



Situation-based Management in a Philosophical Framework A Critical Approach to Decision Making

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Abstract. *Situation-based management is an approach that emphasizes the importance of context in managerial decision-making. In the philosophical view, this theory highlights that there is no one universal management method; instead, the effectiveness of managerial strategies depends largely on the specific conditions, values, and needs of the organization. By utilizing various philosophical perspectives, such as pragmatism, existentialism, and phenomenology, managers can be more adaptive in responding to environmental dynamics. This approach encourages managers to develop critical skills in situation analysis and ethical decision-making, in order to create added value for the organization and stakeholders. This research aims to explore how situation-based management can be integrated with philosophical principles in daily managerial practice.*

Keywords: *Situation-based management, philosophy, pragmatism, existentialism, phenomenology*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern management world, situational theory provides an adaptive approach to managing organizations. This approach focuses on customizing leadership and decision-making styles according to the context and characteristics of a particular situation. In contrast to traditional approaches that often use uniform management principles or standards, situational management emphasizes that no one model can apply to all circumstances. This philosophy emphasizes the importance of sensitivity to variations in context to achieve organizational effectiveness.

Numerous studies underline the critical role of this approach in strengthening the relationship between leaders and subordinates and increasing productivity. However, the importance of philosophy in situational management often lies in how managers understand and interpret the situational factors at hand (Aripova, 2020; Widyadharma et al., 2020). In his research, he highlighted that situational management relies on the assumption that situational factors influence human action more than the overall character of the individual, leading to the customization of managerial styles to fit specific situations (Kholostov & Belousov, 2021)

The importance of the situational approach is also highlighted in practical contexts such as in Australia. Medeiros Ássimos & Pinto (2022); Titov & Rogov (2021) found that managers trained in situational leadership showed a preference for using a supportive leadership style.

This research suggests that the situational approach can be effectively applied in management practice in the field, and provides flexibility that allows for the adjustment of managerial styles according to the developmental level of subordinates (Dalal et al., 2020; Pariy, 2020)

Emphasized the importance of cultural and communication involvement in the implementation of decentralized management models in complex health units. Communicative management is considered essential to overcome cultural limitations in implementing effective organizational change. This suggests that an understanding of the dynamics of unique situations is essential in the application of situational management models in various fields, especially in complex organizations (Setiawan et al., 2019).

The situational approach also has its challenges, especially in terms of validity and effectiveness. Egan (2023) in his review of Situational Leadership Theory revealed that although this approach has been widely discussed, empirical support for this concept is still limited. This theory also opens up discussions about the various factors that influence leadership behavior, subordinate expectations, leadership effectiveness, and decision making. Situation-based management from a philosophical view offers an approach that is not only pragmatic but also responsive to the ever-changing conditions in organizations. This approach challenges the concept that there is one universal solution for all situations and instead emphasizes the importance of contextual analysis and flexible decision-making to produce optimal managerial effectiveness.

Research Methods

The method used is a literature review directly related to the material raised.

2. RESULTS

Situational management is a management approach that adapts management styles and techniques to the situation at hand. In the philosophical view, this approach is not only a managerial technique, but also reflects basic principles of thinking and acting that depend on context. This approach is based on the understanding that every situation has unique characteristics that require different managerial responses. Philosophy here helps to examine the ethical, logical and epistemological foundations that influence decision-making in situational management. It has strong roots in pragmatism, relativism and even existentialism, where humans as managers are faced with contextualized decisions.

Basic Concepts of Situational Management in Philosophy

Situational management was introduced by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, who developed the theory that leaders should adapt leadership styles to the level of maturity or readiness of their subordinates. Philosophically, this approach relates to the philosophy of pragmatism, where actions are taken based on the effectiveness of the outcome. In the context of philosophy, situational management emphasizes several important concepts:

- a. **Contextual Relativism** Every managerial action depends on a particular context. This concept is rooted in the idea of relativism in philosophy, where values and truths are considered dependent on context and environmental conditions. In management, this means that leaders or managers cannot use the same style for all situations but must be able to adapt the approach based on situational factors.
- b. **Pragmatism** Pragmatism teaches that the truth of a theory or action lies in its effectiveness in dealing with real situations. A manager using a situational approach will consider the effectiveness of his actions in the real world rather than rigidly applying the theory. This refers to the view that management is not just a matter of correct theory, but a theory that can be applied in relevant conditions.
- c. **Existentialism** In existentialism, humans are given the freedom to make choices in the midst of ambiguous or unpredictable situations. Situational management requires managers to recognize this freedom, especially when it comes to deciding on methods or approaches to use based on experience and intuition in the face of unique challenges.
- d. **Teleology** Teleology focuses on the end goal and the outcome to be achieved. In situational management, a manager needs to consider long-term goals and their impact in a given situation. This teleological philosophy helps managers to assess which actions will bring the organization closer to its goals.

Implementation of Philosophy in Situational Management Practice

These philosophical principles can be applied in everyday management practices. Some approaches that can be used include:

- a. **Holistic Situation Assessment** Identifies the unique characteristics of a particular situation. In philosophy, this is similar to the phenomenological method that seeks to understand a situation in depth from different perspectives. A manager must evaluate both external and internal factors before determining an appropriate management strategy.

- b. **Adaptation of Leadership Styles** Appropriate leadership styles should be adapted to the needs of subordinates and the state of the environment. A manager may use an authoritarian approach in a crisis, but apply a participative approach in a stable situation. This stylistic adjustment shows flexibility in line with the pragmatic philosophy.
- c. **Decisions Based on Basic Values and Ethics** From a philosophical perspective, ethics play an important role in situational management. Managers are not only required to make efficient decisions, but also to be ethical. Ethical values in philosophy, such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics, help managers to make decisions that are not only result-oriented but also consider the impact on employees and society at large.
- d. **Development of Adaptation Skills and Intuition** In the philosophy of existentialism, intuition plays an important role in dealing with unpredictable situations. A manager needs to hone adaptation and intuition skills in order to respond to rapid and unexpected changes. This decision-making process involves the ability to make choices based on real conditions and a deep understanding of the organizational environment.
- e. **Continuous Evaluation and Self-Reflection** In philosophy, self-reflection is an important process in understanding actions and the consequences of decisions taken. A manager should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of his or her management style in a given situation and be ready to make changes if necessary.

Situational Management Challenges from a Philosophical Perspective

Challenges in implementing situational management from a philosophical perspective include:

- a. **Conflicts of Values and Principles** Not all situations can be resolved with stylistic adjustments, especially when there is a fundamental conflict of values. For example, when the demands of the situation contradict basic ethical principles, managers are faced with a dilemma between results and principles.
- b. **Limitations of Managerial Adaptation** Not all managers are able to adapt quickly. Often, this adaptation skill takes time and experience. Philosophy teaches that sensitivity to context is not something that can be achieved in a short time.
- c. **Difficulties in Decision Making Based on Pragmatism** Although pragmatism teaches effectiveness, not all effective decisions are morally or ethically right. A pragmatic manager may experience difficulties when effectiveness conflicts with the values of the organization or society.

Influence of Philosophical Perspectives in the Development of Situational Management Style

- a. **Epistemology's Involvement in Decision-Making** Epistemology, or the philosophy of knowledge, assists managers in understanding the origin of knowledge used in decision-making. In situational management, managers need to consider sources of information and methods of data collection to properly understand the situation. This epistemological view helps managers select relevant and valid knowledge so that decisions are based on solid information.
- b. **Social and Cultural Sensitivity Development** Social and cultural philosophy teaches the importance of understanding the social and cultural aspects that influence situations. In situational management, a manager must be sensitive to the values, norms, and beliefs of the local community that can affect the effectiveness of the management style. This perspective emphasizes that the social and cultural context of a situation has a major influence in determining the right approach to interacting with employees or external parties.
- c. **The Ethics of Duty and Responsibility in Leadership** The deontological approach in philosophy highlights the importance of duty and responsibility in every action, including managerial decisions. Managers who apply this principle focus not only on the desired output but also on the responsible process. This view is relevant in situations where managers need to make difficult decisions that may have a major impact on certain individuals or groups.
- d. **The Concept of Freedom and Authenticity in Existentialism** In the philosophy of existentialism, individual freedom to choose and act authentically becomes the main value. In the context of situational management, a manager is expected to give employees the freedom to choose work methods that they deem appropriate to a particular situation, without always relying on detailed instructions from the manager. This concept is relevant in participative management, where employees are given the space to contribute according to the characteristics of the situation at hand.
- e. **Application of Situational Logic for Complexity Analysis** The philosophy of logic can help managers think systematically and logically when dealing with complex situations. In situational management, it is important for managers to logically analyze every aspect of the situation so that the decisions taken can be justified. Managers need to consider various possible outcomes and impacts of each action through measured logical reasoning.

- f. **Utilitarianism Philosophy's View on Optimizing the Common Good** Utilitarianism focuses on achieving the greatest happiness and well-being for all parties. In a management situation, this concept can be applied by directing decisions towards choices that provide the greatest benefit to the organization and its employees. Utilitarianism can be a reference for managers to consider the common good and not just organizational benefits, especially when facing decisions that affect many individuals.
- g. **The Importance of a Hermeneutic Perspective in Interpreting Situations** Hermeneutics is a branch of philosophy that focuses on interpretation and understanding meaning. In situational management, managers must be able to understand various situations from diverse perspectives and interpret the existing conditions comprehensively. A hermeneutic perspective helps managers interpret qualitative information, organizational culture, and social dynamics, so that decisions are more appropriate and in context.
- h. **Using the Dialectical Approach to Conflict Resolution** In Hegelian philosophy, dialectic is used to achieve synthesis through thesis and antithesis. Managers implementing situational management can use this approach when facing conflicts between different goals in the organization. By considering multiple points of view, managers can reach a solution that accommodates the interests of all parties and creates a balance between the needs of the company and employees.
- i. **The Value of Patience and Sustainability in Stoicism** Stoic philosophy emphasizes the importance of patience, self-control, and calmness in the face of challenges. In situational management, managers need to have composure when facing uncertain or difficult situations, especially when changes in the situation take a long time to see results. This value helps managers to remain calm, thoughtful, and consistent in the long decision-making process.
- j. **Phenomenological Approach to Understanding Individual Experience** In phenomenology, the emphasis is on the direct experience and understanding of individuals in a given situation. Situational management that adopts this principle will value the direct experience of employees and utilize their input in the decision-making process. This means, a manager does not only look at the situation from data or theory, but also takes into account the real experiences experienced by individuals within the organization.

Practical Implications

This philosophical framework provides the basis for managerial practice and decision-making.

Decision Making

- a. **Multidimensional Considerations:** Managers should consider multiple ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives in decision-making. Good decisions require a thorough analysis of data and context.
- b. **Balance Between Data and Values:** Managers need to balance between data-driven approaches and ethical considerations in every decision they make.
 - 1) **Organizational Culture**
 - a) **Positive Culture Development:** The values held by managers will shape the culture of the organization. Managers should create an environment that supports collaboration, innovation and openness.
 - b) **Strengthening Organizational Identity:** A strong culture can increase employee engagement and build customer loyalty.
 - 2) **Innovation and Adaptation**
 - a) **Responsive to Change:** A deep understanding of the organizational context helps managers adapt to changing environments and market demands..
 - b) **Innovation Facilitation:** Managers who understand organizational dynamics can encourage innovation through creating an environment that supports experimentation and creativity.

3. CONCLUSION

In management, approaches based on philosophical views emphasize the importance of considering ethical values, humanity, and meaningful goals in decision-making. Management is not only oriented towards efficiency and profit, but also values justice, honesty, and social responsibility. In addition, management based on philosophy sees employees not only as a means of production, but as individuals with needs and aspirations that need to be respected. Organizational goals are also geared towards making a positive contribution to society and the environment, so managers are expected to make wise decisions by considering long-term impacts. This philosophical view teaches that good management is sustainable, humane, and reflective, and is able to bring a critical mindset that is relevant to the challenges of the modern world.

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