Unit – II

Chapter- 4: Decision Making: Meaning, Types and Factors Affecting Decision-Making

Dr. Vibha Sharma
Associate Professor & Head (Retired)
Department of Public Administration
MCM DAV College for Women, Chandigarh
Website - https://vibhasharma.in/

Objectives: The objectives of this chapter are to make the students aware of:

1. The concept of Decision-Making.
2. Types of Decisions.
3. The Characteristics of Decision-Making.
4. The process of Decision-Making.
5. Decision-Making Skills.
6. Factors/Hindrances affecting Decision-Making.
7. Measures for Effective Decision-Making.
8. Activities to understand Decision-Making.
9. MCQs on Decision-Making: Meaning, Types and Factors Affecting Decision-Making.

Example: Decision-Making - Controlling Pollution

According to the National Academy of Sciences, USA (1966) Pollution means an undesirable change in the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of water, air and soil that may harmfully affect human, animal and plant life, industrial progress, living conditions and cultural assets.

Pollution has become a serious threat to the existence of human beings; hence, controlling pollution has become crucial for governments around the world. The Government of India also makes decisions to control pollution.

In this chapter, we will examine decision-making by the government/civil servants to control pollution.

Introduction

Decision-making is an indispensable part of the management process. It is the process of choosing the best alternative from amongst various available alternatives to solve a managerial problem. The decision-making process is a dynamic and continuous process undertaken at all levels of the organisation. Higher levels take important decisions while middle and lower levels make routine decisions.

Definitions

1. **Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary:** "Decision making is the process of deciding about something important, especially in a group of people or in an organisation".

2. **Koontz and O'Donnell:** "Decision-making is the actual choice from among the alternatives of a course of action".

3. **George R. Terry:** "Decision-making is the selection based on some criteria from two or more possible alternatives".

4. **Heinz Weihrich and Harold Koontz:** "Decision-making is the selection of a course of action from among alternatives".

Decision-making is thus an important process of selecting the most appropriate alternative from the possible alternatives for resolving an issue confronting them.

Types of Decisions

Decision-making in the organisation is fundamental to achieving its objectives. Decisions are classified in the following manner:

I. Simon's Classification of Decisions

a) **Programmed Decisions:** Programmed decisions are standing decisions and help in resolving issues that are repetitive and routine in nature. The organisations establish standard procedures to be followed while making decisions. Programmed decisions include policies, practices, standards and adopted procedures.

Examples

- The Government of India launched the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) in 1985 to protect all children and pregnant mothers from preventable killer diseases. This programme provides pre-determined/standard procedures and a national immunisation schedule for free vaccination to reduce child and maternal mortality.

- National Education Policy - 2020 is a set of programmed decisions to bring reforms in the education sector.

- Decision to implement the Goods and Services Tax and bring reforms in the tax regime is a programmed decision.

b) **Non-Programmed Decisions:** Non-programmed decisions are not repetitive and routine. Organisations face new problems and cannot rely much on previous decisions and practices to solve these problems. Such problems may require out-of-the-box creative thinking and may occur only a few times in the organisation.

Examples

- During a pandemic, which normally occurs once in a century, non-programmed decisions need to be taken by the governments and international organisations. the COVID-19 pandemic, a highly infectious disease, was raging, and governments even took an unconventional decision of total lockdown/partial lockdown to deal with the situation. Lockdowns were slowly lifted after the Standard Operating Procedures were identified and the vaccination programme was rolled out.

- During COVID-19, initially, all were clueless about the way to deal with it. Police initially made use of the baton to keep people inside their houses. Later, they decided to adopt innovative methods and to make the people aware of the pandemic and the need for lockdown and other Standard Operating Procedures.

II. Chester I Barnard's Classification of Decisions

Chester I Barnard classified decisions as Organisational and Personal.

a) **Organisational Decisions:** Organisational decisions are those that an executive takes to achieve the objectives of the organisation. The objectives relate to the allocation and reallocation of duties and

financial resources, and other important issues of the organisation. The executive can delegate the organisational decisions to his subordinates as per organisational policies.

Examples

- A decision made by a Municipal Commissioner (generally a civil servant) to allocate work to different functionaries of the Municipal Corporation for achieving the goals of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan or any other government programme.

- A decision by the Deputy Commissioner to implement welfare programmes for the benefit of women and children.

b) **Personal Decisions:** On the other hand, personal decisions are taken by an executive in his personal capacity, i.e. an executive's personal decisions affect his personal life. These decisions have to be taken by him and cannot be delegated to others. Occasionally, personal decisions can affect the functioning of the organisation also.

Examples

- A civil servant deciding to improve his technical/educational qualifications to update his knowledge for effective functioning.

- A civil servant's decision to go by his personal vehicle and not take an official one.

III. Strategic & Tactical Decisions

a) **Strategic Decisions:** Strategic decisions taken at the higher levels in the organisation relate to the achievement of long-term goals. These decisions have a major impact on the functioning of the organisation.

Examples

- The Make-in-India programme of the Government of India is a long-term strategy to develop and enlarge manufacturing capabilities within the country.

- Similarly, during COVID-19 pandemic, the government started the process of making the country self-reliant in handling such medical emergencies.

b) **Tactical Decisions:** Tactical Decisions taken at the middle management levels in the organisation relate to the short-term goals. They help in achieving the goals and objectives determined by the strategic decisions.

Examples

- During COVID-19, the government made use of both the public and private sector capacities to manufacture medical kits, protective gear and vaccines not only for use within the country but also for exporting to other countries in the world. The country had become a pharmaceutical hub for the entire world during this time.

- Health Department's decision to set up a medical camp to make people aware of and test the eyes of people at the block/district level.

IV. Policy & Operational Decisions

a) **Policy Decisions:** Policy Decisions are major decisions taken at the highest level. They form the backdrop of many other decisions made later to achieve the goals set by the organisations.

Examples

- The Government of India formulated the National Education Policy (NEP) – 2020 to bring reforms at all levels of education to address developmental imperatives of our country.

- The Government of India has formulated Health Policies over the years - National Health Policy - 1983, National Health Policy - 2002 & National Health Policy - 2017 to bolster the health sector.

b) **Operational Decisions:** Operational Decisions are day-to-day decisions taken by different functionaries in the organisation. These decisions are also as per the overall objectives.

Examples

- To bring long-term reforms in the education system through NEP-2020, several operational decisions like providing infrastructure, empowering teachers and the use of bilingual approach in the teaching-learning process have also been taken.

- The Ayushman Bharat Abhiyan scheme was started in 2018 to provide healthcare facilities to the vulnerable groups.

V. Individual and Group Decisions

a) **Individual Decisions:** Decisions taken by individuals in an organisation are individual decisions, and decisions taken by a group/committee in an organisation are group decisions. Individual decisions are generally taken by senior-level functionaries and point towards a centralised organisation having an autocratic style of functioning. In such decisions, the subordinates are not consulted, and the entire responsibility lies with the individual/functionary who takes the decision. We also have examples of individual decisions being taken by senior functionaries for resolving people's/society's issues.

Examples

- In small business organisations the owner takes all the decisions and hence the success or failure of his organisation depends on his individual decisions.

- An IAS officer, Mr Umakant Umrao, helped the MP farmers battle drought with the help of the Dewas Model for water harvesting - digging ponds in a portion of the field and using it for irrigation as well as groundwater recharge. His initiative led to resolving the water crisis of the region.

b) **Group Decisions:** Group Decisions are collective decisions that are taken by consulting other members/subordinates who are members of a committee constituted at departmental/organizational level. These decisions enable proper discussion on the issues and hence are broad-based decisions leading to collective responsibility.

Examples

- In a large firm or public sector enterprise important decisions are taken by the Governing Body/Board of Directors headed by a chairman.

- Digital India Programme, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

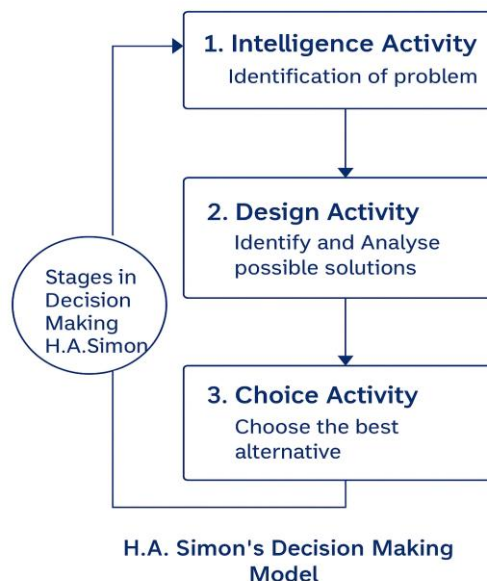## Characteristics of Decision Making

Decision-making is an essential process in organisations. Following are the characteristics of decision-making:

1. **Goal-oriented Process:** Decision-making is a goal-oriented process that helps in achieving the pre-determined objectives of the departments/organisations.

2. **Problem Solving Process:** Decision-making is a process which helps in identifying and resolving the problems faced by the organisation.

3. **Decisions depend on Policy:** Every decision taken by the organisation is dependent on the larger policy in that field. For instance, decisions related to the immunisation of children are dependent on both child welfare policy and immunisation policy.

4. **Dynamic Process:** The decision-making process is dynamic in nature and varies from situation to situation and time to time.

5. **Continuous Process:** Decision-making is a continuous and ongoing process that may see changes over a period of time. Decisions taken earlier must be evaluated and re-evaluated to bring the required changes.

6. **Intellectual and Rational Process:** It includes a rational process that is a result of deliberations, reasoning, periodic evaluation and monitoring.

7. **Dependent on Environmental Factors:** Environmental factors are taken into consideration while taking decisions. Governmental decisions are taken by keeping the economic, geographical and social factors within which they operate.

8. **Selection of one Alternative:** Decision-making is first the identification of the possible alternatives and then selection of the best alternative as per the requirements of the organization.

9. **Time Dimension:** Decision-making has to be timely to be effective. The organization may face financial loss due to a delayed decision.

10. **Uncertainty and Risk Management:** Calculating the risks involved in selecting an alternative, especially the financial risk, is an important feature of the decision-making process.

Stages in Decision Making

Herbert A Simon, a social scientist, has studied decision-making in detail. He describes the process of decision-making in three stages, namely: The Intelligence Activity; The Design Activity; and The Choice Activity. These activities are as follows:

**1. Intelligence Activity**
Identification of problem

2. Design Activity
Identify and Analyse possible solutions

3. Choice Activity
Choose the best alternative

Stages in Decision Making H.A.Simon

H.A. Simon's Decision Making Model

1. **The Intelligence Activity:** The Intelligence Activity relates to the identification of problems/incidents to make a decision. At this stage, the decision-maker identifies a problem or an opportunity to make a decision. In order to do so, he collects information/data, gains insight and determines the significance and implications of making a decision.

2. **The Design Activity:** The Design Activity encompasses the process of designing solutions to solve the problem. This activity helps in determining and analysing different available alternatives to identify a possible course of action. Quantitative and qualitative methods are used to arrive at and evaluate the possible solutions.

3. **The Choice Activity:** After the design activity, wherein different alternatives are determined, the Choice Activity involves selecting the most suitable alternative from the available alternatives based on organisational objectives.

Decision-making is thus selecting the most suitable alternative, by the management, and putting it in action or implementing it. implementation of the decision, too, may involve taking another set of decisions due to the problems faced while executing the decisions. s

Process of Decision Making: The process of decision making is as follows:

Process of Decision Making
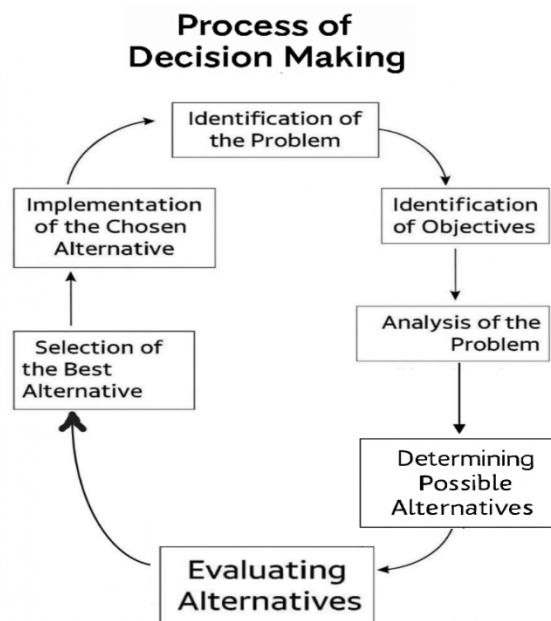
1. **Identification of the problem/s:** An organisation may face a problem or there is a need to make a rational decision. First step is to identify the problem. Identification of the problem confronting the organisation to take a decision is very important. Sometimes, instead of the problem, symptoms are identified as problems. The problem instead of being solved is aggravated.

> **Example: Controlling Pollution - Problem**
>
> India, a developing country, has to increase its industrial and agricultural activities to develop different sectors of the economy. While setting up industries or increasing agricultural activities it was observed that pollution was increasing. Air, water, land, radiation and noise pollution is becoming a major source of worry.

> Pollution was identified as a major problem and controlling it is one of the major tasks of the government wherein numerous decisions are required to be taken periodically.

2. **Identification of Objectives:** After identifying the problem, the need is to identify the objectives to be achieved by resolving the problem. Resolution of the problem must lead to the fulfilling of the objectives.

Example: Controlling Pollution - Objectives

Identification of major objectives to control pollution was undertaken. The objectives include:

- Preserving Environment
- Protecting the health of the citizens
- Managing climate change
- Improving the quality of life of the citizens
- Achieving the benchmarks of Sustainable Development Goals
- Economic benefits

---

3. **Analysis of the Problem:** After identifying a problem and the objectives to be achieved, the executive undertakes a detailed classification and analysis of the problem in the following steps:

   (i) **Classification of the Problem:** Classification of the problem includes clear identification and causes of the problem after separating it from symptoms.

   (ii) **Collection of Data:** Collection of data and all possible information related to the problem. This may also help in determining the relationship of the problem and other functions of the organisation.

   (iii) **Data Analysis:** Collected data is analysed either manually or electronically and efforts are to isolate and describe the problem.

   (iv) **Data Evaluation:** The collected and analysed data is evaluated to develop solutions for the problem.

Example: Controlling Pollution - Analysis of the Problem

Classification of the Problem: Different types of pollution like air, water, soil, radiation and noise were classified and causes identified. For example, automobiles, industries and agriculture have been identified as major sources of pollution. Air - (transportation, agriculture, industry) Water - (fertilisers, industry, human waste, human consumption) Soil and Land - (fertilisers, human waste, disposal of non-biodegradable material)

Collection of Data: Data collection regarding all the different types of pollution. For example, How many rivers are polluted, identifying polluting industries and their numbers, collecting data regarding stubble burning, etc., to find solutions to control pollution. Data related to pollution is available in research papers, government websites and other such platforms. Example - Stubble burning https://www.mdpi.com/2571-6255/6/2/79 https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2035034.

Data Analysis: Data is analysed scientifically, manually and electronically by researchers and other

---

relevant institutions to understand and consider different aspects of the problem.

Data Evaluation: Data is evaluated to find possible alternatives to control pollution.

Data Analysis and Data Evaluation also help in determining the effects of pollution, like climate change, destruction of biodiversity, understanding interrelated causes, and determining different alternatives to control pollution.

4. **Determining Possible Alternatives:** The decision-maker makes efforts to determine diverse alternative solutions to resolve the problem/s. Many alternatives are identified and their benefits that may or may not accrue to the organisation are listed. At this stage sometimes the executives accept the first available solution in their hurry to make a decision.

> **Example: Controlling Pollution - Stubble Burning - Determining Possible Alternatives**
>
> Possible alternatives to reduce air, water and land pollution can include ban on stubble farming, reducing the number of vehicles, use of electric vehicles, earmarking vehicle free zones, growing more trees, emphasis on green firecrackers, curb on plastics and treatment of wastewater from industry.
>
> Since it is not possible to discuss the possible alternatives of all kinds of pollution, we will deal with the issue of stubble burning.
>
> Stubble Burning: Possible alternatives to control stubble burning and its effects include straw chopper, baler, reaper binder, mulching, bioenergy conversion, use of rotavator etc.

5. **Evaluating Alternatives:** The decision-maker evaluates each alternative after the identification and listing of all the alternatives. Some alternatives may benefit the organisation, while others may be discarded as they are unable to achieve the objectives identified by the organisation. The feasibility of all the alternatives is evaluated as per the organisation's requirements. While evaluating the alternatives, the organisation looks into:

   (i) Resources required - men, money, material and other resources;

   (ii) Development of other alternatives -sometimes two or more alternatives emerge to resolve the problem;

   (iii) Suitability of the decision - while evaluating alternatives, the decision-maker should always align them with the objectives of the organisation;

   (iv) Economic and/or social feasibility - some alternatives may seem to be good but may not be economically or socially viable;

   (v) Acceptability by the staff/target groups - Alternatives that create discord or are not fully acceptable can be customised as per the requirements of the organisation; and

   (vi) Benefits/Risks Involved: Every available alternative benefit, as well as risks involved, need to be listed.

> **Example: Controlling Pollution - Stubble Burning - Evaluating Alternatives**
>
> Every alternative to control pollution needs to be evaluated. Following are some general measures to control pollution:

- Alternative - Use of Electric Vehicles in place of petrol/diesel/solar powered/hydrogen powered. Evaluation - Determining whether we can produce the required number of vehicles, measures to dispose of batteries etc.

- Alternative - Increase in the number of public transport services.

  Evaluation - Determining how and which mode will be economical, have social feasibility and how much finance is required.

- Alternative - Earmarking vehicle freezones.

  Evaluation - Determining the economic and social feasibilities.

We will discuss the example of stubble burning.

In the case of stubble burning the following alternatives can be considered and evaluated:

- Alternative - Straw Chopper, Baler, Reaper Binder, Mulching, Bioenergy Conversion and Use of Rotavator

  Evaluation - Need of policies, specific programmes to promote, acceptability by the agriculturists, cost of using this alternative, availability of tools and implements, possible use in the pharmaceutical industry, cost to be borne by the government or the individuals/groups etc.

6. **Selection of the Best Alternative:** Selection of the most suitable alternative is the most important stage in the decision-making process. While selecting the alternative, *Peter Drucker,* a prominent management thinker, believes that the following criteria can be taken into consideration:

   (i) Benefits/Risks: The decision-maker has to weigh the benefits accruing with the risks involved.

   (ii) Economy of Effort: The decision-maker has to ensure that the selected alternative will involve minimum effort and maximum benefits.

   (iii) Time Dimension: Time is an important factor in the decision-making process. If the time dimension is ignored, it can result in a loss to the organisation.

   (iv) Resource Requirement: Adequacy of resources required is evaluated to ensure timely decision-making. The best possible use of human resources has to be looked into.

   Example: Controlling Pollution - Stubble Burning - Selection of the Best Alternative

   Keeping in mind the evaluated alternatives, choice of the best alternative is the next step specifically related to benefits/risks, availability of tools and techniques, availability of finance, time-factor, resources required etc.

   For example where will it be beneficial to install the ethanol based plant on paddy straw feedstocks - decision has to be based on the state where most of the stubble burning is done? Who will do it? How much time will be taken. Different strategies to control pollution through stubble burning can be involved in different places.

7. **Implementation of the Chosen Alternative:** Implementation of the chosen alternative to resolve the problem of the organisation is the final step of the decision-making process. Implementation too requires proper planning, monitoring and periodic evaluation.

Unit – II: Chapter- 4: Decision Making: Meaning, Types and Factors Affecting Decision-Making

<div style="border:1px solid blue; padding:10px">

Example: Controlling Pollution - Stubble Burning - Implementation of the Chosen Alternative

One of the methods to control pollution due to stubble burning taken by the government was to set up an Ethanol plant based on paddy straw feedstock by Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) in Panipat (Haryana). Haryana was chosen as stubble burning happens mostly in the states of Haryana and Punjab.

According to a press release by Press Information Bureau, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on Air Pollution caused by Stubble Burning on July 22, 2024, with persistent efforts there has been an overall reduction of 27% in Punjab and 37% in Haryana during 2023.

Source: https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2035034

</div>

Decision-Making Skills

Decision-making requires the following skills:

1. **Technical Skills:** An employee/official/civil servant who has to make decisions related to a specific field/sector/industry needs to have the required technical skills. He must be able to use the latest tools/techniques for making a timely decision.

   Examples:

   - An employee/official who is responsible for making decisions related to fish cultivation or sericulture must be trained in the respective fields of knowledge.

   - Law enforcement agencies and their officials must have the knowledge of the laws of the land.

   - Mr Jitendra Kumar Soni, an IAS officer (Rajasthan Cadre) is known to use technology for good governance. One such initiative taken by him was to incorporate technology-enabled programmes in day-to-day administrative functioning. He is using his technical knowledge and improving governance.

     Source: https://thebetterindia.com/208000/ias-hero-uttar-pradesh-best-of-2019-initiatives-india-scheme-changemaker/

2. **Interpersonal Skills:** Effective decision-making requires the decision-makers to work with others in a manner that the goals of the teams are achieved. The decision-makers must be able to communicate their ideas and information to the team members and other individuals in a friendly and creative environment rather than in a hostile and centralised manner. Decision-makers need to cultivate effective interpersonal skills to take all along, understand others' perspectives and be empathetic.

   Example:

   - Ms. Shashanka Ala, Deputy Commissioner (IAS) in the state of Mizoram on her first posting saw widespread malnutrition and decided to address this issue. She and her team of officials designed a unique solution - My school, My Farm, wherein every school and anganwadi was encouraged to grow their own food to battle malnutrition. She implemented this idea with the help of members of the village council, church, local non-profit orgnisations, schools and anganwadis and also agriculture and horticulture departments.

     Source: https://thebetterindia.com/189687/ias-hero-mizoram-malnutrition-agriculture-lawngtlai/

3. **Analytical Skills:** Analytical skills like critical thinking, problem solving and data analysis help in making informed decisions. Critical thinking enables quick evaluation of information by analysing both the pros and cons of the decision. Problem-solving works towards finding solutions to problems, and data analysis helps in interpreting and analysing data for decision-making.

   Example:
   - During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India used data analysis and forecasting models to decide when to impose or relax lockdowns.
   - To fight diseases like polio or tuberculosis, the Health Ministry examines epidemiological data. Statistical analysis reveals which regions or age groups are most vulnerable. Vaccination drives are intensified in high-risk districts instead of spreading resources thinly across the whole country.

4. **Time-Management Skills:** A decision-maker needs to have effective time-management skills so that he/she can identify and focus on the most important tasks and complete the work as per the deadlines.

   Examples:

   - When a cyclone is approaching, the government has only a few hours to evacuate people. So the government prioritises urgent decisions (evacuation, shelters, food supply) instead of long-term measures and relocates people quickly/timely to save lives.

5. **Innovative and Creative Skills:** Decision-making requires a person to think out of the box. So, he/she must be creative and innovative in the decision-making process.

   Example:

   - IAS Officer Mr. Sushant Gaurav, through his innovative thinking, transformed Jharkhand's Gumla district - a district having indigenous adivasi communities and having naxalite insurgency - by replacing water-guzzling paddy cultivation with sustainable ragi (finger millet) cultivation. His game-changing interventions empowered the tribals to make a self-sustaining business model. It also helped them in managing severe anaemia and malnutrition. This model is known as the Gumla model.

     Source: https://thebetterindia.com/336832/ias-officer-sushant-gaurav-transforms-gumla-district-of-jharkhand-with-ragi-millet/

6. **Research Skills:** Some decisions have to be based on data collected scientifically. Research needs to be done while taking social and economic decisions too.

   Example:

   - Most of the decisions taken by the government/medical officers during Covid-19 were based on medical research undertaken both at the national and international levels. Decisions undertaken during this time were related to Medicine protocols, lockdowns and other standard operating procedures.

7. **Emotional Intelligence:** Being empathic and thinking from the people's point of view, and making decisions that benefit people.

   Example:

   - An IAS officer Mr. Armstrong Pame, seeing the hardships faced by the people in Touesm (a remote area in Manipur) built a 100 km road through crowdfunding and transformed the lives of the citizens living in that area.

8. **Ethical Judgment Skills:** Decisions have to be ethical and not unethical, even in dire circumstances.

Example:

- Durga Shakti Nagpal, an IAS officer, is known for her resolute stance against corruption.
  Source: https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1163658

Hindrances/Factors affecting Effective Decision Making

Following are the hindrances/factors affective effective decision making:

1. **Lack of Reliable Information:** Lack of the availability of reliable information or incomplete or partial information is the biggest impediment of the decision-making process. It can lead to failure of strategically important projects.

2. **Information Overload:** In today's world of Information Technology, too much information on any issue can also delay effective decision-making as the decision-maker may not be able to assess and process all the data/information available to him.

3. **Personal Bias:** Personal bias of the decision-makers, can lead to irrational decision-making. The personal bias relates to people or issues but they can lead the decision-maker astray.

4. **Ineffective Time Management:** Sometimes crucial decisions are delayed due to irrelevant or routine matters affecting the organisation. Such matters also take away a lot of time and energy of the decision-maker and also result in wastage of financial resources.

5. **Lack of Adequate Resources:** Inadequacy of the right amount of resources, qualified personnel as well as finances may not allow the decision-maker to choose the best alternative, he may go for the second or third best alternative which may or may not maximise results.

6. **Vague Objectives:** Any vagueness at the identification of the objectives of the organisation may lead to vague or non-identifiable objectives and result in a loss to the organisation.

7. **Risk-Taking Ability:** If the financial position of the organisation is not good then the decision-maker will not be able to take an ambitious decision that can result in positive change in organisations.

8. **Ineffective Communication:** Ineffective or untimely communication of the objectives to be achieved, problems to be resolved and solution leads to hindrances in the decision-making process.

9. **Lack of Participation:** Lack of participation of the employees at any stage of the decision-making process is the biggest hindrance in effective decision making.

10. **Unanticipated Circumstances:** Unanticipated problems at any stage of the decision-making process can be a big hindrance. For example in the current year *i.e.* 2020 no industry or organisation could anticipate the circumstances that have occurred due to COVID-19. Best decisions can go wrong in such circumstances.

11. **Conflict:** Conflict in organisations between the employees and employers, inter-personal conflict between functionaries hinder effective decision-making, as more time and resources are likely to be spent on managing conflict rather than taking decisions.

12. **Leadership:** Effective decision-making is not possible if the leader of the organization lacks effective leadership qualities, namely lacks vision, does not take everyone along and does not understand the intricacies of the issue at hand.

Measures for Effective Decision-Making

Following are some measures through which effective decisions can be made:

1. The goals of the organisation must be clearly defined and understood by all.
2. Collection of data/information for decision-making must be from reliable sources and timely.
3. All the necessary organisational support must be made available to the decision-maker/committee;
4. Adequate financial resources must be made available to make decisions.
5. There must be a free flow of communication between the members of the organisation/groups to discuss and take decisions even on contentious issues;
6. Providing effective leadership and accountability during the decision-making process;
7. Use of latest decision-making tools and techniques like Cost Benefit Analysis, Programme Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT)/Critical Path Method (CPM), SWOT analysis and feasibility studies;
8. Members with necessary skills must be involved in the decision-making process;
9. All major functionaries involved in the planning and implementation of the decision must be involved in the decision-making process; and
10. Organisational conflict must be minimised to the extent possible.

Conclusion

Decision-making is choosing the best alternative of all the identified alternatives for solving the organisational problems. It is a continuous process having a cost and time dimension. Decision-making skills are required to make effective decisions. There are a number of hindrances to the effective decision-making process.

Activities to understand Decision-Making

(The teacher can do some or all these activities/any other activities, in the class to provide the required skill set to the students)

1. Community-Oriented Decision-Making: Study and discuss any community-oriented decision/decisions made by civil servants.

   ○ Form groups of 5-6 students and ask them to study a decision taken by a civil servant.

   ○ Different groups can be asked/given different decisions on topics like resolving the water crisis in an area, health issues or any other.

   ○ This activity can be done by taking one example and discussing within groups first, and then discussing and deliberating in the entire class or asking students to take different examples group-wise and then presenting to the class.

2. **Case-Study:** Give a case-study to different groups and ask the students to make appropriate decisions, followed by presentations and discussion in the class.

3. **Reassessing Decisions:** The activity proceeds in the following manner (Time - 40-50 Minutes of which 25-30 minutes are for discussions):

   ○ The teacher asks the students to write a decision which they had taken in the last week.

   ○ Ask them to reassess the decision and give reasons why they had taken that decision.

   ○ Ask them to reassess the decision, and will they take the same decision again?

- ○ Reasons thereof.
- ○ What did they learn from the whole activity?

  (The student will not be asked to show their decisions to others. If someone wants to discuss, then it can be done.

4. **Interpersonal Relations:** Ask the students to write down the answers to the following questions (Time - 40-50 Minutes, of which 25-30 minutes for discussions):
   - ○ Did they have a conflict/fight with anyone in the recent past?
   - ○ Reasons why the fight took place?
   - ○ Think from the other person's point of view and give reasons why you and she/he behaved in this manner?
   - ○ Assess your conflict/fight.
   - ○ How will you resolve the conflict/fight now?
   - ○ What did you learn from the whole activity?

   (The student will not be asked to show their decisions to others. If someone wants to discuss, then it can be done.)

5. **Time-Management:** Ask the students to draw 24 squares (24 hours) on a plain sheet of paper and do the following (40-50 minutes - 15-20 for doing the activity and rest for discussions):
   - ○ Write down what they did yesterday or a day before yesterday since they got up in the morning (hour-wise/half an hour-wise).
   - ○ Activities like - Took bath, had breakfast, came to college, went to a party, slept etc.
   - ○ Ask them to put a cross mark when the hour is complete - Suppose a student sleeps for 5 hours, then she/he should cross 5 squares. Like this, cross as many squares as the student can and write what they did.
   - ○ In the end, count all productive activities and all unproductive activities.
   - ○ See if you can save time from an unproductive activity for a productive one.
   - ○ Have a small discussion in the end.

6. Any other activity/game through which a teacher can make the concepts clear.

Important Terms/Terms/Information

1. **Koontz and O'Donnell:** "Decision-making is the actual choice from among the alternatives of a course of action".

2. **Programmed Decisions:** Programmed decisions are standing decisions and help in resolving issues that are repetitive and routine in nature. The organisations establish standard procedures to be followed while making decisions. Programmed decisions include policies, practices, standards and adopted procedures.

3. **Non-Programmed Decisions:** Non-programmed decisions are not repetitive and routine. Organisations face new problems and cannot rely much on previous decisions and practices to solve these problems. Such problems may require out-of-the-box creative thinking and may occur only a few times in the organisation.

4. **Organisational Decisions:** Organisational decisions are those that an executive takes to achieve the objectives of the organisation. The objectives relate to the allocation and reallocation of duties and financial resources, and other important issues of the organisation. The executive can delegate the organisational decisions to his subordinates as per organisational policies.

5. **Personal Decisions:** On the other hand, personal decisions are taken by an executive in his personal capacity, i.e. an executive's personal decisions affect his personal life. These decisions have to be taken by him and cannot be delegated to others. Occasionally, personal decisions can affect the functioning of the organisation also.

6. **Strategic Decisions:** Strategic decisions taken at the higher levels in the organisation relate to the achievement of long-term goals. These decisions have a major impact on the functioning of the organisation.

7. **Tactical Decisions:** Tactical Decisions taken at the middle management levels in the organisation relate to the short-term goals. They help in achieving the goals and objectives determined by the strategic decisions.

8. **Policy Decisions:** Policy Decisions are major decisions taken at the highest level. They form the backdrop of many other decisions made later to achieve the goals set by the organisations.

9. **Operational Decisions:** Operational Decisions are day-to-day decisions taken by different functionaries in the organisation. These decisions are also as per the overall objectives.

10. **The Intelligence Activity:** The Intelligence Activity relates to the identification of problems/incidents to make a decision. At this stage, the decision-maker identifies a

problem or an opportunity to make a decision. In order to do so, he collects information/data, gains insight and determines the significance and implications of making a decision.

11. **The Design Activity:** The Design Activity encompasses the process of designing solutions to solve the problem. This activity helps in determining and analysing different available alternatives to identify a possible course of action. Quantitative and qualitative methods are used to arrive at and evaluate the possible solutions.

12. **The Choice Activity:** After the design activity, wherein different alternatives are determined, the Choice Activity involves selecting the most suitable alternative from the available alternatives based on organisational objectives.

13. **Technical Skills:** An employee/official/civil servant who has to make decisions related to a specific field/sector/industry needs to have the required technical skills. He must be able to use the latest tools/techniques for making a timely decision.

14. **Emotional Intelligence:** Being empathic and thinking from the people's point of view, and making decisions that benefit people.

Short and Long Questions

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Define Decision-Making.

2. Write a note on any two types of Decisions.

3. Discuss H.A. Simon's process of Decision-Making.

4. Give three characteristics of Decision-Making.

5. Give three hindrances to effective Decision-Making.

6. Write three Decision-Making Skills.

Long Question

7. Define Decision-Making. Discuss the process of Decision-Making in detail.

8. Define Decision-Making and discuss Decision-Making Skills.

Additional Resources/Suggested Readings

1. Sharma, Vibha. Fundamentals of Public Administration for Semester – I, Jalandhar: New Academic Publishing Co, 2024

2. Avasthi, Amreshwar and Shriram Maheshwari. Public Administration. Agra: Lakshmi Narian Agarwal, 2016-2017.

3. Avasthi, Amreshwar and Anand Prakash Avasthi. Public Administration in India. Agra: Lakshmi Narian Agarwal, 2001.

4. Basu, Rumki. Public Administration Concepts and Theories. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1998.

5. Bhagwan, Vishnoo and Vidya Bhushan. Public Administration. New Delhi: S. Chand, 2005.

6. Bhattacharya, Mohit. New Horizons of Public Administration. New Delhi: Jawahar Publishers & Distributors, 2016.

7. Fadia, B.L. and Kuldeep Fadia. Public Administration - Administrative Theories. Thirteenth Revised Edition. Agra: Sahitya Bhawan, 2017.

8. Naidu, S. P. Public Administration. New Delhi: New Age International, 2006.

9. Sharma, M. P., B. L. Sadana and Harpreet Kaur. Public Administration in Theory and Practice. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 2015.

10. Relevant reading material from e gyankosh - http://egyankosh.ac.in/
11. Relevant reading material from e PG Pathshala - https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/

MCQs on Decision-Making: Meaning, Types and Factors Affecting Decision-Making - **https://forms.gle/Te4NkHeb8TJF79tZ6**