventions will not be reduced to the one way of always approaching problems.

This section has reviewed the development of systems thinking up to, and including, the emergence of CST. This chapter claims that by allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions, then can be seen to involve a deeper understanding of all the approaches that I presented in Chapter 2. Before coming to a more detailed exploration about why the need for pluralist systemic approaches in interventions, I need to review how critical systems thinkers deal with issues in interventions. This is explored in the following section.

#### **4. 3 Reviewing how critical systems thinkers deal with issues in interventions**

The purpose of this section is to overview a number of intervention ideas sharing the philosophical underpinnings of CST. I focus on some themes such as: Dealing with power relations and ideological conflicts, managing the diversity of available approaches in a way which respects all their qualities, and debating on paradigm commensurability and learning. Critical systems thinkers emphasise that intervention should be used in a pluralist systemic way (although many of them differ as to what this means) in order adequately to address problem situations, so that our thinking does not become imperialist and one-sided. I start out by considering some responses to issues of power relations and ideology conflicts from critical systems thinkers.

##### **4. 3. 1 Responses to issues of power relations and ideology conflicts**

Several authors (e.g., Foucault, 1982, 1984; Ulrich, 1983, 1991; Schön, 1983; Clegg, 1989; Rahman, 1993; Sinha, 1994; Romm, 1995, 1996, 1998; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a; Mingers, 1997) are concerned with analysing power relations and the exercise of power because they argue that these invariably exist in all social contexts and thus can be important social factors. It is also worth noting, some authors (e.g., Habermas, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1976; Gregory, 1992, Flood and Romm, 1995a; Oliga, 1988, 1990, 1996) look at ideology conflicts which can become a dominant force. Questions arise here such as: How can we reflect on the knowledge created in power relations in society? How can we respond to ideology conflicts in organisations? In the following discussion, I will look at how critical systems thinkers have sought to address these issues.

Flood and Romm (1995a) suggest that practical situations may be encountered where political dynamics prevent the implementation of chosen theories. They argue for the “oblique” use of models and theories in which “the idea of an oblique use of a method is to achieve some purpose other than its immediate and given one” (p.390). They recognise that to use theories not for their given purpose is to fulfil another expectation, i.e. to confront the coercive situation from an indirect angle. As they state,

when we proceed by operating a method obliquely, we operate it with knowledge drawn from our experience of, and insight into, what other theoretical positions can offer. In the case of oblique use, a theoretical agenda not written into the framework is used to penetrate (as far as possible) the framework. This enables the (powerful) clients to be addressed in a way that does justice to that agenda - but in a way that we might find less threatening. (Flood and Romm, 1995a, p.390)

In addition, they emphasise that we not only have to consider which theories could be used, but also how to use them suitably regarding both time and a specific problem situation. Flood and Romm (1995b) recognise that

The chosen purposes cannot be (absolutely) defended on the grounds that they have been agreed or that they are in tune with what the situation calls for. This is because at the moment of research action, there may still be other possibilities for both inquiry and intervention. This is why we do admit a degree of incomparability between options. (Flood and Romm, 1995b, p.481)

Thus, there appears to be a need for ideology-critique to urge us to reflect on our own awareness and to act critically.

In considering the available approaches for dealing with the problem of motivation, we should reflect on perspectives which are not ideologically neutral. We also should look at the limitations of single points of view, and how they have become socially constructed. Oliga (1990) suggests that “any penetrative account of systems stability and change must lie in an historical rather than naturalistic explanation” (p.269). He also notes that “every theory of society defines its own problem of order, and critically, we must ask of that

theory, for whom is order a problem?" (p.272). In other words, when we consider to choose motivation theories we must be aware that different theories might hold a particular interpretation of the facts, according to the assumptions implied by the theories.

Oliga argues that

Insofar as socio-cultural systems are concerned, system theory literature should begin to pay greater attention to the historical processes (such as power relations and exercise of power, and ideological formation of human subjectivities), which ultimately circumscribe individual and social behaviour. (Oliga, 1990, p.283)

Gregory (1992) calls for a more critical view by utilising ideology-critique, because it is concerned with changing our lived relations in society. As she says:

Ideology-critique enables ....actors to be enlightened about their situation. The process of ideology-critique will enable them to understand their historical embeddedness, and thereby to identify their own means for achieving emancipation. Moreover, ideology-critique serves to produce new belief systems, new ideologies, and as such must be subjected to an evaluation. (Gregory, 1992, p.289)

She also believes that

the critic of ideology would need to continuously re-evaluate and amend his or her ideology-critique in the light of new evidence or observation which would be facilitated through the cyclical nature of the critical appreciation process. (Gregory, 1992, p.305)

She thus notes that "one cannot predict that a particular norm or value will 'win out' in the end, only the possibility of getting people to talk and think critically" (p.370). Brown (1994) also considers how knowledge constructions can be subjected to ideology-critique by helping us to detect where others have failed to concentrate on the processes of our own construction. Flood and Romm (1995a) observe that

Ideology-critique can be a way of considering the processes of knowledge-creation that may be regarded as allowing maximum inventiveness for people to think and live alternative relationships to 'the world'. (Flood and Romm, 1995a, p.2)

According to these critical systems thinkers an ideology-critique process is a good way to appreciate others' ideological position, and allows our ideologies to evolve and change. The extent to which these authors provide guidelines on how to conduct processes of ideology-critique varies, and what guidance they provide may or may not be useful when applied to the motivation intervention. As Midgley (1995b) notes, an ideology-critique process involves debating the different assumptions on the available theories, making them transparent to us: if this were undertaken for motivation theories, then we would have a different way of viewing them. However, this has not been done so far, and applications of motivation theories appear, to a large extent, to be based on any individual's specific predilections or ideological stance. This is a significant point to note, as it suggests that a further investigation of the issues arising from (i) the use of power and (ii) the influence of specific ideological factors/features on motivation choices would be worthwhile. This will be undertaken in Chapter 5.

The fact that different theories are based on different ideologies (or paradigms) also leads to another associated issue to which I now turn: the issues of pluralism in available approaches.

#### **4. 3. 2 Responses to issues of pluralism in available approaches**

Some critical systems thinkers (e.g., Flood and Jackson, 1991a, b; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b, 1996, 1997a, b; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Flood, 1995, 1996; Mingers, 1997; Jackson, 1997) consider that we should adopt the pluralism in available approaches to deal with the variety of problem situations that face us. The question arises, how can we make informed choices from a diversity of available approaches to tackle the specific issues in a given

context? Different perspectives in systems thinking have something to say about how we manage the diversity of approaches available to us -- Whether by using combinations of methods, evaluating alternatives, mapping approaches with contexts, or some other management process.

The organisational problem-solving methodology, Total Systems Intervention (TSI -- Flood and Jackson, 1991a), is a process that uses the system of systems methodologies, and it is that pluralist systems approach which I will review first. TSI, is a metamethodology (according to Flood and Jackson, 1991a), which utilises a variety of systems methodologies in order to promote creativity, choice of appropriate methodology, and implementation. The concept of TSI was developed by Flood and Jackson (1991a) (which is now referred to as TSI(1)), and later amended by Flood (1995) (which is called TSI(2)). Flood and Jackson claim that TSI is “complementarist” because it offers directions for managers about how to examine problem situations in terms of different perspectives during the ‘creativity’ phase, and how to choose appropriate intervention methodologies which are suitable to tackle the current problem situations. Moreover, they argue that:

As the intervention proceeds, using TSI, so the nature of the problem situation will be continually reviewed, as will the choice of appropriate systems methodology. In highly complex problem situations it is advisable to address at the same time different aspects revealed by taking different perspectives on it. This involves employing a number of systems methodologies in combination. (Flood and Jackson, 1991a, p.i)

However, TSI(1) is accused of picking out inappropriate methodologies for the definition of problem situations. For example, Tsoukas (1993) notes: “different paradigms constitute different realities, and as such, they provide answers, either explicitly or implicitly”, to all problem situations (p.313). Brocklesby (1995) questions how managers can view the

same problem situation from different paradigms without involving different perspectives and cultural differences. Midgley (1997a) observes that “TSI(1) did not give sufficient encouragement to participants in debate to generate their own metaphors” (p.270).

TSI(2) was developed by Flood (1995) in response to criticisms of TSI(1). He has accepted the criticism that TSI(1)’s exploration of the problem situation was overly limiting. Flood (1995) claims that TSI(2) does not only focus on problem solving, but also emphasises the critical awareness of different methodologies and considers how intervention will be influenced by organisational contexts. He stresses three things: divergent metaphorical analysis; the use of creativity-enhancing techniques; and an awareness of the “ergonomics of reflection”. At the same time, he considers that an organisation should be understood in terms of four key domains: organisational process, organisational design, organisational culture, and organisational politics. He recognises that each methodology has a domain where it can be most suitably used. He also considers what changes could be needed in each of the four domains, not focusing on only one domain to the exclusion of the other three. TSI(2) is thus a pluralist approach, and argues that problem situations cannot be simply defined as simple-unitary, complex-unitary, simple-coercive, etc. Flood believes that problem situations are multifaceted and shifting, for example, the four key organisational domains should be considered simultaneously. He also considers that organisations are dynamic, and points out that “an organisation can be understood in terms of interacting issues and intervention as being part of a continuous process of managing these issues” (p.176). However, Jackson (1997) notes that “TSI assumes an inextricable link between paradigm-based methodologies and the methods, models, etc., with which they are associated” (p.370). He argues that “this makes TSI inflexible in use; unable to respond to the exigencies of particular problem situations”

(p.370). Mingers (1997a) also observes that TSI “does not really address the question of mixing parts of methodologies from different paradigms” (p.247).

Midgley (1992, 1995a, b) wishes to resist meta-methodological approaches consistent with his view of CST as a paradigm in its own right, and proposes the design of mixed methods to maximise flexibility and openness during intervention. Midgley (1992) focuses on Habermas’s (1984) view of good argumentation that: truth statements (about the objective, external world), rightness statements (about our normative, social world), and statements about the individual’s subjectivity (about a personal, subjective, internal world) can be made and challenged. He believes that “all existing systems methods prioritise the investigation of one of these kinds of statements”, which he views as problematic for legitimate intervention since no method can be broad enough to cope with human problems of the 20th century. Midgley goes on to argue that “if our inquiries are going to have any legitimacy in tackling some of the major issues of today, we must indeed embrace methodological pluralism” (p.20). For Midgley, there is no one best or right approach which always predominates; and no methodology should be ignored, but all should be respected and adopted where most suitable. He believes that different methodologies contribute differently towards ‘improvement’.

Midgley (1997a) notes that in any situation, it is best to be flexible and responsive during interventions. He recognises that one way of creating such flexibility and responsiveness is by being able to mix methods in a creative way, and believes that people should think creatively in order to “manage the possible tensions between their own, and various stakeholders’, different viewpoints”, that means, a synthesis is created that lets different research questions join together in a unique way for each situation. He suggests that creative design of methods often involves creating syntheses. It shows how managers can be involved creatively in any situation, forging a way of dealing with every situation in a

unique way which depends on all those involved. Midgley also believes that the synthetic approach is often a better explanation of how managers operate in their real practice. He emphasises that his version of creative design of methods is not the only way to operate pluralism. As he notes, "we can accept that there may be many different visions of methodological pluralism" (p.22). He provides us with one in his consideration of the creative design of methods.

Mingers (1997) proposes the idea of a multi-paradigm multimethodology which also tries to move away from paradigmatic constraints, and in a sense builds on Midgley's idea of mixing methods. He wants to explore multimethodology in its multiparadigm form in order to investigate working with different paradigms and different ideas on what reality looks like. He states that in paradigm isolationism, many methods may be used but they all derive from one basic paradigm (or way of looking at reality). He notes that multimethodology combines together "more than one methodology (in whole or part) within a particular intervention" (p.2). He believes that multimethodology is

not the name of a single methodology, or even of a specific way of combining methodologies together. Rather it refers to the whole area of utilising a plurality of methodologies or techniques within the practice of taking action in problematic situations. (Mingers, 1997, p.2)

The essence of multimethodology, according to Mingers and Gill (1997), "is linking together parts of methodologies, possibly from different paradigms" (p.38). Thus, managers cannot use exclusively one type of method when intervening in the world, for this will lead to a one-dimensional (too selective) approach. Mingers (1997) argues for a "critical pluralist" position which emphasises an acceptance of plurality from different paradigm levels, but also grounds this from a perspective that "is fundamentally critical of unequal and constraining nature of current social arrangements" (p.410). Further, he emphasises that:

The different methodologies that we might employ are all embedded in their own paradigms, embodying particular and partial views of the world. With critical reflection, we must be aware of the underpinning paradigm in order to properly appreciate the methodology, but we do not simply accept this. We should always reinterpret the methodology or technique within a critical framework. (Mingers, 1997, p.437)

Mingers's philosophical grounding for intervention is to employ different methodologies which can help managers to grasp different parts of reality. Also over time different methodologies might be more useful than others. Mingers's view emphasises that managers should have all the necessary capabilities to be able to use a diversity of methods, as well as have a full understanding of the theories behind the use of the diverse methods. Mingers believes that "the actual process of critical multimethodology will be a continual cycle of reflection, judgement, and action" (p.437). In this way managers can learn more about pluralist systemic approaches and also difficulties on the theoretical and practical levels that face them when trying to develop multiple skills for moving beyond alien paradigmatic boundaries.

A further example of this essentially complementarist approach to pluralism is Jackson's (1997) coherent pluralism which also argues for pluralism as a meta-methodology. Jackson (1997) states, we should be careful about aligning methodologies with certain problem situations and simply saying that each methodology can do only a certain thing. He recognises that methodologies "owing allegiance to different paradigms should be employed in the same intervention unless good reasons are given for temporary relapse into imperialism. They should also be used....at all stages of an intervention." (p.365). He also emphasises that,

Pluralism must be employed in the most complex of problem situations; that it must accept and manage a degree of incompatibility between paradigms at the theoretical level; that it should encourage diversity in the use of methodologies embodying different paradigms; and that it should encourage

the maximum diversity of use of different methods, tools and techniques without lapsing into pragmatism. (Jackson, 1997, p.367)

He views pluralism as seeking to respect the different strengths of various methodologies and to choose which methodologies are most suitable to confront particular situations. He states, “pluralism as a meta-paradigm; pluralism as a new paradigm, pluralism as a postmodernist approach, and pluralism as critical systems practice” (p.370). Firstly, he aims to establish a coherent pluralism as a meta-pluralism which can guarantee paradigm diversity. Although it might be difficult to demonstrate in practice, Jackson argues that a constructive communication between different perspectives in alien paradigms should be possible if it is recognised that the different methodologies address different aspects of the same problem situation. Secondly, he claims that pluralism is a new paradigmatic approach which “resolves the difficulty of having to combine methodologies based upon divergent philosophical and sociological assumptions” (p.371). Thirdly, he considers pluralism as a postmodernist approach which is “committed to promoting difference in the world” (p.371). He considers that it allows “the flexibility of method use so that they can cleave closely to what is appropriate in the problem situation confronted and to the twists and turns required in the intervention” (p.372). This is similar to Flood and Romm (1997) who argue that “critique and self-critique can lead to a quality of choice making that avoids relativism as well as absolutism”. Finally, Jackson believes that:

In critical systems practice a meta-methodology is required which protects paradigm diversity and handles the relationships between the divergent paradigms. The meta-methodology accepts that paradigms are based upon incompatible philosophical assumptions and that they cannot, therefore, be integrated without something being lost. It seeks to manage the paradigms not by aspiring to meta-paradigmatic status and allocating them to their respective tasks, but by mediating between the paradigms. (Jackson, 1997, p.372)

Jackson also recognises that in a critical systemic approach, “no paradigm is allowed to escape unquestioned because it is continually confronted by the alternative rationales

offered by other paradigms”, and that we should seek to understand paradigm diversity and to address the complexity and heterogeneity of problem situations (p.373). Jackson’s view also tries to be a unifying perspective. However, a critical systemic approach to motivation is preferable to a form of pluralism that tries to be a final “coherent” pluralism, since it allows for dynamism, development, and learning. It should be concerned with issues such as what individual or organisational learning may be achieved, or the way that the diversity of views on learning as a route to motivation can be managed. This forms the basis of the discussion in Chapter 6, but draw on Gregory’s (1992) idea of a ‘discordant pluralism’ which tries to show how to manage the burgeoning heterogeneity of approaches, and to identify how and why managers might see the world differently and offer competing views which they bring to bear on problem situations, without the unnecessary burden of producing a totally unified vision of what should be done.

Gregory (1992) believes that complementarism is unable to provide for learning between radically different perspectives. She proposes an alternative pluralism which is called “discordant pluralism”. She suggests that discordant pluralism is a position which “represents a ‘shifting nodal point’ in which different, competing and conflicting perspectives may interact in a tension which lasts only a critical moment” (p.441). This means that methodologies can be appreciated differently from alien ideologies or social contexts. Gregory states, the discordant pluralist perspective involves appreciating and supplementing the differences between various methodologies, rather than them competing with one another. She also recognises that discordant pluralism seeks to “facilitate a transformation process through understanding of self and others” (p.442). That is to say, discordant pluralism can promote managers’ abilities to choose from available methodologies which can be interpreted critically and used in a pluralist pattern

according to their knowledge and local contexts at a given point in time. Gregory suggests that there are three main features in discordant pluralism as follows:

The first of these is its local, contingent, and historically situated nature. Second, discordant pluralism promotes communication with other, radically different and alien perspectives. The third feature concerns the use of insights gained through such communication to provide for ethical decision-making. This is achieved through the juxtapositioning of oppositional view-points within a constellation that supports both one perspective and the other. (Gregory, 1992, p.443)

Thus, discordant pluralism can deal adequately with different perspectives, and provides a guidance on how to undertake either the processes of ideology-critique or critical self-reflection. Gregory argues,

Discordant pluralism wishes to facilitate a transformation process through understanding of self and others..... The discordant pluralist's position is legitimated by its critique of both similarities and differences, in which methodologies are viewed as challenging and supplementing one another. (Gregory, 1992, p.459)

This may be a good reason to discuss what the various methodologies propose by looking at their starting premises. It can reveal that different methodologies might be more applicable in some problem situations than in others. A discordant pluralist position accepts some complementarity between alien perspectives, whilst also exploring what managers can learn from each. Gregory (1996b) concludes that

discordant pluralism pays tribute to the differences, otherness, and alterity of alien paradigms or traditions, but has to be coupled with a critical appreciation in order to answer ethical questions about the rightness or legitimacy of a particular perspective. (Gregory, 1996b, p.58)

This idea will be used to make sense of the newly evolving and diverse field of organisational and management learning. It is not to be a one-way process of "informing", since CST can also learn from organisational learning and management learning.

In the following, in facing divergent cultures (or alien paradigms), it will be shown that we should be open to communicate with and learn from each other.

#### **4. 3. 3 Responses to the scope for cross-cultural (or alien paradigms) learning**

Harvey and Allard (1995) point out that in order to deal with cultural diversity, we need to imagine ourselves in others' cultures to understand how they view us and how they interpret our actions. The question arises, how can we overcome cultural boundaries or paradigm incommensurabilities? This is also an issue for alien paradigms in the same culture. So we may ask, how can we really understand one paradigm from the perspective of another? How can we communicate with and learn from different cultures (or alien paradigms)? The extent to which operational guidance is given varies, and its for this reason that I will review the work of critical systems thinkers who have proposed workable models of cross-cultural learning. For example, Gregory (1992) suggests that "those who wish to understand alien paradigms may encounter difficulties through the imposition of their own concepts (imperialism) or in assuming they can [really] know what the other paradigm knows and does" (p.142). She calls for a 'critical appreciation model' which "strives to promote certain features of incommensurable paradigms that make them antagonistic to one another" (p.159). Flood and Romm (1996a) also talk about "paradigm (in)commensurability" which indicates learning between alien paradigms is possible.

Gregory (1992) proposed a critical appreciation model, as indicated in Figure 4. 2, which consists of two distinctive cycles: "scientific inquiry" and "reflexive inquiry", and comprises four dimensions of critical research practice: empirical-analytic (based on observation of the problem situation), historical-hermeneutic (two way communication with others), self-reflection (revealing one's own assumptions), and ideology-critique (examining the social construction).

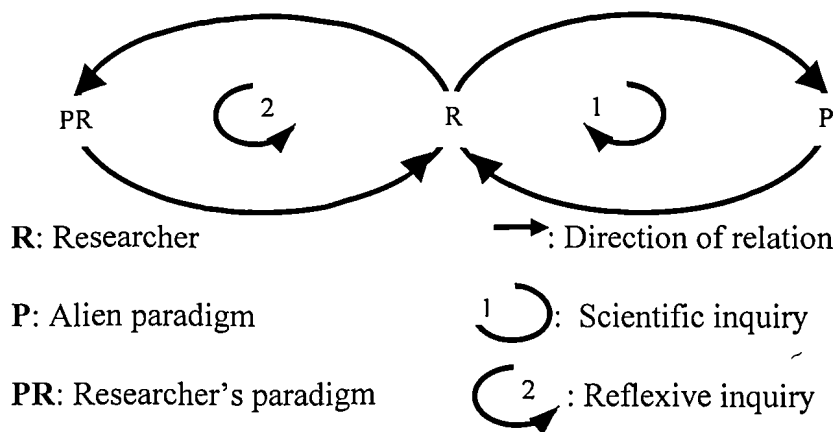


Figure 4. 1 The critical appreciation model  
(Source: Gregory, 1992, p.188)

Gregory suggests that scientific inquiry involves the nature of available methodologies in terms of their philosophy to reveal the assumptions of methodologies; reflexive inquiry concerns the output of the scientific inquiry which seeks to understand intention by means of two way communication with others which can support managers in reflecting on their understanding of the available methodologies; critical self-reflection is to encourage managers to reveal their understanding and consider its legitimacy in the light of possible alternatives; ideology-critique is brought into dialectical debate and is challenged by others. As she notes,

Individual's self-awareness (through critical self-reflection) coupled with sociological awareness (through ideology-critique) appears to be the most appreciative means available to today's individual who wishes to deal morally with the pluralistic environment confronting him or her. (Gregory, 1992, p.355)

Gregory (1994) recognises that "interventions must incorporate elements of self-reflection and ideology-critique (which operate at the individual and societal levels respectively) in order to be more satisfactorily grounded" (p.1555). Furthermore, she argues that

The dialogue community can assist in revealing or uncovering examples of mismatch between "espoused theory" and "theory in practice". If individuals are open to such communications (i.e. are critically self-reflexive), then the

possibility of learning through dialogue will be significantly enhanced.  
(Gregory, 1994, p.1555)

She notes that critical reflexivity should involve both processes of critical self-reflection and of ideology-critique. As she says,

Critical self-reflection without ideology-critique cannot hope to change the *status quo* of individual subjugation. Similarly, ....ideology-critique, even when linked with action, may not bring about the desired changes (wider emancipation) in the social system without corresponding (and more general) individual self-reflection. (Gregory, 1994, p.1572)

In her view, managers have to keep in touch with the context in which they are embedded, because the social context will also affect their interpretation and understanding of different cultures (or alien paradigms). And it is also necessary to note that managers can only interpret (or understand) different cultures (or alien paradigms) through their own perspectives, because they cannot escape their own paradigms. Thus, Gregory concludes that

critical self-reflection may change the individual self, but it need not have any deep impact on society. Ideology-critique may challenge the norms of society, even legitimising new norms, but if other oppositional individuals do not critically reflect on what those norms mean for them as *individuals* then the system will continue as it had been prior to the critique. (Gregory, 1994, p.1572)

Critical appreciation provides managers with an evaluation process of available methodologies which is necessary because no single methodology can be used universally. Moreover, it also emphasises learning across different cultures (or alien paradigms).

Flood and Romm's (1996a) in 'triple loop learning' suggest that managers should be aware of what is being done when managers or others are using their own skills in organisations. They concentrate on what it means to tackle issues in a critical and reflective way, instead of informed agreement acting as the basis for deciding how to

confront core issues that have been surfaced. They believe that exercising the critically reflexive capacity allows people to experience a deeper level of learning which has fruitful social consequences because it permits more diversity in social life and more tolerance between the people involved.

In Flood and Romm's view there are three main areas in which people can become obsessive: structuralism which highlights power as a collective property of the system; intersubjective decision-making which highlights interpersonal interaction as the arena where power is used; and might-right management which highlights power as entrenched in the forms of social relationship. These three arenas imply the three different questions that govern triple loop learning and corresponding to each of these a single criterion is identified for the purpose of evaluation through reflection. They follow Flood (1995) in seeing that there are three types of core issues (defined as design, debate and disemprisoning). They describe issues of design as linked to the way of organising structures; issues of debate as tied to activating debating faculties that may need improving; and issues of disemprisoning connected with what they call the might-right problematic, which allows in-depth consideration of power-knowledge dynamics and the way they are being played out at points in time.

Flood and Romm (1996a) argue that triple loop learning is valuable because it allows people to move to new levels of learning (learning by looping around various questions and various discourses). This implies that people are continually open to accept diversity of discourse and to tolerate that people may have different visions. Flood and Romm define 'triple loop learning' as a process of

establishing tolerance between all three centres of learning to preserve the diversity therein. It does this by bringing together the three questions from the

three loops into one overall awareness, are we doing things right, are we doing the right things, and is rightness buttressed by mightiness and/or mightiness buttressed by rightness? (Flood and Romm, 1996a, p.228)

Flood and Romm propose reflexivity as a way of learning to accept the discomfort of taking in information which appears as hostile information for a position. As they note,

The purpose of reflexivity is to question in deliberate fashion the relevance and consideredness of unchallenged yet favoured points of view. It enables and prepares theoreticians and interventionists for the enriching process of confronting alternatives. Reflexivity is indeed a means by which disciplines are able to retain and encourage diversity and tension. (Flood and Romm, 1996a, p.35)

They believe that reflexivity can be helpful in terms of creating room for diversity in organisational and social life, which is the aim of triple loop learning. They also emphasise that combining methods has to be carefully thought through in order to avoid a particular perspective or purpose becoming dominant, because uncritical managers may use a particular approach without considering other possible ways of addressing the problem context.

Flood and Romm in their discussion of triple loop learning concentrated on what it means to tackle issues in an informed way, that is, in a critical, reflective way. Instead of saying that informed agreement is the basis for deciding how to tackle core issues that have been surfaced. They try to look at intervention by saying that it is not always that people need to be directed to informed consensus. They are also aware of micropolitics and therefore need to act with this in mind. One implication is that interventionists have to take more personal responsibility for choices made. In this way, Flood and Romm try to utilise more fully some postmodern ideas and to see them as incorporated into CST intervention choices.

#### **4. 3. 4 Reflections on learning from critical systems thinkers**

Midgley (1995b) argues that “all acts are interventionary, yet not all interventions are critical or systemic” (p.61). He recognises that to develop critical and systemic interventions, we should see how we conceptualise improvements, the critique that we embrace, and the appropriateness of the methods we use (and the way we use approaches creatively). All these criteria form an essentially interdependent set which must be used simultaneously. Midgley’s discussion of intervention towards improvement is similar in many respects to that of Gregory (1992), who states that there are no definite guidelines for matching methods with problem; there are only criteria and themes that need to be considered so that some methodological expression for intervention can be worked out. However, Gregory offers her analysis on the level of showing how different perspectives can communicate with and learn from one another. She leaves it to learners to learn sufficiently to be able to act with critical appreciation.

As far as the issue of motivation goes, what is done by Midgley (1995b) and Gregory (1992) is to widen the discussion about intervention so that the pressure falls on people to act in critical awareness or with critical appreciation. For example, critical appreciation allows us to consider a range of available approaches, to interpret them and to decide how to use them if we want to deal with any issue at any point in time (such as motivation). It also lets us consider self-society dynamics (linked to ideology-critique and critical self-reflection) as part of the process of learning to be critically appreciative (I discuss this in Chapter 6). It does not tell us how to act in any circumstance, and cannot give a method (or a range of methods from which to pick off the shelf) for suitable action. But it can tell us to be on the look-out to utilise knowledge from a variety of sources, while not being caught

up in any particular knowledge-power dynamic. More detail on this from the perspective of Gregory's conception of self and society, and comparing this with other views on power and ideology, is given in following chapters.

Flood and Romm (1996a) create a pathway which points to the dilemmas involved for interventionists who want to make improvements. One of the dilemmas is that it is not easy to tell what is the best way to act. People can try to rely on scientific knowledge (for example, Taylorism, which offers a scientific view of how to motivate people or how to make people act in accordance with system viability), but the moment science is used, one wonders whether the facts referred to could be seen in another way. One wonders whether, for example, it would be better to try and introduce an equity theory of motivation, which sees people motivated by how they see fair play in the organisation and society. One wonders whether this is a better way to treat people than to regard them as just a part of a performance system. As soon as we see a way of treating people in order to motivate them, there is the worry that formation of knowledge will become dominant, and expressions of people will be lost. Flood and Romm (1996a) argue that "the important part of handling diversity of theories, methodologies and models is to admit that at a certain point we have to act, otherwise their 'inaction' becomes the action of inaction" (p.12). They recognise that choice-making leading to action (even inaction) is part of handling diversity. They introduce the term "(in)commensurability" to show that

Interventionists have to be aware that there are radical differences between theories, methodologies and models. However, some points of comparison are still possible and these points of comparison allow people to make better informed decisions. The decisions are better informed but there is not necessarily consensus. (Flood and Romm, 1996a, p.55)

Flood and Romm therefore part company with Flood and Jackson (1991a) who relied heavily on Habermas's idea of informed agreement. Instead of informed agreement, they

speak of intelligent and responsible action in the face of dilemmas. They offer some guidelines for people to recognise types of issues that may need to be addressed, although they state that people have to make their own decisions regarding what are primary at points in time and what purposes interventionists need to pursue in trying to address the issues. They suggest that power seeps into all three areas of concern. They believe that exploration of power-knowledge formations can therefore allow criticism of power to be treated as a structural question or as a question of spreading the consultative and participative capabilities of people. Because Flood and Romm's ideas are tied up with issues of power and ideology in society more generally, I discuss their argument in more detail in Chapter 5.

In this section, critical systems thinkers argue that it is important to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the great variety of available approaches, promote critical awareness about the contexts of interventions (and possible available approaches), and pursue emancipation. In the following section, I will show that it is necessary to allow pluralist systemic approaches in motivation interventions.

#### **4. 4 Allowing pluralist systemic approaches in motivation interventions**

For the moment it should be noted that the arguments of critical systems thinkers, like Midgley's and Gregory's, veer in the direction of not so much aligning methods to problem contexts, but rather developing people's critical capacities in various ways. This then allows them to look at any topic, for example, questions surrounding motivational processes, in a more critical way than might otherwise have been the case. It also allows people to draw, in an informed way, on a variety of theories, methodologies, and models

of motivation; to compare them with one another in some way (though not completely commensurable) and then to see how they need to address the situation at hand. This means that different motivation approaches are compared by looking at how they each can become informed through the existence of the others. It is then believed that interventionists, by being thus informed, will not work solely with one way of seeing people, one way of seeing how they can be motivated, one way of seeing organisation in society, and one way of seeing prospects for improvements. As Flood and Romm (1996a) state, "one way leads to assimilation; one way leads to complacency; one way leads to ennui; one way leads to nausea" (p.233). This applies both to theorists and interventionists. For example, in the domain of motivation, it applies to considering and reflecting on the range of theories, so that one can be informed about this; and in the domain of practice, it requires that people do not just apply one way at all times. Mingers (1997) suggests that people need to perform different actions, because the world is composed of lots of different realities, and people need to be able to practice interdisciplinary, because they must get together to deal with different aspects of reality.

From these points, Jackson (1997) provides a conclusion:

An approach to managing complex problems which employs a meta-methodology to take maximum advantage of the benefits to be gained from using methodologies premised upon alternative paradigms together, and also encourages the combined use of diverse methods, models, tools and techniques, in a theoretically informed way, to ensure maximum flexibility in an intervention. (Jackson, 1997, p.369)

From all of the above arguments between different perspectives, managers should learn more what can be involved when they undertake motivation interventions because all have something of value which can be built upon in allowing pluralist systemic approaches in motivation interventions.

Pluralist systemic approaches argue that more perspectives provide a more complete picture of the suitability of the available approaches than a single perspective could generate without others' participation. By investigating the philosophy, principles and process of the available approaches, we can critically assess their assumptions about interventions. Indeed there may be different views of the suitability of the approaches. It is necessary to encourage them to enter into a dialectical process of debate that will be capable of promoting self-reflection and ideology-critique amongst participants. According to Gregory (1992),

Individual's self-awareness (through critical self-reflection) coupled with sociological awareness (through ideology-critique) appears to be the most appropriate means available to today's individual who wishes to deal morally with the pluralistic environment confronting him or her. (Gregory, 1992, p.355)

Gregory also argues that "one cannot predict that a particular norm or value will 'win out' in the end, but the possibility of getting people to talk and think critically" (p.370). She suggests that the problems of intervention need to be considered from wider points of view than other approaches have done, and it is not the case that there is one best approach which should always predominate. She holds that no approach should be ignored, but should be respected and adopted where appropriate. It seems reasonable that different approaches should be used, depending on the problem situation of intervention being faced. It is also necessary to elucidate the relations between social circumstances and the theoretical assumptions underlying various approaches. This is to say, social circumstances (e.g., cultural influence, political power, social ideology, etc.) will affect the success with which approaches can be applied, while conversely, interventions will also affect social circumstances. Pluralist systemic approaches thus argue that the available approaches cannot be adequately understood by means of one perspective

alone. Once the different views have been surfaced, they need a dialectical process so that managers can improve mutual understanding and enhance their learning about the available approaches and their potential effects. This chapter claims the need for pluralist systemic approaches in interventions, thus, to judge the possible result of applying a approach to motivation in an organisation, managers need to understand whether there is ideological harmony or friction between the various perspectives.

Before going to the next chapter, I need to indicate briefly why I believe that CST can offer a good way of developing a critical systemic approach to motivation. Because, 'harder', 'softer', and some 'critical' attempts to introduce emancipation which impose a definition of emancipation, can lead to an uncritical appreciation of issues of motivation in organisations. Therefore, to develop a critical appreciation of issues of motivation, we need to be aware of many different theories, what they state about motivation, how they treat motivation, what effects they have when applied in organisations, how people respond to the theories, what means they have for challenging theories (and ideologies), how they can reflect on whether issues of motivation can be addressed in new ways, to improve motivational practices. We also need to understand how people can learn from different theories and from their own reflection on practices in organisations.

I believe that CST has the basic commitment to look at a range of theories with the purpose of increasing the full potential of people while also looking after the environment. It is a paradigm which allows people to develop their critical appreciation of issues while also learning all the time from different theories and different practical applications. In this respect, I agree that Gregory's (1992) critical appreciation is a critical systems approach which best enables learning to occur, as people come to terms with

empirical-analytic and interpretive knowledge, while considering problems of ideology in society and also while being critically reflective. I believe that the question of motivation cannot be dealt with by having only one theory or by expecting all organisations in a society and all cultures within and between societies to adopt one approach. CST allows us to consider a range of theories and a range of factors when considering what a critical systemic approach to motivation involves. A critical systemic approach to motivation can be seen to involve a deeper understanding of all the theories that I presented in chapters 2 and 3.

#### **4. 5 Conclusion**

On the problem of motivation, this chapter has shown why the need for pluralist systemic approaches, and a critical systemic one to intervention, surpasses ones which concentrate on only one aspect of issues connected with motivation. CST is an appropriate approach because it considers ethics, not just embraces plurality. CST argues that it is important to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the great variety of the available theories (or methodologies), promote critical awareness about the contexts of interventions (and possible candidate theories or methodologies), and pursue emancipation. Part of this project of how to look more closely at issues of power relations and ideology conflicts in organisations is developed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Issues in Motivation Interventions (2): Power Relations and Ideology Conflicts**

## **Chapter 5**

### **Issues in Motivation Interventions (2): Power Relations and Ideology Conflicts**

#### **5. 1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I was concerned with looking at motivation intervention in terms of pluralist systemic views. However, ideology and power could become a dominant force which constrains our reflective capabilities and even could make us act in a certain way. This chapter, I will develop some understanding of ideology conflicts and power relations in order to see how this affects motivation in interventions. It focuses on human potentiality, social awareness, and emancipation. It will look at socio-cultural patterns in societies, considering when they can become defined as ideological and how this can be criticised. Work cultures, including people's assumptions about what other people are like and how they themselves should behave, are examined. This will help me to develop my argument about the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation. I look at a number of theories of ideology, and then I show links to questions of power relations, and I relate all of this to the problems of motivation. I start out by showing that the term ideology is used in many different ways in the literature. Some of these ways are discussed as follows.

## 5. 2 Ideology as a pejorative concept

Thompson (1990) states that there are two general conceptions of ideology: a neutral one and a pejorative one. He calls the first a general conception of ideology which is a neutral one referring to people's belief systems in society. From this perspective, Thompson recognises that ideology simply means sets of ideas and values that are held by people, and that

neutral conceptions are those which purport to characterise phenomena as ideology or ideological without implying that these phenomena are necessarily misleading, illusory or aligned with the interests of any particular group. (Thompson, 1990, p.53)

In other words; he observes that ideology can either be held generally between people in society, or else can refer to ideologies linked to forms of systematic inquiry (and the ideas that are created during these forms of inquiry). Thompson believes that ideology, in either of these cases, is not considered as something that is problematic. In fact, ideology can be considered as something inspiring -- sets of ideas which inspire people to act.

In this section, I will not concentrate on this general view of ideology; I want to develop and extend what Thompson calls the second general type which is described as "critical conceptions of ideology". He notes that critical conceptions are those which express a negative, critical or pejorative sense of the term, and imply that ideology or ideological beliefs are "misleading, illusory or one-sided" (p.54). He states that the analysis of ideology in this pejorative sense is concerned with the ways in which symbolic forms (belief systems) intersect with relations of power, and in which an ideology may become another vehicle of power, as some people's ideas come to be dominant in organisations (or society). He recognises that ideological analysis is thus concerned with the "ways in which meaning is utilised in the social world and serves thereby to bolster up individuals and

groups who occupy positions of power” (p.56). So, in studying ideology, managers should examine how ideas can be used to entrench and sustain patterns of domination in organisations (or society). Thompson recognises that ideological phenomena serve to entrench relations of domination, and ideology is actually defined by this fact. He considers that the concept of ideology is concerned with the ways in which ideas are

mobilised in the service of dominant individuals and groups, that is, the ways in which the meaning constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain structured social relations from which some individuals and groups benefit more than others. (Thompson, 1990, p.73)

He also observes that some people will prefer to retain ideological thought and that it will penetrate their own thoughts so deeply that they do not consider challenging it, while others might try to contest it. Therefore the concept of ideology-critique arose as an approach to criticise those perceptions of the status quo that try or serve to legitimate it. Gregory (1992) notes that defining ideology as legitimating the interests of a ruling class does not help us to define the belief patterns in society. As she states,

the problem with this definition is that it does not tell us what to call the discourse of a subordinate group which equally seeks legitimation of its beliefs or interests through ‘distortion and dissimulation’. (Gregory, 1992, p.247)

So the problem is that this definition gives the impression that the process of creating ideology derives only from the dominant class, and it does not look at the ways that others might be involved, and at the value of each of these efforts.

Foucault (1984) prefers not to speak of ‘ideology’ (also see Oliga, 1990) because he believes that people are all the time involved in creating definitions of reality, and it is difficult to judge which ones are true or false. He does not use the term ‘ideology’, because ideology is viewed as false and truth is seen as what really is the case. He also sees

knowledge as closely tied up with power penetration in the social and micropolitical world, so that it is impossible to decide what is true or false. As shown in later sections, Oliga (1990) criticises this refusal to use the term ‘ideology’, because it appears to suggest that it is not worth challenging anything in the name of something better.

Meanwhile, Gregory (1992) refers to a particular definition of ideology that identifies changes in material reality as part of the process of ideology-critique. She calls for a more sharply focused view of ideology, because it is not concerned only with possible distinctions between truth and falsity but with changing our lived relations in society. This ties in to some extent with what Oliga (1996) calls a relational view of power, which sees that it is important to transform the way that relations are lived. Gregory (1992) in turn shows that actually describing and trying to change the material reality involves inter-subjective processes as well as subjective processes. Therefore, she feels that it is important to apply an ideology-critique process to discuss ways of transforming lived relations, and also ways of developing critical self-reflection as part of the whole process. This is linked to her idea that empirical-analytic knowledge, hermeneutic involvement in interpreting material reality, ideology-critique and critical self-reflection all need to be related in the cycle of her critical appreciation process. I now refer more fully to various conceptions of ideology.

### **5.3 An outline of some views of ideology and how they have developed**

In one view of ideology, linked to a pejorative meaning of the term, Thompson (1990) notes that ideology is “conceptualised as a cluster of values and beliefs which are produced and diffused by agencies of the state, and which serve to reproduce the social

order by securing the adherence of individuals to it” (p.75). He recognises that “social reproduction theory” (as a Marxist approach) tried to explain the association between the rise of industrial capitalism and the creation of specific values and beliefs: “capitalist relations were strongly tied to certain ideological beliefs that served to muster the power of the capitalist class and at the same time reproduce the whole social system” (p.75).

However, Thompson (1990) states that post-industrialists question the social reproduction approach, because the ideas that were being disseminated in the media and accepted by people, failed to confront the need which Marxists felt for an entire change of material conditions. He also asserts that people did not want such a complete change and were content with the development of society along existing lines, and subsequent development of modern societies did not need radical change. As Thompson (1990) explains:

the end of ideology theorists discerned the emergence of a new consensus: the old ‘ideological politics’ were giving way to a new sense of pragmatism in the developed industrial societies. The end of ideology in this sense was not necessarily the end of political debate and conflict, of contrasting political programmes which expressed genuine differences of interest and opinion. But these debates, conflicts and programmes would no longer be animated by totalising, utopian visions which incited individuals to revolutionary action and blinded them to any considerations which were contrary to their view. (Thompson, 1990, p.77)

So he considers that the end of ideology was a way of defending the media’s way of representing issues in society, as things that did not require a “utopian” vision to tackle them, but which could be confronted in the politics which had been developed in modern times, this being a more pragmatic politics. However, he points out that the Frankfurt school sought to take account of the centrality of mass communication in modern societies, and to show how this created another form of ideology. For example, Horkheimer and Adorno (1972) provided a systematic account of the way modern culture was being created by the media, and attempted to draw out the implications of this process

for the analysis of ideology in modern societies. In opposition, Thompson believes that the excessive concentration on the grand narrative created by the media implies that there is a definite system of beliefs that are contained in discrete single units (like the state apparatus or the media), and so diverts our attention away from the “multiple ways in which symbolic forms are used, in the varied contexts of everyday life” (p.85). This is also one of the criticisms against the use of the term ‘ideology’ as a systematic set of beliefs.

A Foucauvian analysis tries to look at many ways where power becomes exercised. Thompson (1990) takes a critical approach to examine the meaning of work in different social periods. He does not refer to this as ideology-critique, but more an uncovering of the way in which people come to accept certain definitions of work, because he doubts that these ideas are “mere ideology” concocted by a state apparatus. He wants to see them as seeping into the way everyday life is experienced. He states that the malaise caused by the pursuit of productivity for its own sake is what has led to the inducement offered by a range of local improvements in the regime of work. He also criticises the tendency for people to be induced to see work as a good in itself, aiding the process of continuing productivity in society. He states that whole lifestyles have developed in all areas of society which seem to shape much of the way that work life is addressed and motivation secured. He shows that knowledge about, for example, job enrichment and work teams as developed by the human relations approach, have become linked to relations in the organisation where employees do not question the prevailing patterns. He states that the pursuit of people’s happiness has come to dominate, and its way of dominating is by making people working subjects, so that their subjectivity has thus become penetrated.

Midgley (1995a) argues that a Foucauvian analysis is careful not to create the impression that we cannot challenge the “power-knowledge” formations in a society. Therefore,

although Foucault (1984) does not want to use the term ‘ideology’ or ‘ideology-critique’, the concept is useful because it shows that people can challenge conceptions and are not simply ruled by “knowledge-power” formations. So all in all, I claim that managers can continue to speak of ideology-critique, as long as this is coupled with critical self-reflection which lets them consider the value of any belief system or, more strongly, to question its value. This links up with Gregory’s (1992) statement that the ideology of groups in society, other than those that appear to be the dominant groups, can also be looked at critically. This means that all ideas can be criticised but also, in the process, managers can learn from one another, in order to develop new ways of creating ideas and new ways of putting their ideas into intervention. Now, I go into more detail on each of the different arguments about ideology, relating them also to motivation intervention in organisations.

#### **5. 4 Ideology and social reproduction**

In general, ideology is concerned with analysing the conditions under which societies, and contemporary capitalist societies in particular, are sustained and reproduced. As Thompson (1990) states, ideology attempts “to identify some of the mechanisms which secure the reproduction of existing social relations” (p.86). He explains that the continuous creation of symbolic forms which legitimate social relations also create an ongoing submission of people to the rules and conventions of the existing patterns of the social order; and people become moulded to fit the parts which are scripted for them. Midgley (1995b) would apply a similar criticism to this theory as to the Foucauvian one which seems to make people merely role-players, performing the parts scripted for them, without showing how subjects can create new knowledge. The social reproduction theory

tends to exaggerate the extent to which people are moulded by social processes. As Thompson notes, “individuals are treated essentially as the products of the processes of socialisation and inculcation to which they are subjected” (p.89). The socialisation process is seen as one where people become fitted to their social parts. For example, employees might learn to participate in a production system to gain maximum profits and also to increase productivity. But, as Thompson observes,

individuals are never simply the sum total of processes of socialisation and inculcation; they are never simply actors who obediently perform the roles which are scripted for them. It is part of their very nature qua human agents that they are capable, to some extent, of distancing themselves from the social processes to which they are subjected, of reflecting on these processes, criticising them, contesting them, ridiculing them and, in some circumstances, rejecting them. (Thompson, 1990, p.89)

Although Thompson states that it is part of people’s nature to reflect, criticise, contest and ridicule patterns scripted in social processes, there is a state in which people cannot see how it may be possible to transform these patterns. This is also part of the ideology machinery in society. He suggests that here there is no other perceived way of doing things, and so people may come to accept what exists as the only way open to them. He recognises that the pull of ideology is a pull that people feel, as they experience a powerlessness to challenge the ideas, and with this, the social processes legitimated by the ideas; and they may find it difficult to think of ways of changing the social setting in which they are operating, which is reproduced in the institutions of society. In spite of this importance, Thompson declares that criticising the norms of a society in a way which will not be self-defeating, and in a way which can have the intended consequence of actually challenging the substance of the order (towards the creation of something different) is an important process for people. I claim that an ideology-critique needs to emulate this in its processes.

Thompson (1990) notes that the dominant ideology proposition thus draws our attention to the difficulty of creating objectives for the self which will not be self-defeating and which might help to create a different order, and reminds us that patterns in society can reproduce themselves, even while they challenge us or try to thwart us. However, he recognises that the dominant ideology proposition seems to exaggerate the way in which idea-systems serve continually to establish, sustain and reproduce relations of domination. This is not to deny that the concept of ideology is relevant in the analysis of everyday life, including our working lives and general lifestyles. Thompson states that the problem with the dominant ideology proposition is

simply that it offers a much too simple account of how ideology works in modern societies. It assumes that a particular set of values and beliefs constitutes the elements of a dominant ideology which, by being diffused throughout society, binds individuals of all strata to the social order; but the ways in which symbolic forms serve to maintain relations of domination are far more complicated than this account would suggest. (Thompson, 1990, p.91)

Another view of ideology which has tried to offer a less simple account is the one developed by those concentrating on the media of mass communication as public discourse with regard to how people act in exercising power and in responding to the exercise of power by others. This view is discussed in the following section.

## **5. 5 The Frankfurt school and ideology-critique**

Horkheimer and Adorno (1972) argue that the entertainment industries as capitalistic enterprises have had a great effect on modern society, stultifying the capacity of the individual to think and act in a critical and autonomous way. They state that the cultural goods produced by these industries are actually designed and manufactured to suit the aims of capitalist accumulation and profit realisation. Therefore, they see the rise of the

culture industry as tied up with these aims. They state that cultural ideas do not arise from the masses, but rather, are created for consumption by the masses in terms of an ideology which supports capitalist ideas and practices. Moreover, the masses are manipulated by the mass media and are tailored to create non-thinking and non-critical people. Thompson (1990) notes that the process tempts people to “identify with the prevailing social norms and to continue to be as they already are” (p.100). He also observes that in Horkheimer and Adorno’s conception, the culture industry is a process which is “rendering individuals less and less capable of independent thinking and more and more dependent on social processes over which they have little or no control” (p.100). However, he recognises that the general approach adopted by Horkheimer and Adorno is too limited, in that they neglected to consider that the media are double edged. On the one hand, he believes that the media are shapers of people, but on the other hand the media are mechanisms which people can draw upon to express challenge and critique, and thereby to envisage new forms of existence.

Thompson (1990) has the following two main criticisms of Horkheimer and Adorno’s (1972) analysis. First, as he notes, “it is by no means clear that, by receiving and consuming these products (of the media), individuals are impelled to adhere to the social order” (p.104). He thus states that individuals might consume the products without necessarily believing in the social order as sacred. Second, he argues against Horkheimer and Adorno’s account of the new form of ideology, that it presents an overly restrictive view of the ways in which ideology operates in modern societies. So as with the social reproduction proposition, he suggests that the assertion viewing the culture industry as disseminator of ideology between recipients, is also too restrictive. This also applies to

Habermas's (1984) proposition to some extent, although he does find Habermas's "depth hermeneutic" promising, because it shows that ideology can be interpreted.

Thompson's position is that people need to concentrate on uncovering the way that meaning is constructed in the service of power. As Thompson (1990) states, this lays open the way for explicating "the connection between the meaning mobilised by symbolic forms and the relations of domination which that meaning serves to establish and sustain" (p.293). He recognises that the interpretation of ideology "involves the active construction of meaning, the creative explication of what is represented or what is said" (p.293). In this view of ideology, the meanings of ideas 'disseminated' are always being interpreted, and therefore subjects are seen as actively involved with ideas, rather than as being passively moulded by them. Meaning is something that is subjected to the ongoing process of interpretation. This links in with Midgley's (1995b) ideas of the way that subjects can relate to knowledge in society. People are not formed simply by knowledge (or ideological) formations.

In Thompson's view, when looking at the issue of ideology-critique in relation to mass media dissemination, is that the principle of "self-reflection" must apply both to the individuals analysing any ideology and to the object domain (which is also a subject domain because there are people as subjects involved). He states that the process of interpretation is "connected in principle to the subjects who make up this domain, and that this connection in principle may serve in practice to stimulate reflection between and by these subjects" (p.322). In this way he takes up a depth-hermeneutic view of ideology where "interpretation becomes a potential intervention in the very circumstances about which it is formulated" (p.323). Thus, he argues that a depth interpretation given by any

individual is a symbolic construction, “capable in principle of being understood by the subjects enmeshed in the circumstances which form in part the object of interpretation” (p.323). He notes that as an interpretation which may differ from people’s understanding, the depth interpretation may

enable them to see themselves differently; it may enable them to re-interpret a symbolic question or revise their prior understanding and prior assessment of the symbolic form and, in general, to alter the horizons of their understanding of themselves and others. (Thompson, 1990, p.323)

Therefore he believes that looking at ideology and offering an interpretation of ideology (which involves ideology-critique) already goes along with helping people to change their thinking and their lifestyle choices. Thus, ideology-critique (or interpretation of ideology) is a relevant activity. However, Thompson recognises that the plausibility of the interpretation is a matter of applying “conditions of non-imposition” so that subjects will not feel that the interpretation is imposed on people, and is also a matter of offering the “evidence and arguments adduced in support of the interpretation” (p.323). He states that this process, furthermore, must be “open in principle to the subjects who make up the social world” (p.323). He argues that if the interpretation is plausible in the light of the evidence and arguments adduced in its support, then it should be plausible “not only for the analysts involved in the to and fro of interpretation and counter-interpretation, but also for the subjects who make up the social world” (p.324). Nevertheless, the subjects may not at first accept or find persuasive the arguments and evidence, because people are still caught up in the old ideological traps of thinking. Hence, Thompson recognises that as part of the process of making a credible argument, people’s interpretation has to “stimulate a process of critical self-reflection between subjects who, as actors, are capable of deliberation” (p.324).

Furthermore, Thompson (1990) believes that the critique of ideology is possible, but must be “integrated into a theoretical framework which focuses on the nature of symbolic forms, the characteristics of social contexts, the organisation and reproduction of power and domination” (p.330). He postulates that people are “self-reflective agents who can deepen their understanding of themselves and others and who can, on the basis of this understanding, act to change the conditions of their lives” (p.330). This can be linked to Gregory’s (1994) statement that managers can alter their positions through their own actions as well as by joining forces with others, and this is part of the process of developing critical reflexivity. She recognises that critical reflexivity can “through ideology-critique, challenge the norms (value systems) of the society” (p.1566).

This can be applied to motivation intervention. If employees are being motivated only by external forces which make them feel that rewards can only be gained through, for example, material compensation (scientific management approach); or which make them feel that rewards can be gained only through team-work (human relations approach); or which make them feel that they must work through learning (learning-based approaches), then employees are probably not being sufficiently critically reflexive. In order to be critically reflexive, employees must accept these as motivations only after critically reflecting on their importance, and not simply because there are ideologies of work being disseminated in organisations which make them become mere subjects of (manipulated by) the ideology. This view will be discussed in more detail later. First, however, I shall consider in more depth Habermas’s (1976) position, and also that of Foucault.

## 5. 6 Habermas on ideology

Habermas's (1976) view of ideology is a kind of depth-hermeneutic which incorporates standards of knowledge creation as a way of criticising ideology. He claims that it is possible to launch an ideology-critique process against situations where whole fields of action colonise all other aspects of human life. As Brand (1990) in discussing Habermas's theory states, there is in a society based on the capitalist mode of production, an expansionist tendency in the system. This tendency is kindled by the systemic need to harmonise the tensions generated by capitalist expansion. In other words, capitalist ways of living, involving whole competitive and career-based lifestyles, also may create motivation issues. Brand recognises that the system (money and power)

intrude into areas of the Lifeworld which remain vitally dependent on integration through communicative action, namely those areas which have to do with the Lifeworld's symbolic (rather than material) reproduction. By penetrating into these areas as 'colonial overlords in a tribal society', they generate a social pathology for which the great sociologists of the past had already found various terms (alienation, anomie, loss of meaning and of freedom) but not the right analysis of its cause. (Brand, 1990, p.xiii)

In Habermas's view, as Brand notes, the cause of these pathologies is linked to the fact that evolutionary gains made by modernity are not duly reflected upon with a view to controlling their momentum. Here, Habermas answers the question of why there is so little resistance from a rationalised "Lifeworld" to its own "colonisation". Brand states that Habermas sees the basic cause for this in the "prevention of that global type of interpretation which is found on the level of ideology. This prevention has to do with the fragmentation of everyday consciousness which robs it of its synthetic power" (p.xiii). That is to say, Habermas feels that ideology occurs because there is a fragmentation in our thinking (it is not sufficiently systemic) and a fragmentation in our experiences. Habermas also suggests that sometimes legitimisation crises, coupled with motivation crises occur.

But the experience of these crises is not integrated into an overall critique of the system, including a critique of the way in which the steering media of money and power are penetrating into the “Lifeworld”. He notes that what is necessary is to create the conditions for ideology-critique by renewing possibilities for the kind of discourse that the “Lifeworld” promises.

For Habermas, understanding in the “Lifeworld” is reached through the interpretive efforts of people who coordinate their actions through criticisable claims to validity. He suggests that the human species maintains itself through socially coordinated activities, and that this coordination has to be established through interaction and communication, and communication in turn is oriented to reaching agreement. Therefore, he recognises that the reproduction of the species also requires satisfying the conditions of a rationality that is inherent in communicative action. Habermas’s view is that “reason” as communicative reason, can help people to prevent the complete colonisation of all thought and experience through the steering media of money and power. Although there have been advances in our existence because of the technical capabilities served through these media, “reason” is becoming muted by the penetrating powers of the ideologies linked to the service of money and power. He states that “reason”, as communicative thought and action, is not situated in any one particular subject but rather, in subject-subject relations. He suggests that for the analysis of the evolution of society, “communicative rationality” is the inter-subjectivity of shared understanding which now becomes central.

Therefore, as Brand (1990) notes, that the focus of investigation thereby shifts from cognitive-instrumental rationality to communicative rationality. Habermas (1984)

believes that people's use of language implies a common endeavour to achieve consensus in a situation in which they are free to have their ideas and have equal chances to express their views. This does not, of course, mean that situations in society in which language can become fully communicative will in fact be reached. Brand states that ideally, the process of communicative action

depends on a factor which goes beyond the bounds of the immediate historical situation. This factor is found in the claim for the validity of the reasons which induce people to take their particular share in communicative action. (Brand, 1990, p.11)

There is thus always some reaching towards something more universal in the validity of reasons that people can use in the communicative sphere of thought and action. To strive for understanding in the sphere of the "Lifeworld" means that people in interaction set out to convince one another in a framework of reasoning whereby their interaction is coordinated on the basis of motivation through "reason".

It is important to emphasise here that Habermas does not state that people in communicative action have no personal ends; rather, that if these are pursued under the condition of a communicatively produced consensus regarding the given situation, people have to make use of language in a manner oriented towards reaching understanding. When coordination has been reached, in whatever fashion, people perform on the basis of this, and their activities are thus informed by communicative reason. Habermas (1982) sees "speech" as providing the mechanism for the coordination of communicative action; "speech" is important because it allows people to coordinate their action more communicatively. This makes "speech" quite different from strategic action, which is oriented merely to egocentric calculations of success, such as managers can find in a bureaucratically structured arrangement. When employees, even in a bureaucracy, are

motivated merely by strategic calculation, then motivation becomes a matter of applying mechanisms of power or of money as motivators. As an example, this is when Taylor's scientific management approach (which induces through money rewards) or reinforcement theory (inducing through promise of reward) to motivation may become applicable. But employees become motivated partly because the "ideology" functioning has come to penetrate their consciousness.

Habermas (1982) believes that evolutionary gains have been achieved by the development of capitalism and other forms of modernity. Therefore, he does not reject the mentality of bureaucratic functioning. What he rejects is people's failure to see that these forms of functioning are coming to penetrate more and more into their consciousness and their experience, so that they cannot imagine any other way of doing things. People's ideology-critique faculties then become inoperable, because their ideological legitimation is characterised by structured inequality, the fact that coordination takes place through an apparent complementarity of interests (for example, of management and workers), does not imply that motivation is really based on "reason". The fact that people direct themselves ego-centrally, means that some others still get a better deal in the process. Habermas sees this as an injustice, because it can not be in somebody's interest to accept an offer of unequal exchange. He recognises that in strategic action, people influence the choice situation of others not through criticisable claims of language, but through other mechanisms, namely power or money. The motivation for action is empirical, rather than normative.

Habermas (1984) suggests that people in society can make, intuitively and implicitly, the distinction between strategic and communicative action which the theorist makes

explicitly. This is why Habermas believes that the critical theorist can share ideas with others about the importance of fostering communicative reason. The competence involved here, is what he calls “communicative competence”. He recognises that such competence is what makes the subject capable of communicative speech and action, that is, “able to participate in processes in which shared understanding is reached, maintaining at the same time his or her own identity” (p.594). For Habermas’s view, managers can see that motivation can become empirically rather than normatively directed, when they interact strategically. But Habermas does not state that this is always wrong, because it may be necessary at times in order to sustain the technical performance of systems. What Habermas believes is that people must also use their other faculties, that is, their faculty to reason communicatively. Then, employees can also become motivated through communicative reason. However, this process might include the need for an ideology-critique process, to break the colonisation of thought which makes employees become directed in terms of the performance principles of power (for those who can induce reward) and money (as a way of exacting good performance). An ideology-critique process at the same time breaks patterns of legitimation where unequal exchanges between people (on the basis of money and power) are perpetuated. Therefore, ideology-critique is not merely a thought process; it is also a practical process, because communicative reason is linked to communicative action. Habermas’s view of ideology-critique will be discussed further later, when examining how Oliga (1990) compares it with Foucault’s (1979) argument. Now I proceed to show some aspects of Foucault’s argument, although he does not use the term ‘ideology-critique’ as such.

## **5. 7 Foucault on disciplined motivation as creation of subjects**

Foucault (1979) considers the linkage between rigid, fixed rules for knowledge production, and the implementation of knowledge products in social institutions. He notes that knowledge production is linked with creating people through disciplining their bodies towards experiencing certain ways of life. For example, as he explains, the classical age discovered the body as an object and target of power -- as something that could be manipulated, shaped and trained. Since then, there have been many manifestations of this phenomenon of disciplining the body. He calls these “projects of docility” whereby individuals are trained to be docile, the disciplines. He states that many disciplines have been created and have long been in existence -- in armies, monasteries and workshops. It can be seen that Foucault shows by analogy with other types of disciplining, how discipline in organisations becomes inculcated through the body and through people’s physical experience. Using this analogy, it can be suggested that people become used to working in the same disciplined way.

However, Mingers (1992) suggests that the institutions are an exaggerated expression of the practice of discipline which also seeps into other areas of society. On Foucault, as Mingers notes, “power can best be observed in institutions which magnify its operations, but the practices involved spread throughout society” (p.107). Just as power can express force by creating subjects, it is also able to operate through disciplining their bodies, so that they habitually comply. In this way, possibilities for action can become constrained within a network of social practices which define how people must act. This is not the only way that power operates and, as shown elsewhere, Foucault’s view is not always or solely the pessimistic view of power as domination. For example, Townley (1994) shows that Foucault’s view of the ethical subject acts as a balance against the extreme view of the

body as only subject to others' disciplining dictates. Nevertheless, Foucault's discussion of discipline draws out the fact that people can be disciplined through the inculcation of compliance.

Applied to the organisation, discipline suggests that people become used to working in a way which, in the workshop, is linked to extracting utility. Foucault (1979) does not use the term 'ideology' to point to this disciplining (because he is worried that the term 'ideology' merely implies a process in thought, and also that 'ideology' implies there is something true as its opposite). But his analysis does show how dominant groups may seek to substantiate and legitimise their dominant position through a kind of ideology of control (understood in a broad sense as an ideology built into control). This ideology, and the power that goes with it, has its basis in the increasing rationalisation of social conduct, a rationalisation that objectifies the subjective self.

Foucault (1979) recognises that people at all levels of social institutions are objectified as a result of this increasing rationalisation. This perception is manifested in the view of people as maximum performers; all means are tried to cause people to act at maximum capacity. But for the subject people -- regardless of people's role within the social structure, whether one designs the tools of subjugation or is subject to their use, he believes that people are objectified. Consequently there does not have to be a constant supervisor to check whether people are performing according to the rationalised plan and are performing optimally. People at work become their own surveyors and act according to demands for required behaviour. In this way, people become no longer subjects; they are transformed into objects, almost without being aware of the learning processes which have led to this orientation. These processes have seeped into people's bodies as an

experience of docility. Foucault does not provide much advice as to how to break out of this constraint except by implication.

The problem with Foucault's (1979) conception, according to Poster (1984), is that it tends to reduce all forms of psychic inner life and the diversity of human experience and creativity to the effects of a unifying bodily discipline. Moreover, subjects are understood as manipulable docile bodies, rather than as people with the capacity for autonomous experience and action. This is also the critique offered by Midgley (1995b), who states that this is linked to Foucault's view of knowledge-formations. Foucault does not show how people are able to break out of the grip of societal and institutional knowledge-power formations. Critics of his view of discipline have argued that the construction of the subject cannot be explained simply through reference to bodily experiences. Poster states that too great an emphasis is placed on the effects of a corporeally centred disciplinary power, at the expense of an analysis of how other forms of power contribute to the construction of modern people. Furthermore, Foucault provides no way of going beyond the notion of the subject as a purely determined category (that is, in fact an object) to a fuller understanding of the subject as a thinking, willing responsible agent. As Norris (1993) notes, the subject is little more than a

place-filler, a recipient of moral directives which issue from some other heteronomous source of authority, and which cannot be conceived as in any way belonging to a project of autonomous self-creation. (Norris, 1993, p.33)

Norris aims to create a theory of ideology linked to recognising people's capacities for such "self-reflection", because Foucault's accounts falls short of this. Furthermore, Habermas (1984) also criticises Foucault's argument on the grounds that a concept of ideology (or any similar symbolic definition of power) becomes reduced to a technical

notion of control, or what he calls the “uncircumspect levelling of culture and politics to immediate substrates of the application of violence” (p.291).

Foucault (1972) criticises theories of ideology mainly because people’s psyches imply a pre-existent truth situated elsewhere which is finally revealed with the demystification of ideological fictions. He plays down the idea that there are discernible, objective truths. In Foucault’s view, all knowledge has an ideological function. The production of knowledge is bound up with regimes of power. Therefore, truths have a normalising and regulatory function as people become accepted in society. Knowledge makes people accept as normal a specific way of operating. As Foucault states,

all knowledge is the effect of a specific regime of power ... there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relation. (Foucault, 1972, p.33)

Therefore it is impossible to distinguish between truth and ideology, as if ideology is somehow wrong as opposed to a definite truth. He considers that the normalising force of power can be understood as the imposition of ‘regimes of truth’ through the operation of power upon the body. So in Foucault’s view, McNay (1994) argues that ‘norm’ does not refer to culturally accepted patterns of behaviour, but to “routinised modes of behaviour that are so deeply inscribed on the body by disciplinary modes of power that they seem natural or normal” (p.112). To break out of this pattern is a project that Foucault explores only by implication, and he does not say how people can ever decide that they have a better way of doing things, so that whatever they think can be criticised as just a product of some “power-knowledge” formation. It is for this reason that Oliga (1990) prefers Habermas’s theory (of ideology) to Foucault’s. Foucault’s “power-knowledge” does not seem to provide any criteria for rejecting ideology in the name of something better. In the next

section, it will be shown how through a critical systemic view, Oliga offers criteria for rejecting ideology.

## **5. 8 Oliga's views on ideology**

Olga (1990) creates a (critical) systemic view by examining the work of various critical systems thinkers and relating this to a discussion of ideology and power. He notes that Jackson (1982, 1983, 1985a, b, 1987) and Jackson and Keys (1984) have classified certain systems methodologies within the Habermasian three-interests framework. He shows that the analyses provided by Jackson (1987), and Jackson and Keys (1984) point to the continuing dominance of the functionalist paradigm. This, as we saw in Chapter 3, is one way of seeing also certain motivation theories, which have a tendency to regard employees as motivated towards maximum performance in accordance with given objectives.

Olga (1990) also notes that the interpretive systems methodologies have not completely replaced the well-entrenched functionalist methodologies. Both kinds of these methodologies are still very much in operation. For example, managers can think of interpretive systems methodologies which concentrate on employees' need to debate in order to become committed to plans of action. Olga notes that "distinctive radical/critical systems methodologies have yet to emerge" (p.270). He sees that these are "in dire need of critical inquiry", especially because people are "generally characterised by power asymmetry and contradictions" (p.270). He recognises that an ideology-critique process is one way of highlighting this dire need, and it can be levelled from the viewpoint of CST, using some of the underpinnings explored in Chapter 4. However, Olga notes that to gain acceptance of such a type of thinking might be difficult, especially because it might be

going against the tide of what is already accepted. The unmasking of ideological bias might be “dreaded by the patient” (p.271). By “the patient” he means people in society, but especially those who benefit more from the perpetuation of the ideology.

Oliga (1990) states that mainstream systems theories of stability and instability in society often embrace functionalist or interpretive paradigmatic interests. He recognises that both share a common perspective on their view of social control. These approaches are concerned with the dissolution of tension and contradiction. Oliga notes that the statement of a problem of social order is already a way of seeing reality. He argues that “conflict is an actual or potential problem and so arises only within a theory that defines the problem of conflict”, and adds that “the imposition of order must resolve that conflict on terms favourable to one or the other party” (p.272). Therefore, maintaining order through finding suitable ways of motivating employees may involve terms that are not equally favourable to all concerned. This is why I argue the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation that can uncover these contradictions and also look for some ways of dealing with them, even if it is not necessarily a way that simply emphasises order.

The question is, whether there is a form of organisation that need not rely on domination for its continued successful performance, and in which performance criteria themselves can be altered. This is what Oliga (1990) hints at with his view of the possibility of “transforming such domination” as linked to an analysis of “the roles of power and ideology (ideology-critique)” (p.272). He organises his discussion by considering certain conceptions of power, showing where his ideology-critique view fits in terms of these views. As he notes,

in Foucault’s concept of ‘pouvoir-savoir’ (power-knowledge), power (pouvoir) is assumed to be diffused throughout society, at all levels, just as

practical, everyday life knowledge, *savoir* (as opposed to '*connaissance*', the formal knowledge of science), is. (Olga, 1990, p.274)

In Foucault's view, power is always linked to the way that knowledge is created and utilised for social purposes, penetrating social institutions and people's experience of them. In relation to ideology, Olga notes that Foucault's power-knowledge "challenges the idea of truth or pure knowledge since actual knowledge in society is political activity, the product of power and its disciplinary techniques" (p.274). He raises a point, namely, that Foucault concentrates hard on the way social life is played out in terms of power-knowledge formations, but gives little attention to "the possibility that such parameters of struggle may be ideologically structured" (p.275). He recognises that there is a danger of over concentrating on the tactics without looking at the "biases of potential outcomes" (p.275). By looking at these biases, the road is opened to giving a critique of these outcomes, which for Olga is part of the purpose of ideology-critique. Olga utilises some ideas of Habermas (1984) to make the point about the need for ideology-critique, understood as operating in terms of some standards by which to distinguish truth from falsity (biases). As he notes, "for Habermas critique presupposes criteria for distinguishing truth from falsity, without which the very notion of ideology becomes meaningless" (p.275). He states that two types of consequences flow from failure to make this distinction: first, people lose the ability to distinguish between mere preferences and a critical understanding of what their interests might be. Second, in the absence of such distinctions, "prevailing power relations become the ultimate arbiters of interests" (p.276).

Olga (1990) also points out that Foucault's conception of "power-knowledge" is coupled with a rejection of the concept of ideology. He notes that Foucault does not try to provide standards to which the critique of ideology can refer in order to justify its procedure and

claims to deny “the grounds on which to assert a priori criteria of its own truth” (p.277). He shows that the condition of non-imposition can still accompany ideology-critique, so that a communication between analysts and individuals in their everyday lives becomes a way of carrying out ideology-critique. He recognises that critical theory is not merely a “relative rationality”, and must not simply give its own rational criteria of validity, imputing ideological meanings to other texts. He also emphasises that perhaps there are other ways of effecting critique (e.g., through a critical systemic view of learning such as the one this thesis tries to develop). Before proceeding to discuss this, I continue to discuss Oliga’s analysis of views on ideology. The question is whether a possible better alternative regime (social system) is conceivable. Oliga gives three possible answers: the first possibility is a negative answer, that the present regime’s dominant ideologies and attendant power are not doubted or challenged; the second possibility is a qualified positive answer that there is some doubt regarding both the strength of the power effect and the dominant ideologies; and the third possibility is an unqualified positive answer. Here, both power and dominant ideologies are doubted. Here, counterclaims to the legitimacy of the rulers’ domination can emerge strongly, together with resistance and struggle by the ruled. In this case, there is disdain for the regime’s right and capacity to rule. Oliga recognises that the articulation between power and ideology creates a new relation. However, whether better regimes are then created is still unclear. This brings us to more detailed discussion of the question of power, for it is only in this way that further answers can be found.

## **5. 9 Some views on the exercise of power which help enhance critical appreciation**

As has been shown in the previous sections, ideology theories include ideas about power. For example, the social reproduction theory of ideology states that power configurations in society (based on class formations) are reproduced, in part due to the legitimating force of ideology. The Frankfurt school saw that the media reduced activity in society so that people became consumers of culture. In this sense, people did not develop their critical skills to challenge lifestyles in the “Lifeworld”. Ideology is thus reductive reasoning, supported by reductivist ways of portraying issues.

Thompson (1990) tries to show that power and dominance configurations in society can change, as people see themselves as self-reflecting agents rather than pawns of unchallengeable systems. Gregory (1992) draws attention to the power of challenge, as people begin to co-ordinate their efforts to transform themselves and society. Mingers (1992) suggests that what is important when looking at power in society, is

not a theoretical analysis of power per se, nor even the correct treatment of power in critical theory, but a conception of power from which may be derived useful operationalisations as part of action-oriented methodologies. (Mingers, 1992, p.106)

He states that the results of analysing power should be relevant for people “in everyday situations of power by, and on behalf of, ordinary citizens” (p.106). He recognises that in order to create action, people should not wait until all the different theorists have agreed on what power is, and how to look at it. He thus argues that people should “not wait for some consensus on the current approaches, many of which have important if limited insights” (p.106). He believes that all approaches have some insights and also some limitations.

Mingers (1992) also notes that some of the debates concern whether, for example, “power is seen as either coercive or else enabling; as only intentional and explicit or also as unintentional and implicit” (p.106). He states that when power is seen as coercive then it is assumed that power is always to be challenged, while when power is seen as enabling, then some power is seen as necessary for people to act. He argues that power is most adequately conceptualised as “elusive” , and is also multifaceted. He believes that the explanations of how power operates in society are thus not simple. Here, some of its effects are visible, in that we can see how power is used to manipulate, or alternatively to empower. And sometimes power is conscious and intentional; at other times unconscious and unintentional. This is similar to Oliga’s (1990) view of the difficulty in seeing power in any one way. Mingers suggests that people can draw together different conceptions of power by analysing it, both from their perspectives and from the perspective of structure (conditions that allow individuals to exercise power). He recognises that this drawing together implies a form of “relational perspective” (p.107). He notes that approaches to power can generally be categorised as “subjectivist”, “objectivist”, or “relational” depending on where they locate the main focus of power. He states that

subjectivist approaches concentrate on individuals and groups of people exercising power in a relatively conscious way. Objectivist approaches concentrate on power as a structural phenomenon either constraining and oppressing. Relational approaches emphasise that power must be seen as a relational concept, concerned either with the interaction of groups or interests, or of subject and structure. (Mingers, 1992, p.106)

Flood and Romm (1996a) offer a similar discussion in their typology of power. They see that there are a number of ways of seeing power. But they do not try to integrate them because, they suggest, it is better to keep distinctiveness, so that people can deal with different aspects of issues of power when they intervene. For example, applying Flood and

Romm's analysis and relating it to motivation, managers could consider how structures can create conditions that allow some people to enforce their will on others. These others in turn have to respond to the powerful forces, either by obeying or by trying to resist, but as they resist they might come up against structural constraints. Consideration could be given to how managers consciously exercise power, and also how this may be enabling, especially if they are involved in the exercise of power in an inter-subjective way. For example, managers can create teams which are then seen as using the power of teamwork as a way of motivating employees, along with other ways of involving themselves in decision-making. This ties in with motivation theories which see that employees' motivation can be drawn upon as a powerful force that consciously leads them to work towards co-operative achievement of goals. There is also another view of power which questions such co-operative achievement (which Mingers links to a more critical view of power). As Mingers (1992) states, "a critical approach sets out to challenge the status quo in a more radical way, aiming to change it in favour of the disadvantaged" (p.105). This view of power is always on the lookout for ways of trying to transform situations by criticising the status quo in a radical way. Flood and Romm (1996a) suggest that the efforts of both Habermas (1984) and Foucault (1982) can be seen in this way, as essentially transformative. However, some critics of Foucault (including Oliga, 1996) state that Foucault's argument does not show up sufficiently how people can transform social relations, because he provides no standard by which to assess this. From my personal view, this means that there are no criteria to judge when motivation is most helpful. Now, I will consider in more detail a variety of views on power.

Mingers (1992) considers that in reviews of the literature on power, very little attention has been paid to Habermas's (1984) view on this. Flood and Romm (1996a) observe that Habermas is concerned with activating new knowledge-power relations by appealing to people's capacity to use argument rather than power as force, and they want to pit 'right' (through good argument) against the dominant power of 'might' (p.73). They note, when discussing ideology issues, that Habermas believes that ideology exists because people do not use sufficient "communicative rationality" to challenge ideas in terms of 'validity' claims. Flood and Romm also observe that for Habermas, ideas and whole ways of life linked to the ideas are accepted, without there really being a true consensus arising of genuine rational discourse; the power of ideology thus acts to suppress communication oriented towards better argument. During interventions, power operates illegitimately, because employees do not see how they can challenge it in terms of activating good arguments. Employees then do not become motivated to achieve goals which have been reached through public argument. Employees become motivated merely strategically to try and fulfil whatever ends they can, while 'ego' and 'alter ego' become directed through strategy rather than argument.

However, Foucault (1982) questions whether people can rely on rational argument to make a better society. He describes power in terms of its operation -- what actually happens in the exercise of power. He suggests that power is intentional, in that its exercise has intended results, but it has no overall coherent structure or strategy. Its effects escape intentions: "people know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what they do does" (cited from Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983; p.187). Foucault recognises that power is intimately connected with knowledge, and refers to "power-knowledge". He argues that power relations lead to the development of

knowledge, and knowledge enables the exercise of power. However, Midgley (1995a) notes that power can reinforce a view of subjects who cannot see how people can transform either themselves or entrenched power-knowledge formations.

Foucault (1982) becomes specific about the analysis of power relations in society, and suggests that it is necessary to establish a number of elements, for example, the way that power is used to set up distinctions as it categorises things and names them; and the means that can be used to create power relations. He sees that these factors operate in definite ways. For example, managers can think of language rules that dictate that employees must “work productively” to earn their wage; or that “time is money”. Foucault also notes that there is also secrecy, for example, the way that documents are kept confidential so that people do not have access to information that would allow them to challenge a situation. He believes that if people knew about this, they then might be demotivated to work for the firm. Therefore these means and rules of language and secrecy apply to motivation through strategy. Foucault argues that analyses of the way that power is used are helpful in the continual struggle in and against power. He recognises that people should not aim to remove power:

To say there cannot be a society without power relations is not to say either that those which are established are necessary, or ... that power constitutes a fatality at the heart of societies. (Foucault, 1982, p.223)

In Foucault’s view, knowledge is a way of constructing the world, of differentiating it into various elements and through this process taking control over the elements and disciplining the self and social institutions. So, he believes that knowledge becomes related to discipline of self. For example, we should focus on what the knowledge does -- on its “power effect”. This can become a way of identifying how the power effect can be challenged. Clegg (1989) uses Foucault’s conception of disciplinary power to suggest that

power can be facilitative. He states that power can be considered as creative rather than necessarily limiting, and the conception of discipline allows a more sensitive description of the workings of power than ideology critique alone. So, he sees Foucault's use of the term 'power' as potentially facilitative of new ways of acting. He suggests that this is perhaps a better way of seeing power and knowledge, than merely seeing power-knowledge as ideology. The concern will then be with the workings of power, rather than with examining false interests or distorted expressions, as if these can be identified by individuals. However, Foucault does not offer sufficient material on how knowledge-power formations can be transformed (see Midgley, 1995a).

Rahman (1993) in his book *People's Self-development*, also uses some of the work of Foucault to examine the workings of power, with a view to creating more empowerment and mobilisation of power. He suggests that an analysis of power-knowledge formations creates possibilities for people to mobilise and self-develop. He recognises that mobilisation should rest on the intrinsic urges of people and not be extrinsically imposed; if it is externally imposed it is domination. To avoid this, he recognises that people need to have "(i) a sense of owning the means of production, and (ii) a sense of being the subject of decision-making" (p.19). He wants to see ownership as a category in society that must be examined, so that "the complex combinations of the distribution of formal ownership and decision-making power that obtain in reality can be assessed" (p.19). He recognises that once this is done, new ways of seeing ownership which challenge existing power-knowledge formations can develop. This implies transformation of society as well as self-development, and that a sense of (positive) purpose in the exercise of ownership and decision-making can emerge. He links this to the creation and sustenance of "self-reliance". He defines self-reliance as "reliance on one's own resources, including those objectively external but subjectively internalised, that an inner urge for creative work may

be generated” (p.19). He also notes that “the concept of self-reliance is used in a variety of senses, so that a discussion of its meaning in the context of mobilisation is necessary” (p.19). Furthermore, he suggests that the self-reliance must be coupled with a

state of mind that regards one’s own mental and material resources as the primary stock to draw on in the pursuit of one’s objectives, and finds emotional fulfilment not only in achieving the objectives as such but also in the very fact of having achieved them primarily by using one’s own resources. (Rahman, 1993, p.19)

For Rahman, motivation with self-reliance means becoming motivated not by pressure from without, but by relying on people’s resources to mobilise themselves. This also implies achieving emotional fulfilment from striving for objectives. He is critical of the way motivation is often derived from external resources, which creates the loss of “self-respect”. He recognises that to foster self-respect means that external help should not be relied on

except when it is either mutual or in times of extreme and abnormal calamity immediately threatening survival (for example, danger of drowning, being hit by a cyclone) when, by accepting external help, one may also help preserve self-respect of the helper. Furthermore, co-operative relations should be striven for in the sense that if one appropriates others’ resources, this should occur within some mutually honourable quid pro quo. (Rahman, 1993, p.19)

He attaches great importance to autonomy of choice and action, current and future, which people consider significant. In this sense, managers must be able to judge what they think is significant and must be able to exercise choices when they commit themselves to action. It is also important, in the process, not to endanger their self-reliance in the future. So managers should be given the opportunity to act autonomously, both now and in the future. Rahman recognises that overdependence or being vulnerable statistically, politically, etc. are thus ruled out in this concept of self-reliance; and people should not be at the mercy of others’ whims or of political pressures or unable to act in ways that can better their lifestyles.

Following Mingers's (1992) claim about the need for a theory of power which can be operationalised, Rahman (1993) suggests that "self-reliance conceived in these terms has operational implications that are both creatively positive as well as resistance-oriented and hence defensive" (p.19). He notes that the "creatively positive aspect" ties in with Clegg's (1989) view of the facilitative strength of Foucault's analysis of power, and the idea of resistance is an indication that in the process of mobilising power for self-reliance, people's efforts may meet with obstructions, which have to be resisted. He observes that people in society have become unable, through lack of "material staying power" as well as of "mental staying power" to persevere in the face of top down control. He argues that throwing off exploitative dominance-dependence relations requires persistence. To strengthen this, he recognises that people require cultural education as well as some experience of self-reliance as they become "exposed to examples of self-reliance under difficult conditions by other groups, communities and so on"; and power also requires "an impulse of self-reliance through inspiring leadership, for example, invocations and, perhaps most effectively, through liberation struggles" (p.20). He has a liberation struggle argument that ties freedom to these features, which seeks to be aware of how to improve self-reliance. Furthermore, he notes that self-reliance embraces an energy towards creative activity and that this energy is motored by

an awareness of one's creative assets, arising again out of a combination of material resources under one's control, and such mental resources as confidence in one's ability to solve original problems of life, the courage to take on challenging tasks and the stamina to make sustained efforts to accomplish them, and so on. (Rahman, 1993, p.21)

Thus, we can see that Rahman relates self-reliance to a new way of seeing employees' involvement in organisations (or society) -- ideally not being motivated merely through external rewards, or by some idea of objectives to be reached as externally given, but

through developing employees' confidence for sustaining efforts towards their own accomplishments, which will be emotionally fulfilling. However, this is not simply the same as Maslow's hierarchy where "self-realisation" becomes a way of motivating employees in organisations. Rather, it develops self-realisation further by looking at the way in which collective purpose must be critically handled. In Rahman's view, mobilisation does imply moving towards a collective purpose, but a collectivity is not simply a collectivity geared towards productivity goals or goals of good performance as a technical accomplishment. A collectivity, according to Rahman, is

an association of individuals who possess a sense of identity with the association, so that the collective interest (as defined collectively by an agreed procedure) registers emotionally in the consciousness of its members as part of their 'individual' interest, that is, realisation of the collective objective gives direct fulfilment to the individual members. (Rahman, 1993, p.21)

He thus recognises a balance between people's needs and their association with others, so that they can gain some identity with others, but also can realise something of their own interests. Motivation has to arise from an intrinsic wish to achieve something, and this must not be a matter of being manipulated to want this because people's identity has been totally moulded by the collective. So, as Rahman argues, though self-reliance should be a collective state of mind, it must not "replace individual self-reliance, as the sense of the individual itself is extended to embrace the collective" (p.22). He cautions that for the idea of collective mobilisation (and individuals' fulfilment) to become potent,

the chosen level of mobilisation may be too low, in the sense that the desired mobilisation could have been achieved at a higher level, gaining at the same time a wider choice of resource allocation, as a higher-level mobilisation could allow resources to be put under the control of a correspondingly higher (larger) collective, permitting more efficient resource use to the extent that such possibilities (economies of scale) exist. (Rahman, 1993, p.25)

Here, Rahman's analysis is that if mobilisation is too locally defined, with too small a scale of operation, then it will not have power to transform patterns in society. He

recognises that participation requires a consideration of how to balance the distribution of society's resources between its different collectives and an examination of whether emotional resources are evenly distributed in the sense that fulfilment is being satisfied. However, he states that intervention must not become so abstractly focused that its centre of gravity becomes unmanageable. For purposes of action, he recognises that people thus might have to be chosen for mobilised development, to initiate the process of social transformation towards greater self-reliance as a general principle. The basis of self-reliance, as Rahman has conceptualised it, needs to be linked to larger social goals of generating a new style of life (p.29). He develops his argument in relation to what he calls "the concept of satisfaction of basic needs of the population", and notes that this idea (need fulfilment) has emerged as part of liberal development thinking. Furthermore, he takes the argument about needs further by suggesting that the process of satisfying needs is what is all-important, and not the fact of reaching a satisfaction of the said need. People thus have to create the means of satisfying other needs, according to their own priorities. He recognises that

through such creation we evolve - develop - as creative beings. This is the basic human need - to fulfil our creative potential in ever newer ways - although it may not be expressed or asserted by all because of the conditioning resulting from structural social and cultural domination. (Rahman, 1993, p.187)

Here, he views humankind as being primarily creative beings, a view which links up with the idea of people's self-development through self-reliance and what kind of society is thereby created. He states that such a society "rejects dogmatism about collectivism as the ultimate emancipation of labour and leaves the question to the organic evolution of people's collective search for life", and society also rejects the notion of macro structural change as a prerequisite for people's self-development which can start immediately as a

process of collective inquiry and action for solving problems along with “self-determination” (p.179).

Rahman’s view of self-development is related to the issue of who creates knowledge in society, and how knowledge is used. He recognises that power is built when top-down control is linked to expert rather than organically derived knowledge. He argues that part of the task of social transformation is to

restore popular knowledge to a status of equality with professional knowledge and advancing ‘organic knowledge’ as a part of the very evolution of life and not distanced from it. This offers a new role for intellectuals, in initiating ‘animation’ work with the people to promote their collective self-inquiry and action. (Rahman, 1993, p.179)

So although he sees a ‘role’ for professionals (for example, professionals concerned with developing theories of motivation), he also sees that all knowledge must be related organically to popular ideas and needs. He emphasises that people’s self-development must start “with self-understanding to guide their own action, and is a process in which self-understanding develops as action is taken and reviewed” (p.195). He recognises that people must have a sense of how they wish to address their own needs, and knowledge cannot be held by elites who develop constructions of their needs and try to motivate them on this basis.

Therefore Rahman (1993) refers to a kind of need-based theory of motivation, but not quite in any of the ways that were discussed in Chapter 2. He recognises that his approach must grow organically from a personal definition of needs and by coupling this with new forms of social existence. To organise this transformation, he states that people’s foremost need is for a liberated mind; that is, where transformation is linked to ideology-critique, because ideology can imprison our minds. He summarises his argument:

Only with a liberated mind (of the people), which is free to inquire and then conceive and plan what is to be created, can structural change release the creative potentials of the people. In this sense liberation of the mind is the primary task, both before and after structural change. (Rahman, 1993, p.195)

Therefore, he tries to break monopolies of knowledge, and in this way pave the road for people to assert their right to advance their 'self-knowledge' through 'self-inquiry' as the basis of their action. His suggestion to change power relations is thus aimed towards altering the knowledge, and to produce and advance "organic knowledge" as a part of the very evolution of life. This is opposed to elite-generated knowledge produced in academic laboratories, which is then disseminated as knowledge in society. Rahman recognises that a more liberating role can be taken by the intelligentsia, if they act as facilitators that "stimulate and assist the others to collectively inquire and act for themselves" (p.196). He believes that bringing about basic changes in society is possible by giving a new role to people trying to develop their own knowledge. Relating this to knowledge of needs, he recognises that it should not come from the intelligentsia with the purpose of retaining the basic institutions of society. As he notes, we use knowledge merely to gear employees to maximum performance, or to fulfil objectives and purposes that have not been widely discussed. For example, MBO in the hands of managers can become an ideology that helps to entrench power.

Rahman (1993) offers a new view of motivation, which ties it to organic development of knowledge (through a kind of needs approach). His views are thus very significant for this thesis. I believe that his view of needs also agrees with kinds of learning which allow us to learn between radically alien perspectives as long as we do not let those others impose our knowledge to develop our own self-knowledge. Furthermore, when it is used in a more liberating way, it becomes a view of motivation which leads us to inspire and facilitate,

rather than to merely define objectives. It is also tied to new ways of organising lifestyles in organisations. So, Rahman's view of needs and self-development, offers a new way of seeing employees. He gives a vision of a better motivation where employees can develop their own knowledge and self-knowledge without the imposition of others. In this way he goes beyond Foucault, who does not apparently offer any visions like this. Foucault (1982) concentrates more on showing up 'knowledge-power' configurations and their unfolding in a myriad of circumstances. Oliga (1996) takes a line similar to Rahman's (1993) view, when he speaks about the basic needs approach in which people's needs could be met, and states that these needs must be catered for in society. However, he notes that the needs approach often only becomes a policy, without seeking the involvement of people in deciding how to achieve it or letting them develop their own view of their needs.

Like Rahman's view, Oliga (1996) sees that a needs approach can have some radical importance in helping people to become involved in defining their motivations, without being induced by external power, threat, subtle forms of coercion, etc. He recognises that intrinsic self-knowledge can become a basis both for need satisfaction and for people's self-development. Learning can occur in various ways, as I discuss when I propose a critical systemic view of learning in the following chapter. As referred to the discussion presented in Chapter 2, Oliga's ideas have implications for motivation approaches. For example, need-based theories which do not question views on maximum performance as the criteria for action, and process-based theories which do not allow for radical critique practices, can lead to a neglect of the ideological dimension in social control. And learning-based theories, like need-based theories, can become trapped in a situation leading to employees' self-misunderstanding where they do not employ their critical faculties to redefine their needs. Those approaches suffer from the problem of uncritically

using our ideological self-understandings as resources to reproduce a form of society that in fact cannot meet collective needs.

By reflecting on all of this, we should communicate and learn to become more active in making ideological changes. However, this requires not only our acts of self-knowledge, but also development of a critical systemic view of learning that encourages our self-development. This is the purpose of critical systemic view of learning, as developed in this thesis. It also ties up with Gregory's (1992) "discordant pluralism" (as I mentioned in Chapter 3). Gregory (1994) notes that "an ideology-critique must incorporate structural changes as well as changes which address the processes of interaction between human beings" (p.1565). This is because the "Lifeworld" processes must take account of people relations, as well as organising new interactions between people which are more communicative. As Gregory believes, our actions should be accommodated in a theory of social transformation; and transformation requires our action, which have been activated through critical self-reflection and ideology-critique. She recognises that our actions can reproduce given orders (especially when ideology is not criticised), conversely, our actions can also have impacts which will be transformative (p.1565). She sums up her argument as follows:

Through a critique of ideology an individual may choose to act in certain ways that will impact on the values and beliefs of the society which, in the normal day-to-day activities of individuals and collectives is produced and reproduced. (Gregory, 1994, p.1566)

She recognises that values and beliefs of society can be reproduced and can also be transformed, and that society can be (re)created in a different configuration of interactions and with new values coming to the fore. In this sense, we in turn can be subjected to critical self-reflection and perhaps ideology-critique as soon as they become undesirably

all-powerful as guiding forces to motivation. She uses Habermas's view of emancipation to show that we can emancipate in the sense of looking forward to new futures. She quotes Giddens (1991) who states,

it is this 'openness' of the future to other possibilities that causes other writers to argue for the potentiality of change in the make-up of society: The 'openness' of things to come expresses the malleability of social world and the capability of (individual) human beings to shape the physical settings of our existence. (Giddens, 1991, p.111 cited from Gregory, 1994, P.1563)

Gregory (1992) utilises ideas from Habermas and Giddens, and advocates processes involving the development of self and society (re)creation,

to reveal the complex interactions between self and society which enable each to be co-(re)productive of the other. It is also possible to show the features of reflexive inquiry aimed at providing understanding which involves both processes of critical self-reflection and of ideology-critique. (Gregory, 1992, p.188)

Here, Gregory's exploration of self-society dynamics is another way of looking at ideology-critique, and shows why ideology-critique is necessary to change social configurations that otherwise become reproduced (without critical reflection on why they should be reproduced). Critical reflexivity leads us to develop our own new knowledge (like Rahman's idea of self-knowledge), and shows us how to criticise ideologies which hamper our own development and where we have not reflected on values. Gregory also notes that self-society dynamics aims at encouraging us to reflect on the values that are being reproduced in society as a matter of course. This can be done by means of the critical appreciation process. In the critical appreciation process, all participants' ideologies must be subjected to debate as well as offering opportunities for new reflections. Therefore, as I noted in Section 5.3 of this chapter discussing ideology, Gregory does not want to see that only certain powerful individuals have ideologies that they disseminate to others. Others (so-called subordinate ones) can also develop their ideologies through the critical

appreciation process. In this way, we should develop organisations built on more critical reflexivity which involves normative thinking, and allows employees to question and challenge norms and ideologies which do not seem right. Gregory also refers to Habermas's theory of moral communication to show that moral reasoning cannot be ignored in the critically reflexive processes. Here, we should be able to communicate and learn from one another, and part of this learning allows us to see how immoral contexts (reasoned to be immoral) need changing.

Thus, a critical systemic view of learning is needed to be able to see when, for example, a certain motivation approach has the consequence of enforcing certain types of behaviour, which could be challenged as being wrong. So a critical systemic view of learning is not a values-neutral process, it involves judging different values in alien paradigmatic assumptions which are produced in society, hoping to create better society. Some of these ideas are taken up in Chapter 6, which deals far more with a critical systemic view of learning in the context of looking at self-society dynamics.

## **5. 10 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I highlighted briefly the implications of some theories of ideology and views of power. I showed that sometimes views of ideology imply that people are passive in the face of ruling ideologies and power. An ideology-critique process can be coupled with the idea that we need to engage in critical self-reflection of the way in which ideologies structure lifestyle choices. As Rahman's view states, self-reliance in relation to collective involvement presents a view of motivation which is creativist, but which does not see the employee as isolated from the collectivity. In fact, this creates a way for

managers to understand how self and society can become interlinked so as to develop both self and society (the collectivity). They should recognise that the different approaches are embedded in specific ideologies, and should be aware of the underpinning ideology in order to appreciate properly the approach. We should always have critical awareness about the suitability of the available approaches. Motivation also continually raises questions concerning the appropriateness of both the status quo and ideological differences. Using and developing ideas from these views, I moved towards showing the need for a critical systemic view of learning which is tied up with some understanding of self-society dynamics during motivation interventions.

In the next chapter I develop these ideas further, examining organisational learning and linking this to a critical systemic view of learning during motivation interventions, which are seen as in a discordant pluralist relationship to each other, allowing them to learn from one another.

**Chapter 6: Issues in Motivation Interventions (3):  
The Need for Learning during Interventions**

## **Chapter 6**

### **Issues in Motivation Interventions (3): The Need for Learning during Interventions**

#### **6. 1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I showed that sometimes views of ideology imply that people are passive in the face of ruling ideologies. However, ideology-critique can be coupled with the idea that people need to have critical awareness of the way in which ideologies are structuring lifeworld choices. That is, when matched with a critical self-reflection which allows people to question assumptions that they might have taken-for-granted, or to question dogmatic ways of seeing the world, may form the basis of new ways of being motivated. Instead of motivation being seen as something that has to be inculcated, or as something coupled with an external reward, it can be seen as linked to self-determination, while also accepting people's need to form part of a collectivity. In fact, this creates a way for us to understand how self and organisation can become interlinked so as to develop both self and organisation (the collectivity).

This self-development and collective development can be linked through the process of learning. Selves can learn to appreciate other ways of seeing themselves by considering other people's views of themselves and also other participants' views of theories and ideas. When this occurs, organisation also develops as it does not simply reproduce itself along habitual lines, and in terms of entrenched ideologies. Organisations can develop to the point of creating organisations which reward ethical behaviour (while leaving scope for continued discussion about questions of ethics). And they can develop to the point

where organisational functioning also shows sensitivity to careful thought about sustainability.

In this chapter, I develop these ideas further, discussing views of organisational learning and linking this to a critical systemic view of learning. I show how such a critical systemic view of learning means that people can learn from one another and also from theories that have been offered by others to explain motivation. I also show why a critical systemic view of learning is necessary to understand more about motivation and to help change our conceptions of motivation so that these are not ruled by ideology. The way that learning is ideally in a discordant pluralist position which lets people question what they receive from others, while also adding to their own appreciation of the issues. Therefore, people exist in parallel (and theories exist in parallel) without them all becoming all the same. That is, it means that people can continually learn from one another because they can continue to engage in dialogue about their differences, including a dialogue about the relevance of the available motivation approaches.

## **6. 2 Self-society dynamics**

As noted in Chapter 5, self-society relationships cannot be avoided as part of a discussion about motivation. The question arises whether people should retain a sense of their own identity which is not just ruled by others' expectations of them and others' judgments about their performances. For example, Rahman's (1993) view of self-development offers a new way of seeing society and individuals, and it gives a vision of a better society where people can develop their knowledge and self-knowledge without the imposition of traditional ideology. Thompson (1990) and Gregory (1992) are also arguments which

concentrate on the relation between self and society as being a dynamic one. For example, Gregory believes that action of individuals must be accommodated in a theory of social transformation, and transformation requires the action of individuals, coupled with their critical reflective faculties, which have been activated through critical self-reflection and ideology-critique processes. In these arguments, it is shown how people can be critical of ideologies which otherwise would pattern their performances, and how they can be self-critical about ideas and experiences that they have absorbed.

Nurius (1991) discusses self and society relationships by noting that we not only have selves (definitions of who we are) but also possible selves (definitions of what we might be). He describes the conceptions of possible selves as follows:

Possible selves are the future-oriented components of the self-concept; people personalise and give enduring cognitive form to other's goals, motives, and hopes and fears for the future....Positive possible selves carry both means-end information about who to be like (what social identity to emulate) and what to do (how to go about manifesting or enacting that identity), as well as positive mood associated with the anticipated goal and regard of others. In contrast, negative possible selves are more likely to reflect what not to become, who not to be like, and, in some cases, what not to do. (Nurius, 1991, p. 248)

Nurius's discussion of possible selves shows that people need to have some form of social support to think about creating new ways of being (and thereby perhaps breaking with old ideologies). So although society can restrict people in the sense of perpetuating norms and expectations which reproduce existing lifestyles, collective engagement through significant other people is a way of creating new lifestyles and ways of being. This links up with Gregory's (1992) self-society dynamics, in which people act to change or maintain society, yet social processes transform or constrain the knowledge that people may have, and thereby the actions they may take. She points out that transforming the self requires self-reflection, whilst social transformation needs to begin with ideology-critique. She also emphasises that emancipation cannot result from the application of

self-reflection or ideology-critique independently, but only from a process in which both are used and thereby act to create something new.

In a similar view to Nurius, and when considering the way selves relate to society, Stryker (1991) notes the importance of the 'ought-self', that is, the "person's representations of attributes that someone (self or other) believes they should or ought to possess -- their responsibility, obligation, or duty" (p.25). He suggests that motivation is created by linking between 'self-guides' (which guide their responses) and people's 'self-concepts', which are their sense of their actual own and actual other self-representations, that is, people's feelings about attributes that they possess and about how others are seeing them. This may prompt them either to retreat into negative emotional responses or perhaps to consider altering their self-guides and self-concepts, thus providing some impetus for transformation.

Stryker (1991) also notes that people's ways of responding to their ought-self (how they and others consider their obligation-related self) is not merely a matter of taking in some prescribed conception of normative expectations. People also have their own ideal ought-self as an image which can guide them. Stryker states that "ethical conduct is not reducible to performance in accordance with societal order" (p.26). This is what opens the way for people to challenge norms or ideologies. Similarly, Gregory's (1992) view is that through "critical self-reflection, the participants can alter who they are; they can present a different identity which 'fits' more closely with what is required by the organisation", or which challenges what is required by the organisation (p.363). People can confront social norms because they have their own sense of an ought-self, which may not correspond entirely with the ought-self that they see others proposing for them. This is the ground for

a self-society dynamic relationship, in which people can learn from others but do not have to conform with all of their expectations. People's development of self-concepts (including their development of an ought-self) is not simply a matter of accepting others' ideas for their performance. This can be linked to the aspect of Habermas's (1976) "Lifeworld" where reasoned motivation can occur as people think together about ought-selves (to use Stryker's terminology). This generates mutual learning guided by the intention of becoming better selves, and the ability to act in accordance with 'reason' (communicative co-ordination of action). Foucault (1982) also sees that it is important to concentrate on freedom to rebel, so that even normative directed selves will not simply be selves shaped by others' view of what is right. Townley (1994) highlights this and other aspects of Foucault's argument, as will be discussed in the next section.

### **6. 2. 1 Rebellion and re-creation in the workplace**

Townley (1994) notes that Foucault's (1982) proposal of a 'freedom to rebel' implies a freedom to reject performance appraisals done only by managers, and the general possibility of developing subordinate appraisals of those defined as higher. She recognises that Foucault's analysis of an ethical meaning of subject is not simply reduced to societal dictates, and that the ethical meaning of subject

requires the recognition of various subject positions and the recognition of the plurality and difference which arise due to social, economic and cultural origin, differences in situations and needs. (Townley, 1994, p.156)

Townley notes that currently, potential employees are not given an adequate idea of what their job might entail, which is required if they are not to fall short of any expectations that

employers might have, and regret taking appointments which turn out not to be what they themselves had expected of the job.

Burrell (1992) also suggests that to create new styles of relationship in the workplace requires concentrating on the possibility of creating an organisation for pleasure, so as to enhance motivation. He proposes the 're-eroticisation' of relations in the workplace, and states that the path of re-eroticisation must not be controlled only by managers who mete out pleasures in accordance with their view of what is pleasurable and what behaviour requires rewarding. Burrell emphasises that re-eroticised human interaction implies new lifestyles of a kind which break with ideologies fostering disciplined performance in the workplace in accordance with goals to be achieved. Motivation is attained not by external reward systems (e.g., money and status), but by being part of a pleasurable process of doing. He introduces the terms 'pleasure', 'playfulness' etc. as contestatory language to challenge current organisation theory and practice. He knows that this language can be "swallowed up" and used by organisation theory. Then pleasure comes to be seen merely as "a commodity to be exploited". In Burrell's alternative vision, it is necessary to be aware that pleasure has two faces: "passive resistance" and "radical transformation" (p.87). He notes that passive resistance as a form of creating pleasure does not necessarily have broader social impact. Yet he wants new notions of pleasure to make such an impact in the battleground between organisation and anti-organisation theory. He is concerned that this impact can be lost in passive, introverted efforts of the self. This ties in with Shamir (1991) who considers meaning, self and motivation in organisations, and also with McNay's (1994) suggestion that the ethics of the self as described by Foucault (1982), can retreat into a form of "unregulated introversion" (p.8):

To avoid introversion becoming the response of those who exercise the freedom to rebel, it is necessary to understand how transformation of the self also can be linked to social transformation. That is why Burrell (1992) shows how collective movements have made impacts on a societal level. He hopes that somehow organisational life need not merely be penetrated and reproduced in terms of old style organisational theory, but that new ways of thinking (and experiencing) can penetrate the world of organisation. Other thinkers who have tried to highlight new forms of interaction occurring in the workplace are the proponents of various forms of organisational learning, to which I now turn.

### **6. 3 Some views on organisational learning**

To begin with, Mullins (1993) offers some ideas regarding attitudes which are relevant to organisational learning. He begins by describing attitude, belief and value, all of which can be seen as being developed during socialisation processes. He notes that an attitude is concerned with “what is known about the reality” as it is understood, that belief involves a “specific understanding of reality”, and that value is concerned with “what should be and what is desirable” (p.111). Furthermore, he suggests that “to convert a belief into an attitude, a ‘value’ ingredient is needed which, by definition, is to do with an individual’s sense of what is desirable, good, valuable, worthwhile and so on” (p.112). However, as noted in Chapter 5, it is not to do with an individual’s sense alone, because that sense is linked to his/her involvement in society as other ought-selves (individuals develop their sense of the ought partly by referring to others’ expectations). Therefore, attitude, as belief with added value elements, forms an important component in motivation. As Katz (1960)

suggests, attitude and motive are interlinked and attitude can serve four main functions, as follows:

1. Knowledge-related: attitudes provide a knowledge base and framework within which new information can be placed.
2. Expressive: attitudes become a means of expression. They enable individuals to indicate to others the values that they hold and are thus able to express their self-concept and adopt or internalise the values of the group.
3. Instrumental: held attitudes maximise rewards and minimise sanctions. Behaviour or knowledge which has resulted in the satisfaction of needs are thus more likely to result in a favourable attitude.
4. Ego-Defensive: attitudes may be held in order to protect the ego from an undesirable truth or reality. (Katz, 1960, cited from Mullins, 1993, p.112)

Revealed here (by expansion) are a number of important issues for the development of a critical systemic view of learning. First, attitude is both a means of people's expression and a statement about values that are adopted. People's attitude can also be influenced by others, which is why I can speak of learning. Learning, in fact, means that people's attitudes could change. Second, people may have an instrumental orientation towards the organisation, which means that their attitudes are linked to what they have found rewarding. These will normally be associated with a favourable attitude. But rewards do not have to come only in the form of need-satisfaction in the narrow sense of the term. They can also refer to the kinds of needs discussed when explaining Rahman's (1993) views of needs in Chapter 5. This means that the instrumentality of people's responses can be seen in a broader framework, accounting for their gaining pleasure from doing rather than necessarily having (see Burrell, 1992). People can also become very defensive in order to protect themselves. In one sense, this is a good thing, because it shows that people do not allow themselves unresistingly to be exploited by, or simply shaped by, others'

values. In another way, it may hamper learning, whereby people could learn to take in new information and then to use it for the development of themselves.

Organisational learning see people as a matter of course consistently influencing and affecting the perceptions and attitudes of their subordinates. For example, Mullins (1993) recognises that this can be formalised when organisations “initiate rituals and ceremonies to encourage and maintain certain attitudes and beliefs. Many attitudes and ideas then become permanent and unchallengeable making them highly resistant to change” (p.114). He notes that this can become a hindrance both to personal development (self-transformation) and to collective development (either within an organisation or affecting whole lifestyles in society). He suggests that the process of attitude change is dependent on key factors revealed by asking the following questions:

1. Why is an attitude held in the first place and why should the attitude change?
2. What are the benefits?
3. What are the outcomes if it does not change? (Mullins, 1993, p.115)

He suggests that learning should start out by considering these three questions, and that learning is a

continuous, automatic and often a social process. Although there are times when individuals will deliberately and consciously ‘learn’ and ‘study’, for the most part learning takes place without any necessary deliberations, nor any assessments to find out how much has been learned. Learning is an all-embracing term which covers changes of an enduring and persistent nature. It includes not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and social behaviour. (Mullins, 1993, p.115)

He notes that learning is not simply passive acceptance of what is being taught (or of information received). Due to the active and dynamic nature of the learning process, there will be different values among people in terms of their responses to the learning situation.

He recognises that differences may sometimes be attributable to the fact of people's differing capability to learn and potential to understand the world around them, but, it is also "influenced by how motivated an individual is and by the attitudes held" (p.116). Motivation is thus part of the development of one's own self-concept, as indicated in the last section, and this is one reason why different employees are motivated to learn different things. Employees do not all respond to situations in the same way. As Mullins goes on to note, people can refer to value as another component of thinking. He indicates that "learning links the individual to the social world and is both a personal and social experience". The ideas that people have learned (ways of responding to the world) is partly a configuration of their own values, while aspects may also be shared with others. He also indicates that there are external factors to be considered, such as constraints that occur via the environment (for example, the issues of cultural differences, which I will discuss in Chapter 7). He links internal and external factors in learning. Part of the process of learning is through our receiving information in the form of experience. This view is further justified by Simon (1991), who claims that experiential learning is an integration and alteration of thinking and doing. Kolb (1985) also suggests that learning focuses on experience, but that people have to evaluate their experiences. He maintains that learning is a cyclic process: "doing, reflecting, thinking, deciding and (re)doing", and that people gain experience through doing; reflecting is the meditating on this experience; thinking is the attempt to understand that experience by means of analysis and conceptualisation; finally, people then make choices, deciding on the next steps, and then the cycle repeats itself. In this sense, Kolb believes that learning is a never ending and constantly repeated process by means of action and reflection. Mullins (1993) emphasises

the importance of the synthesis between the individual's behaviour and actions, and the evaluation of their experiences. The individual's goals and

aims are focused as being crucial. Reflection of what has been learnt in order for understanding to be achieved is also important. (Mullins, 1993, p.121)

He observes that the evaluation experience is what allows people to retain some critical distance, so that they do not just receive all information and take it in without questioning its meaning. As Flood (1995) notes, it is necessary to improve people's potential not only to ensure that their role performances can be satisfactory, but also to ensure that life is made meaningful for their own involvement. He observes that, however, making life meaningful should not be simply a process of control led from the top of an organisation. Furthermore, he emphasises that provision must be made for 'freedom of rebellion', but that the freedom of rebellion needs to be linked with a view of learning that ensures that rebels do not cling irrationally to their own ideology, but are able to learn from others. This is emphasised by the critical systemic view of learning advanced in this thesis.

Learning from experience need not be a solitary activity. Senge (1990) believes that people need to be able to think and reflect, both "individually and collaboratively". That is why, he notes, it is important that we "identify partners with whom we can act". Having said this, he nevertheless seems to place more importance on the idea that people must have time to reflect on their own. So people will go about their work attuned to what everybody else is thinking and doing. After collective thought, people are then able to go away and think privately about how they should act. Given that these authors all argue for the integration of experience into learning, one may dare to ask over what periods of time should experiences be allowed to build up before being converted into crucial learning? There are many issues associated with the time dimension to learning, and these will be discussed in the next section.

### **6. 3. 1 The time dimension and organisational learning**

March (1991) adds another dimension to organisational learning by introducing the ‘time’ dimension and by linking this to broader aspects in society. He suggests that when organisations are involved with exploration of new possibilities, feedback is not as clear as when it is relating to its environment by exploiting old certainties. When considering an exploratory relationship with the environment, he argues that it is important to consider the mutual learning of an organisation and individuals in it. Within organisations, he points out that mutual learning has consequences both for people involved and for an organisation as a whole. In particular, he argues that the trade-off between “exploration (of new possibilities) and exploitation (of old certainties)” in mutual learning involves conflicts between short-run and long-run concerns and between gains to people’s knowledge and gains to collective knowledge (p.105). He notes that because these ‘trade-offs’ have to be accomplished, people can expect conflict to exist within organisations. This links up with Swieringa and Wierdsma’s (1992) view of a learning organisation (see Chapter 2), where an indication was given of the need to recognise conflict in learning.

March (1991) discusses how over ‘time’, organisational norms that have been developed begin to “affect the beliefs of people even while they are being affected by those beliefs” (p.106). He recognises that there are various ways in which people’s beliefs draw from one another over time, and there are also advantages to be gained from breaking ties with the ‘folk wisdom’ of the past, when this is used merely to socialise others into accepting received wisdom. He notes that

the returns to fast learning are not all positive, ... rapid socialisation may hurt the socialisees even as it helps the socialised, ... the development of knowledge may depend on maintaining an influx of the naive and ignorant, and competitive victory does not reliably go to the properly educated. (March, 1991, p.121)

So he lays some more of the groundwork for a critical systemic view of learning, in that he suggests that people need to maintain a balance between believing that knowledge is attained and being prepared to admit new information from the seemingly naive and ignorant. He notes that ideology makes those proposing something new or a new way of experiencing reality appear ignorant in the face of the technical and specialist knowledge that is at hand. Confronting this, he makes the point that people should not rely on the learning of the educated.

I claim that learning is a mutual process in which people can gain from appreciating the viewpoints of others, and in this learning process new ways of seeing sustainable cultural contexts can also emerge, as organisations adopt an exploratory role, rather than relying on past habits and old certainties. There is another way of working with other emerging research methodologies: this is by story-telling. I will explore this in the next section.

### **6. 3. 2 Story-telling and organisational learning**

Brown and Duguid (1991) explore the processes of organisational learning by considering story-telling as a way of generating shared experiences in relation to some perceived problem situations. They suggest that through story-telling, separate experiences can converge, “leading to a shared diagnosis of certain previously encountered but unresolved symptoms” (p.64). Before a story is told, people may face a problem but be unable to express their responses in a way that is meaningful to different situations. Brown and

Duguid note that people are, through story-telling, able to “construct a communal interpretation of hitherto uninterpretable data and individual experience” and are also enabled to “modify previous stories and build a more insightful one” (p.64). They note that, through story-telling, people can increase their own understanding and their organisation’s collective knowledge. Reason and Hawkins (1988) also observe that through a collaborative reflective exercise, story-telling juxtaposes explanation and expression as alternative methods of working with qualitative information in sense-making. So the story-telling proves to be a self-enriching process in which people are able to develop their own ideas, and to be a collectively advantageous one in that the collective increases its stock of knowledge. Moreover, story-telling can be interpreted anew, as people decide whether the story-telling helps them to appreciate a particular problem situation.

Brown and Duguid (1991) note that story-telling yields other stories than the ones “furnished by the corporation” (p.65). So learning, in the sense of not simply absorbing information from ‘the corporation’, can be achieved through this informal mechanism. A characteristic of story-telling, according to Brown and Duguid, is that “the stories act as repositories of accumulated wisdom, in particular, community narratives can allow workers to protect their skills in the face of downskilling practices” (p.66). They argue that story-telling creates wisdom, which refers to the realities that are created and recreated in the process of appreciation. Furthermore, they consider that participation in this process can grow over time, and people’s ability to participate in constructions can be supported consciously, by others respecting their voices. This leads Brown and Duguid to suggest that proactive organisations have to reconcile and reinterpret their environment. They recognise that it is not simply a matter of adapting to current conditions, but of

reinterpreting these conditions in a way which allows new relationships to form. As they note, “an enacting organisation must also be capable of reconceiving not only its environment but also its own identity, for in a significant sense the two are mutually constitutive” (p.75). They see it as part of the process of learning, that people learn to innovate in creative “response” to their own environment. They thus try to offer a “unified understanding of working, learning, and innovating”, and point out that working, learning, and innovating are processes that can “thrive collectively” (p.79). They add ‘reflection’ as a new point and emphasise that reflection involves learning how to unite working, learning, and, in particular, how to encourage innovation. In the following section, I will elaborate further on the issue of innovation in relation to organisational learning.

### **6. 3. 3 Innovation and organisational learning**

Simon (1991) notes that ‘roles’ in organisations can become a way of telling people how to reason about problems facing them, and how to engage in decision-making. He recognises that “roles tell people where to look for appropriate and legitimate informational premises and goal (evaluative) premises, and what techniques to use in processing these premises” (p.177). And he emphasises that people are thus highly effective at learning, are self-critical, and are committed to continuous improvement. However, the fact that behaviour is linked to people’s roles does not in itself indicate what degree of flexibility they have in their performances. As Simon states, “the fact that behaviour is structured in roles says nothing, one way or the other, about how flexible or inflexible it is” (p.177). He suggests that some degree of flexibility is required in order to encourage people to accept innovation. He argues that the problem is how to make

provision for “assimilating innovations that originate outside the organisation, or that have to be transmitted from a point of origin in the organisation to points of implementation” (p.181). He recognises that there is much to learn from the outside, and that people should not try simply to re-invent the wheel in every situation. He points out that innovation actually involves to a large degree an intelligence function, and that learning requires much knowledge which is being produced elsewhere that people can utilise as appropriate for their circumstances. At the same time, he emphasises that people must recognise the boundaries of their rationality, which refers to

the limits upon the ability of human beings to adapt optimally, or even satisfactorily, to complex environments. Attention to the limits of human rationality helps us to understand why representation is important, and how policy statements imply representations. (Simon, 1991, p.186)

Here, Simon observes, people must be prepared to change their representations if need be, and that the different representations are required to enhance further the innovativeness of the corporation. What we have learnt so far, is that people can learn from outside sources and need to be responsive to innovation possibilities.

The motivation to move in a different direction, that is, towards innovation, often comes from a particular representation of the corporate purpose. Therefore, in order to proceed along new paths, employees might link their motivation to this. Part of this process requires making new representations. The idea of creating corporate representations is related to the idea of developing organisational learning. That is, the organisation is able to respond in innovative ways. This is not necessarily the same as individual learning processes. Cook and Yanow (1993) pursue this argument much further by making a distinction between organisational and individual learning, a distinction recognised in the literature (e.g., Garvin, 1993; Wick and Leon, 1995; Dovey, 1997; McBain and Kusy,

1997; Edmondson and Moingeon, 1998). Here there are two domains of study: Management (individual) learning and Organisational learning.

#### **6. 3. 4 Management learning and organisational learning**

As Burgoyne and Reynolds (1997) note, management learning was concerned initially with an attempt to create a rational framework for understanding the purposes, processes and effects in the interpersonal behaviour and skills of training; and later research took “more of an interest in the context of these processes” and engaged “more fully with the worlds of both theory and practice” (p.8). Willmott (1997) applies critical thinking to explore the process of learning about theories and practice. He criticises Revans’s (1982) action learning which “abstracts processes of individual self-development from the institutional media of personal and social transformation” (p.171). He proposes instead a “critical action learning” which views social development and self-development as mutually constitutive. He considers that critical action learning is the understanding that embodies

reflection upon problems experienced in everyday practice, which in principle is facilitated by action learning, is of crucial importance if the possibilities of personal and social transformation, anticipated by critical theory, are to be fulfilled. (Willmott, 1997, p.174)

As Cook and Yanow (1993) note, “organisational change is governed by an experiential learning process within which entrepreneurship (individual action) is seen as a search activity” that can bring about “change to the core dimensions of organisational activity” (p.434). They argue that people can learn in the context of organisations, that this context influences the character of that learning, and, in turn, that such learning has repercussions

for the organisation. They recognise organisational learning as having special qualities, referring to

the capacity of an organisation to learn how to do what it does, where what it learns is possessed not by individual members of the organisation but by the aggregate itself. That is, when a group acquires the know-how associated with its ability to carry out its collective activities, that constitutes organisational learning. (Cook and Yanow, 1993, p.438)

In this sense, organisational learning builds on the idea that learning can include the ability to learn in groups. Moreover, Cook and Yanow state that in the course of time and during joint action, people create a set of inter-subjective meanings. They note that an inter-subjective process cannot be reduced to individual learning activity that allows people to recognise that learning acts collectively. They suggest that organisational learning has a special quality which is not merely a matter of individual cognitive processes. They believe that the ontological problem of the existence of an organisation as a cognitive entity is not an issue when one adopts a cultural perspective. They recognise that the issue of concern is, “what is the nature of learning when it is done by organisations?” (p.440) This is also linked with the question, seen from different perspectives, of “what might meaningfully and usefully be understood as learning” (p.440). Their concept aims at understanding people’s behaviour in groups and seeing what kind of learning may be achieved as group activity, and which can also explain why ideology becomes so habitual that people cannot begin to see other ways of thinking. Furthermore, they recognise that different perspectives allow people to view organisational learning as both an innovative and a preservative activity, and allow for an appreciation of the efforts that “organisations, like all human groups, put into maintaining the patterns of activity that are unique to each organisation” (p.448). In this sense, organisational knowledge is not seen as deposited in the minds of people, nor as merely the aggregated knowledge of them, but as something more that is achieved through the mutual interaction and its emergent knowledge.

Organisational learning, according to Cook and Yanow (1993), is “the acquiring, sustaining, or changing of intersubjective meaning” (p.449). They note that the main concerns of organisational learning from different perspectives are, how does an organisation constitute and reconstitute itself? How does an organisation retain or change its identity as people interrelate (including in a proactive way) with their environment? How do people manage to reconstitute themselves in different shapes in order to act innovatively? Cook and Yanow suggest that answers to these questions cannot be reducible to personal cognition, especially, in terms of organisational learning. They recognise that organisational learning is not merely for people, but is part of wider social networks, which together create ‘knowledge’. So organisational learning is not something deposited or located in people; it is located in processes of social existence.

Nevertheless, even accepting that intersubjective processes are not reducible to personal cognition, the question still remains about how learning can be enhanced. I suggest one way to tackle this question is to see how people’s capacities for self-reflection, coupled with ideology-critique can be encouraged. If a critical reflexivity process can be encouraged, then people do not merely become part of collectives which create knowledge which is then retained in stock for them to draw upon. A critical reflexivity process shows how people can contribute to the process of forming a collective which, though more than the sum of its parts, does not become merely an ideology-producing machine which slots them into itself. This is the significance of the discussion of ideology introduced in Chapter 5. There is, furthermore, a need for a fuller understanding of how people may ‘agree to disagree’, which will be discussed in the following section.

### **6. 3. 5 Other contributions to organisational learning**

Hassard (1993) offers an outlook on how managers may 'agree to disagree' by referring to the conception of a language-game, where "knowledge is based on nothing more than a number of diverse discourses, each with its own rules and structures" (p.124). He notes that "each language-game is defined by its own particular knowledge criteria" (p.124). More importantly, he believes that no one discourse is privileged; there must be an "acceptance of a plurality of diverse language forms" (p.124). He suggests that the idea of a language-game, furthermore, is not to pit one discourse against another, but to "maintain a stage of continuous difference". This offers a new way of seeing learning in social contexts. Learning can be achieved by allowing people to form part of an environment of difference, where language-games are played in an effort to sustain these differences. These language-games can motivate employees, and motivation in this way prompts employees to accept the plurality of different views about the world and about themselves. This ties in with Gregory's (1992) discordant pluralist view, which shows how people can develop their critical appreciation as part of a language-game of continuing to sustain both discordance and pluralism. It may be seen as a language-game of learning, but not learning defined in the sense of accepting some stock of knowledge, or even drawing on some stock of knowledge. There are so many knowledges that people have to learn to appreciate, as part of their involvement in language-games.

But language-games might be penetrated by power dynamics, which is why Foucault (1982) concentrates on what happens in the exercise of power. He states that power may have no coherent structure or strategy, but power effects may lead to certain knowledge becoming the norm or accepted way of thinking. Following up Foucault's concerns with

knowledge-power effects, Dachler and Hosking (1995) argue for the necessity of developing a view of learning in terms of provision made for what is called 'multiloguing'. They define multiloguing as offering multiple voices through language (multiple language-games). They state:

Multiloguing need not only refer to explicit live, face-to-face social processes as the term conversation usually connotes. It takes place implicitly, in the sense that by working on a text we are speaking with reference to a complex set of contexts made up of many interrelated texts ... there is always an increasingly complex network of contexts to which reference could be made. Thus while the meaning of a text is context-bound, the contexts are, in principle, unlimited. (Dachler and Hosking, 1995, p.7)

Dachler and Hosking propose a 'relational epistemology' in order to accept truth as socially certified, while not privileging any particular knowledge claim as more true than others. They recognise the emergence of "multiple realities, in the sense of multiple meanings, descriptions or knowledge claims, which are all part of the local ontology in the process of being narrated" (p.8). They argue that local ontology merely forms contexts of interpretations of reality (knowledge claims), while a relational epistemology broadens the possibilities for meaning because it is defined by the fact that it disallows one meaning from being seen as the only possible context for interpretation.

However, Dachler and Hosking (1995) point out that there are socio-cultural limits to what will be allowed as real or true, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable. They note that "in narrating a particular text reference is made, usually implicitly, to a cultural context whose meaning is taken for granted" (p.8). They recognise that this is one way of stopping a scenario of endless challenge and disagreement which can prevent a narration from proceeding; but it also can become a way of avoiding any questioning of the status quo. They consider that the denial of opportunity for questioning the assumed context is what serves to preserve the status quo, and that this suppression of genuinely differing

possible meanings could be seen as an avoidance of novelty. This agrees with Gregory's (1992) point that efforts have to be made to be appreciative of another standpoint; otherwise its meaning will merely become absorbed into old meaning patterns, without properly being appreciated. This is what the process of critical reflexivity can entail (see Chapter 5). A critical reflexivity process allows assumptions that are assumed to become explicated, so that people's ideas (or thoughts) can then be thoroughly discussed. In this domain a full appreciation of other ways of seeing has to be developed (see Gregory, 1992). In this way, as Dachler and Hosking suggest, "the limits that previously maintained the status quo can be (re)constructed" (p.9). They state that discussion about the way that language can be used to bolster assumed contexts of meaning is one pathway towards reconstruction (transformation). However, as I noted when discussing critical systemic views in interventions in Chapter 4, it is also important to consider ways of acting anew; for example, via group co-ordination and by enlisting group support to supply an antidote to status quo 'knowledge-power' formations. Dachler and Hosking believe that a relational perspective allows the relationship between self and society to be continually re-addressed. They note that the narratives which explain how it is that people's selves become part of a social dynamic (and may as actors alter this dynamic), are only narratives, none of which are true per se; but at least they act as a starting point to construct some narrative that allows people to question the limitations of monologuing (as opposed to multiloguing).

Dachler and Hosking (1995) recognise that a relational perspective "opens the possibility for radical change as contrasted with what otherwise would turn out to be more of the same" (p.13). They suggest that part of the process of deconstruction leading to possibilities for radical change, also aims to provide different contexts which point to

these possibilities. This can open the way towards radically different views, which at least provides one alternative to bear in mind. It may be preferable, as Dachler and Hosking suggest, using a different context of meaning, to refer to people as “responsible for the kind of relationships they construct together” (p.15). But they note a problem is that language is also tied in an assumed way to a particular context of meaning, and that it is assumed “that the networker can better understand how things really are (knowledge) and can act, based on better known facts, to structure objects in the world (achieve power)” (p.17). They suggest that knowledge about the world is one aspect which is linked to a nonrelational epistemology in most discourse concerning networking. They recognise that knowledge is produced in social relationships because it is assumed that networking people can learn to know better what and whom they must influence, informing themselves about, among other factors, as well as the perspectives of their subordinates, about organisational practices, structures and policies.

Furthermore, Dachler and Hosking (1995) suggest that negotiation is in fact a process of allowing people to respect and appreciate their differences (as would be the case in, i.e. individual’s need). They believe that people need to be able to ask questions about the processes by which such meanings are made, so that they can begin to think about other contexts to apply to the text of, for example, networking, in order that the term can take on new meanings. This is linked to the idea of critical reflexivity explained in Chapter 5, which means that people can simply become aware of areas in society where language is restrictive of new possibilities and can be allowed to think more critically about the language they are using and its implications. The language of influence and manipulation may be useful in certain contexts. But it must be recognised that the language leads to certain relationships, and that if people want different relationships they may need to use a

different language. For example, if it is felt that motivation for better performance means that some influence on the part of employees is necessary, and that employees can be motivated to perform by being offered some rewards (including the social reward of working in a team), then this is one possibility for motivation. But there are also other possibilities, as have been explored in this thesis. For example, the equity theory of motivation introduces new terminology to explain that employees may be motivated by a sense of equitable processes as another motivating force.

In the next section the conception of language-games in terms of 'multiloguing' provides the background to the argument for a critical systemic view of learning.

#### **6. 4 Organisational learning in terms of multiloguing**

As Gregory (1992) notes, no language structure should be exempt from critical reflexivity and therefore none of the different ways of seeing learning should simply be accepted. The important requirement for critical reflexivity is to allow all possibilities to be appreciated, while at the same time being open to challenge. Further development of ways of seeing things takes place by a constant discordant relationship between the different choices. This can take place through multiloguing, that is, by accepting and enshrining a variety of languages as part of the process of learning between them. Dachler and Hosking's (1995) view of multiloguing is similar in many respects to the idea of discordant pluralism. They note that if negotiation is viewed as multiloguing, then,

instead of trading away differences, so to speak, negotiation is a process in which manager and others may come to know each other's perspectives and construct shared understandings in and about their relations: (Dachler and Hosking, 1995, p.21)

Here they show that differences should not be 'traded away' (denied) but rather that people should come to know better (appreciate) other's perspectives. They apply this idea of multiloguing to consider different points of view which can exist in practice between, for example, management and people's representatives. They suggest that processes of negotiating in which multiloguing creates shared understandings, are emergent in organisations.

It is often considered that appraisal of people is a way of motivating them to perform better because they know that they are being checked. It will be recalled that Townley (1994) suggests that one way of diverting this gaze is for employees also to appraise their managers. This idea is taken up by Dachler and Hosking (1995), who here show the negotiations that may be involved in shifting narratives of control and manipulation. The new narrative of 'self-directness' (similar to Rahman's (1993) view of self-determination) has to be introduced in complex patterns of negotiation. Dachler and Hosking apply a relational perspective which concentrates on ways in which negotiations occur, to consider the differing projects of people involved in networking. Here again, they use language to point to some other possibilities for creating partnerships. They are optimistic because they believe people can participate in constructing local realities in which "there is always the possibility socially to construct partnership rather than dominance" (p.23). Their relational epistemology is adopted to some extent by Gergen (1995) who develops a discussion towards a relational theory of power. Gergen's approach to power offers a good supplement to the foregoing discussion. It helps us to consider how some of the ideas about multiloguing can be achieved in terms of features of power in society.

Gergen (1995) begins with the question: “How may we articulate a theory of power congruent with a constructionist metatheory?” (p.34). He notes, having asked the question, that one has to move carefully because there are no clear answers, since there are different kinds of arguments. As he states:

One moves with trepidation at this point. For example, on the one hand, there is no univocal agreement concerning the nature of the constructivist standpoint. No one can properly claim to speak for the range of interlocutors more generally. Rather, we must envision a range of constructivist accounts with no single entry privileged in its position. (Gergen, 1995, p.34)

He suggests that even when we adopt a constructivist standpoint, there is still much to discuss about how power should be seen, and that one author whose work can be utilised to offer one entry point into the discussion is that of Foucault. He uses some of the ideas of Foucault concerning disciplinary power. He notes how such power for Foucault is tied to ways of constructing realities, in such a way that discourses and associated practices are developed to rationalise their own existence. In this way, Gergen argues that what is taken to be “truth or knowledge by its advocates, becomes the argot of everyday activity, seeping into the capillaries of the normal or taken for granted, so does the aggregate become complicit in its own subjugation” (p.35). He proposes that this idea (of how subjugation is achieved through the “capillaries” of assumed realities), is a useful entry point into analyses of power. But he finds that there is no fully developed perspective in Foucault’s work. Furthermore, he says, there are many ambiguities in regard to “the character of power and oppression” (p.36). In stating that further elaboration is needed, he refers to processes of language and discussions about the “fragmented character of cultural languages” (p.36). He notes that the languages we commonly use do not have an inclusive set of rules; instead, written into language usage are a multitude of possibilities for using it, including “a legacy of long and complex relations among various cultural and sub-

cultural groups” (p.36). So Gergen concludes that language is not static, and that it is “in a continuous state of multiple transformations” (p.36). He recognises that “no society is bound to a singular discursive regime”, and that there is no one regime of truth that is all-pervasive and all-encompassing, and that there are rather fragmentary and partial regimes of power relations. Furthermore, he believes that these relations are not cohesive and they are ever-changing. He emphasises that there exist “a multiplicity of groups, each of which may define power and its attainment according to different ontologies and value systems” (p.40). He recognises that these ontologies and value systems all operate to create multiple configurations of power; and that within the configurations, people can negotiate the terms of what is real and what is good, and so “configurations undergo continuous transformation” (p.40). He does not align himself with theoretical tendencies to “define power in terms of a singular dimension, commodity, or criterion” which implies that only certain people are seen as occupying places of power (p.40). He states:

If we decide to attribute power to those in executive positions, with high income levels, occupying political office, reaching championships and the like, then we are joining the interpretive viewpoint of the people seeing themselves this way. (Gergen, 1995, p.40)

He notes that people see as ontological reality the realities that some groups have created for themselves, and other ways of valuing realities become forgotten; and that the valued-by-themselves position of some groups may in fact be devalued by others. He believes that criticising the valuations attached to positions of power, is an important part of the process of revealing new ways of life, and allows for a critique of positions which presume a standpoint in an unwarranted presumptuous way. The problem is, as Gergen says, those who presume such a standpoint try to “generalise their ontology across all sectors of society” (p.40). He recognises that it is important to be able to criticise views of the value of power and the value of things which are assumed to be valuable.

Further ideas on the cultural contextualisation of views on power will be explored in Chapter 7 where Hofstede's (1980a) account of power distance as a cultural variable is explored. What can be shown here is that ways of working may take on different forms when different views of power are utilised. This points to the importance of being able to think about power in new ways if managers want to think about employees becoming motivated within new ways of working. For example, the power of status gained from competition could be regarded as tedious and slave-like from a certain point of view, and likewise the power of occupying an executive position in a large conglomerate could be regarded as pitiful by those who place more value on the simple life.

Whatever the case, there should be opportunity in social life for those who value different things. There is a need for executives and a place also for performance-based systems, but there should also be room for different experiments with other styles of working and other styles of life, as has been expressed by Dachler and Hosking (1995) and Gergen (1995). People can learn about alternatives by being able to talk about them. As Gergen states, people do have available negative ontologies which can be used to criticise the position and strength of visions which are too all-encompassing. But he is uneasy about a situation where "a posture of defence and counter-critique on the part of others is set up" (p.43). He finds that the rhetorical process of argument leads to isolationism, where different people fail to communicate (or appreciate one another, in Gregory's term). People fail to learn from one another; thus, learning is prohibited. In this thesis, I try to envisage situations where managers will not act in terms of defence and counter-critique such that they fail to appreciate the views of others. Gergen also states that it does not enhance the cause of

learning when people cling to the assumption that some people are powerful and others are exploited. He asks:

By what particular authority does the concept of power necessarily apply to armies, wealth and tyrants? Are there not other and different means of describing these same conditions, ways for example that might be used by the actors themselves? (Gergen, 1995, p.45)

Gergen even believes that when one wants to go beyond a particular perspective it is important to remember that power is essentially a very ambiguous concept and that there is no agreement on what it is. He is worried that when opinions such as this become a “single reality system” mutual “annihilation” seems the only way to organise relationships. He thus argues that

mutually annihilating competitions come about largely through the broad dissemination of a single reality system. It is the unquestioned assumption that wealth, victory, high office and so on are valuable and important that move people to competitive action. As the present analysis suggests, such assumptions of the effective and the good should always be placed in question. (Gergen, 1995, p.47)

Gergen holds that ideas linked to narrow assumptions about what is good and worth getting, should be broadened, so that motivation will not always be oriented towards competition. He believes that it is essential to pursue a learning process where people “expand the range of relevant perspectives to explore the realities of the dominating groups, as well as those of still other groups whose realities may differ” (p.47). He recognises that in exploring different perspectives, people can come to learn more about what is involved in occupying different positions, and they are thus able to think about issues in new ways. For example, managers need not accept passively the ideology of subordinate groups (see Gregory, 1992) nor that of dominant groups. The idea of dominant and subordinate also can be changed because in such discussion people will learn about how they want to (re)organise their relationships. This learning is not

enhanced when it is assumed that people occupying executive and managerial functions are always wrong and exploitative. Rather, it is useful to explore to what extent their ways of leading might be controlled by an ideology of influence and manipulation. If there is a dominating ideological conception leading to specific practices, then more space needs to be made for multiloguing.

There may also be a place in organisational learning for re-examining the way that ‘grievances’ are dealt with in specific circumstances, as Salipante and Binouwen (1995) suggest, a re-examination which concentrates on an important aspect of organisational life from a conflict point of view. It was shown in Chapter 2 that some learning-based approaches fall short of looking at conflict, while others speak about it but do not align it with full discussion of the way that power-knowledge formations are perpetuated through ideology. Salipante and Bouwen’s analysis closes this gap by concentrating on the way that grievances become processed in organisations. They are concerned about grievances which often “classify each grievance into a single, objective category”, and they find this view “highly misleading, as is any research that then relies on such records and categories” (p.77). Their research has led them to the conclusion that a crucial feature of grievances in organisations is that there is such a wide variation from one individual to another, as each offers different perspectives on the situation. This variation adds to the complexity, multiplicities, and dynamism, of the way that grievances arise. Salipante and Bouwen state that

variation in perspectives is the very essence of grievance that needs to be captured in conceptual representations, leading to new explanations for previously identified effective actions and to new ideas about conflict management. (Salipante and Bouwen, 1995, p.77)

They suggest some new explanations and new ideas on the way in which conflict becomes linked to negotiations about reality, and by noting how grievances change constructions of

reality. They note that as with motivation, there are always a wide range of interpretations that can be applied to a set of experiences which can be influenced by co-workers as well as friends and others whom the people concerned are in contact with. They recognise that “interpretations are dynamic and socially influenced, yet ultimately individualistic” (p.80).

Salipante and Bouwen indicate that although people can take up ideas from others, interpretation is ultimately an individual event. They believe that people’s acceptance or not of this is also partly influenced by the way that they have been brought up. They observe with regard to interpretations of grievance experiences that

grievances are significant to organisations, not because they can temporarily disrupt smooth functioning, but because their effect on interpretations such as motives, integrity and one’s value to the organisation can strongly influence individuals’ entire constructions of their organisational reality. These constructions affect members continuing commitment to the organisation and associated decisions of participation and production. (Salipante and Bouwen, 1995, p.80)

We can see why some exploration of grievances cannot be left out of a discussion about learning. How well employees with a grievance or their colleagues feel that grievances are dealt with, might affect their commitment to learning. This links up with the equity theory of motivation, where it is suggested that employees’ feelings about fair process affects their motivation. What is added here is the idea that feelings about fair practices can be created as employees discourse with one another. This discourse can be riddled by conflicting perspectives. Applying Gergen’s (1995) argument to this, it can be stated that if the conflict becomes a clash of ideologies, no (or very little) learning will take place. An orientation towards mutual annihilation can set in, and the prospect of learning across differences will then not be realised.

Salipante and Bouwen (1995) note that even when people do not label their relationships as conflictual, there is a kind of conflict in that they have differing perspectives and interpretations. It is important to explore these as a way of exploiting the fruitfulness of the differences. This can also be done through grievances and interpretations of them. Again this ties in with Gergen's (1995) view about productive opposition. Salipante and Bouwen note that over a succession of grievance episodes, different interpretations can be brought to bear and can add new social experiences to modify any personal perspective (p.83). They suggest that this modification process (learning) is important so that people can think together about organisational actions and decisions. Sometimes different viewpoints are such that they threaten the continuation of a personal relationship with the organisation. S/he may feel that s/he cannot continue to work there. But even continuing to work there does not imply that shared perspectives are reached. Salipante and Bouwen note that "the person never needs to reach a shared interpretation with others, the key behavioural action for the individual is simply remaining a member of the organisation" (p.83). They state that an individual may lower his evaluation of others and interpret events in a way consistent with these lowered evaluations, "yet choose to remain and do the job according to his own standards" (p.83). However, commitment might also be lowered if evaluations of others is consistently negative.

The concepts developed by Salipante and Bouwen (1995) can be applied to conflict and non- conflict situations alike. They suggest that conflict can be defined as emerging from situations of negotiation where people "fail to achieve the minimally shared meaning required for an action to be accepted" (p.83). Less conflictual relationships (less annihilating of others) is when people have opposing perspectives but can still accept in some sense one another's actions. They recognise that because people are either not

committed or less committed to work with others if their evaluation of others is consistently negative, forms of conflict resolution are important to introduce when considering commitment. They suggest that questions should be asked:

When parties interact, what structuring or intervention leads to a questioning of one's own formulation? What metaphors lead to appreciation of others' perspectives? What types of discourse lead to reformation and the social acceptance of a common meaning? What does resolution mean and how do we define desirable outcomes? (Salipante and Bouwen, 1995, p.93)

As has been shown above, these kinds of questions can contribute to learning (learning to appreciate others' views and learning to question one's own formulations) and also to allowing people to interact so that they can reach more understanding (if not to share realities, at least to understand others better). A desirable outcome cannot be decided beforehand, as it depends on the people involved and their views, including their views about what learning factors are important to them. The most important practical implication of the multi-perspective view that has been discussed with reference to authors (e.g., Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Salipante and Bouwen, 1995; and Gergen, 1995), is that, as Salipante and Bouwen suggest that

individuals and groups in organisations should engage in conflict with a full realisation that they are negotiating meanings. The interplay of differing perspectives will be ongoing [dynamic] and will continue in future conflicts. Organisations that accept pluralism will have a tolerance for this interplay of divergent perspectives, for different values, that will make conflict processes and the renegotiating of meaning more open than in organisations where one party devalues another's perspective. (Salipante and Bouwen, 1995, p.93)

The views expressed by Salipante and Bouwen are consistent with a discordant pluralist way applied to people's learning experiences. In the interplay of differences, people are negotiating meaning, and what is important is that they try to appreciate others' constructions. They can then also learn from these other constructions, instead of trying to annihilate them or assimilate them into a single viewpoint.

## **6. 5 The dynamics of organisational learning**

The dynamics of organisational learning analysis can be applied to motivation intervention. It can be stated that when motivation criteria spring from a singular perspective, then employees' motivations are ruled by ideology (the ideology of this perspective). To introduce a learning perspective into motivation is to allow managers to think about differing motivating factors, by considering different approaches, and also by relying on their own experiences of working with others and how employees can be motivated in different problem contexts. However, because different interpretations of experience will exist in divergent positions, there will remain a variety of interpretations of experience that motivation approaches can also see as complementary in some way, as was shown in Chapter 4. Discordant pluralism means that managers do not all need to be brought under the banner of a single perspective. However, it is also important that managers thinking about the issues are open to learning from one another. This is what allows approaches to develop and also what allows managers to re-engage and in new ways with their experiences. So, for example, managers might learn to motivate employees in new ways, and not simply in terms of a fixed ideology that motivation often springs from -- motivation to compete for scarce commodities (such as money and status). Employees might decide that they want to experiment with other styles of living. This can take place at organisational level as organisations develop the opportunities for members to try new ways of co-relating, as for example through the kinds of ways discussed with reference to Dachler and Hosking (1995), Townley (1994) and others.

There are a wide range of approaches to think about and all of these in turn can learn and develop through communication with alternatives. But it is not the theories themselves that learn, rather people who would use them. As Salipante and Bouwen (1995) note, learning is part of the process of negotiating meaning, but these negotiations should not

become ruled by ideologies. This includes ideologies of so-called dominant groups and ideologies that may be constructed to reveal forms of dominance (for example, the dominance of influence and manipulation). When new ideas are developed, this should ideally be done in a spirit of mutual learning, where learning is seen as occurring through the negotiation of differing realities. This is a dynamic process. If this can be done, then it can be said that 'improvements' (Midgley's term) are taking place in people's perspectives and therefore in their way of understanding and applying their values.

From the above discussion it is clear that some kinds of organisational learning encompass a range of phenomena which advocate a cognitive approach to improve organisational adaptability and effectiveness. As Argyris and Schön (1996) state, "organisational learning occurs when individuals within an organisation experience a problematic situation and inquire into it on the organisation's behalf" (p.16). They recognise that individuals should "reflect on and inquire into their organisational learning system and its effect on organisational inquiry" (p.72). They argue that "organisational learning is not a value-neutral activity but proceeds from values, has implications for values, and is subject to critique in terms of a conception of what is good or right, and for whom" (p.194). Indeed, more insight can be gained by accepting different perspectives, but that it is possible to self-reflect on this. In the following, I argue the need for a critical systemic view of learning during motivation interventions.

## **6. 6 Needing critical systemic learning during motivation interventions**

As shown in the previous sections even a brief review of the organisational learning literature reveals considerable fragmentation and diversity, I hope to draw attention to the benefits of this diversity in learning approaches. Traditionally, organisational learning focuses on the acquisition of mental processes and cognitive interactions with the external or internal environment, and is concerned with using knowledge in order to exercise that learning which can best lead to the achievement of goals or to solutions of specific problems, or to identifying the values and assumptions underlying learning and developing shared norms and values alignment (e.g., Huber, 1991; Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992; Isaacs, 1993; Coopey, 1996; Flood and Romm, 1996a; Weil, 1998). Learning processes are thus directly connected to personal experiences which are shaped by socially transmitted beliefs and value judgements. However, I claim learning should also have the capacity for ideology-critique, and should not submit to purely passive models of learning.

Although it may be accurate to say that we learn values, norms and (empirical) knowledge, it is also the case, as Thompson (1990) suggests, that people can interpret all of these. Midgley (1995b) claims that the 'improvement' of knowledge and understanding relies on people reflecting on their assumptions and examining and judging the surrounding ideologies which provide the context for their own values and beliefs. 'Improvement' is here defined as related to people's learning abilities based on critical reflexivity. Now I proceed with my argument to explore the field of my proposed critical systemic view of learning (which can be called critical systemic learning) in terms of 'improvement' (Midgley's usage).

I accept Midgley's (1995b) suggestion that 'improvement' is always both 'temporary' and 'local' (p.58). As Midgley notes, the local can also extend to include whole ways of life in a society. For example, 'improvements' can occur across organisations, and also between organisations and the environment as people deconstruct ideologies which have become fixed. A critical reflexivity process at the general level of society (and even across national boundaries) is something that may involve vast numbers of people. For example, we can refer to Dachler and Hosking's (1995) suggestion that possessive individualism or the ideology of influence and control penetrate whole ways of thinking across sectors of society. To improve situations like this, it is necessary to engage in a critical reflexivity process.

Part of the process of developing a critical systemic view of learning involves learning about how improvements in areas of society can come about and considering how changes can be effected. This involves a process of constant learning by means of ideology-critique processes as one thinks about what kinds of changes are possible. As Midgley (1995b) notes, it is always a limited set of people who define what 'improvement' is. He says that this is one reason why he sees it as temporary and local. However, managers can learn about how others are defining improvement. It is thus important to have a concept of ideology-critique as part of a critical systemic view of learning. Midgley (1995b) also observes that "even if there is widespread agreement between all those directly affected by an intervention [such] that it constitutes an improvement, this agreement may not stretch to future generations" (p.59). He concludes that this is why it is so important to have some notion of "sustainability" built into a view of improvement. I have tried to show that part of a critical systemic view of learning is to extend the learning parameters so that the process of learning does not stop merely at the purpose of any organisation, but extends to

consider social contexts in the future. Here I am following Midgley (1995b) who states that future generations must be given importance. This idea can be linked to the ideas about ought-selves as discussed earlier (e.g., Stryker, 1991): that is, to the part of the self that defines its own obligations in relation to what it believes is responsible action. Our ought-selves can develop in the process of learning. Thus, self-direction does not exclude consideration of others, including future generations. Furthermore, self-determination can be in its own terms directed also to a desire to create a sustainable environment, for the reason that this is a good thing in itself (and not necessarily because some people will benefit from this, now or in the future).

Midgley (1995b) goes on to suggest that it is important that our understandings about improvement are geared in such a way that we minimise the possibility of “terrible, unanticipated side-effects” (p.59). He makes the point that power can be manifest when decisions are made concerning who is to be included in the process of developing knowledge (learning). One way of improving this is through enhancing our learning processes, understood in the critical sense of the term, as developed in this chapter. Ideally, as Gregory (1992) notes, all ideologies that have become formulated in a society need to be subjected to critical reflection. This -- as we saw in the previous chapter -- is one way of breaking through power-knowledge formations that have become unrecognised and is also a way of ensuring that any learning is genuinely transformative. However, as Gregory (1992) points out, this does not mean replacing these formulations with another ideological formation, but rather allowing all patterns of thought to learn from one another. Then, both the complexity in theory and the multiplicity in practice can be retained.

In this section, I argued the need for critical systemic learning which stresses both the critical and systemic components in the learning process. The process is never-ending because of (or as long as there exists) ideology conflicts among the plurality of ideas and experiences. Nevertheless, it has also been shown through the process of ideology-critique and the discussion about the need to develop a learning capacity that responsible social awareness may be blocked by certain ideologies, for example, ideologies stressing maximum performance at all costs.

What is this critical systemic learning and how does it differ from the existing organisational learning? I suggest that critical systemic learning sees self-society dynamics as the focal point that connects people and society without them reducing each other. That is why I propose to link individual learning and organisational learning together in relation to critical systemic learning. When society is reduced to its constituent individuals, learning is seen as a process in which people have to be rewarded on the basis of their personal needs. This means that learning is tied to finding out what people require and then allowing them to compete so that they can learn properly to perform (in competition) to meet their own needs. This is not necessarily a wrong way of treating people, but learning then tends to reduce people's potential somewhat and forgets that they may be able to learn on other bases. Learning could also create a society where people cannot imagine other ways of functioning. There may be times when it is feasible to treat people in this way and this is why critical systemic learning which concentrates on this aspect of learning suggests it is not *per se* to be rejected outright.

There are some differences between critical action learning (Willmott, 1997) and critical systemic learning, as summarised in Table 6.1.

Therefore, we should be aware of some learning theories which define learning merely as accepting something and that this learning process reduces people to 'things' which merely register information or merely take in guidelines for acceptable conduct in the form of norms, without allowing for people to challenge and question these norms. Norms can be accepted uncritically but can also be subjected to discussion, where people discuss things from a normative viewpoint.

As Habermas (1984) believes, normative discussion is essential so that norms can be challenged in speech acts oriented towards mutual understanding. Habermas's argument is essentially based on the idea that people can learn to discuss and can also learn to the point where they come (ideally) to a consensus understanding. However, as noted in Chapter 5, Foucault sees that people have potentially to resist certain power-knowledge formations that have been created in specific historical settings. What can be said is that at least he shows us that specific formations might be challenged (because they do not rest on any absolute foundation). It can be extrapolated that Foucault prefers people to learn from their involvement with others and from their own responses to others, rather than merely to be shaped by the constitution of knowledge in society. This way opens the path to critical systemic learning which reflects on knowledge that is being disseminated through certain patterns of thinking (ideologies).

	Critical action learning	Critical systemic learning
World view	<p>The world is a contiguous psychopolitical field of action and change.</p> <p>Content and/or delivery of learning is guided by critical social theory and reflection upon experiences derived from its practical application.</p>	<p>The world is a contiguous social field of action and reflection.</p> <p>Content and/or delivery of learning is guided by critical systems thinking and critical reflection upon experiences and others' understandings derived from its practical application.</p>
Modus operandi	<p>Learners are potentially receptive to, and can be facilitated by, the concerns of other groups, in addition to individual tutors, when identifying and addressing problems</p> <p>Received wisdom, including that of experts, is subject to critical scrutiny through a fusion of reflection and insights drawn from critical social theory.</p> <p>Models, concepts, and ideas are developed through an interplay of reflection upon practice and an application of ideas drawn from critical traditions.</p>	<p>Learning can be facilitated by ideology-critique, in addition to, communication between different perspectives, when learners are identifying and addressing problems.</p> <p>In critical systemic learning knowledge is subject to critical reflexivity through self-reflection and ideology-critique and insights based on critical systems thinking.</p> <p>Models, concepts, and ideas are developed through interplay of critical reflexivity, critical awareness, and discordant pluralist views upon practice and an application of ideas drawn from local contexts.</p>

Table 6.1. An alternative approach to learning using a framework adapted from McLaughlin and Thorpe (1993)

I showed in Section 6.2 that learning is related to some understanding of self-society dynamics which can be seen as both playing a part in transforming each other. Here, I try to develop these ideas further, by linking this to a more critical perspective than has been

supplied by learning theories so far. Critical systemic learning sees the way that learning occurs as ideally being through an ideology-critique process, which allows managers to reflect on what they receive from others, while also adding to their own appreciation. Managers therefore exist side by side (and theories exist side by side) without their becoming all the same. This means that managers can continually learn from one another because they can engage in an ideology-critique process across different perspectives (even learn from divergent learning approaches). Put in the terms that Gregory's (1992) critical appreciation model suggests, managers can see why empirical-analytic knowledge should not simply be accepted without showing them how they can interpret this knowledge.

In this section, I have tried to offer critical systemic learning as a process which involves the understanding and exploring of organisational context, to reflect on the social phenomena, and to improve the purpose and processes of learning by an ideology-critique process to reflect on the status quo in radical ways. Furthermore, critical systemic learning is also a step toward experimenting with the possibility of finding new ways to supplement a critical systemic approach to motivation. In this sense, critical systemic learning is not only a kind of learning according to a particular rationality, but also an expression of a wider awareness and reflection in organisations (or society).

## 6. 7 Conclusion

In this chapter I explored a variety of organisational learning ideas and I showed how they could become interlinked to enrich our understanding of learning processes, seen from a critical systemic point of view. I also showed how they allow us to expand our vision of learning from the learning-based motivation theories (discussed in Chapter 2), and to develop critical systemic learning which tied as it is to the capacity for ideology-critique linked with critical self-reflection processes, cannot confirm purely passive models of learning. Although it may be true that people may learn values, norms, and empirical information. It is also true that people can interpret all of these. Put in the terms of Gregory's critical appreciation model, we can see why empirical-analytic knowledge cannot just be accepted without showing how people can interpret the knowledge. People can also through critical self-reflection and ideology-critique processes develop their own understanding of the empirical events. But their own understanding can be enriched by others' understanding, and this is what the process of critical appreciation (systemic learning) is all about. It also applies to norms. Norms can be accepted uncritically but they can also be things that are subjected to discussion, where people discuss things from a normative viewpoint. I also showed the importance of multiloguing was discussed to show how different languages (on the level of theory and experience) can exist in a discordant pluralist relationship. That is, learning possibilities are never ending. I concluded by indicating how critical systemic learning needs to be related to social awareness so that new lifestyles can be thought about and experimented with. I tied discussion about critical self-reflection and ideology-critique processes as part of the development of a critical systemic approach to motivation in organisations.

In the next chapter, I take up issues related to cross-cultural influences on motivation. I discuss this mainly by referring to cultural variables of Hofstede's (1980a, b) argument about culture's consequences in motivating people to perform in different ways.

## **Chapter 7: Issues in Motivation Interventions (4): Harnessing Cross-Cultural Influences**

## **Chapter 7**

### **Issues in Motivation Interventions (4): Harnessing Cross-Cultural Influences**

#### **7. 1 Introduction**

This chapter follows up arguments developed about the need for critical systemic learning during motivation interventions. Expanding this line of thought, in this chapter work by several authors (Hofstede, 1980a, b, 1984, 1987, 1991, 1993; Cox and Blake, 1991; Sowell, 1991; Rivera, 1991; Schein, 1992; Huo and Steers, 1993; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994; Harvey and Allard, 1995; Brocklesby, 1994, 1995; Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995, 1996) which notes that culture links self and society and is the environment in which people develop ideas about themselves and their relationship with society is discussed. I also take up Hofstede's (1980a) suggestion that there are certain cultural variables which affect the way that people work in organisations. So the aim of this chapter is to explore different ways diverse cultures may cope with the issue of motivation intervention, and the possibilities for cross-cultural (or alien paradigms) learning. To start out, let us consider the cultural variables.

#### **7. 2 Understanding cultural variables**

Hofstede (1980a) draws out a number of variables which he argues may differ from culture to culture. As Sowell (1991) notes, a world view of cultural diversity has progressed by sharing different unique features and advances with one another. Rivera (1991) also states: "cultural values play a key role in how you view the world and how you

learn to succeed in it” (p.32). Hofstede suggests that there are four cultural variables: power distance (high or low); masculinity versus femininity (as cultural features); individualism versus collective orientation; and uncertainty avoidance (as a variable this can vary between wanting to take risks and trying to avoid them). He recognises that variations between cultures mean that people’s motivation and ways of becoming motivated can vary. For example, motivation that is sometimes seen as coming from collaborative teamwork may not be as much of a motivator in a society where people feel uncomfortable with low power distance (as I will explain later). Or again, the idea of being motivated through competition as a challenge, may be less of a motivator in a culture where employees feel more comfortable with collective orientations. Hofstede (1984) focuses on the culture dimension in management and planning, and shows that people with different cultural backgrounds may have very different beliefs, as indicated in Table 7.1.

From the following table, we can see different beliefs embedded in each cultural background. For example, in Taiwanese culture employees are motivated by group interest because of low individualism; the domain of owner interest cannot be ignored because of high power distance; and the relationship between the employee and owner has a moral component because of high uncertainty avoidance. Huo and Steers (1993) also note, Taiwanese enterprises respect for old age is one of the key factors which keeps these enterprises stable, and traditional power relationships still determine organisational direction because employees cannot radically challenge authority.

Country	Individualism	Power distance	Uncertainty avoidance	Masculinity
Taiwan	17	58	69	45
Japan	46	54	92	95
Korea	18	60	85	39
Singapore	20	74	8	48
Hong Kong	25	68	29	57
Germany	67	35	65	66
Great Britain	89	35	35	66
U.S.A.	91	40	46	62

Table 7.1. Value of Four Cultural Indices for Eight Countries  
Individualism: stands for a preference for a loosely knit social framework in society wherein individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only.

Power Distance: is the extent to which the members of a society accept that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally.

Uncertainty Avoidance: is the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.

Masculinity: stands for a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material success.

(Source: Cultural Dimensions in Management and Planning, Hofstede, 1984, p.25.)

In this section, I point to some implications for understanding and learning among cultural diversities. The same principle applies as has been developed in the previous chapter regarding the nature of learning from a critical systemic view. We should be able to question what is a part of other traditions, so that we do not merely accept that some other tradition is better. As Cox and Blake (1991) suggest concerning improving organisational capability to manage cultural diversity, people should be aware that in a particular tradition ideological forces may be operating to limit their learning capacities. So before

we can learn from one another, we need to be aware of problems of ideology potentially restricting our learning.

Nevertheless, Hofstede (1991) states that although there are wide cultural differences, people from very dissimilar cultures can learn fruitfully. Cox and Blake (1991) also observe that cultural diversity promotes creativity and innovation. They note, specific steps (e.g., people making themselves aware of the attitudinal differences of others) must be taken to realise this benefit. Hofstede also points to limitations; for example, one limitation is related to the variable of power distance. He suggests that when people seek co-operation from nationals who score high on power distance, this becomes difficult because the co-operation itself depends on the “whims of powerful individuals” (p.237). Also significant from the critical systemic view of learning, is that cultures where uncertainty avoidance is strong find it difficult to learn from with something which seems so different. So there are various limitations to the possibility of learning when we are speaking on the level of learning between cultural boundaries.

I believe that critical systemic learning developed in previous chapters has some applicability here too (there are also restrictions on learning when applied within some cultural or national contexts, so the problems are not qualitatively different). Just as applying need-based motivation theories in an emancipatory way may be more difficult when dealing with differences between ‘advanced’ and ‘less advanced’ countries, so it seems that the same applies to possibilities of co-operation among those at the same ‘level’. But, this should not lead to pessimism. It only means that the challenge is greater. Hofstede (1991) points out that when addressing the question of learning across national boundaries, that there are certain value-laden issues that cannot be ignored. This ties in

with the fact that CST cannot avoid value-laden issues when considering how to approach a commitment to cross-cultural learning. This is what Hofstede is referring to when he states that we cannot simply continue to introduce more and more technology, and apply it as if this can go on forever without reflection.

There are issues, as Hofstede (1991) notes, that cannot be dealt with by any specific set of people -- decisions that have to be made on a world-wide scale. Cox and Blake (1991) also assert that managing cultural diversity should enhance organisational flexibility. Thus, cross-cultural learning is necessary. People need to be motivated for this, and according to Hofstede, there is the possibility for such motivation, subject to the limitations that he has pointed to (which he hopes can be overcome). The limitations actually relate to people's ability to learn, because those who score high on power distance and therefore rely on the judgement of those who seem powerful, may find that they need to learn more about co-operation if they want to create sustainable policies. Also those who normally like to avoid uncertainty may find that they cannot continue to do so, because they will still be faced with the uncertainty of not knowing if the future is sustainable. And again, those who might want to believe that the culture of competitive individualism works well, may find that in certain contexts they cannot any longer hold onto this. Moreover, those who wish to adopt a kind of masculine orientation of influence and control, may also find that in certain contexts this is not sustainable. So on all counts cross-cultural learning to address the kinds of issues that Hofstede has raised and that have been explored in this thesis, may require critical systemic learning between different aspects.

### **7. 3 Hofstede's four dimensions about cultural variables**

Now I will discuss in more detail Hofstede's (1980a) arguments, and issues surrounding his arguments. Hofstede defines culture as "the collective mental programming of the people in an environment", and notes that culture "encompasses a number of people who were conditioned by the same education and life experience" (p.43). His work on the effects of culture is used to point to possible different orientations of managers in different societies. He labels four dimensions about cultural variables as follows.

#### **7. 3. 1 Power distance**

Power distance refers to the way that people rely on managers to make top decisions and to take responsibility for them. Hofstede (1980a) notes that power distance indicates "the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions and organisations is distributed unequally", and is "reflected in the values of the less powerful members of society as well as in those of the more powerful ones" (p. 46). Mendonca and Kanungo (1994) also observe that when there is a high power distance then there is a high value placed on obedience to superiors and dutiful compliance with their directives. Such obedience and compliance is not based on the expertise or competence of those to be obeyed but rather on the fact that they occupy a position of authority. People are unwilling to disagree with their superiors. Mendonca and Kanungo feel that people who operate in such cultures can learn from other cultures where value is placed on self-determination; otherwise subordinates may experience a feeling of powerlessness. However, Hofstede (1980b) points out that when a manager tries to force this kind of viewpoint onto cultures with high power distance values, this can also be counterproductive. He cites the case of

France, where management by objectives (as organised in the American way) was not successful because it relied too much on managers coming to define objectives collectively, a process which was shunned in France (also in the Taiwan cultural context). So although it seems that learning is achievable, the principle of non-imposition must apply. So must not imposing a value of low power distance onto a situation where people feel uncomfortable with it. Of course, attention must be given to the fact that ideological forces could restrict discussion about possibilities for new ways of working together. This is a factor which must be considered by those who are trying to present new ideas (for example, ideas about lower power distance as a value) within some cultural contexts. Hofstede (1991) notes that there are no absolute values for judging whether certain cultural values are less powerful factors than others in some way (for example, the value of accepting power distance as a strong gap between people in a hierarchy). So, it is very difficult to say how people will operate. But, Hofstede also points out, this does not mean that people are value-free.

So in the light of the discussion about critical reflection in the previous chapter, I suggest that anybody wishing to offer new values, or who believes that there is some imperative to introduce something new (for example, about the way power can operate), that theorist or practitioner must also be willing to listen to what those in the context state about the matter.

### 7. 3. 2 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is manifested in people's desires not to take risks. Hofstede (1980a) recognises that uncertainty avoidance indicates

the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid these situations by providing greater career stability, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviours, and believing in absolute truths and the attainment of expertise. ( Hofstede, 1980a, p.46)

Nevertheless, he notes that "societies in which uncertainty avoidance is strong are also characterised by a higher level of anxiety and aggressiveness that creates, among other things, a strong inner urge in people to work hard" (p.47). Mendonca and Kanungo (1994) refer to India, and state that:

The early socialisation practices in India, ... expect that individuals perform tasks as a matter of duty, and in terms of their prescribed role in society. .... In the organisational context, the effects of high uncertainty avoidance are manifested in terms of high aversion to risk taking, dependence on superiors, reluctance to take personal initiatives, and high external locus of control. (Mendoca and Kanungo, 1994, p.195)

They also note that often the degree of uncertainty avoidance is related to people's dislike of the risks involved in facing their managers. People are worried that their managers will not sanction any exercise of autonomy and decision-making unless it goes exactly according to the rules. They feel more secure in following rules. Managers are not confident that the work that has been delegated will be done if it is left to subordinates to take personal initiative. Mendonca and Kanungo also note that this uncertainty from the managers' side "will make them exercise greater control and provide more detailed directions than are actually required" (p.196).

Mendonca and Kanungo suggest that it is possible for us who are trying to avoid risks in this way to learn new ways of acting. We can learn, for example, that through access to participative management, we can become involved with less anxiety on all our parts if we

personally try less to avoid risks. But the way that principles of participative management are applied must be consistent with the predominant cultural characteristics of the country of application, otherwise, Mendonca and Kanungo suggest, the application will not be successful. So applying participative management cannot simply be applied in the same way in all cultural contexts. People can learn to take some personal initiative and to find fulfilment from this, while they can learn to relinquish some control. People may find that in any case they cannot continue any longer with always trying to avoid risks, because organisations are too complex for everything to be directed with certainty. These are things that can be learnt, but in the process of suggesting new ways of behaving, consultants must be careful not to adopt an impositionary role.

### **7. 3. 3 Individualism and collectivism**

Individualism is manifested in the sense that work and other fulfilments are based on personal needs. The self is experienced apart from the rest of society, with whom the individual is often seen in competition (see the discussion on possessive individualism in the previous chapter). Hofstede (1980a) suggests that:

Individualism implies a loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and of their immediate families only, while collectivism is characterised by a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups; they expect their in-group (relative, clan, organisations) to look after them, and in exchange for that they feel they owe absolute loyalty to it. (Hofstede, 1980a, p.47)

Mendonca and Kanungo (1994) note that in highly collectivistic cultures, by contrast, “family concerns and group attainments take precedence over the individual’s work concerns and achievements” (p.196). They note that when people perform their jobs well,

the motivation for this is not a sense of “delight of achieving job objectives”; rather, the motivation is associated with efforts to “please their superiors or peers, who may be friends, relatives, or people from the same village” (p.197).

This shows that people do not always in all cultures become motivated by the same things. In highly collectivistic cultures motivation differs from highly individualistic ones. This is why in the previous chapter possessive individualism was defined as an ideology if it stops people from looking at new ways of being, feeling and working. Collectivism can also operate as ideology if it makes people feel that they have to operate always in terms of what Stryker (1991) calls an ‘ought self’ which is defined by others’ feelings about one’s duties. This limits us from thinking about norms -- we simply accept whatever society seems to demand. This is not compatible with critical systemic learning, which sees that we can question ideas and norms through ideology-critique and can transform ourselves.

### **7. 3. 4 Masculinity and femininity**

Hofstede (1980a) observes, measurements in terms of a masculinity-femininity dimension express “the extent to which the dominant values in society are ‘masculine’ -- that is, assertiveness, the acquisition of money and things” (p.48). For example, not masculinity simply as being necessarily male but rather as pointing to an attitude to life, femininity may be associated with being motivated by quality of life and care for others and the environment. Thus, we see that masculine features (or what are defined as masculine) penetrate workplace culture where the orientation is towards influence and control, and sometimes this is linked to orientations towards possessive individualism, where

competition between individuals is seen as the order of the day. These ways of working and relating can become an unquestioned part of a culture.

#### **7. 4 Realising cross-cultural influences on motivation**

Based on Hofstede's (1980a) findings, and coupled with discussion from previous chapters, we see that different cultures may cope with motivation issues in different ways. For example, the idea of rewarding people on the basis of personal needs may not be applicable in more collective-based cultures. Hofstede (1980b) points out that Maslow's needs theory does not reflect universal needs. For example, self actualisation may be applicable to American society but not to all other societies; even management by objectives -- which became popular in America (after Drucker) -- is based on the idea of the impersonal pursuing of goals which may be inapplicable in all cultural contexts. The low power distance that exists in America suggests that people do not look to a manager to take all responsibility but can consider individually how to pursue goals.

Therefore, Hofstede (1980b) emphasises that managers need to examine the processes of developing motivation by looking at the social and cultural contexts. This gives an indication of how people can cope suitably with the question of motivation in their society. We should be careful about simply adopting approaches to motivation that have been created by other cultures. However, Hofstede states that learning between cultures in multicultural contexts is possible. He believes that there is much scope for problem-solving argument in various settings. It can be in the setting of organisations which are multicultural, and it can also be in the sphere of decision-making about how to sustain the environment. In hoping to encourage multicultural creative contexts, cultures (and hence

managers) need to learn from one another through exchanges which let managers question what they receive from others, while also adding to their own appreciation of the issues; but also ensuring that one cultural way of seeing does not come to impose on the others. A cultural system can be seen as part of a system of intercultural influences, and the way in which this affects views of motivation must be acknowledged.

When considering the motivating of people in a given context, Mendonca and Kanungo (1994) show how managers can work with organisational culture while still extending the boundaries of what seems possible within that culture. They believe that this is necessary when there are cultural constraints of some sort which can be identified. They show why they believe that sometimes it is necessary to extend the boundaries of what is taken as given in a particular cultural setting -- especially if one is aware of tensions that are being caused by the restrictions of the culture (for example, the anxieties linked with risk avoidance as described above, or the anxieties linked to feelings of powerlessness which some employees possess). Mendonca and Kanungo speak of the dysfunctional effects of, in Hofstede's terms, high uncertainty avoidance and high power distance. But, they agree with Hofstede that views of it and ways of dealing with motivation in various contexts cannot all be the same. As Harvey and Allard (1995) argue,

To deal with diversity we need to understand ourselves, and our cultural blinkers in order to go beyond thinking of our way as the only way and to develop appreciation for other viewpoints. We need, too, to be able to put ourselves in the shoes of others to understand how they view us and interpret our actions. (Harvey and Allard, 1995, p.9)

Mendonca and Kanungo's (as well as Hofstede's) ideas raise the idea of intervention to improve learning among cultures. Intervention as shown in this thesis should contribute to enabling people (motivating them) to pursue better ways of working and better ways of being. But cultural constraints (ideology) have to be examined. Also situations where high

power distance is prohibitive of all innovation will also have to be considered as potentially problematic. Hofstede (1980b) suggests that every society has to cope somehow with certain “basic problems” (p.212). In this sense, some issues are common to all societies, such as the fact that power will operate in some way, and that managers have to consider what level of risk they want to take and how they can organise this.

So it is necessary to adopt critical systemic learning if the manager wants to harness the utility that a plurality of approaches to motivation can offer. This allows differing ways of motivating people to be taken seriously, and it also allows cultures to learn from one another. That is, it allows the ideas from one culture to be seen as a counterpoint for criticising ideas that have become fixed in other cultures. There are many intervention possibilities for us who desire to instill learning, so that within cultural boundaries people can reconsider their lifestyles and ways of working.

In developing cross-cultural learning, motivation theories discussed by Moorhead and Griffin (1995) (need-based, process-based, and learning-based), could be examined by considering their possible relevance in different cultures, and also their possibilities for criticising traditions that have become ideological in those cultures. Critical systemic learning looks at problems of ideology in society and tries to see how new styles of working can be explored, in a way which is not aimed at serving the interests of only certain individuals or groups, and is both culturally sensitive and able to extend the boundaries of culture through an ideology-critique process. It is linked with an exploration of the possibilities for legitimate intervention with the purpose of enabling us to deal with the problems of motivation in our own cultures. In the process of developing cross-cultural learning, power relations in society have to be considered again, partly with a view to respecting patterns that have been established (for example, with regard to power

distance) but partly with the aim of criticising ideological formations. As Brocklesby and Cummings (1995) claim, different cultures can impact on our ideology with effects on:

where one looks for problems and how these problems are perceived; what one chooses to include within, or omit from, research; how one interacts with clients; what one believes 'works well' and what does not; whose interests one supports; and how findings are presented. (Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995, p.241)

Therefore, anybody who wants to foster cross-cultural learning cannot simply accept without question assumed patterns that have been established in society as a way of working and a way of defining people's motivations. But also anybody who claims to be self-reflective also has to pay attention to the condition of non-imposition, so, they do not impose their own values on others as if these are necessarily better.

The question to be raised here is, how can we transcend cultural boundaries? Gregory (1994) suggests that "ideology-critiques have a role to play in bringing about such changes", and notes that "the individual is responsible for gaining new cognition, new understanding of a particular situation" (p.1562). She argues that

through a critique of ideology, an individual may choose to act in certain ways that will impact on the values and beliefs of society which, in the normal day-to-day activities of individuals and collectives, is produced and reproduced. (Gregory, 1994, p.1566)

She argues that we should not only be capable of adopting subjective and objective positions in discourse, but also must be able to consider whether a proposed norm is fair. Thus, the challenge is how to capture the benefits of cultural diversities rather than their meaning. Midgley (1995b) also notes possibilities for cross-cultural learning and integration in terms of a critical systems perspective. This thesis argues that critical systemic learning can help us by providing opportunities to reflect on in given organisational cultures. Hence, the value of cross-cultural interactions lies in providing us

with an increased critical awareness of our own culture to guide the way in which we look at motivation, and the way we deal with others' responses. Managing cultural diversities also provides insights into alien cultural contexts by learning new ways of thinking and new ways of behaving to change our own deep-seated assumptions, which can help us to become aware of our own assumptions and how we might deal with motivation.

## **7. 5 Conclusion**

In this chapter I showed how culture affects the way in which people become motivated and the possibilities for cross-cultural (or alien paradigms) learning. An approach cannot be adequately understood by means of one culture alone. Cultural differences can also be regarded as complementary in some ways, in that we do not all have to be subsumed into one dominant pattern that encompasses the world. This allows different cultural patterns for motivating people to co-exist, while at the same time we can learn from the dynamics of cultural differences. Once the cultural variables have been surfaced, we need critical systemic learning through an ideology-critique process so that we can improve mutual understanding and enhance our learning among the available approaches and their potential effects.

Having examined the issues in motivation interventions in Chapters 4 through to 7, in the next chapter, I argue the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation, and present the main commitments of this approach in action.

**PART THREE**

**THE NEED FOR A CRITICAL SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO  
MOTIVATION**

## **Chapter 8 : The Need for A Critical Systemic Approach to Motivation**

## **Chapter 8**

### **The Need for A Critical Systemic Approach to Motivation**

#### **8. 1 Introduction**

This chapter follows up arguments developed in previous chapters and argues the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation. A critical systemic approach to motivation is a step both towards discovering the limits of the current approaches, and towards experimenting with the possibility of finding new thinking in interventions. Especially, it emphasises critical systemic learning which encourage participants, particularly managers, to communicate with and learn from other perspectives (even cross-cultures) by means of self-reflection and ideology-critique. This approach is based on critical systems thinking (CST), and highlights that the following four themes should be embodied in interventions: critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, critical systemic learning. This chapter first presents the key requirements to motivation which provide criteria in determining whether the intervention is appropriate in a given organisational circumstance, and then offers a critical systemic approach to motivation in action which hopes to resolve the issues identified or arising during interventions, and can lead to improvement in tackling the problems of motivation..

## **8. 2 The key requirements for successful motivation**

It is false to assume that there is a ready-made approach to improving motivation where it is hoped that intervention will be immediate and produce quick results. As Shamir (1991) states, the shortcomings of current models (or approaches) stem from their overreliance on hedonistic assumptions and an instrumental model of the human being: namely, “their bias toward individualistic behaviours in individualistic cultures, their inapplicability to weak situations, their emphasis on predicting discrete acts and their oversight of the role of values and moral obligations in work motivation” (p.405). In order to correct these biases, we need theories that can explain individual sacrifices for organisational concerns and can account for the role of values and moral obligations in energising and directing work behaviour. The following six key requirements point out that continuous improvement will be characteristics of successful motivation in organisations:

1. The processes of intervention should address the systemic nature of motivation. The interventions components form a system, with changes in one element affecting the others. Because the components need to mutually reinforce high motivation, they must be examined as a system of interacting parts. The intervention of each element should be consistent with the intervention of the others.
2. The processes of intervention should be dynamic and iterative. It should reflect the fact that motivation is the order of the times and that intervention is an ongoing process of adjusting to change and improving motivation in organisations. Intervention is never finished, but it continually seeks to expand the effectiveness of motivation.

3. The processes of intervention need critical systemic learning --a process where people should learn by doing, trying out new perspectives, appreciating their effectiveness, and modifying them if necessary. Moreover, people often start intervening with only limited knowledge of interventions alternatives and vague ideas about what they want their interventions to look like. They can gain clarity about interventions by trying to implement them in favoured directions and learning from the experience. Such critical systemic learning helps people to better understand what they really want their interventions to be. It also provides a deeper and more realistic understanding of the perspectives needed to implement motivation interventions.
4. The processes of intervention need to look at conflicting perspectives, needs, and interests. Organisations typically include a diversity of perspectives. Motivation intervention should take into account the different viewpoints and should seek to reconcile the conflicts among them. The intervention process ideally helps managers with different ideologies and assumptions learn together to create a new reality. It should facilitate uncovering and clarifying conflicts among different perspectives and searching for innovative resolutions.
5. The processes of intervention should allow the diversity of available motivation approaches in a way which respects all their qualities. It also should consider that problems or situations need to be reflected on from wider points of view than other approaches have done, and it is not the case that there is one best or right approach which should always predominate. Motivation intervention should hold that, in principle, no approach should be ignored, but should be respected and adopted where appropriate. It seems reasonable that different approaches should be used, depending

on the problem situation being faced. However, while pluralist systemic approaches are part of the answer, they should (in the view of critical systems thinkers) be operated critically.

6. The processes of intervention need to facilitate critical awareness, in Jackson's (1991a) terms, that means examining systems design proposals in terms of their "underpinning values and assumptions" and also means understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches (p.185). The aim is to elucidate the relations between social circumstances and the theoretical assumptions underlying various approaches. As Midgley (1995a) argues, critical awareness is to "examine and re-examine taken-for-granted assumptions, along with the conditions which give rise to them" (p.2). This is to say, social circumstances (e.g., cultural influence, political power, social ideology, etc.) will affect the success with which motivation approaches can be applied, while conversely, systems intervention will also affect social circumstances.

Traditional approaches to motivation tend to score low on these requirements for successful intervention motivation in organisations. Their approaches often ignore the systemic nature of organisations and focus on limited interventions in isolation from the others; they tend to view motivation intervention as a one-shot event rather than as a dynamic and iterative process; they are frequently implemented by external experts who leave the organisation with little instruction about how to improve motivation; they tend to focus on limited perspectives and needs, typically catering to the interests of owners; they often involve limited motivation approaches in organisations; they tend to be concerned with improving existing understandings of the problems of motivation, often neglecting the need to radically transform the organisation.

In order to correct these biases, current thinking of motivation should be expanded by adding a self-society dynamic based model of work motivation. A self-society dynamic based model of work motivation rests on the following assumptions:

1. Humans are not only goal-oriented but also value self-reflection. This means that, in contrast to the current cognitive emphasis in motivation approaches, behaviour is not always goal-oriented and instrumental but is also expressive of values, attitudes, and beliefs.
2. Individual's behaviour is motivated and regulated by internal standards and self-appreciative reactions to their own actions. Thus self-appreciation is an important form of intrinsic motivation. To the extent that self-appreciation reflects the ought self and hence an anticipated sense of self-worth, it is closely linked to social values as cultural conceptions of the desirable.
3. People are motivated to maintain and increase their sense of ideology-critique. The self-society dynamic is thought of as pertaining to a multiplicity of meanings. We can assume that ideology-critique is not only a corrective mechanism activated in case of discrepancy but also a positive motivation. In a sense, the self-society dynamic is an ideology that people attempt to express and validate in their behaviour.
4. Self-society dynamics involves critical systemic learning --a process where people try out new behaviours, processes, and structures; and make necessary modifications. Self-society based behaviour is not always related to clear expectations or to immediate and specific goals. Rather, it is often guided by imagined possibilities and

faith. It is important to note that as representations of the self in future states, possible selves are views of the self that often have not been confirmed by social experience. Furthermore, this type of self-knowledge does not always exert its influence on the individual in direct proportion to the ease with which it can be formulated or to the likelihood of being realised.

Having examined some key assumptions concerning: the need for a self-society dynamic based model of work motivation, the requirement of appreciating the suitability of available approaches to deal with the problems of motivation more appropriately and effectively, the importance of considering the diversity of available approaches in a way which respects all their qualities, reflection on the legitimacy of power relations and question ideology conflicts in given social contexts, the need for critical systemic learning to foster cross-cultural (alien paradigms) learning. It is now possible to draw these assumptions to create a new thinking to motivation. I call this a critical systemic approach to motivation (which henceforth I refer to as 'my' approach). The following section aims to introduce the main ideas in my approach.

### **8. 3 The main ideas of a critical systemic approach to motivation**

My approach is based on CST. As we saw in Chapter 4, CST is concerned with the promotion of pluralism, critical awareness, and human emancipation. Pluralism suggests that various approaches should be used according to their perceived strengths and weaknesses; critical awareness requires that the suitability of an approach be evaluated

through local ideological studies; human emancipation needs to be encouraged through meaningful participation. My approach argues, following Flood and Romm (1995b), that “each choice (methodology, theory) can be made only using locally generated criteria informed by wider considerations” (p.473). Thus, there can be no universal standard for reviewing, appreciating, and choosing an approach to motivation. It is therefore vital that we do not seek to judge an approach from only one single perspective and assume that this perspective is the truth. The need is to explore multiple perspectives by means of critical self-reflection and ideology-critique. As Gregory (1992) states, critical self-reflection is about encouraging managers to reveal their understanding and assumptions and consider their legitimacy in the light of possible alternatives; and through ideology-critique, managers’ ideology are brought into dialectical debate and are challenged by others. This is to prevent motivation interventions from automatic domination by a single ideology. Flood (1990) suggests that absolutes should be resisted. Instead, contextualised understanding and the integration of approaches can be more appropriate in a local context which refers to both space and time (Flood, 1996; Flood and Romm, 1996b). The following principles need to be embodied when applying my approach to intervene in the problems of motivation.

1. Meaningful participation and communication among different perspectives is necessary.
2. Knowledge is never perfect and sufficient, appreciation is a never-ending learning process.
3. People should be willing to critically reflect on the coercive use of power and question ideology conflicts during interventions.

4. People should consider intervention in terms of a pluralist systemic position (informed by discordant pluralism). .
5. People should perceive the importance of cultural contexts.

My approach argues that the current understanding and knowledge about motivation needs to be critically assessed, and different perspectives should be taken into account in order for all participants to gain an improved awareness of their circumstances and the likely effects of implementing available approaches. It essentially emphasises a critical and systemic process of developing something new out of existing perspectives. Because organisations are artefacts created by people, they are the manifestation of different values and beliefs about how motivation should be intervened in. In laying the foundation, we learned that motivation interventions are variable and dynamic; they are malleable, not deterministic. Although motivation interventions must be responsive to people and environments, intervening is not an exact process with one correct outcome. Rather, there is considerable choice in interventions to achieve motivation. Moreover, as managers learn more about intervening, their ability to alter existing approaches or generate entirely new ones increases. It is a potentially continuous process. My approach highlights four themes in motivation interventions: critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, and critical systemic learning (see Figure 8. 1 -- Model of critical systemic approach to motivation in action). It is unidirectional, but is a potentially continuous process because the new understanding of the available approach and/or the context may lead the organisation and manager to start a new cycle of investigation.

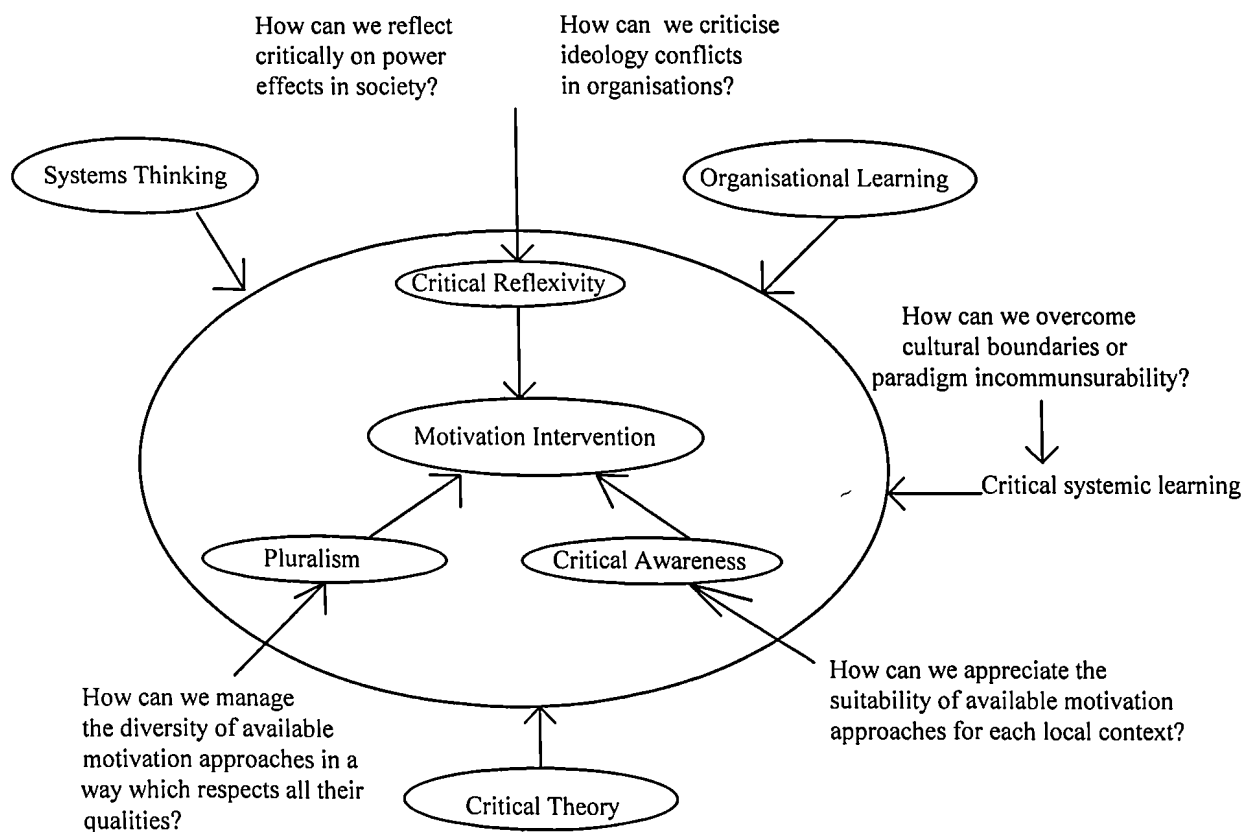


Figure 8.1 Model of Critical Systemic Approach to Motivation in Action

The model of my critical systemic approach to motivation in action is explained in more detail below:

- Urges critical awareness to appreciate the available approaches in terms of underlying assumptions

An approach is created according to particular meta-theoretical assumptions about motivation. By investigating the philosophy, principles, and process of the available approaches, we can critically assess these meta-theoretical assumptions. This enhances our understanding of the available approaches. My approach emphasises that different approaches should be appreciated critically in terms of meta-theoretical assumptions

(or reflect on manager's assumptions) and a given organisational context. Managers cannot simply accept without appreciation assumed patterns that have been established in organisations, because no one best approach can be used universally and be used concretely to motivation. My approach provides a new critical process for managers to encourage them to evaluate a given approach prior to (possible) intervention. As I argued in Chapter 3 that an evaluation approach needs to take into account the views of stakeholders who will be directly or indirectly influenced by the application of a candidate approach(es). This is because the proposed intervention will directly or indirectly affect them, and they may in turn affect the course of the intervention. Managers should continually appreciate the radically distinct assumptions behind the available approaches, and should capture the complexities of dynamic environments.

- **Stresses pluralism to utilise the diversity of available approaches in a way which respects all their qualities**

My approach is a form of pluralism which involves appreciating and recognising the differences and similarities between available approaches, which is preferable to reducing them to only one perspective; and allows for dynamics and development to move beyond alien paradigmatic boundaries. As I argued in Chapter 4, CST considers that problems or situations need to be considered from wider points of view than other approaches have done, and that there is no one best or right approach which should always predominate. My approach holds that no approach should be ignored, but should be respected and adopted where appropriate. It seems reasonable that different approaches should be used, depending on the problem situation of motivation being

faced. Especially, my approach stresses discordant pluralism which enhances the abilities of managers to understand the available approaches by encouraging self-reflection and ideology-critique. As Gregory (1996) argues, pluralism seeks to “facilitate a transformation process through understanding self and others” (p.622). This is to say, the available approaches should be interpreted critically and used in a way which respects all their qualities at a given point in time.

- **Promotes critical reflexivity to question ideology conflicts and to reflect on power relations during interventions**

In examining the assumptions that an approach to motivation should embrace, we should consider that paradigms are not ideologically neutral. We also need to have an idea of what ideology actually is, and how it can be critiqued. Most importantly, we should prevent uncritical ideological domination. From a critical point of view, ideology needs to be criticised. In Chapter 5, I argued that personal and social ideology affect both our view of reality and choice of approach to motivation interventions. I suggested that ideology-critique is possible, but strictly objective ideology-critique cannot be achieved. As Gregory (1992) proposes a theory of ideology-critique, according to which ideologies should be critised by observation, communication, and self-reflection. Ideology-critique is a dynamic process because the participants can change their ideological positions through the critical process itself, necessitating renewed analysis. Furthermore, I also indicated that it is problematic to tackle motivation interventions in which managers are aware of issues of the coercive of power. I argued that coercion can only be tackled through the promotion of mutual understanding

among participants. Each needs to understand different perspectives. Importantly, the moral responsibility for improving the organisational situations lies with all participants. Finally, my approach argues that professional knowledge needs to be opened up to challenge by sweeping in wider perspectives from relevant participants. In addition, the forms of communication proposed within my approach may support participants in arguing against the possible imposition of undesired ideologies.

- **Encourages critical systemic learning to foster communication and learning between cross-cultures (or alien paradigms)**

In motivation intervention, the manager plays a key role. It is therefore important that managers reflect on what they believe; their assumptions, knowledge, and understanding of both the current organisational circumstances and the available approaches. In Chapter 6, I explained the importance of critical systemic learning which provides opportunities for individuals to see motivation through other patterns of thought, either leading to an elaboration of the original paradigm. As Gregory (1992) indicates that “improved self-awareness would enable us to come to see the repression and subjugation that have helped to shape our social reality and its accepted interpretations” (p.207). She argues that “one cannot predict that a particular norm or value will ‘win out’ in the end, but the possibility of getting people to talk and think critically” is valuable (p.370). It is thus necessary to encourage people to enter into a dialectical process of debate that will be capable of promoting self-reflection and ideology-critique amongst participants. Nevertheless, it will be difficult for each individual to carry out self-reflection and ideology-critique alone. The presence of a

facilitator is usually necessary to promote questioning. Therefore, in order to improve mutual understanding and communication, I suggest that, wherever possible, critical systemic learning is necessary. Furthermore, in chapter 7, I step toward experimenting with the possibility of learning new ways of thinking and new ways of behaving to change people's taken-for-granted ideologies, which can help them to become aware of their assumptions and how they might learn from different cultures (or alien paradigms).

In this section, I have shown the main ideas in my approach, which provides critical and systemic interventions because no single approach can be used universally. My approach views humans as being motivated by a complex set of interrelated factors (such as external rewards, need for affiliation, need for achievement, and desire for meaningful work) which vary in importance according to the context (including the cultural context). It is assumed that different employees often seek quite different goals in a workplace and have a diversity of talents to offer. Under this conceptualisation, employees are regarded as reservoirs of potential talent, and manager's responsibility is to learn how best to bind such resources. My approach argues that professional knowledge needs to be opened up to critically challenge by sweeping in wider perspectives from relevant perspectives. In addition, the forms of self-reflection and ideology-critique proposed within my approach may support managers in arguing against the possible imposition of ideological conflicts. In effect, critical systemic learning allows one to dispense with the unlikely assumption that a single approach will be equally effective under any and all circumstances, and rather substitutes an emphasis on appreciation of the situation to determine which approach will be more appropriate in a given circumstance.

## **8. 4 The need for a critical systemic approach to motivation**

Organisations exist today in an environment that is changing in fundamental ways and is demanding changes in organisations that go well beyond the status quo. As I detailed in Chapter 2, different motivation approaches are categorised as need-based, process-based, and learning-based. There appears to be no single best way which can deal with the problem of motivation. In this section, I will look at the strengths and weaknesses (as they have been discussed in the literature) of ‘hard systematic approaches’ and ‘soft systemic approaches’, and finally argue the need for my approach to motivation.

Hard systematic approaches (e.g., need-based motivation approaches) are designed as means to achieve pre-determined ends. These authors assume that natural science-based systems concepts can equally be employed to intervene in human beings’ affairs, such as dealing with the problems of motivation. They also believe that quantitative models can be used to pursue optimal solutions. Hard systematic approaches are thus characterised by the pursuit of pre-defined goals in well-structured problem solving procedures. Obviously, the key assumption underpinning the approach to motivation adopted by hard systematic approaches is the ability to construct and manipulate a model of a situation under study. However, organisational situations can be problematic, especially if we focus on organisations within society, where different ideologies, interests and presumptions exist. Hard systematic approaches are criticised for simplifying objectives and ignoring value issues in some circumstances. Therefore, the question arises: when do

we need different approaches, which are based on distinct perspectives, to assist us to solve more complex motivational problems?

Soft systemic approaches (e.g., process-based motivation approaches) tend to respect various individual perceptions and bring these into the problem solving procedure. As Checkland (1978) states, the soft systemic approach is based on inter-subjectivism: it deals with people and their perceptions, values, and interests. It is argued that we should not avoid subjectivity, but should include it in any definition of objectivity. Soft systemic approaches emphasise individuals' perspectives, but they also seek to build accommodation among individuals. However, soft systemic approaches encounter major difficulties: the power relations implicit in consensus creation and neglect of cross-cultural (or alien paradigms) learning. The fundamental basis of soft systemic approaches is inter-subjectivism; they seem to lack sufficient methods to deal with the effects of unequal status and influence to motivation in organisations, or within the wider society. As Jackson (1991a) argues, "the exercise of power in the social process can prevent the open and free discussion necessary for the success of work and interaction" (p.12). Therefore, how my approach to motivation addresses these issues, is brought into the discussion.

My approach to motivation is a holistic concept, which seeks to enhance critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, and critical systemic learning in dealing with the problems of motivation. It argues that traditional understandings to motivation need to be critically examined, and different perspectives should be taken into account in order for managers to gain an improved awareness of their own organisational circumstances and the likely effects of implementing the available approaches. The question arises, is it really

wise for managers to take professional knowledge for granted? My answer is “no”, for three reasons. First, the available approaches could develop as their creators revise their perspectives, making a one-off classification restrictive. Second, there might be more than one interpretation of an approach to motivation in which interventions are a considerably complex, uncertain, and multi-faceted processes. Finally, taking professional assumptions for granted might mean importing an alien ideology into an organisation without any awareness. I argue that an approach to motivation should be appropriately understood according to different perspectives. When managers take an approach to motivation, they presume that they understand the available approaches. However, it can be argued that this is only their own perspectives, and should be opened up to communicate and learn from others. Part of my approach to motivation emphasises that managers should learn to think systemically, not to reduce the whole into separable part(s), isolated from contact with other ways of doing things. Therefore, no single approach, no matter how ‘systemic’ it may be, is sufficient to deal with the problems of motivation. My approach to motivation provides a forum in which each of different perspectives can be communicated and learnt, and the consequences of conflicting views realised.

To summarise, an approach is created according to particular assumptions about motivation. By investing the philosophy, principles, and process of the available approaches, we can critically examine their assumptions. Each of the three types of systems approach might have different perspectives to motivation. It is by comparing and contrasting the different perspectives that a more critical appreciation of the available approaches and their suitability for a given organisational circumstance may be gained. Figure 8. 2 represents the strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of systems approach.

1. Be aware of the necessity of critical awareness
2. Allow pluralist systemic approaches in interventions
3. Question ideology conflicts and reflect on power relations in organisations
4. Realise cross-cultural (alien paradigms) influences
5. Emphasise critical systemic learning to foster inter-paradigm communication and cross-cultural learning

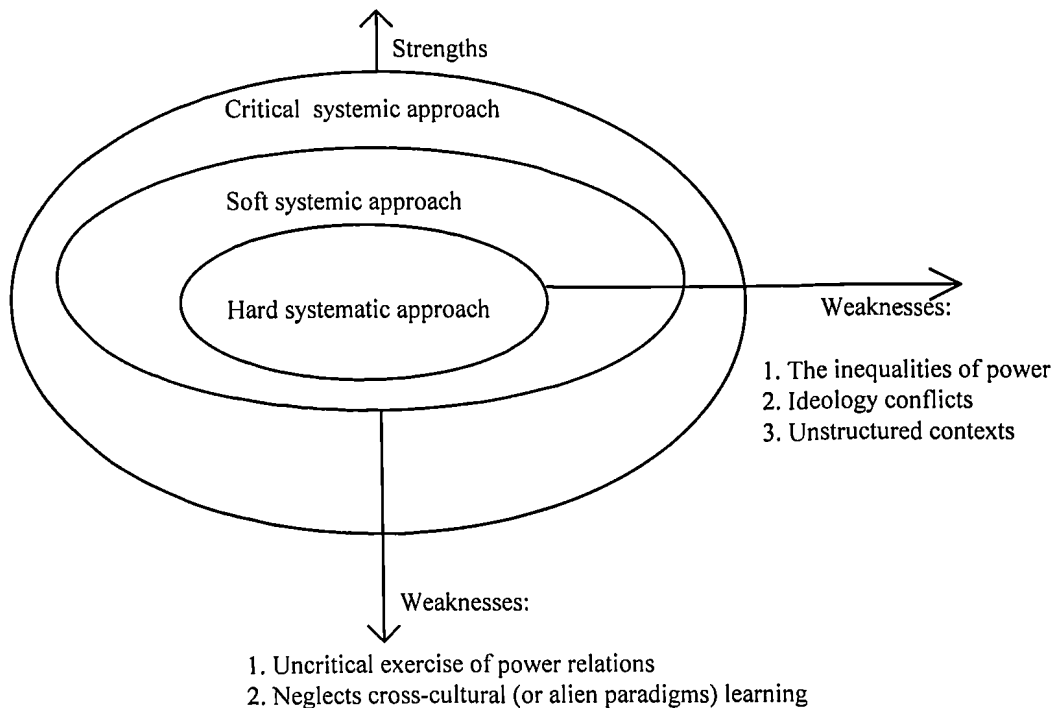


Figure 8. 2 Strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of systems approaches

In the following section, I design a practical process for tackling the problems of motivation by means of my approach.

## 8. 5 Designing a method for implementation

This practical process could employ many techniques which are needed to expose the different assumptions underlying managers' perspectives during interventions. It must be emphasised that in a real situation, adaptations will be necessary. I recognise that the manager plays a key role in the whole process and should not only be committed to the technical feasibility of the intervention, but also has a moral responsibility in relation to the

organisation. This idea is central to the understanding of critical systems thinkers, most notably Midgley (1990) and Flood and Romm (1996b). My approach highlights the four commitments to critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, and critical systemic learning (as discussed in Section 3). How these commitments are expressed in any particular intervention should always be borne in mind when dealing with the problems of motivation. Managers need to have the following characteristics.

1. To promote critical awareness, managers should be willing to consider the consequences of intervention and the suitability of available approaches in a given organisational context. Managers should reflect on their intellectual knowledge and ideological understanding of motivation approaches and their own organisational circumstances. This means that managers can become aware of the need to be critical or reflective of their intellectual assumptions.
2. To appreciate the available approaches in a pluralist position. Managers have to be willing to develop understanding of the ideological assumption and strengths and weaknesses of the available approaches. They should hold that no approach should be ignored, but should be respected and adopted where appropriate. They must also be willing to consider that problems or situations need to be appreciated from wider points of view than other approaches have done, and that there is no one best or right approach which should always predominate.
3. To raise critical reflexivity, managers have to be willing to critically reflect on the power relations and question the ideological differences. It is the managers' responsibility to create a forum (or forums) for different perspectives to discuss the available approaches so that their needs can be assessed prior to intervention, ensuring

that the motivation intervention creates improvement. If the powerful resist the different perspectives, at least the latter will be forewarned.

4. To cultivate critical systemic learning as a way to overcome different perspectives (or cultural boundaries). Critical systemic learning involves an iterative cycle of self-reflection and ideology-critique processes. This kind of learning continues until managers have learned enough to tackle the problems of motivation effectively.

In the following sections, I will describe how my approach can be used in practice. To begin with, I focus on critical awareness.

### **8. 5. 1 Critical awareness**

As discussed in Chapter 4, people in different perspectives view motivation differently, there is no *a priori* basis for deciding which approach has the better solution for motivation. In this sense, managers should appreciate different assumptions on the consequences of intervention and the suitability of available approaches in a given organisational context. Each assumption managers make is derived from, and supported by, a particular ideology, which will determine the way the motivation is perceived. Several authors (e.g., Emery, 1969; Schön, 1983; Ulrich, 1983; Oliga, 1988, 1990, 1996; Jackson, 1991a; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Flood, 1995; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a, b; Brocklesby, 1994, 1995; Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995; Wilby, 1996; Mingers, 1997; Ho, 1998) consider that the implementation of the available approaches should be appreciated critically. For example, Flood (1995) recognises that any choice of approach has to be critically reviewed and examined. The

main technique to appreciate the difference among assumptions could use Ulrich's (1983) boundary questions to see what different perspectives exist between interventionists, because they might view the same problems of motivation in different ways. As Ulrich (1983) indicates, boundary questions help managers to appreciate assumptions about the organisational circumstances and the available approaches. Midgley (1995b) also indicates that boundary questions can be used by individuals to enhance critical self-reflection.

As argued earlier, an approach to motivation is made according to creator's assumptions. These assumptions are derived from their experiences, beliefs, and social ideology. However, the creator of the approach might be not willing to be classified in a particular paradigm framework (as discussed in Chapter 3). Likewise, I do not want to set up a classification system for approaches and their associated paradigms. I argue that this way limits flexibility. This kind of classification could also be interpreted as imperialism because managers would inevitably apply their own values and ideological assumptions to the process of classification. In contrast, my approach shows that inquiry into the ideological nature of the assumptions of the available approaches enriches managers' understanding without the need for a pre-formed paradigm framework. As I have shown, to appreciate the available approaches is to examine their fundamental philosophy, principles, and processes. The following issues should be taken into account.

1. Managers can look at how the available approaches pursue their goals. Are the goals generated by a particular perspective or individual? On what kind of techniques and methods is the processes of achieving the goals based?

2. How do the available approaches tackle the problems of motivation; using what kind of paradigm?
3. What do the available approaches want motivation to be?
4. Do the available approaches take value conflicts into account?

Through critical awareness, managers can gain explanations from the original creators. Moreover, the available approaches can also be appreciated through boundary questions that could help managers to gain a deeper understanding of the assumptions to motivation. Here, critical awareness is concerned with the application of the available approaches and the impact of intervention to motivation. The processes of motivation intervention should develop managers' understandings in terms of social awareness and the strengths and weaknesses of the available approaches, and in particular it should help managers clarify the likely consequences of applying it. Therefore, questions arise such as, can the problems of motivation be solved by means of a single approach? If not, how can managers relate different approaches together? My approaches argue that different approaches are most appropriately applied in different organisational circumstances. It advocates pluralism that appreciates the diversity of available approaches in a way which respects all their qualities.

### **8. 5. 2 Pluralism**

As discussed in Chapter 4, an approach to motivation should not be interpreted only by its creators and users. It is also necessary to take into the evaluation process the different

perspectives. This is because the proposed intervention will directly or indirectly affect them, and they may in turn affect the course of the intervention. Several critical systems thinkers (e.g., Flood, 1989, 1995, 1996; Jackson, 1989, 1990, 1991a, b, 1997; Flood and Jackson, 1991a, b; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b, 1998; Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a; Mingers, 1997) examine the benefits of using pluralist systemic approaches to deal with issues during intervention. For example, Jackson (1997) notes that

the explicit choice of a 'dominant' methodology to run an intervention with 'dependent' methodologies, reflecting alternative paradigms, in the background. The relationship between dominant and dependent methodologies must be allowed to change as the intervention proceeds to maintain flexibility at the methodology level to set alongside the flexibility we are looking for at the level of methods and tools. (Jackson, 1997, p.373)

Managers may hold different perspectives, based on their own knowledge and assumptions, from which to see motivation. Likewise, managers may also have different ideas about the available approaches to motivation. If managers are independent, without strong power influence in the situation, strategic assumption surfacing and testing (SAST, Mason and Mitroff, 1981) is recommended. Through SAST's dialectical debate, managers can gain a clearer picture of different assumptions, and the issues which underlie conflicts and disagreement. However, managers should not make any judgement as to which position is superior. Rather, all issues should be taken into account and consideration given as to how the available approaches might be applied so that as wide a variety of perspectives as possible can be satisfied. Of course, there may be some interests that remain irreconcilable. My approach does not try to force compromise. If compromise is not possible, at least my approach raises awareness of the probable consequences of

intervention using the available approaches in a way which respects all their qualities.

This goal is to examine and appreciate the three different assumptions about:

1. What the available approaches want motivation to be.
2. What motivation is and ought to be from the different viewpoints.
3. What managers think about the “is” and “ought” of motivation and the available approaches.

My approach argues that the available approaches should be appreciated in terms of different perspectives (reflect on user’s assumptions and organisational circumstance); at the same time, to see what can be learnt from one another and how each can be developed, because there is no one best approach which should always predominate and can be used universally for motivation. As Gregory’s (1992) argues, managers should keep in touch with the organisational context in which they are embedded, because the organisational context will affect their appreciation of available approaches. Indeed, my approach recognises that social pressures will affect whether a approach can be implemented properly, and that certain approaches may be unsuitable when dealing with the problems of motivation in certain power relations or ideological circumstances. Thus, the use of available approaches should be considered in relation to the power relations and ideology conflicts inside and surrounding the organisation. Once again the possibility of the critical reflexivity becomes relevant here.

### **8. 5. 3 Critical reflexivity**

As discussed in Chapter 5, sometimes managers are passive in the face of ideology conflicts and the exercise of power in interventions. As several authors (e.g., Foucault, 1972, 1979, 1982, 1984; Habermas, 1976, 1982, 1984; Elster, 1982; Schön, 1983; Poster, 1984; Jackson, 1985b, 1989, 1991a; Clegg, 1989; Meszaros, 1989; Flood, 1990; Brand, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Austin, 1990; Eagleton, 1990, 1994; Oliga, 1990, 1996; Mingers, 1992; Gregory, 1992; Rahman, 1993; Townley, 1994; Midgley, 1995a, b; Flood and Romm, 1996a; Brown and Wilby, 1996; Reynolds, 1997; Mingers, 1997) point out, it is problematic to deal with a problem situation in which managers are aware of issues of the ideology conflicts and power relations during interventions. It is therefore important that managers should perceive social and organisational circumstances. Schön (1983) shows that managers have to consider at two levels: (i) his personal tacit norms and (ii) social consciousness. Flood (1990) states that

Self-reflection develops an awareness of one's own mind and its operations and reasoning about how and why the ideas of this mind and operation come about. Using ideas of the mind to reflect on other ideas it already processes. (Flood, 1990, p.216)

However, the question arises, how can managers gain an understanding of their unconscious presuppositions which are based on their experiences and are affected by the surrounding social contexts? Gregory (1992) indicates that "improved self-awareness would enable us to come to see the repression and subjugation that have helped to shape our social reality and its accepted interpretations" (p.207). Likewise, Brown and Wilby (1996) state that the way to reflect on our tacit knowledge is to be open to different perspectives, beliefs, and assumptions. As they state,

This process however assumes a willingness or ability to be open within a group process of inquiry. This openness requires our understanding of previous experiences or phenomena to come into contact with the unique aspects of the current situation, and the conflicting views and tacit

understandings which are brought by different participants to the change process. (Brown and Wilby, 1996, p.19)

But, they do not clearly spell out how to challenge and to criticise the social constraints.

We may ask, how can managers reflect on (or challenge) the exercise of power relations?

How can managers question (or criticise) ideological differences (or ideology conflicts)?

In examining these questions, it is important not merely to surface a variety of positions, but also to identify ideology conflicts and power relations. This will allow managers to reflect on power relations and question whether the dominant ideology can or should be changed, and what there might or might not be for managers involvement in the change process. Ulrich's (1983) boundary questions can be used to understand the ideology conflicts and power relations behind the current organisational situation. Managers could ask the four types of question about

1. Sources of motivation in the organisation. These are concerned with the organisation's purpose, direction, and value.
2. Sources of control in the organisation. These are concerned with the organisation's power relations. Who actually takes decision(s)?
3. Sources of expertise in the organisation. These are concerned with the organisation's know-how. How does the organisation set about achieving its ideal design and goals?
4. The nature of participation in the organisation. These are concerned with who is affected, directly and indirectly, by the organisation's operation, and whether or not they can become involved in decision making.

The questions are asked in both the “is” and “ought” modes. By comparing the answers using the two modes, managers can clarify the ideology conflicts and power relations in the current organisational situation. As Gregory (1992) notes,

individual’s self-awareness (through critical self-reflection) coupled with sociological awareness (through ideology-critique) appears to be the most appropriate means available to today’s individual who wishes to deal morally with the pluralistic environment confronting him or her. (Gregory, 1992, p.355)

She recognises that it is necessary to apply an ideology-critique process to discuss ways of transforming lived relations and also ways of developing critical self-reflection as part of the whole process, as well as to prevent uncritical domination.

My approach does not seek to judge objectively the exercise of power or ideological differences, but also tries to identify how the power effect can be reflected on and how the ideology conflicts can be criticised by means of a critical reflexivity process. In order to be critically reflexive, my approach argues the need for critical self-reflection to reveal our own assumptions in order to appreciate (or question) the value of any social systems, and an ideology-critique process to examine the social construction in order to break the colonisation of thought which make us become manipulated by assumed ideologies and power asymmetry. Moreover, can people based in different paradigms (even cross-cultural influences) communicate with each other, and if so, how can managers overcome paradigm communication (or cultural boundaries) by means of critical systemic learning?

#### **8. 5. 4 Critical systemic learning**

As discussed in Chapter 3, Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) ‘sociological paradigms’ framework shows that people in different paradigms view reality differently, according to

assumptions they make about the world. Nevertheless, this is not to say that learning between different cultures (or alien paradigms) is impossible. Several critical systems thinkers (e.g., Flood, 1990, 1995; Midgley, 1992, 1995a, b, 1996, 1997; Flood and Romm, 1995a, b, 1996a) discuss the issues of paradigm incommensurability. In Chapter 7, other authors (e.g., Hofstede, 1980a, b, 1984, 1987, 1991, 1993; Austin, 1990; Cox and Blake, 1991; Sowell, 1991; Rivera, 1991; Huo and Steers, 1993; Gioia and Weaver, 1994; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994; Harvey and Allard, 1995; Brócklesby, 1994, 1995; Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995) consider the issues of cross-cultural learning.

However, the question arises, how can inter-paradigm communication be conducted? From a critical systems point of view, Gregory's (1992) 'critical appreciation model' provides a clear guide for inter-paradigm communication (or cross-cultural learning). She argues that inter-paradigm communication (or cross-cultural learning) needs to involve not only observation, interpretation of an alien paradigm, and the generation of understanding of the cultural circumstances in which the translation happens, but also some analysis of interventionists' inner understanding. She suggests the need for "an alternative pluralist perspective which allows for communication between alien paradigms which should allow their differences and conflicts to be considered" (p.146). Moreover, she recognises that managers have to keep in touch with the situation in which they are embedded, because the cultural circumstance will also affect their interpretation and understanding of alien paradigms in interventions. She argues that four kinds of approach are needed if inter-paradigms communication is to be conducted critically: historical-hermeneutic inquiry (surfacing other views and communicating ones own), empirical analytic inquiry (observations of the situation), ideology-critique (examining

the social construction of the various viewpoints), and self-reflection (revealing the interventionist's own assumptions).

In Chapter 6, my approach argues the need for a critical systemic learning which sees self-society dynamics, and involves appreciation of alternatives by means of self-reflection and ideology-critique processes to be aware of what we receive from alien paradigms (or different cultures), while also adding to our own perspectives. Furthermore, it proceeds towards exploring new ways of thinking and new ways of behaving to challenge our taken-for-granted ideologies which can lead us to become aware of our own assumptions and how we might learn from alien paradigms (or different cultures).

## **8. 6 Comments on my critical systemic approach to motivation**

I have tried in this chapter to argue the need for my approach to motivation by highlighting critical awareness, pluralism, critical reflexivity, and critical systemic learning. My approach not just matches with specific problem situation, because it requires us to examine the diversity of available approaches and to come to our own critical appreciation of how to deal with the issues. So I believe that the problems of motivation cannot be dealt with by having only one approach or by expecting all organisations and all cultures within and between societies to adopt one approach. I also noted that this should be broadly understood as including self-reflection and ideology-critique as part of the process of intervention, so that the problems of motivation are not narrowly defined either by prevailing ideologies or by prevailing rigid conceptions of what is needed for social

transformation. However, other questions arise, for example, what should be the role of interventionists when getting involved in the dynamics of social asymmetries in organisations or in whole societies where some people's decision making is regarded as more important than others. Flood and Romm (1995b) argue that in order to break this dominant wisdom, the interventionist might need to be creative by using these dominant methods, but altering the way issues are attended to.

My approach stresses appreciating knowledge and values and critical assessment of how the organisation is doing living up to its values and accomplishing its valued outcomes. It involves ongoing appreciation, innovation, and change in order to maintain and improve the effectiveness of motivation. We have argued the need for critical systemic learning by means of critical self-reflection and ideology-critique (in the way I explored it in Chapter 6) which accepts continued warning to avoid believing that there is only one narrow route to the problems of motivation in organisations. Critical systemic learning asks us do not stick with only one view of seeing problems of motivation. It (which is linked to an understanding of discordance as part of learning) shows how the problems of motivation can be addressed in a way which both enriches our understanding of the various motivation theories, and of participants' varied experiences and different perspectives in regard to motivating factors. This enrichment of understanding (which includes development of both theory and development of personal experience) is a never-ending process, because of continuing tension which gives rise to further critical learning. For example, Gregory's (1992) critical appreciation model allows us to consider a range of theories, to interpret them and to decide how to use them if we want to deal with any issue

at any point in time (such as motivation). It also lets us consider self-society dynamics (linked to critical self-reflection and ideology-critique) as part of the process of learning to be critically appreciative.

So far, it should be noted that these arguments veer in the direction of not so much aligning methods to problem contexts, but rather developing people's critical capacities in various ways. Then, this allows them to look at any topic, for example, questions surrounding motivation intervention, in a more critical way than might otherwise have been the case. It allows people to draw, in an informed way, on a variety of approaches and models of motivation; to compare them with one another in some way (though not completely commensurable) and then to see how they feel when they need to address the situation at hand. That is, the available approaches are compared by looking at how they each can become informed through the existence of the others. Therefore, it is believed that interventionists, by being thus informed, will not work solely with one way of seeing people, one way of seeing how they can be motivated, one way of seeing organisation in society, and one way of seeing prospects for improvement. This applies both to theorists and interventionists. For example, in the domain of motivation, it applies to considering and reflecting on the diversity of available approaches, so that one can be informed about this; and in the domain of practice, it requires that people do not just apply one way at all times.

On the problem of motivation, this chapter has shown why a critical systemic one to intervention, surpasses other ways which concentrate on only one aspect of issues connected with motivation. It has shown how concentration on one aspect is a result of not

making use of a full range of approaches that have been developed to look at the problems of motivation. As shown in Figure 8.3, my approach for tackling the issues during motivation interventions.

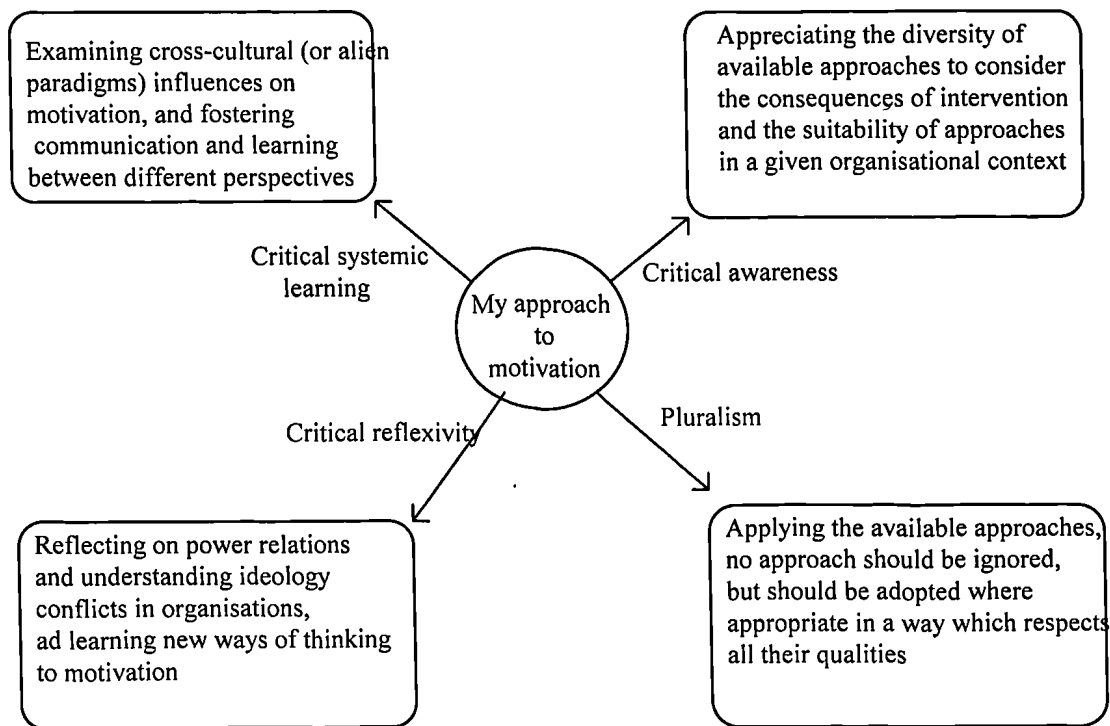


Figure 8.3 My approach for tackling the issues during motivation interventions

## 8.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, my approach to motivation argues critical awareness which is needed because no single approach can be used universally and all approaches introduce ideological assumptions into intervention. I also emphasise that managers should consider the choice of the available approaches in a discordant pluralist position. The available approaches to motivation should be critically appreciated in terms of different

perspectives in a way which respects all their qualities. This implies that, although an approach might have been created with a given purpose in mind, it might be interpreted and used in different ways. My approach convinces that ideology conflicts and power relations affect both our view of motivation and choice of the available approaches to interventions. I argue that critical reflexivity is necessary which can act as a way to actually increase insight by making managers examine their own ideological assumptions and reflect on power relations as part of the critical process. Finally, I stress that communicating with, or interpreting alien paradigms (or cross-cultural influences on motivation) can be achieved through critical systemic learning. As paradigms and their associated approaches are ideological, I conclude that it will be necessary for my approach to incorporate these aspects of self-reflection and ideology-critique.

Having spelled out the commitments of my approach, in the next chapter I explain why these same issues are a cause for concern for me, for managers in Taiwanese enterprises, and consider how to apply my approach to deal with the problems of motivation that there is a need to build a critical learning organisation (CLO).

## **Chapter 9: Proposals for Using A Critical Systemic Approach to Motivation for Building A Critical Learning Organisation**

## **Chapter 9**

### **Proposals for Using A Critical Systemic Approach to Motivation for Building A Critical Learning Organisation**

#### **9. 1 Introduction**

In the first eight chapters I have made a case demonstrating the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation. I have shown that such an approach has to include a critical appreciation of the way that available motivation approaches can learn from one another through processes of communication and learning (Gregory, 1992, 1996a, b) and also that different cultural contexts can learn from one another in the process (Hofstede, 1980a, b; Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994; Brocklesby, 1994, 1995; Brocklesby and Cummings, 1995; Dachler and Hosking, 1995). This involves ideology-critique coupled with critical self-reflection as a cognitive capacity (e.g., Thompson, 1990; Rahman, 1993; Gregory, 1992; Oliga, 1996).

In this chapter I integrate all the strands of thinking that have gone into Chapters 1 to 8, and I argue the need to build a critical learning organisation (CLO). To do this, I draw on some of the ideas that I have developed earlier in the thesis, but I also add some others regarding learning organisations. In trying to integrate all the available motivation approaches in a way consistent with a critical systemic approach as developed in Chapter 8, I now in this chapter reorganise the arguments that I laid out in Chapter 2's review of the literature of motivation. I show how this review points up different approaches to the study of humankind; about what people are and about what they can become. I do this by

discerning the differences between the motivation approaches and re-categorising them in terms of their view of people; and demonstrate that these alternative views all have some credibility but that each must learn from the other, considering in the process the consequences of adopting another view of people. I show why I prefer (as part of my approach) to adopt a view of humankind as complex beings (following Schein's terms) able to learn from human diversity, from different approaches (or ideologies), and from different experiences of the world as captured in different organisational contexts.

The need for a critical systemic approach to motivation is argued in this thesis because there are many approaches but none that so far offers an approach to motivation that is systemically able to appreciate radically different views of people and their motivation. As shown in my review of the literature on motivation in Chapter 2, and my critical commentary in Chapter 3, the need for a critical systemic learning in Chapter 6 so far seems to work with a view of people as learning from others, but not as able to engage in critical appreciation whereby they can criticise ideological conceptions that may be prevalent. In order to allow for this, we need to extend learning theories by introducing notions of critical self-reflection and ideology-critique (e.g., Gregory, 1992). To some extent, authors (e.g., Argyris and Schön, 1978; Schein, 1987a, b; Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992) of learning organisations have tried to do this -- but the significance of this for a critical systemic approach to motivation still needs to be further explored. In the concluding section, I indicate why a critical systemic approach is necessary in order to tackle the problems of motivation in Taiwanese enterprises.

## **9. 2 Re-categorisation of motivation theories**

In Chapter 2 we saw that it is convenient to categorise motivation theories in terms of need-based, process-based and learning-based. This scheme (taken from Moorhead and Griffin, 1995) is useful as a way of discussing the various theories, and what they can offer towards our understanding of motivation. It is also useful because it aids a critical commentary of the literature that has been developed about motivation. Now, however, I wish to extract from this review, and from my critical commentary, five different views of humankind. I wish to explore some implications of adopting these views. This is consistent with a critical systemic approach which, as Flood and Jackson (1991a) and Midgley (1995a, b) point out, requires us to have some awareness of the implications of holding certain views. In order to aid such awareness, I therefore re-categorise those motivation theories that I have already discussed so as to allow us to discern five different perspectives, and their implications for our views of human nature.

The five perspectives about people which I isolate are: a view of economic beings, of rational beings, of social beings, of psychological beings, and of complex beings (following Schein's (1987a) models of human nature). I argue in this chapter that the view of complex beings allows managers to think about what it means to build what I call a CLO. This view of complex beings allows managers to appreciate the other four views and leads to a dynamic idea of employees with regard to their motivation. Also, the four other views do not lead to a vision which allows managers to learn from different theories, and hence to develop their view of how human beings can act. The idea of complex beings thus fits in better with a view of critical appreciation as described by Gregory (1992) -- where learning possibilities between viewpoints are strengthened, enabling managers to think about themselves and about their situation as part of a dynamic process (where their

consideration of new ideas in turn allows them to act in different ways). Schein (1987a) observes, complex beings is built on the view that “human beings are different from each other and that they change and grow in their motives as well as in knowledge and skills” (p.86). Therefore, it is important for managers to appreciate what approaches are available; it is even more important to recognise what can be done to bring about motivation, and when and how motivation can be directed within existing structures. As Schein emphasises, “the manager must be a good diagnostician in order to know what the motivations and abilities of his subordinates actually are, and must be flexible enough to use different influence attempts with different people” (p.86). To begin with, let us consider a view of people as economic beings.

### **9. 2. 1 Economic beings**

As shown in Chapter 2, there are some motivation theories, specifically Taylor’s scientific management approach, that view employees as motivated primarily through economic reward. Taylor’s ideas were aimed at creating an efficient workforce based on time-and-motion studies. Taylor developed techniques such as a piece rate system which was seen as a way of motivating employees to perform for maximum efficiency. This suggested that employees could be rewarded for the amount of work done (as long as this was done well). A fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work could be calculated and employees would be motivated to work for bonus pay if they worked sufficiently hard. This implied that employees were motivated by economic incentives. This view of people can be termed Economic Beings.

Morgan (1997) points out that Taylorism implies that managers and designers leave all the “doing” to people (p.23). Managers can see how the job could best be done, and then employees’ work could be monitored to see if they are performing efficiently. This implies the creation of “management observation checklists” to be used as performance indicators (p.23). Employees would perform well, it was then argued, if managers judged their work by performance and rewarded them on the basis of that performance. Employees were seen as competitive -- they would compete with fellow workers by trying to do the job quickly if they knew that they would get a reward for it. The reward was an economic incentive which was believed to motivate employees. Employees did not involve themselves in their work other than for the economic reward that would follow, and were not required to have a sense of responsibility for seeing a whole job done. Thus, job specialisation has been associated with Taylorism. It was argued that breaking jobs down into specialised parts would let employees work faster and better. This approach governed management thinking at the turn of the century and still governs much thinking about motivation. As we saw in Chapter 5, there is often an operating ideology of competitiveness and individualism (which Hofstede (1980a) associates with ‘masculinity’) that enters our thinking about motivation. This may or may not accord with how people feel about themselves. The point, though, is that it has become an ideology which often functions to create people who then do not try to see themselves in any other way.

It will be shown below that a critical systemic approach lets managers learn to see employees in many different ways and also to be aware of what the implications are of certain theories -- which Argyris (1993) calls ‘theories-in-use’ (following the model developed by Argyris and Schön, 1978). Managers need to be aware that the view of

economic beings is not the only possible way of seeing employees. Also, an outcome of inference from this view is that employees tend to become more individualistic and competitive because managers reward them for this. The reward system in the organisation is geared to performance criteria set by managers. Managers do not treat employees as able to become motivated through different factors.

It is possible that this type of motivation results from the view of economic beings which Argyris and Schön (1978) calls the theory-in-use of the managers. Also, it can become the theory-in-use of most of us who do not challenge this theory. Salaman (1983) points out that it is important not merely to accept ideologies without challenge. He notes that there is evidence of resistance already in many of the organisations that seem to reward employees as if they are simply economic beings. He argues that counter-cultures are part of the substance that preserves organisational integrity by not allowing only managers to set all agendas for the reward system. All this indicates that there may be a dynamic of resistance that can arise when people are viewed as economic beings by managers.

Nevertheless, there may still be times when the view of people as economic beings points to something that managers are willing to adopt. This could be, for example, as I see in the case of Taiwan, when managers feel that their economic success and also that of their country depends on giving employees economic rewards for hard work done well. But there should always be space for resistance to assumed ideologies -- as explained in Chapter 5. It is therefore possible to question the ideology of economic beings by showing that it is not always the case that employees are (or should be) motivated simply by an economic incentive.

The view of humankind as economic beings is closely associated with the view identified as rational beings. However, because the view of rational beings includes some extra components, I isolate this as a second category.

### **9. 2. 2 Rational beings**

Morgan (1997) notes that alongside Taylor's arguments for increasing efficiency through piece-rate systems and increased specialisation of tasks, and that "during the 19th century, a number of attempts were made to codify and promote ideas that could lead to the efficient organisation and management of work" (p.16). The approach of mass production through organising the division of labour was a key theme. This way of thinking was recorded by Weber (1947), who "observed the parallels between the mechanisation of industry and the proliferation of bureaucratic forms of organisation" (quoted by Morgan, 1997, p.17). Weber suggests that the bureaucratic form of organisation aided the processes of mechanisation and specialisation that were being undertaken at the turn of the nineteenth century. Bureaucracy as a form of organisation relies on the idea that there can be "precision, speed, clarity, regularity, reliability and efficiency achieved through the creation of a fixed division of tasks, hierarchical supervision and detailed rules and regulations" (quoted by Morgan, 1997, p.17).

Morgan (1997) states that Weber was critical of the potential for the bureaucratic approach to pervade all aspects of human life, "eroding the capacity for spontaneous action" (p.17). The idea of using a bureaucratic way of organising was to increase the rationality of production, eliminating the variation that occurs when employees try to act outside of definite rules and regulations which fix their tasks. Weber called this approach

to living a “goal-rational approach”, and he noted that it implied rational action in accordance with meeting definite goals that had been set. It was action that employed the most efficient means to achieve these goals.

The ideas of the bureaucratic approach can be summarised as follows: there is a chain of command where employees can receive orders from a superior (who would be an expert in their field). There are some others (not too many) reporting to one superior. Employees are employed also in terms of their specific competencies. There is a division of work much like that described by Taylorism (see above). Management would in this way establish the specialisation required to achieve the goal of the organisation in an efficient way. There would also be discipline demanding obedience to rules which would require supervision. However, there is also a recognition that kindness and justice to encourage personnel in their duties, is important too. As Morgan (1997) observes, management by objectives (MBO), or goal-setting theory fits in well with this kind of bureaucratic approach. As noted in my discussion of this in Chapter 3, when MBO links up with a view of employees as motivated to perform tasks in accordance with goals set by the organisation, it begins to agree with a regulatory approach as described by Burrell and Morgan (1979). Morgan states that “forms of MBO are often used to impose a mechanistic system of goals and objectives on an organisation” (p. 21).

The view of human nature implied in this bureaucratic approach and this idea of motivation to fulfil goals can be called a view of rational beings (e.g., Taylorism and Weberianism). This is because it sees human beings as recognising what is the most efficient way of organising the workplace and then complying with what is required to practise such efficiency. Employees are seen as rational beings directed towards the

achievement of goals. Cantor and Fleeson (1994), more recently have attempted to build a view of people which also rests on seeing them as intelligent goal-pursuers. They suggest that:

We are interested not only in those people who seem to feel already in control in a task context but also, or perhaps more so, in those people for whom the task is an important challenge that requires marshalling their resources, cultivating their intelligence, and overcoming their uncertainties. (Cantor and Fleeson, 1994, p.155)

They note that a view of people as goal-directed in this way bears analogy with ideas on expert problem solving. Employees can become experts in fulfilling tasks. This also implies that employees orient themselves rationally to do a specialised task that they want to fulfil -- towards some goal that has been set. The view fits in with ideas of organising behaviour according to the dictate of efficient pursuit of goals by rational beings. However, my approach has to ask this question. One way to look at achievement is to realise that it might not be the only way of organising a modern society. There may be other factors that are ignored when human beings are seen as simply rational beings able to organise according to competencies.

As noted in Chapter 2, while theories around economic beings and rational beings have been developed, other theories have also been suggested. Another theory -- underpinned by another view of human nature -- is that of the human relations approach. Theorists such as Mayo and Herzberg have been important contributors here.

### **9. 2. 3 Social beings**

As already mentioned, Yang (1992) states that in Taiwan today, employees tend to orient themselves more towards individualism than in the past. The human relations approach argues that employees are more socially oriented than theories of economic beings or rational beings imply; as Morgan (1997) notes, motivation is not merely a technical problem. Studies on aspects of the workplace such as the workers relationships with one another have portrayed people as primarily social beings who find it important to have support from colleagues. It has been found that rather than fulfil production schedules that are demanding but physically possible, employees prefer to adhere to the lower norms of colleagues so as not to become isolated from the group and shunned by colleagues.

The question of motivation is therefore redefined in terms of a view of social beings, such as in the human relations approach. Researchers (e.g., Lee and Lawrence, 1991; Swieringa and Wierdsma, 1992; Argyris, 1993) have found that the perceptions and meanings that people give to their work is important. Employees in the organisation self-organise according to the norms that they develop in their groups. The human relations approach concentrates on the human side of the workplace and on the way employees' attitudes to their work and to each other affect their production. Instead of thinking that management alone could set criteria for objective observation to check rates of work, it was realised that the social element in the workplace could not be ignored. Employees there organise into groups developing group culture in the process. They do not work for bonuses if they feel that this would invite disapproval by their group. The human relations approach was interpreted by Mayo (1949) to show that human needs go beyond material motivation; employees are seen as social beings and not motivated only by material rewards.

The human relations approach later became associated with Herzberg's interpretations of how employees could be motivated by intrinsic rewards. This meant that the way to deal with them was through "encouraging them to exercise their capacities for self-control and creativity" (Morgan, 1997, p.36). So it became associated with an approach used to find out how motivation could be developed in order to make employees control themselves. The aim was to create conditions allowing employees to exercise self-control and creativity within the demands of their job. As Morgan (1997) states, much of this theorising has proved extremely attractive in management circles, for it offers the possibility of motivating employees through 'higher level' needs (such as their need for some autonomy in their work performance).

Critics of the conceptions of economic and rational beings as well as of social beings say that all these views of people have become developed to allow managers to set performance objectives. The idea in all these views is that employees can be controlled either through using work-rate schedules combined with bonuses for hard work (e.g., Taylor or Weber) or by letting employees define their work so that they can be more productive (e.g., human relations approach). As noted in Chapter 3, therefore, it is not possible to subscribe uncritically to a view of people as social beings -- which could be just as narrow as a view of them as economic or rational beings. The social beings view can be used to support practices which have not been sufficiently considered regarding the implications for those involved. Issues such as the fairness of the way performance criteria are set, who sets them, and how employees can be 'made' to conform, are still issues that need to be further looked into (e.g., as described by the equity theory discussed in Chapter 3). These issues are not resolved simply by appealing to a view of human beings as social beings.

As shown in Chapter 2, there have been other approaches developed. Some of these approaches have another view of people, namely, psychological beings. This view can be seen, for example, in Vroom's expectancy theory.

#### **9. 2. 4 Psychological beings**

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory has some similarity with the view of people as able to make rational and conscious choices (rational beings) -- but it adds the belief that employees perceive circumstances in the light of their psychological make-up. For example, as in the case of the industrial modernisation in Taiwan, employees are increasingly adopting more individualism to satisfy their needs and desires. Therefore, it is impossible to say what would be rational behaviour, for employees' choices of how to behave depend on how they see possibilities and on how they assign value to rewards. Managers should provide adequate challenge to allow employees to use their talents fully, and enough understanding of employees to know when and how to challenge them. It follows that employees cannot all be motivated by, for example, economic rewards or incentives; this will depend on how they are valued by themselves. Or again, employees might not simply be motivated to perform in accordance with what are socially sanctioned standards. This depends on how they view the standards. There are subtle mixtures of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations that go into employees' choices.

But employees might not be fully conscious of what is motivating them. There are psychological processes that might be influencing them without their being fully aware of them. Psychological beings (e.g., Vroom's expectancy theory) is useful in that it provides

a tool for employees to begin to reflect more on what they find rewarding and why. This process of reflection can be undertaken by employees as they self-reflect, but also in groups where they can learn to reflect together through dialogue. This leads onto another view of people (a related view) as complex beings who do not have fixed motivations or fixed ways of orienting themselves in the world. Their ideas and motivations can be a dynamic process fuelled by self-reflection and reflection with others. It is this view of people -- as complex beings -- that forms the basis of what is described in the next section.

### **9. 2. 5 Complex beings**

As spelled out in Chapter 2, there are learning-based motivation theories that have been developed to explain employees' behaviour. But these theories need to be taken much further in order to support a view of people as complex beings who can exercise capacities for self-reflection and reflection with others. Managers need a critical systemic view that allows, in Gregory's (1992) terms, for a discordant pluralism where employees are faced with and learn to cope with divergent theories about their behaviour -- theories that they come to terms with as they reflect critically on what they can learn from them all.

A CLO as I describe it, hopes to contribute by showing how people can operate as complex beings. Before making this description, I show what can be offered specifically by Argyris (1993) and also by Schein (1987a) to help us in defining the substance of a critically oriented learning organisation. Neither of these authors states that his approach is a CLO. But their models of learning organisations help to point in this direction.

### **9. 3 To build a critical learning organisation**

To begin my discussion of the development of a CLO, I give an outline of some of Argyris's and Schein's views which have helped me in my formulation of what a learning organisation should look like. I have chosen these two authors because their ideas, though requiring some extension to build a CLO, are consistent in many ways with the arguments that I have been pursuing in the thesis so far. However, as indicated in the rest of the thesis, views of learning also need to be supplemented by many of the ideas that have been presented by critical systems thinkers such as Flood and Jackson (1991a), Gregory (1992), Flood (1995), Midgley (1997), and Flood and Romm (1996a). They can be supplemented with literature more generally on ideology-critique and power and on the way that selves can operate in societies as explained in Chapter 5.

After discussing the view of Argyris in this regard, I move on to discuss the view of Schein. I show how these views of a learning organisation can be extended in the light of the discussion that I have provided in the rest of my thesis and also in view of the re-categorisation of motivation theories that I offer in this chapter. This re-categorisation is what allowed me to draw attention to the conception of complex beings, in support of the idea (i.e., I use it to support my agreement with the idea) that it is possible to build a CLO.

#### **9. 3. 1 Argyris's view of what is meant by organisational learning**

In Chapter 2 some ideas were given about how Argyris and Schön (1978) developed views on organisational learning. It was pointed out that they see theories-in-use as affecting the way that managers behave. They argue that when managers have theories-in-use that are anti-learning, this affects their relationship with others. They react to others by trying to

defend their own ideas, rather than allowing these ideas to be subjected to more public testing. Argyris (1993) has offered more thought on this to help managers to see what is required if they want to move beyond these patterns, towards patterns where managers can use “double loop reasoning” (following on from Argyris and Schön, 1978). Argyris recognises that “double loop reasoning” is a type of learning where managers learn to question the theories-in-use that they have been using. He states, “double loop reasoning” allows managers to question their defences so that they can “encourage inquiry into or testing of the validity of their claims” (p.10). He argues that “double loop reasoning” means that managers do not expect to use the same logic that was used when formulating ideas and claims in the first place; managers are allowed rather to look at these claims from different perspectives. He describes the process which managers must avoid:

Craft your conversation in ways that, in order to test the validity of your claims, others will have to use the same logic that you used to produce the claim in the first place. These are recipes for self-fulfilling, self-sealing anti-learning processes. They are the hallmarks of defensive reasoning. (Argyris, 1993, p.10)

He recognises that in order to create productive learning, managers need to learn to use logic and data “that are independent of those making the claims” (p.11). This means that managers can bring in new data and new logic to show a different angle. Managers then can make up their own minds instead of having to use the original logic and data. He also notes that for “double loop reasoning” to be operating, managers must be willing to encourage inquiry into the testing of different views, and they also need to be able to change their reasoning processes. Moreover, managers must be alert to others’ inconsistencies and gaps in their perspectives. Argyris suggests that people in turn must not try to cover up these by defending their position dishonestly, because when they are being defensive they are trying to cover up inconsistencies.

Argyris (1993) shows that in many organisations this kind of defensiveness is in fact rewarded, and that organisations reward employees for actions that “limit the very learning that leading learning requires” (p.13). This is how a non-learning organisation develops. Argyris states that it is important for managers to be aware of how the reward system can encourage defensive behaviour and be aware of how their own actions might produce a “highly limited learning organisation” (p.14). He also notes that when managers try to develop the skill of double loop reasoning themselves and practise it, they often find that this skill is not valued in the current organisational culture. He therefore appeals to all those who feel responsible for this to begin to create new organisational cultures.

We can see in Argyris’s view many similarities to what has been described in this thesis as critical appreciation and critical systemic learning (see Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). Critique is enhanced when managers can, for example, question organisational cultures (ideologies) that uphold theories-in-use in an uncritical manner. Critique can be used to show up where theories-in-use are creating defence mechanisms, at an employee and/or organisational level. Critique can be used to try to show inconsistencies in points of view, which can lead managers to reflect again on such points of view. Critique can also be used to show implications of not reflecting on points of view (theories-in-use). Furthermore, Argyris (1993) shows that theories and logics are not all the same, and recognises that we can use different logic and data to question existing theories (different from the person espousing the theory). He argues that if we try to see all types of reasoning as the same, then we will not realise the discordance between different theories. Thus, we will impose one logic on all the other logics.

The one problem with Argyris's view, is that he still seems to think that it is possible to test the validity of theories, once managers use "independent" reasoning -- that is, independent of the person whose logic is being questioned. But managers need to remember that this logic will also be dependent on the criticiser's use of logic. This is what Gregory (1992) means when she states that all ideologies need to be challenged (see Chapter 5). We cannot assume that ideology-critique can take place from a neutral perspective. That is also why Flood and Romm (1996a) state that in "double loop learning", as Argyris and Schön (1978) describe it, there may be a tendency to rely on the scientific model as a way of testing theories. They note that this does not create sufficient allowance for managers to criticise radically what it means to test a theory.

A CLO as I envisage it should not appeal to independent testing. Rather, it should appeal to personal ability -- as complex beings -- to appreciate a diversity of theories and to learn from them all.

### **9. 3. 2 Schein's interpretation of organisational learning**

Schein (1987b) in a similar way to Argyris and Schön (1978) focuses on the defence mechanisms which can lead managers to "hear more or less what we expect or anticipate based on prior experience" (p.64). He notes that in this way managers block off "a great deal of information that is potentially available" (p.64). He states that this is linked to the defence mechanisms of denial, which lets managers deny things that do not fit their prejudgements. He recognises that such denial is anti-learning, and that what is most difficult about managers' emotional responses to situations where they deny what they do not want to acknowledge, is that they do not notice their denials. He believes that

managers control, suppress, delete or deny their feelings, and this is because in their culture they learn that “feelings should not influence judgement” (p.65). So, he argues, managers do not acknowledge how they feel about situations and how this might in fact be affecting their judgements, they simply pretend to see the situation. This is a paradox, and managers end up acting on their feelings.

Schein (1987b) therefore takes the position that it is important that part of the process of consultation should help managers to recognise the feelings that they are having and also what might have triggered these feelings. He believes that managers do not need to be “victims of them”; if they can consciously understand their impulses then they can learn better about how to deal with situations (p.65). He states that once managers understand more about themselves, they will be less likely to distort the informational input available to them and can “minimise the distortions on the initial information input” (p.66). He also notes that one of the reasons why managers seem to be unable to do this, is that they are afraid of being “attacked and put at a disadvantage” (p.66). So when managers disagree with a point which is being made, they take it as a sign of attack and do not treat the disagreement as part of a learning experience that will help them to learn more about ways of seeing the situation. Managers therefore make judgements based on emotional impulses instead of thinking more (reflecting more critically) in communication with others.

Schein (1987b) argues that when managers act in this way, it is not that their actions are “irrational”, it is rather that their critical reactions are based on data observed through a distorted vision of too much prejudgement. Managers’ critical reactions have been based on “incorrect initial observation” (p.68). Schein’s point is that all managers are emotional.

Managers react to situations by way of their emotions. But managers should be more aware of this so that they can learn better about their prejudgements and therefore modify them. Managers can do this by communication and listening also to others -- and not seeing others' disagreements with them as a sign that others are attacking them. Managers should come to know more about their own "personal defensive filters" so that they can take greater care in "checking out before reacting" (Schein, 1987b, p.71). Managers must also be careful to remember that different cultural contexts encompass radical differences about values. So managers must not simply interpret according to their own cultural perceptions. For example, as Schein notes, in some cultures it is a sign of respect for the importance of a meeting, if managers take as long as they need to discuss the matter, even though it might mean they are late for other appointments. The idea of being on time for appointments therefore has different meanings in different cultural contexts. Managers must be aware of this when they interpret situations. This agrees with Hofstede's (1980a) idea that managers need to be aware not only of different theories, but also of different cultural patterns as part of the process of critical systemic learning. In Chapter 7 it was indicated why it is important not to believe that only one set of cultural patterns is the best way to organise. Managers can listen to other cultural beliefs as a way of thinking again about their own.

All in all, Schein's view of defence mechanisms that inhibit us from learning from others and from other cultures, has many similarities with that of Argyris. But he draws more attention to the emotional side of what makes managers cognitively defensive. As Argyris (1993) notes, learning organisations cannot be developed unless managers in the organisations try to create learning orientations. He does not discuss what it means to harness ideas from contradictory ways of seeing, he only asks managers to check their

observations. Neither does he consider the hermeneutic process of deciding how to look at data nor does he recognise that there can always be new interpretations (which might contradict one another). This is where the discordant pluralist position has more strength in building a CLO.

### **9. 3. 3 A critical learning organisation with the complex beings concept developed**

In the above discussions, I have shown that ideas on critical systemic learning can be taken from some authors (e.g., Schein, 1987a, b; Argyris, 1993). But these need to be further developed to provide for a more discordant pluralist position as described in other parts of this thesis. For example, contradictions between theories (e.g., motivation theories) must become a starting point for learning on the part of all the inhabitants of a CLO. This is not just the same as Argyris's view of testing theories, because he does not consider what can be done when logics of testing contradict one another (in a discordant way). Also, it is not simply rational beings who can test theories, because as Schein shows, managers have emotions which influence the way they see information. But Schein does not draw out the full significance of this for complex beings. He assumes that once managers know their emotions they will be better able to read the real situation. He does not consider that complex beings always interpret the world, which means that there may be very many different interpretations at play at any one time in an organisation.

Critical appreciation works on many levels and is not merely a process of correctly accepting data, but a process of promoting communication with different interpretations, so that our thinking can become more appreciative of variety. As Gregory (1996b) notes,

discordant pluralism does not try to reconcile theories and interpretations; it is a matter of learning to deal with diversity on both intra- and inter- paradigmatic levels. Managers need within a way of thinking to explore its inconsistencies and also between ways of thinking (logics) to explore where they are discordant. A CLO is also not simply a matter of cognitive function, however, managers are also involved in making ethical judgements in the process (Gregory, 1996b). Therefore, in some respects the equity theory of motivation can be used to support the process of learning in a CLO. But this is not simply to say that employees are motivated by feelings of equity. Learning has to be set up in organisations so that employees can learn from another's experiences of what they took to be inequities. This can also be done through setting up ways of discussing grievance procedures, as noted in Chapter 6. Multiloguing about grievances procedures and other procedures is all part of to build a CLO (see Chapter 6).

Burrell (1992) points out that managers are talking about a whole new approach to the world, when they see organisations as complex patterns in which many motivations may play a part. This gives an opportunity also for exploring new lifestyles through what Burrell calls a more eroticised relationship with reality, where managers' aim is not to control it by understanding it -- as in rational beings's conception of the world. Complex beings are able to appreciate that no one way of becoming motivated appreciate the variety of approaches to motivation that exist and are being developed.

The analysis of different motivations and lifestyles also has to take into account that belief systems can intersect with relations of power in organisations. As this chapter has shown when building up the categories of economic beings, rational beings, social beings and psychological beings, these can all assume an ideological function in organisations when they are accepted uncritically. Even the category of complex beings could become

ideological if accepted uncritically. But the point about the category of complex beings is that it expects managers to be complex enough to reflect critically on themselves, developing them further as complex beings, able to absorb and deal with many ideas and feelings.

When used uncritically, any of the above views of humankind carry implications that they may become a type of power in an organisation (and a whole culture), as the specific conception of people and their capacities comes to be dominant. Therefore by studying ideology in a critical way, managers can examine how ideas can be used to entrench patterns of domination in society and learn how to avoid this. Ideology is defined by the fact that it sustains relations of domination (see Chapter 5). I have shown above why it is important to criticise the potential ideological symbolism of adhering to a conception of beings as any of the categories identified above. It is therefore preferable to be more fluid in our view of what human beings are and what can motivate them.

It is possible that we will not try to challenge ideological conceptions because of conceptions of humankind which have become accepted. But Gregory (1992) notes that all people in society can in principle become involved in this process. She goes so far as to state that managers should become involved, because this is part of the way in which a dynamic self-society relationship can be sustained. Managers then do not become puppets of a belief system handed to us by others. They can communicate and listen to others as the basis for their own learning and their own action.

#### **9. 4 Can we develop a fixed method to apply a critical systemic approach to motivation?**

The above discussions about how complex beings can be involved in society imply that it is possible to utilise a critical systemic approach to motivation. I have shown what it means to build a CLO where managers can continually learn from one another by appreciating their different domain theories, their experiences, their cultural patterns, their feelings, and their values. This has to be supported by complex beings, who are able to operate with and deal with diversity (through a discordant pluralist position).

On this basis, I now ask the question whether it is possible to develop a fixed method that supports my approach in a CLO-- just as other authors have developed approaches to support their motivation theories or models? It is clear that the development of such a fixed method cannot be of the same type as offered by other authors. One of the criticisms of their methods is that they are unable to capture the complexity of a dynamic view of human beings and of their self-society relationships. So developing any method for a CLO runs the risk of being criticised for its anti-dynamism. Nevertheless, managers can consider the kinds of themes that would be asked as guidelines to build a CLO.

Managers can consider whether there are any situations in which specific motivation theories (and views of beings) might be more appropriate than others. Are there any such situations? Managers could say that as long as they have reflected on the implications of adopting a view of humankind as, for example, economic beings, then it is appropriate to work with this style of offering incentives (on the basis of economic reward). But if any organisation consistently and unquestioningly adopts only this line, without checking to see how employees find this acceptable and without organising for continued dialogue

about incentives, then this use of the view of beings is in danger of slipping into unreflective use. Also, as far as possible in an organisation, there should be room for employees to be rewarded on the basis of different incentives. For example, some employees at points in time might gain greater reward from intrinsic satisfaction and thus choose to take less economic rewards. The flexibility of the CLO will allow these options always to be put on the table. Employees who suggest different options for incentives should be regarded as employees from whom they can learn about motivation. In this way a CLO will continually refine its view of the complexity of motivation. There is no method for determining which view of motivation is more “appropriate” -- other than the critical systemic learning that has been explored throughout this thesis. Nothing is more or less appropriate than employees in the situation learning from one another and acting accordingly. So it is impossible to say that managers can match motivation to appropriate situations. This is the importance of Gregory’s (1992) and also Midgley’s (1995a, b) critique of TSI(1) which tried to match theories to situations.

Rather than this matching of motivation to situation, it is preferable to have some understanding of different theories and on the basis of this understanding, developed with participants in the situation, to see what can be learnt about how to deal with motivations that are defined as relevant. Flood and Romm’s (1996a) ‘triple loop learning’ develops this idea by arguing that managers need to have a consciousness that can loop between different ways of seeing. Once managers have this consciousness, they are able to think better about how to proceed in given situations. There is no recipe that can tell managers that such and such a theory matches such and such a situation. This mechanistic approach is out of keeping with to build a CLO. A CLO develops managers’ critical capacities so that they can judge better how to act in specific situations with which they are faced (e.g.,

Midgley, 1995b, 1997). There may be some sense in trying to assess how to look at the current situation. Managers can look, as a start, at:

- Employees' positions in the organisation and whether there are possibilities for them to develop their capacities;
- Employees' qualifications and whether these are relevant to their jobs, and if not, whether they might prefer to get on-the-job training that is more relevant for what they want to do;
- The sources of motivation -- what is important for them at present;
- What evidence there may be for the interpretation that they are demotivated at present;
- What possibilities can be explored for helping to motivate them in accordance with how they define what is important to them.

As shown above, these rewards can differ from person to person: while some might value economic reward, others might value the chance for some training towards some other skills; others again might want to see opportunities for getting promoted to a position which is more challenging for them. On the basis of starting points such as these, and other questions which could be discussed with employees in the workplace (and with other stakeholders), managers could as facilitators or intervenors try to map out a perception of the different motivations operating in the current situation, the resources available to deal with these, and the opportunities that exist for creating a situation which is more in keeping with managers' ideas of how they could operate in a CLO.

Given that the aim of motivation is to lead towards 'improvement' (Midgley's usage), managers need also to find a way of thinking about improvements -- what desired future

situation is being looked towards. Here again, managers could operate with a starting list such as:

- More dialogical communication between employees in different levels of organisation, across sectors and with other stakeholders;
- More dialogue about possible training needs that can be pursued;
- More learning about different things that can motivate employees and how these differences can be dealt with in a CLO;
- More learning about how employees can operate in organisations without the organisation expecting compliance with predetermined ends. This could involve, for example, dialogue about levels of profit to be pursued, types of productivity that are regarded as important, and ways of pursuing profit or productivity.

Once critical systemic learning is encouraged, then it is also possible to set up an appraisal system that allows for continued learning about itself. This is important. Otherwise, appraisal systems run the risk of being inherently conservative, being set up to conserve reward systems culturally already operating. An appraisal system in a CLO would have the characteristic that it would allow employees not to become fixed in present reward incentives. They should always look forward to moving from the current situation (as they perceive it) to some desired future state that they believe will be more satisfying.

In order to be able to facilitate the process towards a CLO similar skills to those discussed by Argyris (1993) and by Schein (1987b) (and described earlier in this chapter) would need to be cultivated on the part of managers. The additional skill of being open to discordance (Gregory, 1992) and to triple loop learning (Flood and Romm, 1996a) would also be needed. These skills are critical reflection with others and self-reflection, as

outlined in my thesis (especially in Chapter 6). However, the methods presented in this section are an ideal; in practice, managers will need to modify and adapt them, and/or introduce other methods, according to in a given organisational context.

In the following section, I indicate why there is a need for a critical systemic approach to motivation in Taiwanese enterprises.

## **9. 5 The need for a critical systemic approach to motivation in Taiwanese enterprises**

So far, I argue that in order to tackle the problems of motivation, managers need to be aware of a diversity of personalities and communicate with others so that they can develop appropriate response approaches to motivation. Taiwanese enterprises have followed traditional Chinese culture which involves specific social circumstances. For example, Chen (1984) describes the characteristics of Taiwanese enterprises as follows: 1. Personal relationship is emphasised. 2. Owners are regarded as sole rulers. 3. Nepotism is common. 4. The employer has a kind of “power” or authority, derived from respect, and ties of duty and obligation. Cheng and Kleiner (1993) emphasise that the Chinese normally stress a rational commitment to motivation rather than an emotional one. Moreover, during the 1990's Taiwanese enterprises have been subject to dynamic external change and the influx of multiple effects of the combination of Chinese and Western cultures, both of which have produced large internal tensions. There has been a growing appreciation of the importance of effective motivation. Taiwanese enterprises have to become aware of how to make full use of their human resource in order to ensure their viability and competitiveness. In the past decade, with social, political and economic changes, most Taiwanese enterprises have been facing rapid change. For example:

- **Changes in cultural values**

The majority of Taiwanese immigrated from mainland China over the past several centuries and they retain their Chinese cultural traditions. From 1884 - 1934 Japan occupied Taiwan, so that the older generation of Taiwan were educated by the Japanese and were influenced by that culture. Over the past twenty-five years or so, the new management generation have been educated in the thinking of western countries, mainly in the USA. Yeh (1991) observes that the type of management practices used by Taiwanese firms are the choices of their Chief Executive Officers. Their different backgrounds such as family origin (mainlanders or local natives), education (American or Taiwanese education), and age, all influence the type of management style that they use. He also looks at these three types of influences in terms of organizational structure, decision making and human resource management practices.

In a classic study, Meade (1970) examined the difference between Chinese and American cultures. He found that the Chinese people of the older generation have values based on obeying authority. Consequently, traditional style bosses always use power rather than democracy otherwise they would lose face. However, the new generation of managers are more individualistic, suggesting that new ideas of motivation intervention are needed.

- **Market structure changes**

After the second world war, due to lack of natural resources, Taiwan depended on US financial aid to develop its economic independence by increasing the productivity of its industry and exported agriculture products. Jacoby (1966) states that

The joint Chinese-U.S. strategy was to use the bulk of aid money in other sectors to create external economics for private investment in agriculture and industry. (Jacoby, 1966, p.190)

However, the growth of the importance of the domestic service sector with the rise in spending power of the people has changed the market structure. Taiwanese enterprises

will have to adapt to these new circumstances change. For example, Yang (1992) notices that what is happening in the course of the modernisation of Taiwan, is that employees are tending to “change from social orientation to individual orientation in their need for achievement” (p.153). This means that “the Chinese people become gradually more like people in a modern industrialised society such as the United States, where the individual-oriented type of achievement motivation prevails” (p. 153). Yang (1992) believes that in countries such as the USA there is typically this kind of motivation directing personal orientations.

Again taking the example of Taiwan as a way of seeing the application of this view of people, we can see that the idea of Rational Beings also features when Taiwanese “move away from the traditional syndrome of social oriented traits” -- and increasingly towards achievement itself (Yang, 1992, p.153). As this occurs, there is also some movement -- as described by Weber (1947) -- away from traditional authority towards the authority of experts. Managers who are experts at something are given status for this in the more modern organisations. As Yang (1992) notes, there is thus a “central trend of Chinese psychological transformation due to modernisation” (p.160). Whether or not this trend is something to be desired, is a matter that is not considered by Yang.

- **The recognition of labour rights**

The Labour Standards Law (LSL) became law in 1984. The LSL is a law that establishes wage and hour requirements and working conditions. Workers have begun to demand changes resulting in a number of industrial conflicts between employers and employees which were unknown before the law was introduced. For example in 1986 there were 1458 conflict cases rising to 1621 cases by 1987. The reasons for the industrial conflicts were mainly due to disagreements regarding working conditions, salary, annual bonus, annual leave.

This is also partly as a result of the repeal of the Enforcement Law of 1951 which banned strikes and workers unions. Since 1986, workers can legally strike and organise unions. This reflects changes in society more generally both politically and socially. This freedom may mean that organisations become less effective at carrying out their business and as a result labour problems have become the major issue in investment (Industry Bulletin;1993). We see that Taiwanese enterprises are facing many challenges from both within the organisation (different values between generations, owner-workers' conflicts) and outside the boundaries of the organisation (social liberalisation and global market competition) and they will need to find new ways to survive. For example, Ferdinand (1996) points out that not all employees see themselves as simply working hard in order to get more financial reward. Moreover, he states, as the opportunities increase for employees' self-fulfilment through means other than work, they are not prepared to work as hard as the older generation did (in Taiwan) "in the aftermath of the Second World War and the civil war against the communists" (p.59). There therefore seems to be some evidence that, at least as Ferdinand sees it, the ideology of Economic Beings does not penetrate completely into all sectors of the society. Just as Burrell (1992) also points out, there are tendencies for resistance to this ideology through the creation of different lifestyles. This seems also to have some substance in the context of Taiwan -- judging from Ferdinand's work.

Taiwanese enterprises are presently facing rapid social, political and economic change, which is producing many challenges, from both inside the organisation (different values between generations, owner-workers' conflicts) and outside it (social liberalization and global market competition). For these reasons, it is considered that an examination of the

potential for using a critical systemic approach to motivation in Taiwanese enterprises would be beneficial.

Given the complexities of the evolving work place relations in Taiwan, it may be that organisations (and particularly the older generation of managers within them) are not yet ready for the introduction of a critical systemic approach to motivation. However, in my view the younger generation of well educated and rising managers are ready both to be motivated differently and to use new motivation approaches. Hence, on balance, I feel that Taiwan is ready for the introduction of a critical systemic approach to motivation which will facilitate the development of a critical learning organisation.

## **9. 6 Conclusion**

In this chapter I moved towards a re-categorisation of motivation approaches in order to lead toward the category of complex beings. It was shown how this last category allows managers to appreciate the discordant relationship between the available motivation approaches which imply different views of human beings and their capacities. Managers can appreciate that employees are complex enough to be able to be understood not in terms of any single one of the views of beings. Human beings (in terms of complex beings) can be understood as capable of dynamically altering personal views. This dynamism implies that managers appreciate different ways of seeing employees (including ways in which they can become motivated) and that in organisations there is scope for dialoguing (multiloguing) between different languages about what is possible and desirable.

I then moved on to consider whether managers can develop a method for building a CLO. I showed that such a method should allow pluralist systemic approaches in interventions (as described in Chapter 4), encourage critically reflection on power relations and question ideology conflicts in organisations (as described in Chapter 5), need critical systemic learning during interventions (as described in Chapter 6), and take into consideration cross-cultural influences on motivation (as described in Chapter 7). A CLO allows people to learn from one another in a constant process which implies also a dynamic self-society relationship. No organisational contexts should become fixed and unquestioned. No way of assigning rewards should be seen as fixed. No way of organising work should become permanent. Any fixing means that the organisation is not a CLO. I offered a set of starting issues regarding motivation that a facilitator (together with others) could use to begin to assess situations in any particular organisation; and also a set of questions that could allow managers to think about improvements. These, I suggest, would provide a way in for facilitators hoping to set about building a CLO.

In the next and final chapter I provide a summary of what I believe I have achieved through this study as a whole in terms of showing the need for a critical systemic approach to motivation and what such an approach could offer.

## **Chapter 10: Conclusion**

## **Chapter 10**

### **Conclusion**

#### **10. 1 Introduction**

Throughout this thesis we have learned about the internal and external issues of motivation interventions. We have seen the importance of working with human nature, social contexts, and encouraging critical reflexivity in our employees. We have learned the critical nature and importance of values, synergy, and critical learning. I have used critical systems thinking (CST) to inform my understanding of the issues in motivation interventions. Motivation is not a simple matter. In fact, as this thesis has discussed, motivation interventions involve a lot of issues. In Chapter 1, the following aims of this thesis were established:

1. to critically analyse the literature on motivation;
2. to evaluate and organise the range of approaches available;
3. to develop a means by which managers can utilise the plurality of motivation methods available to them;
4. to show why managers need to be socially aware when seeking to motivate people;
5. to show why managers (and others) need to adopt a critical systemic learning approach during motivation interventions; and
6. to show how cross-cultural influences should be addressed in a motivation intervention.

7. to show why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary; and,
8. to demonstrate the importance for each of the strands of the critical systemic approach to motivation.

In this chapter, I will show how these aims have been met.

## **10. 2 Meeting the aims of the thesis**

The first aim was to *critically analyse the literature on motivation*. In Chapter 3, I examined the assumptions of different motivation approaches in terms of their implications for the organisation of working life in a society. In order to evaluate and differentiate the approaches, I drew on the ‘sociological paradigms’ framework developed by Burrell and Morgan (1979). I showed that Burrell and Morgan’s framework gives us one method for evaluating motivation approaches, but that as practising managers we really need a more practical way to relate the approaches to the specific situations facing us in order to make choice between methods. An alternative approach, that of Jackson and Key’s (1984), later extended by Jackson (1987), provides a “system of systems methodologies” framework which focuses on problem-situation characteristics, and I also used this framework to *organise and evaluate the range of motivation approaches* (the second aim) available. Through the use of the two frameworks a number of persisting problems with the range of motivation approaches were highlighted and these formed the starting points for each of the next four chapters.

The third aim was *to develop a means by which managers could utilise the plurality of motivation methods available to them*. In Chapter 4, I reviewed some more recent critical

systems literature and showed how ideas about pluralism drawn from CST could be used to help managers in utilising the full range of motivation approaches available. As CST considers the ethics of using specific approaches, it was argued that it can provide a more just approach when dealing with motivation in organisations.

The fourth aim was to *show why managers need to be socially aware when seeking to motivate people*. Here, I argued that it is necessary to take the ‘whole’ social situation into account when managers are dealing with the issues of motivation. Initially, I suggested that it is important for managers to consider the widest possible set of affected people, instead of only direct participants. I then argued that any change will affect different interest groups in different ways. Indeed, this thesis recognises that social pressures will affect whether motivation interventions can be implemented properly, and that certain approaches may be unsuitable when dealing with the issues of motivation in certain ideological or social circumstances. In Chapter 5, it was suggested that it is worthwhile to understand the power relations and ideology conflicts in organisations which allow us to reflect on existing ways of life. This thesis argued that ideology-critique is a dynamic process which depends on the interaction among people, alien ideologies, and interpretations of social circumstances. It also emphasised that personal and social ideology affect both our view of reality and choice of approaches to motivation interventions. Critique is important, because it allows us to expand our understanding. I therefore proposed that Gregory’s (1992) critical appreciation model should be used as a basis for development of an approach for motivation interventions. Through this discussion the fourth aim was met.

The fifth aim of this thesis was *to show why managers (and others) need to adopt a critical systemic learning approach during motivation interventions*. I argued that managers should be critically aware of the needs and desires of employees, so as to help release their potential. In Chapter 6, I argued that only critical systemic learning would be sufficiently open to the possible radical differences that exist within alien paradigms or cultures. Altogether, this thesis argues that learning should be improved by means of an ideology-critique process to communicate with and learn from alien paradigms (or different cultures). Ideas on critical systemic learning developed in Chapter 6 were applied further in Chapter 7, where it was shown how this kind of learning also needs to be both culturally sensitive and able to extend the boundaries of different cultures. This thesis emphasises that managers should learn to go beyond patterns which are becoming entrenched, such as those associated with ideas of influence and control applied to the social context, in order to prevent them from spreading across all of our ways of thinking.

The sixth aim of the thesis was *to show how cross-cultural influences should be addressed in a motivation intervention*. Here, I argued that different approaches are based upon particular meta-theoretical assumptions about social reality, which are also informed by specific cultural influences. This thesis uses CST as a basic philosophy to explore how to create a critical process for motivation interventions which seeks to expose cultural differences and build upon them. In Chapter 4, I argued by allowing pluralist systemic approaches in interventions that the issues of motivation can be considered from wider points of view than other “traditional” motivation approaches have done. In Chapter 7, I considered the consequences of changes in cultural norms within a society especially as they related to issues of motivation. I showed that a critical systemic approach which draws on ideas about dialogue between alien perspectives

would be a more useful approach for managers to adopt in their motivation interventions. Specifically, I argued for people to adopt a more open approach to understanding other perspectives. Through such an approach, learning that draws on cross-cultural features of a situation can be achieved.

The seventh and eighth aims were *to show why a critical systemic approach to motivation is necessary* and *to demonstrate the complementary importance of each of the strands of the approach*. In Chapter 8, I pulled together the strands of my approach: pluralism, social awareness, an ethical, learning perspective and open-ness to cross-cultural influences. Then, in order to aid the task of showing how to apply my approach, in Chapter 9, I focussed on the need to build a critical learning organisation (CLO). To do this, I recategorised some of the motivation approaches. I argued that it is preferable, as part of my approach, to view people as complex beings who do not have fixed motivations or fixed ways of directing themselves. Complex beings also exercise self-reflection and reflection with others, and learn from discord to develop in a dynamic way as part of their involvement in organisations (or society). I argued that managers (and others) must be committed to continually developing themselves and others. When managers give employees the opportunity to learn, develop, and grow, they expand their horizons and make connections. They find new motivation in what they do and in their work environment.

I believe that my approach could be useful for managers, especially in Taiwanese enterprises. During my experience of working as a manager in Taiwan for thirteen years, I was troubled by unsuccessful attempts by our management team to motivate ‘employees’ (that is, those under our direction). I have realised that these shortcomings have often

resulted from a failure to appreciate the circumstances of Taiwanese enterprises and a desire to be guided instead by motivation approaches used in other cultures. At the same time, I have seen that we managers lacked awareness of the influence of other cultures (such as the U.S.A) on employees, who were not motivated entirely by external rewards. Having considered these and other matters, my approach would consider Taiwanese enterprises' needs rather than approaches which merely copy alien thinking.

### **10.3 Contributions to Knowledge**

Contributions have made through the critical analysis of the motivation literature in Chapter 3. My review of the literature on motivation revealed a wide diversity of approaches. Given the wide variety of motivation approaches, I felt that it was necessary somehow to evaluate the different methods, to assess whether, how and when any single approach might be better than another. A further contribution was made in Chapter 4 where I considered how the literature on pluralism and intervention methods might inform a manager's approach to dealing with the diversity of motivation methods available. In Chapter 5, I showed that motivation takes place in an ideological arena where people have different views about what it is morally right to do. Here, a contribution was made by suggesting that managers need to be socially aware, to adopt an ethical stance when dealing with motivation issues. Chapter 6 pointed to the need for guidance on processes of critical reflection and learning whilst Chapter 7 contributed to an appreciation of how alien and discordant cross-cultural aspects can be utilised and learning between different perspectives achieved. Finally, the most significant contribution that my research makes to the field of motivation is in the model of a critical systemic approach (detailed in

Chapter 8 and evaluated in Chapter 9) which I argued can be used by managers in Taiwan to address the problems currently being experienced there.

## **10. 9 Thoughts for the future**

The existing motivation approaches in general fail to uncover the assumptions which are behind their ideologies and ignore power relations in society. These approaches often criticise and oppose alien ideologies. Moreover, these approaches ignore our capability for critical reflexivity which exposes the ideological base of different motivation approaches, leading to resistance. In contrast, this thesis argues that the diversity of available motivation approaches, ideological differences, organisational (even social) constraints, and cultural diversity *can* be managed using my approach enlightened by social and critical awareness, pluralism, and critical reflexivity, to improve motivation interventions. Especially, my approach emphasises that we should have the notion of critical systemic learning which facilitates communication with and learning from different cultures (or alien paradigms). This would overcome the transient nature of many ‘solutions’ and increase ‘sustainability’ of motivation.

In this thesis I have concerned myself with the abstract rather than the concrete. Thus, a further gap still exists between theory and practice. Specifically, there is a clear need to educate managers to understand and utilise my approach -- in my case, in Taiwanese enterprises. One obvious problem is that of translating academic concepts and language into practical terms that managers can understand. This is a challenge which would need further work in close contact with organisations and management practitioners.

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