

The Manager: Between Individual and Group Decision-Making

GHALMI Ettayib¹ *
Mekki khadidja²

¹ Mustapha Stambouli University, Mascara,(Algeria), ghalmitayeb@gmail.com

² Mustapha Stambouli University, Mascara,(Algeria)

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Abstract:

This research contribution aims to highlight the leadership functions and decision-making patterns of managers, in addition to addressing the concept of collective decision-making and group decision-making.

The study concluded that the effectiveness of a decision depends on the maturity and experience of the decision-makers, and that the role of the manager is essential in decision-making, whether individual, collective, or in a group. Therefore, managers need to periodically refine their leadership skills by sharing opinions and seeking the help and advice of consultants and experts. Several key functions of the manager were also identified, including coordination, planning, and policy-making, reflecting the complexity of his role in guiding the work group to achieve its goals.

Keywords: Manager; Leadership; Decision Makers; Decision Making.

* **GHALMI Ettayib.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The management of institutions of all kinds seeks to achieve and attain set goals using available resources and capabilities. In doing so, it needs to make decisions to solve problems and address the ongoing challenges facing the institution. It can therefore be said that decision-making is the essence of management and the determining factor of its success or failure.

The quality of decision-making in an organization, whether individual or collective, depends on the maturity and experience of decision-makers and their awareness of the risks and consequences.

Decision-making in small and medium-sized organizations is often the responsibility of the manager, but in the case of complex or new problems, he or she may seek the help of experienced employees or consultants. Large organizations and companies face more complex challenges and problems, which makes the decision-maker's task more difficult. In these organizations, there are decision-making teams or groups that the manager can turn to. This raises the question about the role of the manager or leader in the group's decision-making process.

To discuss the study's problem, we analyzed different decision-making styles for managers to understand the decision-making process in different styles, in addition to clarifying the concepts of collective decision-making and group decision-making, while explaining the role of the manager in all of the above.

1 Decision-makers in the organization

Decision-making is a fundamental process in institutional management, and this process can be individual or collective. First and foremost, we must address concepts related to the manager, as he or she is central to the decision-making process, whether individual or collective.

1.1 The manager and decision-making in the organization:

When talking about decision-making, the manager immediately comes to mind as the leader and primary decision-maker in the organization. The manager must be flexible in determining how decisions are made. Sometimes circumstances push them in one direction, where it is imperative to have a group to help with decision-making, but on the other hand, experience leads them to believe that their experience and understanding of the problem is better than that of the group and therefore their decision is more likely to be correct. Sometimes the decision-making group is a tool to avoid the responsibility of making decisions individually (Towler 2009, 15-16). Through practice, training, and education, people can acquire the skills necessary to become good managers. It is equally important to recognize that employees are part of 50% the manager-employee relationship and therefore have an important contribution to make in this regard. In other words, being a good employee is a crucial element in having a good manager (Sinofsky et Iansiti 2010).

1.2 The managerial functions of a manager:

The manager develops, internalizes, and communicates business plans to his or her team and responds to unavoidable contingencies. Furthermore, he or she shapes the team, building values, processes, and capabilities that improve effectiveness over time. He or she creates and internalizes the strategy and translates it into specifics for team members. This is not a shallow management role, but rather true "technical leadership" that contributes to strategic perspectives, guides individual contributors, and coaches the team toward the strategy. The role is complex and requires both skill and time, balancing vision with communication. The role is grounded in technical excellence and combines an awareness of business objectives with an architectural understanding of the capabilities and interdependencies that will drive success (Sinofsky et Iansiti 2010, 194).

Managers are responsible for setting and achieving company goals with and through others (Tovmasyan 2017). The complexity of a manager's leadership role is best appreciated by reviewing the many tasks they perform. Specific managerial functions vary in importance depending on the type of group being led. In addition to the manager's style and personality, but to varying degrees, all managers serve a variety of functions. These functions are as follows (Bedeian et Glueck 1983, 496):

- The leader as an executive serves as a coordinator of group activities.
- The manager serves as a planner to influence the ways and means by which the group achieves its stated goals.
- The manager as a policymaker serves as a representative of the work group at higher levels in setting goals and policies.
- The manager as an expert serves as a source of information and skills.
- The manager as an external representative of the group serves as the work group's representative in dealing with other groups.
- The manager as a reward and punishment dispenser serves as a distributor of rewards and punishments.
- The manager as arbitrator and mediator serves as a judge and mediator in resolving conflicts within the group.
- The manager serves as a role model for the behavior of work group members.
- The manager serves as a symbol of the group, serving as a focal point for group unity.
- The manager serves as a scapegoat and target for criticism when things go wrong.

1.3 Decision-Making Styles for Managers:

Based on the Vroom Yetton Jago decision model, three leadership styles (authoritarian, consultative, and group) and six different decision processes can be distinguished (Vroom et Jago 1974):

1.3.1. Autocratic Style:

In this style, the manager makes decisions independently without consulting subordinates. Two types of processes can be distinguished within the autocratic style:

1.3.1.1. Solo Autocratic Style:

In this process, the manager uses available information to make decisions independently, without consulting team members or external parties. The decision does not depend on team members and their opinions are unimportant, but it is important to communicate the decision made to the team.

1.3.1.2 Autocratic Style with Dependence on Subordinates:

The manager makes the decision independently, obtains any necessary information from subordinates, and then decides to resolve the problem himself. The manager may inform subordinates of the problem upon obtaining information from them, or refrain from doing so. The role of subordinates in decision-making is clearly to provide specific information requested by the manager rather than to create or evaluate solutions.

1.3.2 Consultative Style:

In this style, the manager consults but makes the decision alone. Two types of processes can be distinguished within the consultative style:

1.3.2.1 Individual Consultative Style:

The manager adopts a consultative role and takes the initiative to consult with dependent team members individually about the situation, problem, and decision to be made, to obtain their ideas and suggestions without assembling them. Team participation is higher than in the autocratic decision-making style. However, the decision is still made by the leader. This decision may or may not reflect the influence of subordinates.

1.3.2.2 Group Consultative Style:

In this style, the manager gathers his team and shares the problem and situation with them. During this meeting, he obtains their ideas and suggestions and then makes a decision, which may or may not reflect the influence of subordinates.

1.3.3 Group Style:

The manager shares the problem with his subordinates as a group. Together, they generate and evaluate alternatives and attempt to reach agreement (consensus) on a solution. Their role is largely similar to that of a leader: facilitating the discussion, focusing on the problem, and ensuring that critical issues are resolved. They do not attempt to influence the group to adopt their solution and are willing to accept and implement any solution that has the support of the entire group.

1.3.4 Delegating Style:

This style is identical to the group style, but for problems requiring individual solutions. The manager delegates the problem to a subordinate, providing them with any relevant information they have, but giving them the responsibility for solving the problem themselves. Any solution they reach will receive the manager's support.

2. Decision-making Groups:

Modern management trends favor increased employee participation in the decision-making process. Furthermore, some problems or situations facing an organization require a type of participatory process in which decisions are made collectively, i.e., collectively working to define the problem and decision criteria, identify and analyze alternatives, and select and implement a course of action.

Many management writers and researchers have emphasized the importance and necessity of individual and group participation in organizational decision-making processes. Numerous studies and research have indicated the positive outcomes and effects of such

participation, such as increased productivity and improved quality, improved performance, job satisfaction, self-esteem, cooperation, and enhanced commitment to organizational goals. It also helps bring about desired changes and improve effective communication (حريم 2014، ص95).

2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Decision-making Groups:

The effectiveness of a decision-making group can be affected by a variety of factors. Therefore, it is not possible to favor a decision-making group over individual decision-making or vice versa. (Kreitner 2009) identified some advantages and disadvantages of decision-making groups in his book "Management" as follows:

2.1.1 Advantages of a Decision-Making Group:

2.1.1.1 Knowledge Accumulation:

Having a number of decision-makers in the same room generates a tremendous amount of knowledge and allows for the exchange of experiences and expertise to reach better decisions.

2.1.1.2 Diversity of Perspectives:

The group's diverse specializations, interests, and experiences lead to viewing situations from different perspectives, thus building a more comprehensive picture of the problem.

2.1.1.3 Understanding and Accepting the Decision:

Participation in decision-making and preparing action plans leads to understanding the decision and its implementation stages, which increases subordinates' acceptance of the plans they participated in developing.

2.1.1.4 Opportunity for Training:

Participation in decision-making is an opportunity to gain experience by interacting with experienced people to learn how to face new challenges and benefit from the expertise of others.

2.1.2. Disadvantages of the Decision-Making Group:

2.1.2.1 Social Pressure:

Maintaining routine and a comfort zone, if present within the decision-making group, stifles the creativity of other members.

2.1.2.2 Dominance of the Few:

The assumption of control by one or more individuals, or the formation of alliances within the group, leads to the dominance of the few over the group's opinions, serving their own interests.

2.1.2.3 Making mutual concessions:

Some policies, side agreements, and bargaining among group members can lead to the displacement of sound thinking when individual interests are at stake, i.e., personal interests over the interests of the organization.

2.1.2.4 Changing goals and plans:

Sometimes, secondary considerations, such as winning an argument, proving a point, or rejoining the competition, deviate from the primary path of making a sound decision or resolving a problem.

2.1.2.5 Groupthink:

In some cases, the desire to unify opinions and resolve internal conflicts may override the group's pursuit of the right decision.

2.2. The Difference Between Individual and Group Decisions:

The following table illustrates the most important differences between individual and group decisions. This distinction is based on a set of criteria, including the type of organization, the identity of the decision maker(s), the influence of behavioral factors, the type of prevailing decision model, and finally, the situational factors necessitating the decision.

Table (01): The Difference Between Individual and Group Decisions

Differentiation Criteria	Individual Decision Making	Group Decision Making
Type of Institution	Small, medium, and even large enterprises are dominated by a single manager.	Often found in large organizations, but also in small and medium-sized enterprises (in the case of partners, the manager or owner uses consultants or workers to make decisions).
Manager or Decision Maker	The owner or partner in charge of management. The general manager or financial manager is authorized to make decisions.	A board of directors or a decision-making group (managers and/or owners plus experienced and specialized workers or consultants).
Impact of Behavioral Factors on the Decision Maker	The individual is influenced by various behavioral factors, such as emotions, cognitive errors, and the reactions of other investors, in addition to the biases resulting from these factors.	The group is less susceptible to behavioral factors and biases, unless one manager or group member dominates and influences others.
Prevailing Decision	The prevailing model in individual decision-	Rational decisions can be reached if the group

Model	making is bounded rationality, given that the decision-maker is limited in his or her ability to process all the information related to the alternatives and is influenced by various behavioral factors and biases.	possesses expertise, the ability to communicate, and respects opinions, in addition to the availability of time, information, and alternatives.
Situational Factors Requiring the Decision (Hareem, 2014).	1. The time available for decision-making is short; 2. The decision is relatively unimportant to the group; 3. The manager has all the information necessary to make the decision; 4. Fear of one or two individuals dominating the group; 5. Fear of conflict erupting during the discussion of alternatives and solutions; 6. Individuals may feel they have too many meetings and do not feel the need to participate; 7. Information necessary	1. There is a need for creativity and innovation; 2. The group has the information necessary to make the decision; 3. Acceptance of the decision by group members is important and necessary; 4. The group's understanding of the decision is important; 5. The problem is complex and requires a wealth of diverse information to find a solution; 6. The manager wants individuals to feel they are part of the

	for the decision is confidential and cannot be shared with all individuals; 8- Group members are not qualified or capable of making such decisions.	democratic process or wants to build trust; 7. There is a need for further thinking about solutions to address the risk; 8- There is a desire for each person to understand the other better.
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Source: (2024 غالمي).

3 Decision making in a group and Collective Decision-Making:

When discussing group decision-making, we must distinguish between two basic concepts or models: Decision making in a group and collective decision-making. The two models are distinguished by who bears responsibility for decision-making.

3.1 Decision making in a group:

In this model, the manager creates a team or group of employees and/or advisors to assist him in making decisions. Under the manager's supervision, the group undertakes all the necessary stages and steps of decision-making, from defining the problem to implementing the decision. The selection of the appropriate alternative or course of action is left to the manager or group leader. The group's role in this step is advisory only. The decision may reflect the viewpoint of the group as a whole, the viewpoint of the manager alone, or both, depending on the expertise and experience of both parties and the effectiveness of communication and participation methods.

3.2 collective decision making:

Decision-making in this model is undertaken by a group of individuals with shared leadership roles (study groups, review committees, boards of directors). Group members participate in all decision-making steps and share in making the decision and bearing responsibility for it.

3.3 The Difference Between Decision making in a group and collective decision making :

The following table (02) illustrates the most important differences between Decision making in a group and collective decision making.

Table (02): Decision making in a group and collective decision making

Decision making in a group	collective decision making
The manager or group leader is the decision maker.	Decisions are made collectively.
The group's role is to assist the manager in decision-making by carrying out the tasks assigned to them.	Group members assume leadership roles and share in decision-making.
The manager bears sole responsibility for the decision.	The group shares responsibility for the decision, with collective accountability.

Source: (2024 غالمي).

4 CONCLUSION:

From what has been discussed, we have concluded that decision-

making in an organization is a multidimensional process that requires individuals with the necessary skills and experience to make decisions and define the roles and responsibilities of each member of the decision-making group.

Decision-making in an organization depends primarily on the decision-maker and the extent of their experience and academic, administrative, and leadership competence. In addition to their ability to share opinions and value teamwork, whether individual or collective, preparing for a decision by gathering information and generating alternatives is a collective effort involving those with experience and expertise.

The decision-maker needs to develop their competencies and hone their academic and practical skills on a regular basis by improving their level. They also need to seek out financial advisors and seek out experienced and competent partners and employees, interacting with them to benefit from their experiences.

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