



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE:MBA 827**

**COURSE TITLE:ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

**MBA 827**  
**ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

**COURSE GUIDE**

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## **MBA 827 ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

MBA 827: Advanced Organizational Behaviour is a two credit course for students offering MBA Human Resources Management in the School of Business and Human Resources Management.

The course will consist of fifteen (15) units, that is three (3) modules at five (5) units per module. The material has been developed to suit Masters students in Human Resources Management at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) by using an approach that treat fundamental areas of organizational behaviour.

A student who successfully completes the course will surely be in a better position to manage workers as individuals and groups in both private and public organizations.

The course guide tells you briefly what the course is about, what course materials you will be using and how you can work your way through these materials. It suggests some general guidelines for the amount of time you are likely to spend on each unit of the course in order to complete it successfully. It also gives you some guidance on your tutor-marked assignments. Detailed information on tutor-marked assignment is found in the separate assignment file which will be available in due course.

### **2.0 WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE**

This course will introduce you to the fundamental aspects of organizational dynamics generally. It also includes the Individual Behaviour, Groups and Group Dynamics, Organizational Structure and Culture, Leadership, Organizational Change and Development, and Case Study.

### **3.0 COURSE AIMS**

The course aims, among others, are to give you an understanding of the intricacies of organizational dynamics and how to tackle case analysis in both private and public enterprises.

The Course will help you to appreciate Individual Behaviour, Groups and Group Dynamics, Organizational Structure and Culture, Leadership, Organizational Change and Development, and Case Study.

The aims of the course will be achieved by:

- Explaining the Concept of organization behaviour;
- Identifying the fundamental aspects of organizational dynamics;
- Discussing the aspects of Individual Behaviour in Organizations;

Presenting the aspects of Groups and Group Dynamics;  
Highlighting and discussing Organizational Structure and Culture;  
Describing Leadership Theories and Leadership Behaviour;  
Discussing Organizational Change and Development; and  
Explaining Principles of and Approach to Case Study and Case Analysis.

#### **4.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Define the concept of Organizational Behaviour;
2. Discuss the fundamental Aspects of Organizational Dynamics;
3. Analyse the aspects of Individual Behaviour in Organizations;
4. Discuss the aspects of Groups and Group Dynamics;
5. Analyse Leadership Theories and Leadership Behaviour;
6. Explain Organizational Change and Development; and
7. Analyse the Principles of and Approach to Case Study and Case Analysis.

#### **5.0 WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE**

To complete this course, you are required to read all study units, attempt all the tutor-marked assignments and study the principles and approach to case study and case analysis in this material provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need access to a personal computer running Windows 95. Each unit contains self-assessment exercises, and at certain points during the course, you will be expected to submit assignments. At the end of the course is a final examination. The course should take you about a total 17 weeks to complete. Below are the components of the course, what you have to do, and how you should allocate your time to each unit in order to complete the course successfully on time.

#### **6.0 COURSE MATERIALS**

Major components of the course are:

Course Guide  
Study Units  
Textbooks  
Assignment file

#### **STUDY UNITS**

The study units in this course are as follows:

##### **MODULE 1:**

Unit 1 Overview Of Organisational Behaviour  
Unit 2 Individual Behaviour And Attitude  
Unit 3 Personality And Values  
Unit 4: Learning  
Unit 5: Perception

### **MODEL 2:**

Unit 1: Work Groups and Decision Making  
Unit 2 Group Dynamics  
Unit 3: Content Theories Of Motivation  
Unit 4: Process Theories Of Motivation  
Unit 5: Leadership

### **MODULE 3:**

Unit 1: Organisational Structure  
Unit 2: Organisational Culture  
Unit 3: Organizational Conflict & Conflict Management  
Unit 4 Organisational Change And Development  
Unit 5 Case Study

## **8.0 ASSIGNMENT FILE**

In this course, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain for these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the assignment file itself and later in the section on assessment in this course guide. There are 15 tutor-marked assignments in this course; the student should attempt all the 15.

## **9.0 PRESENTATION SCHEDULE**

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for this year for the completion of tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

## **10.0 ASSESSMENTS**

There are two aspects to the assessment of the course: first are the tutor-marked assignments; and second is a written examination.

In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information, knowledge and techniques gathered during the course. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the **Presentation Schedule** and the **Assignment File**. The work you submit to your tutor will account for 30% of your total course mark.

At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final written examination of 'three hours' duration. This examination will also count for 70% of your total course mark.

### **11.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMAs)**

There are fifteen tutor-marked assignments in this course and you are advised to attempt all. Aside from the course material provided, you are advised to read and research widely using other references (under further reading) which will give you a broader viewpoint and may provide a deeper understanding of the subject. Ensure all completed assignments are submitted on schedule before set deadlines. If for any reasons, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Unless in exceptional circumstances, extensions may not be granted after the due date.

### **12.0 FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING**

The final examination for this course will be of 'three hours' duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. All areas of the course will be assessed and the examination will consist of questions, which reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercises and tutor-marked problems you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed.

Utilise the time between the conclusion of the last study unit and sitting for the examination to revise the entire course. You may find it useful to review your self-assessment tests, tutor-marked assignments and comments on them before the examination.

### **13.0 COURSE MARKING SCHEME**

The work you submit will account for 30% of your total course mark. At the end of the course, you will be required to sit for a final examination, which will also account for 70% of your total mark. The table below shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

**Table 1: Course Marking Scheme**

| <b>ASSESSMENT</b>   | <b>MARKS</b>   |
|---------------------|--|
| Assignment 6 (TMAs) | 4 assignments, best 3 will be used for the Continuous Assessment<br>= 10 x 3 = 30% |
| Final Examination   | 70% of overall course marks  |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>100% of course marks</b>  |

### **14.0 ASSIGNMENT FILE**

| Unit | Title of work                                 | Weeks activity | Assessment (end of unit) |
|------|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1    | Overview Of Organisational Behaviour          | 1              |                          |
| 2    | Individual Behaviour And Attitude             | 1              |                          |
| 3    | Personality And Values                        | 1              |                          |
| 4    | Learning                                      | 1              |                          |
| 5    | Perception                                    | 1              |                          |
| 6    | Work Groups And Decision Making               | 1              |                          |
| 7    | Group Dynamics                                | 1              |                          |
| 8    | Content Theories Of Motivation                | 1              |                          |
| 9    | Process Theories Of Motivation                | 1              |                          |
| 10   | Leadership                                    | 1              |                          |
| 11   | Organizational Structure                      | 1              |                          |
| 12   | Organizational Culture                        | 1              |                          |
| 13   | Organizational Conflict & Conflict Management | 1              |                          |
| 14   | Organisational Change And Development         | 1              |                          |
| 15   | Case Study                                    | 1              |                          |
|      | <b>Revision</b>                               |                |                          |
|      | <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>15</b>      |                          |

## 15.0 TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the names and phone numbers of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter as they would provide assistance to you during the course. You must submit your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion group if you need help.

The following might be circumstances in which you would find help necessary, when:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings.
- you have difficulty with the self-tests or exercises.
- you have a question or problem with an assignment with your tutor's comment on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and to ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participation in discussions.

## **16.0 SUMMARY**

MBA 827: Advanced Organizational Behaviour intends to expose the graduate student to the nitty-gritty of managing individuals and groups in any enterprise, be it a private or public, corporate or small business enterprises, government or non-governmental organisations. Upon completing the course, you will be equipped with the knowledge required to produce a good research work.

We hope you enjoy your acquaintances with the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). We wish you every success in the Future



## **MBA 827**

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**UNIT 1:      OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Organizational Behaviour
  - 3.2 Influences on Behaviour in Organisations
    - 3.2.1 The Individual
    - 3.2.2 The Group
    - 3.2.3 The Organisation
    - 3.2.4 The Environment
  - 3.3 Contributory Disciplines
    - 3.3.1 Psychology
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  - 3.4 Orientations To Work
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Organisations of one form or another are a necessary part of our society and serve many important needs. The decisions and actions of management in organisations have an increasing impact on individuals, other organisations and the community, It implies that organisations play a major role in the lives of us all. Hence, it is important to understand how organisations function and the influences which they exercise over the behaviour of people, particularly those who work in organizations.

In this first unit of the study material, therefore, you will be taken through the general overview of the field of organizational behaviour.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of organizational behaviour
- identify and explain various influences on behaviour in organization
- mention and discuss contributory disciplines to organizational behaviour
- discuss orientations to work.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Meaning of Organizational Behaviour**

There are many views on the nature and meaning of organizational behaviour. These varied views, nevertheless, recognize the fact that organizational behavior concerns the behaviour of people in organizational setting in relation to their actions and interactions with other individuals and groups as well as the management in organization setting. According to Mullins (2000), organisational behaviour is concerned with the study of the behaviour of people within an organisational setting. Furthermore, Mullins posits that organizational behaviour involves the understanding, prediction and control of human behaviour and the factors which influence the performances of people as members of an organisation. There is a close relation between organisational behaviour and management theory and practice.

You have to understand that in most cases rarely do all members of an organisation, except perhaps very small organisations, behave collectively in such a way as to represent the behaviour of the organisation as a whole. In practice, as observed by Mullins (2000), organizational behaviour refers to the behaviour of individuals, or sections or groups of people, within the organisation.

All said and done, the term organisational behaviour is widely accepted and therefore, it is frequently and increasingly used in literature on the subject. The term organisational behaviour is a convenient way being used when referring to the multiplicity of interrelated influences on, and patterns of, behaviour of people within organisations.

Nevertheless, the behaviour of people, as posited by Mullins (2000), cannot be studied in isolation. It is therefore, necessary to understand the interrelationships with other variables which together comprise the total organisation. You will understand that such analysis involves consideration of interactions among the formal structure, the tasks to be undertaken, the technology employed and methods of carrying out work, the process of management and the external environment.

Hence, the study of organisational behaviour embraces an understanding of the behaviour of people, the process of management, the organisational context in which the process of management takes place, organisational processes and the execution of work, and interactions with the external environment of which the organisation is part.

### **3.2 Influences on Behaviour in Organisations**

A number of variables in terms of the influences on behaviour in organization are discernible in providing parameters within which to identify a number of interrelated dimensions – the individual, the group, the organisation, and the environment - which collectively influence behaviour in work organisations. See Fig 1.1 below for these influences and their impact on management of organizational operations.

#### **3.2.1 The Individual**

Organisations are made up of their individual members. The individual is a central feature of organisational behaviour and a necessary part of any behavioural situation, whether acting in isolation or as part of a group, in response to expectations of the organisation, or as a result of influences of the external environment.

Where the needs of the individual and the demands of the organisation are incompatible, it results in frustration and conflict. It is the task of management to provide a working environment which permits the satisfaction of individual needs as well as the attainment of organisational goals.

### **3.2.2 The Group**

Groups exist in all organisations and are essential to their working and performances. The organisation is comprised of groups of people and almost everyone in an organisation will be a member of one or more groups. Informal groups arise from the social needs of people within the organisation. People in groups influence each other in many ways, and groups may develop their own hierarchies and leaders.

Group pressures can have a major influence over the behaviour and performance of individual members. An understanding of group structure and behaviour complements a knowledge of individual behaviour and adds a further dimension to organisational behaviour.

### **3.2.3 The Organisation**

Individuals and groups interact within the structure of the formal organisation. Structure is created by management to establish relationships between individuals and groups, to provide order and systems and to direct the efforts of the organisation into goal-seeking activities. It is through the formal structure that people carry out their organisational activities in order to achieve aims and objectives.

Behaviour is affected by patterns of organisation structure, technology, styles of leadership and systems of management through which organisational processes are planned, directed and controlled. The focus of attention, therefore, is on the impact of organisation structure and design, and patterns of management, on the behaviour of people within the organisation.

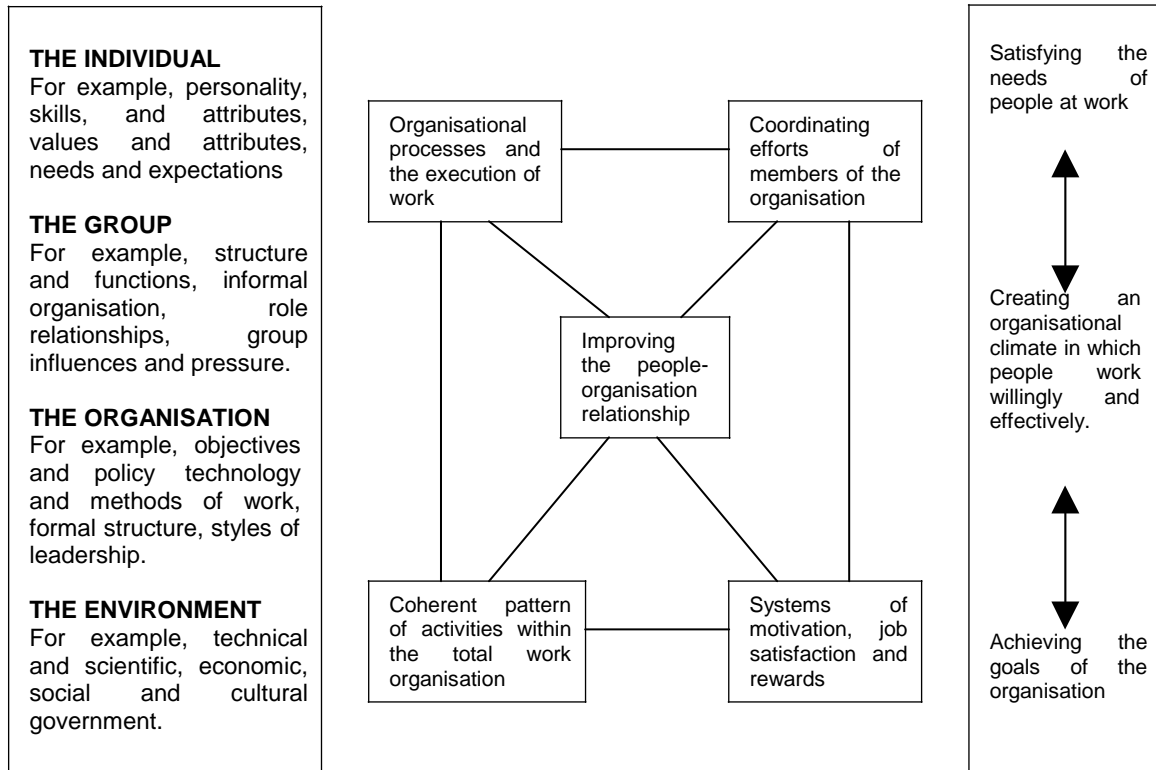
### **3.2.4 The Environment**

All organisations function as part of the broader external environment of which it is part. There are different variables within the external environment that affect the organization. For example, technological and scientific development, economic activity, social and cultural influences and governmental actions have tremendous impact on organizational operations.

The effects of the operations of the organisation within its environment are reflected in terms of the management of opportunities and risks and the successful achievement of its aims and objectives. The increasing rate of change in environmental factors has necessitated the need to study the total organisation and the processes by which the organisation attempts to adapt to the external demands placed upon it.

These different dimensions above provide contrasting but related approaches to the understanding of human behaviour in organisations. They present a number of alternative ways for the study of the subject and extent of related analysis.

**Fig 1.1 Influences on Behaviour in Organizational Setting & their Impact on Management of Operations.**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, London: Pitman Publishing, p.11.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

List and explain the various influences on the understanding of organizational behaviour.

### **3.3 Contributory Disciplines**

#### **3.3.1 Psychology**

Psychologists are, broadly speaking, concerned with the study of human behaviour, with traits of the individual and membership of small groups. The main focus of attention is on the individual as a whole, or what can be termed the 'personality system', including for example, perception, attitudes and motives.

#### **3.3.2 Sociology**

It is also possible to adopt a sociological approach concerned with a broader emphasis on human behaviour in society. Sociological aspects can be important. A number of sociology writers seem set on the purpose of criticising traditional views of organisation and management.

Sociologists are more concerned with the study of social behaviour, relationships among social groups and societies, and the maintenance of order. The main focus of attention is on the analysis of social structures and positions in those structures, for example the relationship between the behaviour of leaders and followers.

#### **3.3.3 Anthropology**

Anthropologists are more concerned with the science of mankind and the study of human behaviour as a whole. As far as organisational behaviour is concerned, the main focus of attention is on the cultural system, the beliefs, customs, ideas and values within a group or society, and the comparison of behaviour among different cultures. People learn to depend on their culture to give them security and stability, and they can suffer adverse reactions to unfamiliar environments.

The contribution of psychology, sociology and anthropology aid our understanding of the behaviour of people in work organisations, and underpin the field of organisational behaviour.

Behavioural science attempts to structure organisations in order to secure the optimum working environment. It is concerned with reconciling the needs of the organisation for the contribution of maximum productivity, with the needs of individuals and the realisation of their potential. Emphasis is on the application of relevant aspects of psychological and sociological theories and practices, and cultural influences, to problems of organisation and management in the work situation.

You should not be confused by use of the word 'theory'. Most rational decisions are based on some form of theory. Theory contains a message on how managers might behave. This will influence attitudes towards management practice and lead to changes in actual

behaviour. Theory helps in the building of generalised models applicable to all organisations. It further provides a conceptual framework and gives a perspective for the practical study of the subject. Thus theory and practice are inseparable. Together they lead to a better understanding of factors influencing patterns of behaviour in organisations and applications of the process of management.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Mention and discuss various disciplines that contribute to the understanding of organizational behaviour.

### **3.4 Orientations To Work**

People differ in the manner and extent of their involvement with, and concern for, work. Empirical evidences from information collected about the work situation indicate that individuals differ in their approaches to organisational participation and involvement with work colleagues and life outside the organization. Hence, there are three main types of orientation to work such as instrumental, bureaucratic and solidaristic.

#### **1. Instrumental Orientation to Work**

Individuals with an instrumental orientation see work not as a central life issue but in terms of a means to an end. There is a calculative or economic involvement with work, and a clear distinction between work-related and non-work-related activities.

#### **2. Bureaucratic Orientation to Work**

Individuals with a bureaucratic orientation regard work as a central life issue. There is a sense of obligation to the work of the organisation and a positive involvement in terms of a career structure. There is a close link between work-related and non-work-related activities.

#### **3. Solidaristic Orientation to Work**

Individuals with a solidaristic orientation regard the work situation in terms of group activities. There is an ego involvement with work groups rather than with the organisation itself. Work is more than just a means to an end. Non-work activities are linked to work relationships.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Mention and discuss various orientations to work in organizational setting.



## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The analysis in this unit, as you have observed, portrays the fact that organizational behaviour involves the understanding, prediction and control of human behaviour and the factors which influence the performance of people as members of an organization. You have also appreciated the fact that the understanding of behavior in organizations is contingent on the individual, the group, the organization itself, and the environment within which the organization operates. Hence all these variables collectively influence behaviour in work organizations. The analysis in this unit has also indicated that social science disciplines such as psychology, sociology and anthropology contribute to the understanding of organizational behaviour. Lastly, the analysis has demonstrated that people differ in their orientations to work; that is, individuals differ in their approaches to organisational participation and involvement with work colleagues and life outside the organization.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered included the following:

- Nature of organizational behaviour
- Influences on organizational behaviour
- Contributory disciplines to organizational behaviour, and
- Different orientations to work in organizational setting

In the next study unit, you will be taken through the discussion on individual behaviour and attitude to work in organizational setting.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and discuss the main variables that influence behaviour in organizations.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. Influences individual, group, organization itself, and environment in which the organization operates
2. Disciplines that contribute to the understanding of organizational behaviour are psychology, sociology, and anthropology.
3. Orientations to work in organizational setting are instrumental, bureaucratic and solidaristic.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

French, W. L., Kast, F. E. & Rosenzweig, J. E.(1985). Understanding Human Behaviour in Organization, New York: Harper and Row.

Handy, C. B. (1993). Understanding Organizations,( Fourth Edition). London: Penguin...

Mullins,. L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour,( 4<sup>th</sup> Edition). London: Pitman Publishing.

Robbins, S. (1992). Essentials of Organizational Behaviour,( Third Edition). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

### **FURTHER READING**

Luthams, F. (1992 ). Organizational Behaviour, (Sixth Edition). New Jersey: McGraw-Hill.

## **UNIT 2: INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Attitude
  - 3.2 Prediction of Behaviour
  - 3.3 Attitudes and Organizational Culture
  - 3.4 Attitude Change
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

There are no limits, as you will understand, to the attitudes people hold. Generally, attitudes are learned throughout life and are embodied within our socialisation process. Empirical evidence has shown that some attitudes such as religious beliefs may be central to our life, a core construct, and may be highly resistant; to any change. On the other hand, more peripheral attitudes may change with new information or personal experiences. Specific events in our life, particularly traumatic experiences such as redundancy, may have a dramatic effect on our attitudes.

The major pre-occupation herein is to discuss the concept of attitude. We also use this section of the unit to distinguish attitude from beliefs and values.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate between attitudes and beliefs
- discuss how behaviour can be predicted
- explain how organizational culture influences attitudes
- discuss the process of attitudinal change.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Attitude and Belief**

According to Mullins (2000), attitudes can be defined as providing a state of 'readiness' or tendency to respond in a particular way. Beliefs are concerned with what is known about the world; they centre on what 'is', on reality as it is understood. Values are concerned with what 'should' be and what is desirable.

Gross (1987) 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'. It has been suggested by Gross that whereas 'adults may have thousands of beliefs, they may have only hundreds of attitudes and a few dozen values. In the opinion of Hofstede (1980), values refer to a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others.

Attitudes are interlinked with motives. Depending on an individual's motives, attitudes can serve four main functions.

**Knowledge:** One of the major functions is to provide a basis for the interpretation and classification of new information. Attitudes provide a knowledge base and framework within which new information can be placed.

**Expressive:** Attitudes become a means of expression. They enable individuals to indicate to others the values that they hold and thus to express their self-concept and adopt or internalise the values of a group.

**Instrumental:** Held attitudes maximise rewards and minimise sanctions. Hence, attitudes towards other people (or objects) might be held because of past positive (or negative) experiences. Behaviour or knowledge which has resulted in the satisfaction of needs is thus more likely to result in a favourable attitude.

**Ego-Defensive:** Attitudes may be held in order to protect the ego from an undesirable truth or reality.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Identify and explain the functions of attitudes to an individual.

### **3.2 Prediction of Behaviour**

The issue which we have to tackle herein is whether it is possible to predict behaviour if we know an individual's attitude.

Empirical evidence suggests that it is possible to predict behaviour if we know an individual's attitude. Therefore, it seems that people do not always behave in a way that is true to their beliefs; what people say and what they do may be very different. Such evidence indicates that attitudes can be revealed not only in behaviour but also by the individual's thoughts; although these may not be revealed in public. And by feelings, the strength of which demonstrates the extent to which the attitude is a core or peripheral construct.

A classic study by La Piere, according to Mullins (2000), illustrates this point. Visiting American hotels and restaurants with a Chinese couple, La Piere found no sign of prejudiced attitudes in the face-to-face situation, but there were marked racist attitudes in the follow-up attitude survey. He found complete contradictions between public and private attitudes.

These findings have important implications for the study of attitudes and reveal two important issues for the psychologist and manager such as follow:

**1: Attitudes cannot be seen but can only be inferred.**

Given that the attitudes employees hold are important for morale and the effectiveness of organisations, it is important that there is confidence in the measurement techniques used to assess the strength of attitudes. As attitudes are inferred, heavy reliance is placed therefore on the accuracy of assessment. Although there are a number of different techniques which could be used to measure attitudes, the two most common techniques are direct observation and self-reporting techniques.

All of us observe others and assess attitudes on the basis of their communication style (both verbal and non-verbal) and their behaviour. This is an example of an informal approach; unsystematic, spontaneous and based on our understanding of social cues. We may be wrong in our judgement. Students who turn up late for classes, slouch on their seat and do not ask questions may still hold very positive attitudes towards organisational behaviour. Managers may also be erroneous in their assumptions and beliefs about their colleagues (both subordinates and superiors). Their beliefs may never have been tested out – merely assumed to be correct.

Organisations which assess their employees' attitudes by using attitude questionnaires (self-reporting techniques) are attempting to systematically gauge and measure these assumptions. Attitude questionnaires are time-consuming to design and administer. The questions asked, their relevance, style and length are all important variables in the validity of the questionnaires. So, too, is the honest completion of questionnaires.

Making public people's private attitudes may also have its dangers as expectations of change may be envisaged. If these do not occur, disappointment and low morale may be the result.

Attitude questionnaires are used by many companies as a barometer for the attitudinal climate of organisations and as such enable managers to be in touch with employees' views and feelings.

**2: Attitudes are often shared within organisations and therefore, embodied in organizational culture**

This does not imply that attitudes are constructed just within the organisations. Classic research has shown the influence of the wider community in the formation of orientations towards work. Differences in class/orientation may elicit a range of loyalties and possibly produce opposing perceptions of commitment, loyalty and cooperation.

For example, Salaman (1983) states that 'the commitment and co-operation of worker members of the organisation is frequently regarded by senior management as problematic and uncertain' and suggests that consensus and control has to be achieved by the selection and manipulation of attitudes, values and knowledge. Thus, counter-cultures are recognised as having a powerful influence on the maintenance of an organisation's

integrity. People within counter-cultures who change their orientation and identify with organisational values face criticism and hostility from their peer group (Mullins, 2003).

Thus according to Mullins (2003), research suggests that attitudes are not just individually formed but arise out of interaction with others. They are often 'locked-in', often regarded as obvious, mere common sense, and are so much taken for granted that they may be overlooked. Sharing the belief system of others also has affective outcomes. If people feel that they belong and are included it enables them to feel good about working in an organisation. If, on the other hand, people do not feel part of the organization, if they feel that they do not share the dominant attitudes and beliefs, negative emotional consequences are likely to result. Studies of token women in management support these ideas.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify and discuss two important issues relating to the nature of attitudes.

### **3.3 Attitudes and Organizational Culture**

Although the role, power and responsibility of managers vary from organisation to organisation, all managers regardless of status contribute to the maintenance of the organisation's culture. In one sense the position of manager is a formal recognition of success and as such managers play key role in personifying the culture. It has been suggested that managers and their culture are inseparable from each other and that managers consistently influence and affect the perceptions and attitudes of their subordinates. Organisations may initiate rituals and ceremonies to encourage and maintain certain attitudes and beliefs. Many attitudes and ideas become permanent and unchallengeable, making them highly resistant to change.

Empirical evidence in the hotel industry revealed that irrespective of personal circumstances (age, gender, education, social class) managers had been exposed to a process which had 'encultured' them to a shared understanding of the industry, resulting in common attitudes on a range of topics. Attitudes towards their management trainees were found to be significant with regard to the trainees'. Development; such high expectation ensured broad training opportunities and the use of their own personal network of contacts to ensure their proteges' success. The significance of positive attitudes of managers towards their trainees cannot therefore be over-emphasised.

### **3.4 Attitude Change**

The permanency of attitudes clearly has implications for attitudinal change. At the beginning of this section it was pointed out that whereas peripheral attitudes may easily change with new information or experiences, central attitudes tied into other cognitive systems may be much more difficult to shift.

Theories of attitude change stress the importance of balance and consistency in our psyche.

There is the view that not only would people find it uncomfortable to hold two conflicting attitudes, but to do so would motivate us to change one of the attitudes in order to reach a balanced state.

Cognitive dissonance is the term given to the discomfort felt when we act in a way that is inconsistent with our true beliefs. Like balance theory, it suggests that we are motivated to reduce its impact.

Mullins (2000) points out that the process of attitude change is dependent on a number of key factors, the most important being:

- ☐ why an attitude is held in the first place
- ☐ why it should change;
- ☐ what the benefits are and to whom;
- ☐ what the outcomes are if it does not change.

Considerable research has demonstrated the importance of the following variables in a programme of attitude change:

- ☐ the persuader's characteristics;
- ☐ presentation of issues;
- ☐ audience characteristics;
- ☐ group influences;
- ☐ outcome of attitude change (reward or punishment).

Attitudinal change, therefore, depends on many factors which include the ones listed above.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The analysis in this unit, as you have observed, has been used to discuss the concept of attitude. From the foregoing, you have appreciated the fact that attitudes involve a state of 'readiness' or tendency to respond in a particular way. On the other hand, beliefs are based on what is already known about the world since they centre on reality as it is understood. Beliefs are concerned with what "is" while values are concerned with what 'should' be and what is desirable.

Attitudes, as you have understood from the analysis in this unit, provide the basis for interpreting new information, serve as means of expression of someone's state of mind, instrumental for maximizing rewards and minimizing sanctions, and used to protect one's ego from reality. Attitudinal change is a function of many factors which include the persuader's characteristics, presentation of issues, audience characteristics, group influences, and outcome of attitude change; reward or punishment.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

Nature of attitudes, beliefs and values.  
Functions of attitudes to an individual. Approaches to the prediction of behaviour. Influence of organizational culture on attitudes, and Process of attitudinal change.

In the next study unit, you will be taken through the discussion on personality and values.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and discuss the main functions of attitudes.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1.
  - i) Knowledge: provide a knowledge base and framework within which new information can be placed.
  - ii) Expressive: Attitudes enable individuals to indicate to others the values that they hold.
  - iii) Instrumental: Held attitudes maximise rewards and minimise sanctions.
  - iv) Ego-Defensive: Attitudes may be held in order to protect the ego of an individual.
2. Issue 1: Attitudes cannot be seen; they can only be inferred.  
Issue 2: Attitudes are often shared within organisations and as such are embodied in the culture of organisations.

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## **UNIT 3: PERSONALITY AND VALUES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Personality
  - 3.2 Approaches to the Study of Personality
    - 3.2.1 Nomothetic approach
    - 3.2.2 Idiographic Approach
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

All human beings in one way or the other share the same 'humanness'. Some of us share the same gender type or the same personality dimensions; we may have the same ability levels or share similar socio-economic backgrounds. Nevertheless, as you will understand in the course of discussion in this study unit, that our uniqueness stems from the dynamic ways in which human features combine. Such features are traits, gender, abilities, physique, development aspects, motivation, attitudes, perception, socio-cultural aspects.

Therefore, it is possible to differentiate between individuals in terms of the above criteria. All of such characteristics shape our sense of self. Basically, this is essential for the dedicated research required in understanding our personality. However, when applying theories to people at work, it is important to remember that a holistic view should be taken which takes into account the dynamic processes. Psychological investigations emphasise the complexity and variety of individual behaviour. The study of personality provides an excellent example of some of the complexities involved in applying psychological theory in practice.

The complexities of the process of predicting differences in individuals with regard to their attitude and performance in the workplace pose a number of interesting questions which psychologists have tried to solve. Therefore, this study unit is used for discussion towards providing insights into predicting differences in the attitudes and performances of individuals in the workplace.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of personality
- discuss the main approaches to the study of personality
- Identify and discuss the various theories of personality.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Personality**

According to Mullins (2000), personality comes from the Greek word "persona", meaning "mask". The word 'personality' derives from the Latin word 'persona' which means 'mask'. The study of personality can be understood as the study of 'masks' that people wear. These are the personas that people project and display, but also include the inner parts of psychological experience which we collectively call our 'self'.

According to Adams (1954, cited in Schultz & Schultz, 1994), personality involves summing up everything about an individual; his or her likes and dislikes, fears and virtues, strengths and weaknesses. Personality in the views of Schultz & Schultz (1994) refers to what defines an individual, as a person separate from all others.

A contemporary definition of personality offered by Carver and Scheier (2000) is that personality is a dynamic organisation, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create a person's characteristic patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. According to Carver & Scheier (2000), the word personality conveys a sense of consistency, internal causality, and personal distinctiveness. This issue of personal distinctiveness is very important. There are certain universal characteristics of the human race and particular features of individuals. For example, we all experience stress and the elevated cortisol that goes with it, and we all suffer the immune suppressive effects thereof. Nevertheless, individuals are unique in innate feelings, behaviours, attitudes, and the like.

According to Carver & Scheier (2000), personality is associated with:

Dynamic Organisation: suggests ongoing readjustments, adaptation to experience, continual upgrading and maintaining Personality doesn't just lie there. It has process and it's organised.

Inside the Person: suggests internal storage of patterns, supporting the notion that personality influences behaviours, etc.

Psychophysical systems: suggests that the physical is also involved in 'who we are'

Characteristic Patterns: implies that consistency/continuity which are uniquely identifying of an individual

Behaviour, Thoughts, and Feelings: indicates that personality includes a wide range of psychological experience/manifestation: that personality is displayed in many ways.

#### **3.2 Approaches to the Study of Personality**

##### **3.2.1 Nomothetic Approach**

Nomothetic approaches are primarily concerned with the collection of group data. This means that such theorists accumulate evidence with regard to the identification of personality traits; producing effective measurements of the traits in order to draw

comparisons between individuals. Being able to predict behaviour is a major aim and outcome of this approach. Researchers closely align themselves to studies which are 'scientific' in a positivistic sense. The term positivism refers to the branch of science which is exclusively based on the objective collection of observable data; data which are beyond question. Such an approach transfers methods used in natural sciences to the social world.

Nomothetic approaches tend to view environmental and social influences as minimal and view personality as consistent, largely inherited and resistant to change. Psychologists would not diminish the difficulties that measuring personality brings. Nevertheless, nomothetic approaches would claim that it is possible to measure and predict the ways in which personality types would behave given certain circumstances, and are able to support their claims with research findings.

The two main theories discussed under this approach are Eysenck's theory of main personality types and Cattell's identification of personality traits.

### **1. Eysenck's Theory of Main Personality Types**

Hans Eysenck followed a tradition of writers by applying four basic types introduced by Hippocrates: melancholic; sanguine; phlegmatic; and choleric. Eysenck's approach was influenced by the positivistic tradition; his aim was to produce objective evidence of personality differences using large samples of the population. By investigating 700 servicemen he was able to use rigorous statistical data to test his hypotheses. His findings supported the notion that there were two major differences which could be measured:

Individuals in Eysenck's theory could, therefore, be one of four main personality types. The type would lead to a predisposition of traits which could, itself, lead to the likelihood of certain behaviours. For instance, a person typed as an extrovert would be responsive and outgoing and in a new social situation s/he would predictably initiate conversation among a group of strangers.

Eysenck's theory and his subsequent Personality Inventory allowed identification of a personality type. From this description it was possible to predict likely behaviours. Eysenck had a clear view about the constancy of personality. He believed that personality was largely inherited and that introverts and extroverts are born with differing physiological tendencies. Furthermore he argued that the personality we are born with is largely unalterable by environmental influences.

Although it could be argued that Eysenck's theory is too simplistic in terms of the number and range of types proposed, this theory has an impressive amount of supporting research evidence. His approach has immediate appeal to managers in organisations who are concerned with predicting the future behaviour of their employees either for selection or promotion.

One of his earlier studies indicated that stable introverts were generally found among the most successful businessmen. Stability seemed to be manifest regardless of the type of work the managers did but their degree of extroversion seemed to vary, depending on the nature of their work. It is therefore not surprising to find that the use of psychometric tests

has grown substantially over the past decade and that the majority of large companies use occupational tests.

## 2. Cattell's Identification of Personality Traits.

Cattell's work has striking resemblances to that of Eysenck in the methods that he used to study personality. He used quantitative, objective techniques in order to analyse his data (although he used a different factor analytic measure), and followed traditional scientific procedures in order to understand the basic dimensions of personality. Cattell used three main sources for the collection of personality data.

- (i) L-data (Life record data). Ratings by trained observers.
- (ii) Q-data (Self-rating questionnaire). Responses to a questionnaire which measured personality traits. (Cattell 16PF Questionnaire.)
- (iii) T-data (Test data). Observations collected in specific situation tests.

The data collected were factor-analysed by Cattell resulting in the identification of two main types of personality traits.

Surface traits, those traits which seem to cluster together consistently; and

Source traits, which seem to underlie and determine the traits which are likely to 'surface' into behaviour.

Cattell identified sixteen personality factors (or source traits) which are presented Fig 3.1 below.

**Fig. 3.1 Cattell's Personality Factors (or Source Traits).**

| <i>Formula</i> | <i>High score</i>                          | <i>Low score</i>                     |
|----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| A              | Outgoing                                   | Reserved                             |
| B              | More intelligent (abstract thinker)        | Less intelligent (concrete thinker)  |
| C              | Higher Ego Strength Emotionally stable     | Lower Ego Strength                   |
| E              | Dominant                                   | Emotionally unstable                 |
| F              | Surgency (optimistic)                      | Submissive                           |
| G              | Stronger superego strength (conscientious) | Desurgency (pessimistic)             |
| H              | Parmia (adventurous)                       | Weaker superego strength (expedient) |
| I              | Presmia (tender-minded)                    | Threctia (timid)                     |
| L              | Pretension (suspicious)                    | Harria (tough-minded)                |
| M              | Autia (imaginative)                        | Alaxia (trusting)                    |
| N              | Shrewdness                                 | Praxernia (practical)                |
| O              | Insecure – guilt-proneness                 | Artlessness (unpretentious)          |
| Q1             | Radicalism                                 | Self-assured                         |
| Q2             | Self-sufficiency                           | Conservatism                         |
| Q3             | High self-concept control (controlled)     | Group dependence                     |
| Q4             | High tension (tense, frustrated)           | Low self-concept control (casual)    |
|                |  | Low tension (relaxed, tranquil)      |

Source: Mullins,. L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 107.

Unlike Eysenck, he did not 'type' individuals but used 'traits' as his main personality descriptor (although there is high correspondence between Cattell's second-order factors and Eysenck's 'types'). They also differed with regard to the determinants of personality: Eysenck viewed the inherited physiological basis as the main determinant whereas Cattell was more interested in taking social factors into account when understanding an individual's personality. Both theorists have contributed to a lively debate about personality structure and its measurement, and in doing so have advanced the selection techniques available to managers.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain the nomothetic theory of personality, drawing on examples of contributors to the theory.

### **3.2.2 Idiographic Approach**

Idiographic approaches are concerned with understanding the uniqueness of individuals and the development of the self concept. They regard personality development as a process which is open to change. They regard individuals as responding to the environment and people around them, and see the dynamics of the interactions as playing a critical part in shaping personality. The measurement of traits is seen as largely inappropriate in that one person's responses may not be comparable to another's. Furthermore, they would suggest that personality assessment is not a valid method of understanding the unique ways in which a person understands and responds to the world. The depth and richness of a person's personality cannot be revealed in superficial paper-and-pencil questionnaires. Furthermore, the categories defined by psychologists are too narrow in scope and depth.

Some researchers do not fit easily into either of the above broad approaches. Freud, for instance, is idiographic in the sense that he is interested in the self and its development, but his theory does not allow for personality growth and change after childhood. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory also bridges the two approaches.

The approaches can be seen as complementary; indeed, it could be argued that different foci are important in understanding the many complicated facets of personality.

Idiographic approaches emphasise the development of the individual and of individuals' views of themselves - their self concept. Supporters of idiographic approaches are critical of the nomothetic approach which attempts to categorise individuals on the basis of group data. They argue that the techniques used to collate the group data are questionable and the outcome inappropriate to an understanding of personality. For the idiographic researchers personality is expressed through the experiences and development of the individual. It cannot be understood outside a social context and has to be studied in the light of individuals' own perceptions of their world. Idiographic researchers would always

take into account the social circumstances of the person and in particular the relationships with others, family life and social conditions.

The following theories are typical examples of the idiographic approach:

### **1. Carl Rogers' Way of Being**

Carl Rogers' theory claims that personality is embedded within personal relationships. He emphasised the importance of fulfilment and psychological growth, placing at the centre people's knowledge of their own feelings. For Rogers, the expression of emotion was critical in freeing up people's autonomy and creativity in the quest for self-actualisation. The process of becoming a person requires the ability to give and receive unconditional regard -the warmth and respect for the person, who they are, regardless of how they behave.

### **2. Mead's Mind and Self**

G. H. Mead was unable to separate the notion of an individual's personality from the concept of society. He claimed that 'a person is a personality because he belongs to a community, because he takes over the institutions of that community into his own conduct'. As individuals we can only have a sense of self in relation to others. He proposed the idea that the self has two components: one which is spontaneous and unique (I), and the other which is learnt through exposure to the society (me).

### **3. Cooley's Development and Socialization**

C. Cooley, like Mead, emphasised the importance of early development and socialisation. He believed the emotion and sensation that we hold of 'self' was instinctive but was developed by experience. His phrase 'the looking-glass self' suggests that we come to know ourselves through our relationship with others and their reactions to us.

### **4. Erikson's Identity and Life Cycle**

Erik Erikson's theory is a good example of the idiographic approach. He viewed personality development as continuing throughout life. He was interested in the effect of experiences on the development of the self concept and how different individuals resolved personal conflicts.

Although he recognised the importance of early childhood in establishing certain basic concepts of trust, autonomy and initiative, he disagreed with Freud's emphasis on the effects of early development. For Erikson, all eight stages of life produce different tensions and conflicts which have to be resolved.

Successful resolution produces a healthy personality, whereas difficulties in earlier stages may produce problems later on. Erikson's theory not only makes considerable sense in terms of face validity (i.e. the 'feel-good' factor) but also links with other research indicating that managers' motivations and goals change with age. Hunt, for instance, identified nine different career/life stages.

**Fig. 3.2 Life Tension and Conflict**

|         |              |   |                 |                      |
|---------|--------------|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| Stage 1 | Trust        | V | Mistrust        | 1 <sup>st</sup> year |
| Stage 2 | Autonomy     | V | Doubt           | 2 – 3 years          |
| Stage 3 | Initiative   | V | Guilt           | 4 – 5 years          |
| Stage 4 | Industry     | V | Inferiority     | 6 – 11 years         |
| Stage 5 | Identity     | V | Role confusion  | 12 – 18 years        |
| Stage 6 | Intimacy     | V | Isolation       | Young adult          |
| Stage 7 | Generativity | V | Self-absorption | Middle age           |
| Stage 8 | Integrity    | V | Despair         | Old age              |

Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 109.

## **5. Freud's Psychoanalytic Approach**

A discussion on personality would not be complete without a mention of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). His psychoanalytic approach emphasises the importance of:

- early childhood experiences, particularly parental relationships and dealing with trauma;
- different levels of consciousness and the influence of the unconscious mind on behaviour;
- understanding the 'whole' person in relation to their past.

Early childhood experiences were seen by Freud as paramount in understanding the adult personality. He described the development of all individuals as one which progressed through a number of stages: (i) oral; (ii) anal; and (iii) phallic. An inner force (or libido) was also identified. This libido was seen by Freud as a universal human characteristic which provides the necessary life energy for progression through the developmental stages. Each stage was also characterised by an internal struggle of domination by three personality structures called the id, ego and superego as well as external conflict with outside relationships. These conflicts and tensions, rooted into the past and repressed within the unconscious, were seen by Freud as key to the understanding of adult personality.

Freud's theory has been heavily criticised on the grounds that:

- it is not replicable and his arguments were circular;
- samples used were atypical;
- it is subjective and unscientific;
- a heavy emphasis on early childhood makes it highly deterministic; and
- it disregards later development and changes.

His theory should, however, be seen in its historical context and in terms of its impact upon the development of later theories and ideas.

With regard to organisational behaviour, Freud's theory still has much to offer with respect to understanding stress at work. When the going gets tough it is easy to slip into habitual ways of responding that have been learned as children. Within the working context such behaviour may be seen as inappropriate and yet bring immediate relief or comfort to the individual. Instances include regressing into temper tantrums or gaining relief by excessive eating or drinking and can be seen to protect the ego from a painful memory or unwanted impulse. Freud labelled these defence mechanisms. The most readily observable ones in the workplace include:

- Regression – adopting childhood patterns of behaviour;
- Fixation – inflexible and rigid behaviour or attitudes;
- Rationalisation – elaborate 'covering-up' of ideas/motives;
- Projection – attributing feelings and motives to others.

Freud saw adult personality as being largely determined by the strength of inner drives and impulses and the resolutions of these tensions within early childhood experiences. Freud's overwhelming interest lay in understanding the conflicts that exist for the person and how people come to terms with their anxieties and tensions. His interest therefore lay in understanding the whole person and not in identifying traits or types.

Freud produced a generation of scholars who developed his ideas to produce their own theories and models of personality development. Two of the most significant are Karen Homey and Melanie Klein.

- ☐ Although Karen Homey accepted certain principles of Freud's theory with regard to unconscious motivation, she disagreed with the predominance of sexual forces and her theory suggests far more optimism than Freud's.
- ☐ Melanie Klein encouraged the study of the sources of anxiety. She suggested that the principal source of anxiety was the fear of the death instinct. She posited that early childhood is a critical time for the formulation and development of lifelong mental attitudes.

## **6. Jung's Personality Functions and Attitudes**

Carl Jung's theory is of particular significance in that it bridges Freudian ideas with modern approaches of personality test design. His theory identifies life energy as concerned with hopes and goals of the future and not just of the past. Unlike Freud, Jung describes three levels of personality:

- conscious level (daily reality);
- an unconscious level (contains our own unique complexes); and
- collective unconscious (store of universal and evolutionary experiences).

Jung identified four universal aspects of our personality which he referred to as archetypes which we all share. For instance, according to Jung we all strive for self-actualisation; have a darker self; have both masculine and feminine qualities; and have a persona, a role we can play.



## **7. Meyers-Briggs' Type Indicator**

However, it was Jung's identification of personality functions and attitudes which have been applied to the rigours of systematic testing by Isabel Briggs-Myers and Katherine Briggs identified differences between individuals in terms of their libidinal energy which could flow outwards to the external world (extrovert) or inwards to their inner world (introvert). Personality differences would also be manifest through differing cognitive functions of thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is based on these theoretical constructs with the additional dimension of style of living.

The MBTI has promoted considerable research interest, particularly with regard to the correlation between personality type, occupations and management style.

## **8. Cognitive Theory: Kelly's Personal Construct Theory**

George Kelly's theory of personal constructs does not just consider personality development; it considers the whole person in terms of their perceptions, attitudes, and goals. For Kelly, personality is the individual's way of construing and experimenting with their world. Kelly was critical of separating the study of personality apart from the 'whole' person:

According to Bannister and Fansella (1971), the castrating effect of separating personality off as a mini-psychology in its own right is perhaps best seen in the curiously named study of 'individual differences', which in fact turns out to be the study of group sameness. As a result we have focused on the establishment of general dimensions, at some point along which all individuals can be placed, rather than on a study of the dimensions which each individual develops in order to organise his own world.

For Kelly it was critical to take data from one individual person (idiography) and to employ a technique which could cope with the qualitative nature of the data to be collected. He developed the Repertory Grid which was able to measure an individual's construct of the world. Kelly was thus able to employ a clear and valid measure within an idiographic approach. This was an important advance in idiographic techniques and the repertory technique has become increasingly important as a research tool. It enables the person to use his/her own constructions of the world but in such a way that they are comparable and measurable.

An example of the repertory grid technique is provided from a case study by Fiona Wilson. The research examined the impact of computer numerical control (CNC) technology in the engineering industry. Its main objective was to explore the effect of new technology on the responses of both craftsmen and managers in two differing companies. One of the research measures used to explore the subjective experiences of the workers was Kelly's Repertory Grid. Wilson describes it as a 'formalised conversation' and says that 'It is an attempt to stand in others' shoes, to see their world as they see it, to understand their situation, their concerns.

Using this technique, Wilson was able to measure the workers' own feelings and motivations, and to understand the impact that technology had on their job, their skills

and sense of self worth. She noted in her conclusion that the strategic decisions made by the two companies in their utilisation-of ,the new technology made a direct and measurable impact on the perception and attitudes of the craftsmen.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Explain the idiographic theory of personality.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The analysis in this unit, as you have observed, has been used to discuss the concept of personality. From the foregoing, you have appreciated the fact that personality is a dynamic organisation, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create a person's characteristic patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. This explains the uniqueness of individual human being. This unit has also been used to discuss the fact that there are mainly two distinct theories which explain the nature of personality; one which holds that personality cannot be influenced by the environment while the other holds that personality is a subject of environmental dictates.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

Meaning and nature of personality  
Nomothetic theory, and  
Idiographic theory.

In the next study unit, you will be taken through the discussion on learning.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss Freud's psychoanalytic approach to the understanding of personality.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. Nomothetic theory of personality views personality as consistent, largely inherited and resistant to change, and environmental and social factors have minimal influence on personality.

Contributions range from the theory of Main Personality Types (Hans Eysenck) such as extrovert and introvert personalities; and the Personality Traits (Cattell) identifying surface traits and source traits in personality.

2. Idiographic approach is concerned with understanding the uniqueness of individuals and the development of the self concept. Personality development is a process which

is open to change; responding to the environment and people around them, and the dynamics of the interactions as playing a critical part in shaping personality.

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## **UNIT 4:      LEARNING**

### **CONTENTS**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The nature of learning is such that it is a continuous, automatic and often social process. Nevertheless, 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. A discussion on learning inevitably involves an examination of change and how it takes place.

Learning includes not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and social behaviour. It is self-evident that learning will be influenced by how motivated an individual is and by the attitudes held. These attitudes may themselves be affected by the rewards and punishments received in past situations, and by the culture and close environment within which the individual lives. Hence, it is pertinent to examine the nature of learning within the work environment. This is the subject of discussion in this study unit.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of learning
- discuss the nature of learning
- Identify and discuss various theories of learning
- Discuss the application of learning to study skill and workplace.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning and Process of Learning**

According to Mullins (2000), learning is an all-embracing term which covers changes of an enduring and persistent nature. Individual differences occur because of the active and dynamic nature of the learning process. Individuals are not just vessels which are filled with knowledge; they are active participants who interact and relate to the world around them. Their ability to learn is an effect of their innate potential and their social experiences.

It is evident that learning links the individual to the social world and is both a personal and social experience. Learning is a natural, spontaneous process which can be observed in the play of young children as they imitate and model their behaviour and attitudes on the people around them. Although learning has a consequence for the individual's understanding it should not be forgotten that learning is frequently a shared experience (Mullins, 2000).

More often than not, this process may be deliberate as, for example, in the parent-child relationship when parents are attempting to socialise the child into acceptable ways of behaving, or in organisations where employees are taught opening phrases to say when answering the telephone. At other times learning happens as a natural consequence of living in and adapting to the world.

The formal learning settings can be likened to special situations which can be distinguished from other forms of social learning. Formal learning which takes place in institutions – is typically concerned with the acquisition of knowledge or skills, although attitude change often accompanies such changes. Individuals are often tested, graded and deemed to have passed (or failed) a preconceived and agreed standard. Such a process is ingrained in our society and is used as a basis for distinguishing between individuals.

There are various theories of learning, which are all traceable to the history of psychology. Some of the earliest experimental psychologists focused their attention on animal learning. These theorists based their ideas on positivistic traditions and were keen to develop laws of learning. They were only interested in behaviour which could be objectively measured, and they designed experiments which maximised their control and the validity of their results.

#### **3.2 Nature of Learning**

Some cognitive theorists have emphasised the cyclical nature of learning and its active nature. For example, experiential learning is an integration and alteration of thinking and doing (Kolb, 1985; Davis, 1990). This approach emphasises the importance of the synthesis between individuals' behaviour and actions, and the evaluation of their experiences. The individual's goals and aims in the form of a learning contract, are focused as being crucial. Basically therefore, reflection of what has been learned in order to experiment with new situations and to become aware of new possibilities is a vital part of the learning process.

The learning cycle as espoused by Kolb (1985) is the very essence of action learning. Hence, learners are not able to be passive recipients; they are forced into a situation which demands that they reflect and evaluate their actions. This has the effect of encouraging individuals to become lifelong learners and to be central in the learning process.

According to Kolb, experiential learning will enable managers to cope with change and complexity. Thus, he suggest that a key function of strategic management development is to provide managers with access to knowledge and relationship networks that can help them become lifelong learners and cope with the issues on their continually changing agendas. Furthermore, Kolb suggests that partnerships between education and industry create feedback loops which enable an interaction between ideas and action and create a lifelong attitude towards learning.

The learning cycle by Kolb (1985) involves the following process:

- i) Concrete experiences stage: perception of the objective world;
- ii) Observation and reflection stage: beginning of internalization;
- iii) Abstract conceptualization stage: step back from reality and draw conclusions and generalizations; and
- iv) Active experimental stage: check out theories and hunches by testing in new situations.

Kolb (1985) has also advanced ideas about the different ways in which people learn, recognising their different cognitive styles. He describes four main learning styles; convergent, divergent, assimilative and accommodative, which have particular characteristics and whose strengths lie in differing situations. According to him, individuals have a preference for learning in certain styles, and thus; understanding and knowing one's style will go some way in helping the learning process.

According to Mullins (2000), some writers suggest that hand in hand with experiential learning should be the creation of learning cultures. The recognition that organisations have to be able to cope with constant change and complexity requires a learning climate in which the new order of things can be understood. Such a climate allows for disagreement and conflict by seeing differing perspectives as energising debate and innovation. Making mistakes is seen as an opportunity for review and modification rather than looking for someone or something to blame. In this vein, Garratt (1994) regards the creation of a learning organisation as having positive and liberating consequences which include not only enabling organisational efficiency and effectiveness but significantly the generation of a 'healthier and more cheerful organisation'.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Identify and discuss the stages involved in cyclical nature of learning.

### **3.3 Theories of Learning**

#### **3.3.1 Behaviourism Theory**

Behaviourism is a school of psychology developed by researchers who were interested in behaviour; action that could be observed, measured and controlled, in contrast to ideas

and thoughts in people's minds which are invisible and impossible to measure. These behaviourists' theories are discussed below.

## 1. Law of Exercise and Association

The theory was developed by J.B. Watson in 1924. The theory refers to the process which occurs when two responses are connected together and repeatedly exercised. Watson was particularly interested in the study of fixed habits and routines.

## 2. Classical Conditioning

The classical conditioning theory was developed by I. Pavlov in 1927. Pavlov, working in Russia, proposed the theory from laboratory experiments which invariably demonstrated how reflexes, such as salivation, could respond to a new situation and new stimulus. Pavlov discovered that dogs would salivate to a bell if this was repeatedly associated with the arrival of a plate of food. The dog had learned to associate the sound of the bell with the food and thus had been conditioned to respond in a particular way; in this example by salivating as indicated in Fig 5.1 below.

Fig 5.1: Pavlov's Classical Conditioning Scenario

### Stage 1

*Stimulus:* Plate of food ..... *Response:* Dog salivates

No learning – an automatic and 'natural' reaction – an unconditioned response.

### Stage 2

*Stimulus:* Plate of food plus the sound of a bell ..... *Response:* Dog salivates

Repeated over many trials. Dog is in a learning situation of associating the bell with the onset of food.

### Stage 3

*Stimulus:* The sound of a bell ..... *Response:* Dog salivates

Learning has taken place and the dog has been conditioned to respond to the sound of the bell. Thus a S(timulus) – R(esponse) bond has been made.

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Source: Mullins (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.122.

Pavlov's experiments facilitated the understanding of how conditioned responses are reinforced or strengthened if the stimulus is constantly repeated with the unconditioned response. His experiment also showed that animals can learn to discriminate between different tones of bells. In other experiments, Pavlov showed how animals could learn to generalise and respond to bells of similar but slightly different sound.

Pavlov also demonstrated that responses will diminish over time (this is called extinction) without the repeated connection of the stimulus with the unconditioned response. These

laws of learning which Pavlov established in his animal laboratory were applied to human learning in the 1990s and a discussion of their applications are given at the end of this section (Mullins, 2000).

### 3. Outcomes of learning

This theory was developed by E.L. Thorndike in 1932; the work drew attention to the outcomes of learning. Thorndike watched animals in new learning situations and observed that animals learn by trial and error. There was no evidence of insight in the first place, nevertheless, their behaviour was affected by the success of the outcomes. He discovered that if an action was successful (for example, if it led to the reward of food), then it was more likely to be repeated. Thorndike called this the law of effect (Mullins, 2000).

### 4. Operant Conditioning

Based on the ideas of Thorndike, B.F. Skinner advanced a thesis of operant conditioning in 1974. Skinner's experiments on animals showed the effects of rewards and punishment on animal learning. He proved that a response would be learned when the animal associated the behavioural response to a reward. Skinner termed the reward as reinforcement as shown in Fig 5.2 below.

Fig 5.2: Skinner's Operant Conditioning Scenario

A hungry animal is placed in a box – called the Skinner Box – empty except for a lever and food container.

#### Stage 1

*Stimulus:* Lever in a box ..... *Response:* By trial and error the animal presses the lever.

The lever releases a pellet of food.

#### Stage 2

*Stimulus:* Lever in a box ..... *Response:* Lever pressed for the pellet of food.

The animal has learned to respond to the lever for the reward of food and thus a S(timulus) – R(esponse) bond has been made.

Source: Mullins (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.123.

In subsequent trials of Skinner's experiment, the animal did not require the trial and error stage; it immediately pressed the lever to receive the reward. Conditioning had therefore been achieved.

Skinner experimented with the reinforcement process. The relevant issues were: what would happen if the animal was not rewarded on each trial?; and what effect would partial reinforcement have on the rate of learning? He found that this strengthened the Stimulus – Response bond and the behaviour was more resistant to extinction. The reward seemed to hold even greater importance.



Negative reinforcement was also shown to be powerful. These experiments were still concerned with the Stimulus-Response bond but the reward was the prevention or stopping of something painful or nasty. For instance, if the animal had been placed in a box and received an electric shock unless it jumped into a box when the light came on, the animal quickly learned to jump. If by responding in a particular way it prevented something nasty or uncomfortable happening, negative reinforcement was said to occur.

Nevertheless, punishment is very different in kind as this is trying to break the stimulus-response bond. Therefore, if the animal pressed the lever and received an electric shock it would be punished for pressing the lever and thus would quickly learn not to respond (Mullins, 2000).

Operant conditioning, according to Mullins (2000), whereby responses are learned because of their outcome, can be illustrated by a variety of learning situations from learning skills and sports to learning how to behave. Behaviour modification is the term given when behaviour is gradually shaped and reinforced by rewards as the person comes closer to the end objective.

Learning occurs incrementally with the task divided into subgoals each with their own reward. Sometimes shaping occurs away from the main business, in training centres where peer assessment and reward can also act as further encouragement for the 'shaping' process. As the trainee's behaviour becomes modified, expectations will alter and enlarge and praise or reinforcement will be given less.

The theories as discussed above can be used to understand how people can become conditioned to react in certain ways. All individuals have their own habits, routines and ways of doing things, which may have been learned by past praise and reinforcement. Learning the skills and knowledge required in a job and the social ways of behaving are vital aspects of organisational behaviour.

According to Mullins (2000), rewards are only one part of the learning process. The observed managerial behaviour will also be assessed by the more junior officer. The assessment requires judgement; it is not simply a response to a situation based on association. Human behaviour offers far greater complexity than an animal's hungry response pattern. Arguably the behaviourist school enhanced knowledge of learning processes and their theories are capable of explaining many simple learning situations but, by themselves, they are not able to account for the complexity of differing situations that individuals face nor for the variety of individual responses given.

Cognitive factors are critical in understanding how people learn. Observing changes in behaviour is only a part of the learning process. To understand how and why people learn attention must be given to a myriad of individual factors. People learn not only by association and rewards but by having knowledge of their results and by receiving feedback. The achievement of their desired aims and goals motivates and drives people to learn. This has led theorists and educationalists to consider the ways in which people learn through experience (Mullins, 2000).

### 3.3.2 Cognitive Theories

According to Mullins (2000), notable theorists investigated animal learning in the 1920s and 1930s.

Kohler (1925) in his *Mentality of Apes* treatise, for example, argued that chimpanzees were able to solve a problem through the use of insight. He placed fruit out of reach of the chimpanzees but with a stick within reach. He believed that the chimpanzees had actually worked out what they needed to do and that the process of learning was more complex than a simple stimulus-response association.

Another theorist, Tolman (1932) in his *Purposive Behaviour in Animals and Men* treatise, showed that rats were capable of cognitive behaviour in a series of experiments in which he investigated animal learning. He disagreed with the behaviourists and their simple notions of S – R learning because his findings indicated that the rats had learned an image of the maze (a cognitive map) which they would use at a latter time.

Piaget (1926), a Swiss psychologist and theorist, in his “*The Language and Thought of the Child* treatise”, directed interest and attention to human learning and showed through a series of careful observations that childhood is made up of four major stages of intellectual development as shown below:

|                      |                           |                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>First Stage:</b>  | Sensory-motor period:     | birth to 2 years;     |
| <b>Second Stage:</b> | Pre-occupational thought: | 2 years to 7 years;   |
| <b>Third Stage:</b>  | Concrete operations:      | 7 years to 11 years;  |
| <b>Fourth Stage:</b> | Formal operations:        | 11 years to 15 years. |

As observed by Mullins (2000), although there may be differences in the time that children may take to pass through all stages, Piaget’s theory offers a tight coherent perspective of the maturation of intellectual thought and development. Piaget also encouraged studies to consider the cyclical nature of learning and the ways in which children and adults adjust to and accommodate their environments.

For many cognitive theorists, learning is viewed as a form of information processing with three stages:

- an active perception stage which gives attention to stimuli from the environment;
- a second mentally active stage which makes sense of the information;
- finally, a restructuring and storage phase.

According to Glaser (1992), rather than learning being seen as the acquisition of discrete information, some researchers argue that the most significant process is the building of holistic frameworks or ‘scaffolds’. The type and build of differing scaffolds may be a useful way of viewing individual differences in learning effectiveness.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify and discuss the stages involved in learning according to cognitive theorists.

### **3.4 Application of Learning Theory to Study Skills**

#### **3.4.1 Learning Theory Applied to Study Skills**

It is advisable that you take special interest in this area of the discussion. It will help you towards gaining strategies that will enable you organize yourself for meaningful study in your programme.

According to Mullins (2000), based on combined findings from both cognitive and behaviourist schools, there are three fundamental features that can be applied to study skills as identified and discussed below:

good organisation;  
active planned sessions; and  
psychological preparation.

##### **i) Organization**

Study material is more easily learned when it is associated and organised in as many and varied ways as possible. In addition to your written and organised notes, use other senses such as: visual sense -draw maps, plans and posters; auditory sense – make and play back revision cassette tapes. Using resources effectively (time, library, tutors) is perhaps self-evident but clearly essential.

##### **ii) Active Planned Session**

Learning is enhanced when you distribute your workings sessions and avoid cramming. It is sensible to allow reasonable time breaks and recall sessions. Being constantly active in your learning, ensuring that you understand the study material and that you are not passively rewriting notes without thinking them through, is also critical. Constantly testing your knowledge and reviewing your study material is good practice.

##### **iii) Psychological Preparation**

Setting targets and goals is important for readiness to learn and cutting down procrastination time. Setting your own psychological contract by aiming to achieve a goal, being clear about what you are planning to learn and then rewarding yourself when you have reached the target, has also proved successful.

The environment also promotes your readiness to learn and sitting in the same room or at the same desk can encourage a positive learning attitude. Being positive, getting rid of anxiety and emotional factors, may be the most difficult but is probably the most important part of this preparation process.

#### **3.4.2 Learning Theory Applied to Workplace**

Mullins (2000) identifies some of the major areas where it is possible to apply the theories of learning in workplace.

In area of self development, individuals are advised to engage in:

Learning what to 'do' (for example, skills and knowledge).  
Learning how to 'be' (role behaviour).

Learning the ropes (socialisation process and culture) and the social rules (norms and attitudes).

In the area of development of other people, the following is important:

Personal development -training others and developing their potential (including skills of mentoring, assessing, advising).

Policy development -developing policies for 'learning organisations'; coping with changes and development; enabling 'loose', creative and lateral thinking.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed that learning involves a continuous, automatic and social process which may be deliberate as in organisations where employees are taught the intricacies of operations. The discussion above shows the cyclical nature of learning and its active nature. Basically therefore, reflection of what has been learned in order to experiment with new situations and to become aware of new possibilities is a vital part of the learning process. The discussion also portrays the fact that learning theory can be applied to workplace and even your own study skills.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, we have discussed the following topics:

Meaning and Process of Learning  
The Nature of Learning Theories  
of Learning, and Application of  
Learning Theory.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the cyclical nature of learning.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The stages involved in cyclical nature of learning cycle

- i) Concrete experiences stage: perception of the objective world;
- ii) Observation and reflection stage: beginning of internalization;
- iii) Abstract conceptualization stage: step back from reality and draw conclusions and generalizations; and
- iv) Active experimental stage: check out theories and hunches by testing in new situations.

2. According to cognitive theorists, learning is viewed as a form of information processing with three stages such as follows:

- i) an active perception stage which gives attention to stimuli from the environment;
- ii) a second mentally active stage which makes sense of the information;
- iii) finally, a restructuring and storage phase.

## **7.0REFERENCES**

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## **FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 5: PERCEPTION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Perceptual Process
  - 3.2 Influences on Perception
    - 3.2.1 Internal Factors
    - 3.2.2 External Factors
  - 3.3 Organisation and Arrangement of Stimuli
  - 3.4 Perceiving other People
  - 3.5 Attribution Theory
  - 3.6 Perceptual Distortions and Errors
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Perception is germane to all organisational behaviour, and therefore, any situation in organizations can be analysed in terms of its perceptual connotations. The import of individual differences is particularly apparent when focusing on the process of perception. Hence, this is a characteristic feature of behaviour which has particular importance to the manager. Individuals see things in different ways. Individuals have their own unique picture or image of how they see the 'real' world. Individuals do not passively receive information from the world but they analyse and judge. Due to individual differences, they may place significance on some information and regard other information as worthless. This implies that individuals may be influenced by their expectations so that they only see what they expect to see. In this study unit therefore, we are going to discuss the process of perception of individuals.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the perception process
- identify and explain factors affecting perception
- explain organization and arrangement of stimuli
- discuss how individuals perceive other people
- discuss the attribution theory
- mention and explain forms of distortions in perception.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Perceptual Process**

According to Mullins (2000), the following considerations are important towards understanding the perceptual process in human beings.

##### **1. Individuality**

Individuals are all unique. Individuals have their own way of looking at and understanding their environment and the people within it. A situation may be the same but the interpretation of that situation by two individuals may be vastly different. The physical properties of the environment may be identical in terms of how they 'are', but they are perceived quite differently because each individual has imposed upon the object/environment their own interpretations, their own judgement and evaluation.

##### **2. Selectivity in Attention and Perception**

It is not possible to have 'an understanding of perception without taking into consideration and account its sensory basis. It is not possible for individuals to attend to everything in the environment because their sensory systems have limits. The physical limits therefore imply that individuals are selective in their attention and perception.

##### **3. Organisation and Judgements**

According to Mullins (2000), early pioneer work by psychologists has resulted in an understanding of universal laws which underlie the perceptual process. It seems that individuals cannot help searching for meaning and understanding in their environment. The way in which individuals categorise and organise this sensory information is based on a range of different factors including:

- the present situation,
- the emotional state, and
- past experiences of the same or similar event.

Some information may be considered highly important to individuals and may result in immediate action or speech. Nevertheless, in other instances the information may be simply left unattended to or assimilated into other ideas and thoughts. The link between perception and memory processes becomes obvious. Some of the unattended material in terms of information may be forgotten or changed and reconstructed over time.

##### **4. Assumptions**

Assumptions are made throughout the perceptual process, below individual conscious threshold. Individuals have learnt to take for granted certain constants in their environment. Therefore, individuals assume that features of the world will stay the same and thus they do not need to spend their time and energy seeing things afresh and anew. Hence, individuals thus make a number of inferences throughout the entire perceptual process. Nevertheless, these inferences may save time and speed up the process which may also lead to distortions and inaccuracies.

## 5. Perception as Information Processing

According to Mullins (2000), it is common to see the stages of perception described as information processing information system: information as stimuli are selected at one end of the process. Then interpreted and translated, resulting in action or thought patterns. The elaborate analysis of this process is given below.

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Pre-perceptual stage:</b> | Stimuli from the environment.  |
| <b>Stage 1:</b>              | Selection of stimuli; screening or filtering.                                    |
| <b>Stage 2:</b>              | Organization and arrangement of stimuli.<br>Logic and meaning to the individual. |
| <b>Stage 3:</b>              | Pattern of Behaviour   |

The above simplified form of perceptual process is indicative of the fact that perception starts from the information individuals receive from the environment; the stimuli from the environment. From there, individuals select stimuli or information through screening or filtering. The next stage involves organization and arrangement of selected stimuli, which gives rise to logic and meaning to the individual. This results in pattern of behaviour of the individual.

For example, in an organizational setting, a memo from superior officer will trigger the selection of an item under the responsibility of a subordinate through screening or filtering. The individual then organizes the selected item of the memo and makes meaning out of it. This gives rise to engaging in certain action towards discharging his responsibility.

## 6. Inferences and Assumptions

In certain circumstances individuals may select information out of the environment because of the way they categorise the world.

For instance, if a superior officer is advised by colleagues that a particular subordinate has managerial potential, the superior may be specifically looking for confirmation that those views are correct. According to Mullins (2000), this process has been known as 'top-down', because the cognitive processes are influencing the perceptual readiness of the individual to select certain information, This emphasises the active nature of the perceptual process. Individuals do not passively digest the information from their senses but they actively attend and indeed, at times, seek out certain information.

Hence, the process of perception explains the manner in which information (stimuli) from the environment around us is selected and organised, to provide meaning for the individual. Perception is the mental function of giving significance to stimuli such as shapes, colours, movement, taste, sounds, touch, smells, pain, pressures and feelings. Perception gives rise to individual behavioural responses to particular situations. Therefore, despite the fact that a group of people may 'physically see' the same thing, they each have their own version of what is seen -their perceived view of reality (Mullins 2000).



## **3.2 Influences on Perception**

The first stage in the process of perception is selection and attention. The issue has to do with the reason for attending to certain stimuli and not to others. There are two important factors to consider in this discussion: first, internal factors relating to the state of the individual; and second, the environment and influences external to the individual. The process of perceptual selection is based, therefore, on both internal and external factors (Mullins 2000).

### **3.2.1 Internal Factors**

#### **i) Sensory Limits or Threshold**

Mullins (2000) quoting Kohler (1964), observes that all senses of individuals have specialist nerves which respond differentially to the forms of energy which are received. For instance, the eyes receive and convert light waves into electrical signals which are transmitted to the visual cortex of the brain and translated into meaning.

The sensory system of all human beings is geared to respond to changes in the environment. This has particular implications for the way in which individuals perceive the world. The term used to describe the way in which we disregard the familiar is 'habituation'.

Individuals may differ in terms of their sensory limits or thresholds. For instance, without eyeglasses some people would not be able to read a car's number plate at the distance required for safety. People differ not only in their absolute thresholds, but also in their ability to discriminate between stimuli. For instance, it may not be possible for the untrained to distinguish between different grades of tea but this would be an everyday event for the trained tea taster. This implies that we are able to learn to become more discriminatory and are able to train our senses to recognise small differences between stimuli. It is also possible for us to adapt to unnatural environments and learn to cope.

Individuals may also differ in terms of the amount of sensory information we need to reach their own comfortable equilibrium. For instance, some individuals would find loud music at a party or gig uncomfortable and unpleasant, whereas for others the intensity of the music is part of the total enjoyment. In the same vein, if individuals are deprived of sensory information for too long this can lead to feelings of discomfort and fatigue. Empirical evidence has shown that if the brain is deprived of sensory information then it will manufacture its own. Therefore, it implies that the perceptual process is embedded in the sensory limitations of the individual.

## **2. Psychological Factors**

Psychological factors will also affect individual perception. These internal factors are personality, learning and motives, and they give rise to an inclination to perceive certain stimuli with a readiness to respond in certain ways. This is called an individual's perceptual set (Mullins, 2000).

Differences in the ways individuals acquire information has been used as one of four scales in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator already discussed in Unit Three of this material

under personality and values.. Myers-Briggs (1987) distinguish individuals who tend to accept and work with what is given in the here-and-now, and thus become realistic and practical (sensing types), from others who go beyond the information from the senses and look at the possible patterns, meanings and relationships. These 'intuitive types' groom expert at seeing new possibilities and new ways of doing things'. Myers-Briggs stresses the value of both types, and emphasise the importance of complementary skills and variety in any successful enterprise or relationship.

Mullins (2000), based on the classic experiments of field dependence/independence by Witkin et al (1954), observes that field dependent individuals were found to be reliant on the context of the stimuli, the cues given in the situation, whereas field independent subjects relied mainly on their own internal bodily cues and less on the environment. These experiments led Witkin et al to generalised to other settings outside the psychological laboratory and to suggest that individuals use, and need, different information from the environment to make sense of their world.

### **3. The Needs of an Individual**

The needs of an individual will affect their perceptions. For example, an officer or a manager deeply engrossed in preparing an urgent report may screen out ringing telephones, the sound of computers, people talking and furniture being moved in the next office, but will respond readily to the smell of a beverage. The most desirable and urgent needs will almost certainly affect an individual's perceptual process.

The 'Pollyanna Principle' claims that pleasant stimuli will be processed more quickly and remembered more precisely than unpleasant stimuli. However, it must be noted that intense internal drives may lead to perceptual distortions of situations (or people) and an unwillingness to absorb certain painful information. This will be considered later in this unit (Mullins, 2000).

### **4. Previous Experience**

Learning from previous experiences, as observed by Mullins (2000), has a critical effect throughout all the stages of the perceptual process. It will affect the stimuli perceived in the first instance, and then the ways in which those stimuli are understood and processed, and finally the response which is given. The learning gained from past experiences colour what is seen and processed.

According to Mullins (2000), language plays an important role in the way we perceive the world. Our language not only labels and distinguishes the environment for us but also structures and guides our thinking pattern. Language is part of the culture people experience and learn to take for granted. Culture differences are relevant because they emphasise the impact of social learning on the perception of people and their surroundings.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Identify and discuss the internal factors that affect perception.

### **3.2.2 External Factors**

According to Mullins (2000), the knowledge of, familiarity with or expectations about, a given situation or previous experiences, will influence perception. External factors refer to the nature and characteristics of the stimuli. There is usually a tendency to give more attention to stimuli which are, for example: large; moving; intense; loud; contrasted; bright; novel; repeated; or stand out from the background.

It has been observed that any number of these factors may be present at a given time or situation. It is therefore the total pattern of the stimuli together with the context in which they occur that influence perception. For example, it is usually a novel or unfamiliar stimulus that is more noticeable, but a person is more likely to perceive the familiar face of a friend among a group of people all dressed in the same style.

Another example is that the sight of a fork-lift truck on the factory floor of a manufacturing organisation is likely to be perceived quite differently from one in the corridor of a university. The word 'terminal' is likely to be perceived differently in the context of, for example: a hospital, an airport or a computer firm.

### **3.3 Organisation and Arrangement of Stimuli**

The Gestalt School of Psychology led by Max Wertheimer, according to Mullins (2000), claimed that the process of perception is innately organised and patterned. They described the process as one which has built-in field effects. In other words, the brain can act like a dynamic, physical field in which interaction among elements is an intrinsic part. The Gestalt School produced a series of principles, which are still readily applicable today.

According to Mullins (2000), some of the most significant principles include the following:

#### **1. Figure and Ground**

The figure-ground principle states that figures are seen against a background. The ground-figure does not have to be an object; It could be merely a geometrical pattern. Many textiles are perceived as figure-ground relationships. These relationships are often reversible.

The figure-ground principle has applications in all occupational situations. It is important that employees know and are able to attend to the significant aspect (the figure), and treat other elements of the job as context (background). Early training sessions aim to identify and focus on the significant aspects of a task. Managerial effectiveness can also be judged in terms of chosen priorities (figure). Stress could certainly occur for those employees who are uncertain about their priorities, and are unable to distinguish between the significant and less significant tasks. They feel overwhelmed by the 'whole' picture.

#### **2. Grouping**

The grouping principle refers to the tendency to organise shapes and patterns instantly into meaningful groupings or patterns on the basis of their proximity or similarity. Parts

that are close in time or space tend to be perceived together. For example, in disunity, the workers are more likely to be perceived as many independent people; but in unity, because of the cohesiveness principle, the workers may be perceived as three distinct groups of people.

### **3. Closure**

There is also a tendency to complete an incomplete figure; to (mentally) fill in the gaps and to perceive the figure as a whole. This creates an overall and meaningful image, rather than an unconnected series of lines or blobs.

According to Gestalt theory, perceptual organisation is instant and spontaneous. Individuals cannot stop themselves making meaningful assumptions about their environment. The Gestaltists emphasised the ways in which the elements interact and claimed that the new pattern or structure perceived had a character of its own, hence the famous phrase: 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts'.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify and explain the basic principles involved in organization and arrangement of stimuli.

### **3.4 Perceiving other People**

According to Mullins (2000), the principles and examples of perceptual differences discussed above reflect the way we perceive other people and are the source of many organisational problems. In the work situation the process of perception and the selection of stimuli can influence a superior officer's relationship with subordinate staff.

Mullins advances the following examples:

the way in which a superior officer may think of a number of staff: either working in close proximity; or with some common feature such as all clerical workers, as a homogeneous group rather than a collection of individuals each with their own separate identity and characteristics;

the extent to which allowance is made for flexibility and tolerance given for personal initiative, imagination or individual action by staff; rather than insistence on continuity, formal regulations or set procedures;

.the degree to which unanimity is perceived, and decisions made or action in the belief that there is full agreement with staff when, in fact, a number of staff may be opposed to the decision or action.

A superior officer's perception of the workforce will influence attitudes in dealing with people and the style of managerial behaviour adopted. The way in which officers approach the performance of their jobs and the behaviour they display towards subordinate staff are likely to be conditioned by predispositions about people, human

nature and work. An example of this is the style of management adopted on the basis of McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y suppositions (Mullins, 2000).

## **1. The Dynamics of Interpersonal Perception**

Mullins (2000) quoting Laing (1971), observes that the dynamics of person perception cannot be overestimated. Unlike the perception of an object which just exists, another individual will react to you and be affected by your behaviour.

The interaction of individuals thus provides an additional layer of interpretation and complexity. The cue which individuals may attend to, the expectation they may have, the assumptions they may make, the response pattern that occurs, leave more scope for errors and distortions. Individuals are not only perceiving the stimulus (that is, the other person) but they are also processing their reactions to other people, and therefore they are only one part of this process.

Thus person perception differs from the perception of objects because: it is a continually dynamic and changing process; and the perceiver is a part of this process who will influence and be influenced by the other people in the situation.

Guirdham (1990) propounds a cycle of perception which involves the following steps:

1. Person A speaks, moves, gestures, etc.
2. Person B interprets A's speech, movement and gestures in order to understand A's motives, emotions, assumptions, attitudes, intentions, and abilities.
3. B responds in speech, movement, gesture, etc.
4. A's interprets B's speech, movement and gestures in order to understand B's motives, emotions, assumptions, attitudes, intentions, abilities.
5. A responds in speech, movement, gesture, etc.

The last step leads back to step 2, which forms a sort of loop.

## **2. Setting and Environment**

According to Mullins (2000), person perception is also affected by the setting, and the environment may play a critical part in establishing rapport. For example, in a meeting setting, the factors such as the following influence the perceptual process:

- Purpose of and motives for meeting. Emotional cost to parties.
- Status/role/age/gender/ethnic group/appearance/personality/interests attitudes.
- Previous encounters.
- Time of meeting.
- Environment/culture,
- Past experience, Rapport.

## **3. Perception and Communication**

The process of interpersonal perception is affected by the way people communicate. Communication and perception are inextricably bound. The way and manner individuals communicate to their colleagues, boss, subordinates, friends and partners depends on their

perception of them, on their 'history' with them, on their emotional state, etc. Individuals may misjudge them and regard such communication as unsuccessful, but unless they have some feedback from the other party they may never know whether what they have said, or done, is received in the way it was intended. Feedback is a vital ingredient of the communication process. The feedback may reaffirm our perceptions of the person or it may force us to review our perceptions.

#### 4. Transactional Analysis

Transactional analysis, developed by Eric Berne (1966), is one of the most popular ways of explaining the dynamics of interpersonal communication. It is now a theory which encompasses personality, perception and communication. Berne used it initially as a method of psychotherapy but it has been convincingly used by organisations as a training and development programme.

Transactional analysis has two basic underlying assumptions:

all the events and feelings that we have ever experienced are stored within us and can be replayed, so we can re-experience the events and the feelings of all our past years;

personality is made of three ego states which are revealed in distinct ways of behaving. The ego states manifest themselves in gesture, tone of voice and action, almost as if they are different people within us.

Berne identified and labelled the ego states as follows:

**Child Ego State:** behaviour which demonstrates the feelings we remember as a child. This state may be associated with having fun, playing, rebelliousness, spontaneous behaviour and emotional responses.

**Adult Ego State:** behaviour which concerns our thought processes and the processing of facts and information. In this state we may be objective, rational reasonable – seeking information and receiving facts.

**Parent Ego State:** behaviour which concerns the attitudes, feelings and behaviour incorporated from external sources, primarily our parents. This state refers, to feelings about right and wrong and how to care for other people.

Berne claimed that the three ego states were universal, but the content of the ego states would be unique to each person. All individuals are said to behave in each of these states at different times. The three ego states exist simultaneously within each individual although at any particular time any one state may dominate the other two.

Berne emphasised that the states should not be judged as superior or inferior but as different. Analysis of ego states may reveal why communication breaks down or why individuals may feel manipulated or used. Berne insists that it is possible to identify the ego state from the words, voice, gestures, and attitude of the person communicating.

A dialogue can be analysed not only in terms of the ego state but also whether the transaction produced a complementary reaction or a crossed reaction. By complementary it is meant whether the ego state was an expected and preferred response.

According to Stewart and Jaines (1987), knowledge of transactional analysis can be of benefit to employees who are dealing with potentially difficult situations. In the majority of work situations the Adult – Adult transactions are likely to be the norm. Where work colleagues perceive and respond by adopting the Adult ego state, such a transaction is more likely to encourage a rational, problem-solving approach and reduce the possibility of emotional conflict.

Given the incidence of stress in the workplace, analysis of communication may be one way of understanding such conflict. By focusing on the interactions occurring within the workplace transactional analysis can aid the understanding of human behaviour.

It can help to improve communication skills by assisting in interpreting a person's ego state and which form of state is likely to produce the most appropriate response. This should lead to an improvement in both customer relations and management-subordinate relations.

Transactional analysis can be seen, therefore, as a valuable tool in which individuals can understand social situations and the games that people play both in and outside work organisations. Transactional analysis emphasises the strong links between perception and communication and illustrates the way in which they affect each other.

## **5. Selection and Attention**

According to Mullins (2000), the social situation consists of both verbal and non-verbal signals. The non-verbal signals include: bodily contact; proximity; orientation; head nods; facial expression; gestures; posture; direction of gaze; dress and appearance; and non-verbal aspects of speech.

Verbal and non-verbal signals are co-ordinated into regular sequences, often without the awareness of the parties. The mirroring of actions has been researched and is called 'postural echoing'. There is considerable evidence to indicate that each person is constantly influencing the other, and being influenced.

According to Mullins (2000), Cook (1971) has suggested that in any social encounter there are two kinds of information which can be distinguished:

**static information** – information which will not change during the encounter: for example, colour, gender, height and age; and

**dynamic information** – information which is subject to change: for example, mood, posture, gestures and expression.

## **6. Impression Management**

Individuals in some situations will attempt to project their attitudes, personality and competence by paying particular attention to their appearance, and the impact this may have on others. This has been labelled impression management and the selection

interview is an obvious illustration. Some information is given more weight than other information when an impression is formed. It would seem that there are central traits which are more important than others in determining our perceptions.

An instance of these central traits is the degree of warmth or coldness shown by an individual. The timing of information also seems to be critical in the impressions we form. For example, information heard first tends to be resistant to later contradictory information. In other words, the saying 'first impression counts' is supported by research and is called 'the primacy effect'. Empirical evidence has also shown that a negative first impression is more resistant to change than a positive one (Mullins, 2000).

## **7. Organisation and Judgement**

Mullins (2000), quoting Galagan (1975), observes that the ways in which we organise and make judgements about what we have perceived is to a large extent based on our previous experiences and learning. There are cultural differences in the way that body language is perceived and interpreted.

Inferences and assumptions individuals make which go beyond the information given, and they guide the way in which individuals interpret the behaviour of others. In the same vein, individuals make assumptions about the world of objects, and go beyond the information provided. Individuals also make critical inferences about other people's characteristics and possible likely behaviours.

Judgement of other people can also be influenced by perceptions of such stimuli as, for example: role or status; occupation; physical factors and appearance; and body language. Examples are inferences drawn from posture, invasions of personal space, the extent of eye contact, tone of voice or facial expression.

## **8. Body Language**

Mehrabian (1970) propounded that body language is of particular significance in individual perception. According to him, this is because in face-to-face communications the message about individual feelings and attitudes come only 7 per cent from the words used, 38 per cent from the voice and 55 per cent from body language including facial expressions. Significantly, when body language such as gestures and tone of voice conflicts with the words greater emphasis is likely to be placed on the non-verbal message.

According to Green (1994), body language may be a guide to personality but errors can easily arise if too much is inferred from a single message rather than a related cluster of actions. And there are of course many cultural variations in body language.

Perceptual judgement applies particularly to perceptions about other people. A person may tend to organise perception of another person in terms of the 'whole' mental picture of that person. Perceptual judgement is influenced by reference to related characteristics associated with the person and the attempt to place that person in a complete environment.



### 3.5 Attribution Theory

Mullins (2000) observes that part of the process of perceiving other people is to attribute characteristics to them. Individuals judge their behaviour and their intentions on past knowledge, and in comparison with other people they know. It is the way of making sense of their behaviour. This is known as attribution theory.

Attribution, according to Mullins (2000), is the process by which people interpret the perceived causes of behaviour. The theory suggests that behaviour is determined by a combination of perceived internal forces and external forces.

According to Mullins (2000), based on ideas of Heider (1958), the internal forces relate to personal attributes such as ability, skill, amount of effort or fatigue. The external forces, on the other hand, relate to environmental factors such as organizational rules and policies, the manner of superiors, or the weather.

Behaviour at work, as observed by Mullins (2000), may be explained by the locus of control, that is, whether the individual perceives outcomes as controlled by themselves, or by external factors. Judgements made about other people will also be influenced strongly by whether the cause is seen as internal or external.

Kelly (1973) as cited by Mullins (2000), espouses that in making attributions and determining whether an internal or external attribution is chosen, three basic criteria are important, such as discussed below:

**Distinctiveness:** how distinctive or different was the behaviour or action in this particular task or situation compared with behaviour or action on other tasks or situations?

**Consensus:** is the behaviour or action different from, or in keeping with, that displayed by most other people in the same situation?

**Consistency:** is the behaviour or action associated with an enduring personality or motivational characteristic over time, or an unusual one-off situation caused by external factors?

According to Mullins (2000), a consideration in the evaluation of task performance within an organizational setting is whether the cause of behaviour was due to stable or unstable factors. Stable factors are ability, or the ease or difficulty of the task while unstable factors are the exertion of effort, or lack of it.

Employees with an internal control orientation are more likely to believe that they can influence their level of performance through their own abilities, skills, or efforts. Employees with an external control orientation are more likely to believe that their level of performance is determined by external factors beyond their influence.

### **3.6 Perceptual Distortions and Errors**

According to Mullins (2000), the accuracy of interpersonal perception and the judgements made about other people are influenced by:

- the nature of the relationship between the perceiver and the other person;
- the amount of information available to the perceiver and the order in which information is received;
- the nature and extent of interaction between the two people.

Furthermore, there are four main features which can create particular difficulties and give rise to perceptual problem, bias or distortions, in dealing with other people. Such forms of distortion are discussed below:

#### **1. Stereotyping**

According to Mullins (2000), this is the tendency to ascribe positive or negative characteristics to a person on the basis of a general categorisation and perceived similarities. The perception of that person may be based more on certain expected characteristics than on the recognition of that person as an individual. It is a form of typecasting.

Stereotyping is a means of simplifying the process of perception and making judgements of other people, instead of dealing with a range of complex and alternative stimuli. It occurs when an individual is judged on the basis of the group to which it is perceived that person belongs.

Examples of common stereotyping, according to Mullins (2000), may be based on:

- nationality – e.g., some particular group of people are orderly and industrious;
- occupation – e.g., all accountants are boring;
- age – e.g., all young people are unreliable, no old person wants to consider new ideas;
- physical – e.g., all people with red hair have fiery temperament;
- education -e.g., all graduates are clever;
- social – e.g., all unemployed people are lazy;
- politics – e.g., all labour voters are in favour of socialism.

Stereotyping infers that all people within a particular perceived category are assumed to share the same traits or characteristics. A significant social implication of stereotyping therefore is the perception held about particular groups of people based on gender; race; disability; religious belief; and age.

Stereotyping can block out accurate perception of the individual or individual situation. Therefore, stereotyping may lead to potential situations of prejudice or discrimination.

## **2. Halo Effect**

This is the process by which the perception of a person is formulated on the basis of a single favourable or unfavourable trait or impression. The halo effect tends to shut out other relevant characteristics of that person.

A particular danger with the halo effect is that, where quick judgements are made on the basis of readily available stimuli, the perceiver may become 'perceptually blind' to subsequent stimuli at variance with the original perception, and often sub-consciously notice only those characteristics which support the original judgement.

The process may also work in reverse. This is known as the rusty halo effect. This is where general judgements about a person are formulated from the perception of a negative characteristic. For example, a staff may be seen arriving late as a new superior officer. There may be a very good reason for this and it may be completely out of character. But on the basis of that one particular event the person may be perceived as a poor time-keeper and unreliable. Another example concerns a new member of staff who performs poorly in a first major assignment. This may result from an unusual circumstances and not typical behaviour, but the person may still be perceived as a bad worker (Mullins 2000).

## **3. Perceptual Defence**

This is the tendency, according to Mullins (2000), to avoid or screen out certain stimuli that are perceptually disturbing or threatening. Therefore, people may tend to select information which is supportive of their point of view and choose not to acknowledge contrary information. For example, a superior officer who has decided recently to promote a member of staff against the advice of colleagues may select only favourable information which supports that decision and ignore less favourable information, which questions that decision.

## **4. Projection**

According to Mullins (2000), attributing or projecting one's own feelings, motives or characteristics to other people is another distortion which can occur in the perception of other people. Judgements of other people may be more favourable when they have characteristics largely in common with or easily recognised by the perceiver. Projection may also result in people exaggerating undesirable traits in others that they fail to recognise in themselves.

Perception is distorted by feelings and emotions. For example, a superior officer who is concerned about possible redundancy may perceive other officers to be even more concerned. People have tendency to perceive others less favourably by projecting certain of their own feelings or characteristics to them.

According to Freud, in his description of defence mechanisms, projection is a way in which individuals protect themselves from acknowledging that they may possess undesirable traits and assign them in exaggerated amounts to other people. For instance, a superior officer who considers all subordinates as insincere may be projecting one of his own characteristics.

Mullins (2000) observes that the above problems with perception arise because of the selectivity which exists in the perceptual process. The paradox is that this process is also people's downfall. Errors and bias are inherent in perceptual paradox.

The perceptual process is described as selective and subjective: perceiving the world according to individual's own terms and expect the world to fit into their constructs. This process is repeated when people join new organisations or have a new position within the same organisation. Fitting into the organisation involves selecting information which is necessary from that which is less significant. At times, the process can be distorted and individuals can also be tricked into seeing the world in particular ways.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed that perception affects organisational behaviour, and therefore, any situation in organizations can be analysed in terms of its perceptual conditions. Perception which explains individual differences is a characteristic feature of behaviour of workers in organizational settings. Perceptual process is selective as well as subjective. Individuals perceive the work situation according to their own terms, which comes in play when people join organisations In order for individuals to fit into the organisation involves selecting information. This can be distorted by both internal and external factors.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following::

- The Perceptual Process
- Influences on Perception
- Organisation and Arrangement of Stimuli
- Perceiving other People
- Attribution Theory, and
- Perceptual Distortions and Errors.

In the next study unit, the discussion is centred on work groups and decision making.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and discuss the factors that distort individual perception.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The internal factors that affect perception are as follows:
  - i. Sensory Limits or Threshold
  - ii. Psychological Factors
  - iii. The Needs of An Individual
  - iv. Previous Experience

2. The basic principles for organization and arrangement are as follows:
- i. Figure and Ground
  - ii. Grouping
  - iii. Closure

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

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## **FURTHER READING**

Kohler, I. (1964). 'The Formation and Transformation of the Visual World', *Psychological Issues*, 3.

## **UNIT 6: WORK GROUPS AND DECISION MAKING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Work Group
  - 3.2 Types of Work Groups
    - 3.2.1 Formal Groups
    - 3.2.2 Informal Groups
  - 3.3 Reasons For Formation of Groups
  - 3.4 Group Cohesiveness and Performance
  - 3.5 Understanding Group Behaviour
  - 3.6 Role Relationships
  - 3.7 Overlapping Group Membership
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Individuals in organizations seldom work in isolation from others. It means that the workers in organizations work in groups arising out of deliberate structural design. Workers are deliberately banded into groups in form of departments, units, divisions, and the like. Hence groups are a characteristic of all work situations and almost everyone in an organisation will be a member of one or more groups. Basically, work is a group-based activity and for the organisation to function effectively it requires good teamwork. You can appreciate the fact that the working of groups and the influence they exert over their membership is an essential feature of human behaviour and of organisational performance. Therefore, it behoves the superior officers in organizations to use groups in order to achieve a high standard of work and improve organisational effectiveness. This study unit is used to expose you to the discussion on work groups and decision making.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of a work group
- identify and explain types of work group
- discuss reasons for formation of groups.
- mention and explain factors affecting group cohesiveness
- discuss group behaviour in work setting
- analyze role relationships among workers in organization
- discuss the implication of overlapping group membership.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Work Group**

There are many possible ways of defining what is meant by a group. The essential feature of a group is that its members regard themselves as belonging to the group. Although there is no single, accepted definition most people will readily understand what constitutes a group. A popular definition by Schein (1988), regards the group in psychological terms as any number of people who interact with one another; are psychologically aware of one another; and perceive themselves to be a group.

Another useful way of defining a work group, according to Adair (1986) as cited by Mullins (2000), is that it is a collection of people who share most, if not all, of the characteristics such as: a definable membership; group consciousness; a sense of shared purpose; interdependence; interaction; and ability to act in a unitary manner.

Groups are an essential feature of the work pattern of any organisation. Members of a group must co-operate in order for work to be carried out, and managers themselves will work within these groups. People in groups influence each other in many ways and groups may develop their own hierarchies and leaders. Group pressures can have a major influence over the behaviour of individual members and their work performance. The activities of the group are associated with the process of leadership. The style of leadership adopted by the manager has an important influence on the behaviour of members of the group.

#### **3.2 Types of Work Groups**

Groups are formed as a consequence of the pattern of organisation structure and arrangements for the division of work, for example the grouping together of common activities into sections. Groups may result from the nature of technology employed and the way in which work is carried out, for example the bringing together of a number of people to carry out a sequence of operations on an assembly line. Groups may also develop when a number of people of the same level and status within the organisation see themselves as a group; for example, departmental heads of an industrial organisation, or employees of local councils.

Groups are deliberately planned and created by management as part of the formal organisation structure. But groups can also arise from social processes and the informal organisation. The informal organisation arises from the interaction of people working within the organisation and the development of groups with their own relationships and norms of behaviour, irrespective of those defined within the formal structure. This leads to a major distinction between formal and informal groups.

##### **3.2.1 Formal Groups**

Formal groups are created to achieve specific organisational objectives and also concerned with the co-ordination of work activities.

People are brought together on the basis of defined roles within the structure in the organisation. The nature of the tasks to be undertaken is a predominant feature of the formal group. Goals are identified by management, and certain role relationships and norms of behaviour established.

Formal groups tend to be relatively permanent, although there may be changed in actual membership. However, temporary formal groups may also be created by management, for example the use of project teams in a matrix organisation.

Formal work groups can be differentiated in a number of ways, for example on the basis of membership, the task to be performed, the nature of technology, and position within the organisation structure.

### **3.2.2 Informal Groups**

An informal structure always exists within the formal structure of the organization. The formal structure of the organisation, and system of role relationships, rules and procedures, will be augmented by interpretation and development at the informal level. Informal groups are based more on personal relationship and agreement of group members than on defined role relationships. They serve to satisfy psychological and social needs not related necessarily to the tasks to be undertaken. Groups may devise ways of attempting to satisfy members' affiliation and other social motivations which are lacking in the work situation, especially in industrial organisations.

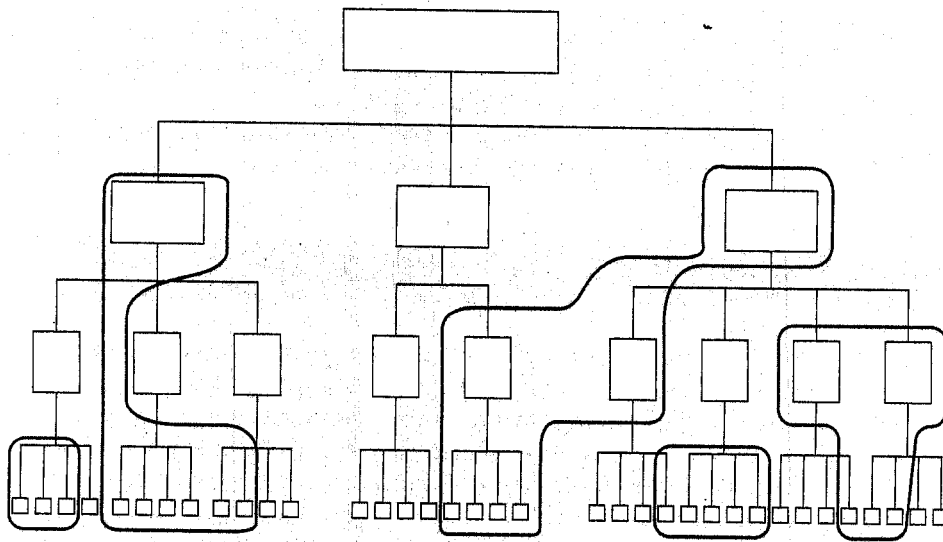
The membership of informal groups can cut across the formal structure. They may comprise individuals from different parts of the organisation and/or from different levels of the organisation, both vertically and diagonally, as well as from the same horizontal level. An informal group could also be the same as the formal group, or it might comprise a part only of the formal group. See Fig. 6.1 below.

The members of an informal group may appoint their own leader who exercise authority by the consent of the members themselves. The informal leader may be chosen as the person who reflects the attitudes and values of the members, help to resolve conflict, leads the group in satisfying its goals, or liaises with management or other people outside the group. The informal leader may often change according to the particular situation facing the group. Although not usually the case, it is possible for the informal leader to be the same person as the formal leader appointed officially by management.

According to Mullins (2000), a lack of direction and clear information flow within the formal structure can give rise to uncertainty and suspicion. In the absence of specific knowledge, the grapevine takes on an important role, rumours start and the informal part of the organisation is highlighted, often with negative results.



**Fig. 6.1: Informal Groups within Formal Structure of an Organisation**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 185.

### **3.3 Reasons for Formation of Groups**

Individuals will form into groups, both formal and informal, for a number of different reasons relating to both work performance and social processes.

**i. Certain tasks can be performed only through the combined efforts of a number of individuals working together.**

The variety of experience and expertise among members of the group provides a synergetic effect which can be applied to the increasingly complex problems of modern organisations.

**ii. Groups may encourage collusion between members**

In order to modify the formal working arrangements more to their liking, for example by sharing and rotating unpopular tasks. Group membership therefore provides the individual with opportunities for initiative and creativity.

**iii. Groups provide companionship and a source of mutual understanding and support from colleagues.**

This can help in solving work problems, and also to mitigate against stressful or demanding working conditions.

**iv) Membership of the group provides the individual with a sense of belonging.**

The group provides a feeling of identity, and the chance to acquire role recognition and status within the group.

**v) The group provides guidelines on generally acceptable behaviour.**

It helps to clarify ambiguous situations such as the extent to which official rules and regulations are expected to be adhered to in practice, the rules of the game, and what is seen as the correct actual behaviour. The informal organisation may put pressure on group members to resist demands from management on such matters as, for example, higher output or changes in working methods. Group allegiance can serve as a means of control over individual behaviour. The group may discipline individuals who contravene the norms of the group, for example, the process of 'binging' in the bank wiring room, mentioned above.

**vi) The group may provide protection for its membership.**

Group members collaborate to protect their interest from outside pressures or threats. This is particularly the case when some workers are employed and made to work together over a long period of time; for example, the factory workers at the shop floor. Another example is the labour union that is normally formed to protect the interest of its members.

**vii) Beneficial to group membership.**

Groups are a potential source of motivation and of job satisfaction, and also a major determinant of effective organisational performance. It is important, therefore, that the manager understands the reasons for the formation of groups and is able to recognise likely advantageous or adverse consequences for the organisation.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain the reasons for the formation of work groups.

### **3.4 Group Cohesiveness and Performance**

According to Argyle (1989), social interaction is a natural feature of human behaviour but ensuring harmonious working relationships and effective teamwork is not an easy task. The manager's main concern is that members of a work group co-operate in order to achieve the results expected of them. Cohesive groups do not necessarily produce a higher level of output. Performance varies with the extent to which the group accepts or rejects the goals of the organisation.

Also, with a very high level of cohesiveness and attention to social activities, there may even be a fall in output. The level of production is likely to conform to a standard acceptable as a norm by the group and may result in maintaining either a high or a restricted level of output.

Nevertheless, cohesive groups may be beneficial to the group members as well as the organization. Thus cohesive groups can, among others, bring about:

- greater interaction between members,
- mutual help and social satisfaction,
- lower turnover and absenteeism,
- higher level of production.
- greater co-operation among members

Membership of a cohesive group can be a rewarding experience for the individual and can contribute to the promotion of morale.

Members of a high-morale group are more likely to think of themselves as a group and work together effectively. Strong and cohesive work groups can, therefore, have beneficial effects for the organisation.

In order to develop the effectiveness of work groups the manager will be concerned with those factors that contribute to group cohesiveness, or that may cause frustration or disruption to the operation of the group.

The manager needs to consider, therefore, both the needs of individual members of staff, and the promotion of a high level of group identity and cohesion. There are many factors which affect group cohesiveness and performance, which can be summarised under four broad headings, as shown below:

The factors affecting group cohesiveness and performance, according to Mullins (2000), are as follow:

- (i) Membership Size
  - Compatibility
  - permanence
- (ii) Work environment
  - .nature of task
  - physical setting
  - communications
  - technology
- (iii) Organisational
  - management and leadership
  - personnel policies and procedures
  - success
  - external threat
- (iv) Group development and maturity, for example:
  - forming
  - storming
  - norming
  - performing.

The characteristics of an effective work group, as Mullins (2000) posits, are not always easy to isolate them. The latent feature of a work group is a spirit of cooperation in which members work together as a united team, and with harmonious and supportive relationship.

According to Mullins (2000), the characteristics of an effective work group are as follow:

- a belief in shared aims and objectives;
- a sense of commitment to the group;
- acceptance of group values and norms;
- a feeling of mutual trust and dependency;
- full participation by all members and decision-making by consensus;
- a free flow of information and communications;
- the open expression of feelings and disagreements;
- the resolution of conflict by the members themselves; and
- a lower level of staff turnover, absenteeism, accidents, errors and complaints.

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention and explain the factors affecting group cohesiveness and performance

### 3.5 Understanding Group Behaviour

The effective management of work groups requires an understanding of the psychological and social influences on behaviour within organisations.

Allcorn (1989) distinguishes between defensive and non-defensive work groups, and provides a typology based on four differing sets of culture. See Fig. 6.2.below.

**Fig. 6.2: Behaviour of Defensive and Non-Defensive Groups**

| Group Culture   | Group Behaviour   |
|---|---|
| homogenized<br>Institutionalized<br>autocratic<br>intentional | <b>Defensive group.</b> They provide collective and individual defences against anxiety that results from group membership. Deals with group participation in a <b>non-defensive</b> way. The type of group that is desirable in the workplace. |

Source: Mullins,. L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 185.

### 1. Intervention in Group Culture

Attempting to change the culture of a defensive group into that of an intentional group is not easy. The intervention strategy is likely to be perceived as threatening to members of the group. Allcorn suggests that successful intervention involves the comparisons of perceptions and understandings in order to provide a thoughtful summary of the group's perceptions which is accepted by the members. This requires sensitivity to the anxiety of group members and the forces that mitigate against change. Members need to understand the actions associated with the intentional group as a basis for establishing and maintaining an intentional culture.

Allcorn reminds us that individual and group behaviour is highly complex, difficult to understand and even more difficult to manage. It is important to further develop group-process skills.

## **2. Effect of Technology on Work Groups**

The nature of technology and the work flow system of the organisation is a major determinant of the operation of groups, and the attitude and behaviour of their members. Low morale and a negative attitude towards management and the job are often associated with a large number of workers undertaking similar work.

A number of different studies have drawn attention to the relationship between technology and work groups. For example, Walker and Guest (1952) as cited by Mullins (2000), referred to effects of technology on work groups. The character or type of group is determined largely by the technological requirements of the organisation. They found that the technological layout and pacing of work by the assembly line operation was a source of dissatisfaction to the workers.

## **3. Production Systems and Group Behaviour**

The type of production system determines the nature of work groups and manner in which they conduct themselves. On the basis of a study of many and varied groups in a number of different industrial organisations, Sayles (1958), according to Mullins (2000), identified four main types of groups each with distinctive technological features and characteristic patterns of behaviour such as the apathetic, erratic, strategic and the conservative.

### **i) Apathetic Groups**

Tended to be relatively low skilled, and poorly paid. Members performed a range of different functions with little task interdependence. There was a lack of enthusiasm, little sense of internal unity, lack of a clearly defined leader, individual rather than group problems, low morale. Tended to accept management decisions with few pressure devices. Members felt suppressed and discontented.

### **ii) Erratic Groups**

Also tended to be low skilled and with low statuses. Members performed identical or very similar tasks requiring frequent interaction with each other. Work was often physically demanding and tended to be unpredictable. Developed occasional cohesion. Mixed relationship with management, but easily inflamed in handling grievances. Tended to have authoritarian leadership.

### **iii) Strategic Groups**

Relatively skilled, well paid and self-assured. Usually a good production record. Generally individual jobs but with a high degree of interaction and internal group unity. Jobs were often important to management. Tended to be active and influential with continual union participation and pressure on management. Shrewd in use of grievance procedures and in improving their own position.

### **iv) Conservative Groups**

Made up of skilled workers with high statuses and mainly on individual operation. Wide dispersion throughout the organisation and low level of interaction, but strong sense of identity and a reasonable degree of internal unity. Tended to be conservative in negotiations but exert strong pressure for specific objectives, for example maintenance of traditional differentials and wage levels. Often associated with professional bodies and tended to be ambivalent regarding trade unions.

There was a marked similarity of behaviour among the different types of group with similar technological features across a wide range of industrial settings. The work organisation and production technology determines the type of work group that emerges, and restricts the form of action taken by the group. Sayles suggests that the relationship between work groups, management and the form of grievance behaviour, and the collective activity of the group, is influenced by five major variables:

- relative position of the group on the internal promotion ladder;
- relative size and importance of the group;
- similarity of jobs within the group;
- extent to which the work is indispensable to the functioning of the department or organisation, and ;
- precision with which management can measure the workload and work pace for the group.

These variables are determined largely by the nature of technology. Technology also influences the differentiation of the task and division of work, and the internal social structure of the group. The greater the task differentiation and the more complex the internal structure of the group, the less likely the effects of grievance behaviour.

## **4. Technology and Alienation**

According to Mullins (2000), the nature of technology and the work organisation can result in a feeling of alienation, especially among manual workers. Factors which have been shown to affect alienation include the extent to which the work of the individual or the group amounts to a meaningful part of the total production process, and the satisfaction which workers gain from relationships with fellow workers and group membership.

In a study of assembly line and other factory work, Goldthorpe (1968) found that the technology was unfavourable for the creation of work groups. On the other hand, he also found a group of workers who, although alienated, were still satisfied. Membership of a meaningful work group was not necessarily an important source of job satisfaction. The workers, all married men, aged between 21 and 46, were not interested in maintaining

close relationships with fellow workers or supervisors. Their earnings were well in excess of the average manual wage at the time – they were 'affluent' workers.

Goldthorpe recognised, however, that in other situations where there is the opportunity for teamwork, the workers will have greater social expectations and the membership of work groups may be very important to them.

## **5. Technology and Group Operation**

Technology is clearly a major influence on the pattern of group operation and behaviour. The work organisation may limit the opportunities for social interaction and the extent to which individuals are able to identify themselves as members of a cohesive work group. This in turn can have possible adverse effects on attitudes to work and the level of job satisfaction. In many assembly line production systems, for example, relationships between individual workers are determined by the nature of the task, the extent to which individual jobs are specified, and the time cycle of operations.

In recent years there have been attempts to remove some of the alienation aspects of mass production and assembly line work by increasing the range of tasks and responsibility allocated to small groups. These attempts include greater use of self-regulating work groups and of group technology.

Group technology involves changes to the work flow system of production. With the traditional 'functional layout' of production, lines of similar machines or operations are arranged together so that components are passed back and forth until all activities are completed. Nevertheless, with 'group technology' production, the work flow system is based on a grouping of workers and a range of machines. This enables work groups to perform series of successive operations using a group of machines on a family of similar components (Mullins, 2000).

## **6. Impact of Information Technology**

The impact of information technology demands new patterns of work organisation, and affects the formation and structure of groups. Movement away from large-scale centralised organisation to smaller working units can help create an environment in which workers may relate more easily to each other. Improvements in telecommunications mean, for example, that support staff need no longer be located within the main production unit. On the other hand, modern methods of communication mean that individuals may work more on their own, or even from their own homes, or work more with machines than with other people.

### **3.6 Role Relationships**

For the organisation to achieve its goals and objectives the work of individual members must be linked into coherent patterns of activities and relationships. This is achieved through the 'role structure' of the organisation.

Mullins (2000) posits that a role is the expected pattern of behaviours -associated with members occupying a particular position within the structure of the organisation. It also describes how a person perceives his/her own situation.

The concept of role is important to the functioning of groups and for an understanding of group processes and behaviour. It is through role differentiation that the structure of the work group and relationships among its members are established. The development of the group entails the identification of distinct roles for each of its members. Some form of structure is necessary for teamwork and co-operation. The concept of roles helps to clarify the structure and to define the pattern of complex relationships within the group.

The formal organisational relationships (line, functional, staff or lateral) can be seen as forms of role relationships. These individual authority relationships determine the pattern of interaction with other roles.

The roles, that the individual play within the group are influenced by a combination of: situational factors, such as the requirements of the task, the style of leadership, position in the communication network; and personal factors such as values, attitudes, motivation, ability and personality.

The role that a person plays in one work group may be quite different from the role that a person plays in other work groups. However, everyone within a group is expected to behave in a particular manner and to fulfill certain role expectations.

## **1. Role Set**

In addition to the role relationships with members of their own group-peers, superiors, subordinates -the individual will have a number of role-related relationships with outsiders, for example members of other work groups, trade union officials, suppliers, and consumers. This is a person's 'role-set'. The role-set comprises the range of associations or contacts with whom the individual has meaningful interactions in connection with the performance of their role.

## **2. Role Incongruence**

An important feature of role relationship is the concept of 'role incongruence'. This arises when a member of staff is perceived as having a high and responsible position in one respect but a low standing in another respect. Difficulties with role incongruence can arise from the nature of groupings and formal relationships within the structure of the organisation. There are a number of work-related relationships, such as doctor and nurse or senior manager and personal assistant, which can give rise to a potential imbalance of authority and responsibility.

A classic account of role incongruence can be seen in Whyte's study of the American restaurant industry. The chefs, who regarded themselves as of high statuses and were generally recognised as such by the staff, resented being told what to do by the waitresses who were generally regarded to be of lower statuses. As a result arguments resulted, disrupting performance. The conflict of status was resolved by the introduction of an ordering process by which the chefs received customers' orders without the feeling of taking instructions from the lower status waitresses (Mullins, 2000).



Difficulties with role incongruence can also arise in line-staff relationships: for instance, a relatively junior member of the personnel department informing a senior departmental manager that a certain proposed action is contrary to the policies of the organisation. Another example with staff relationships is where a person establishes him or herself in the role of 'gatekeeper' to the boss, for instance where a comparatively junior personal assistant passes on the manager's instructions to one of the manager's more senior subordinates or where the personal assistant attempts to block a more senior member of staff having access to the manager.

Problems over role incongruence can also lead to the possibility of role stress; this is discussed later in this unit.

### **3. Role Expectation**

Many role expectations are prescribed formally and indicate what the person is expected to do and their duties and obligations. Formal role prescriptions provide guidelines for expected behaviours and may be more prevalent in a 'mechanistic' organisation. Examples are written contracts of employment, rules and regulations, standards, policy decisions, job descriptions, or directives from superiors. Formal role expectations may also be derived clearly from the nature of the task, which may, at least, be defined legally. For example, the obligations of the company secretary under the Companies and Allied Matters Act (1990).

Nevertheless, it is not all role expectations that are prescribed formally. There will be certain patterns of behaviour which although not specified formally will, nonetheless, be expected of members. These informal role expectations may be imposed by the group itself or at least communicated to a person by other members of the group. Examples include general conduct, mutual support to co-members, attitudes towards superiors, means of communicating, dress code and formal appearance at workplace.

Members may, as observed by Mullins (2000), not always be consciously aware of these informal expectations yet they still serve as important determinants of behaviour. Under this heading could be included the concept of a psychological contract. The psychological contract implies a variety of expectations between the individual and the organisation. These expectations cover a range of rights and privileges, duties and obligations which do not form part of a formal agreement but still have an important influence on behaviour).

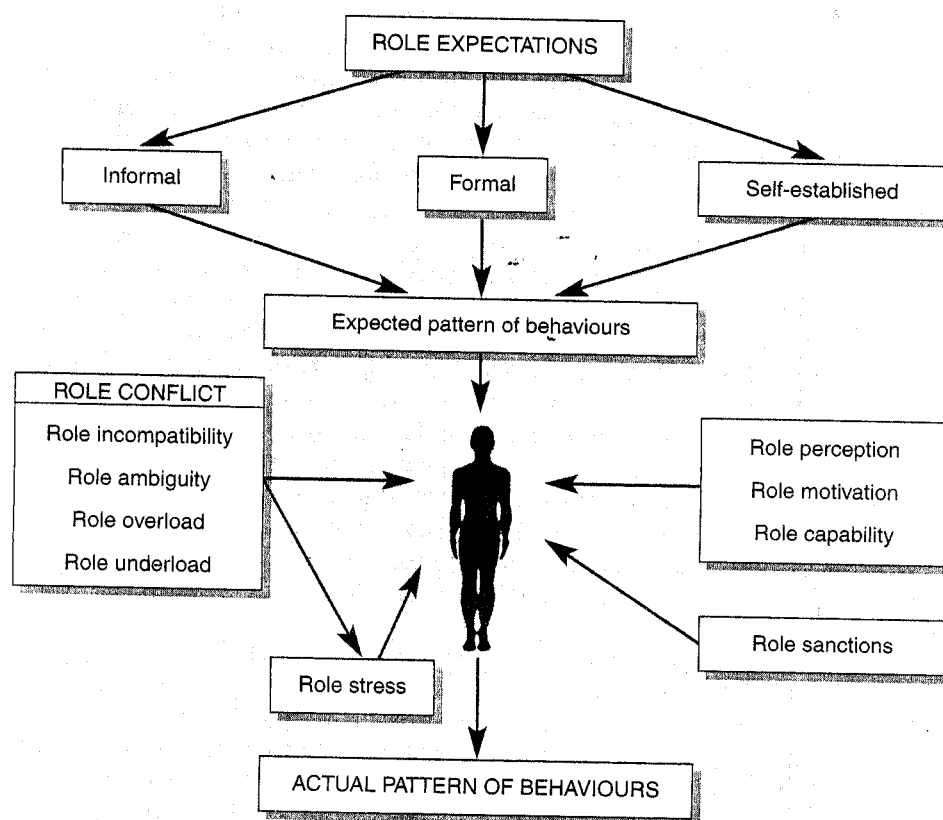
Some members may have the opportunity to determine their own role expectations, where, for example, formal expectations are specified loosely or only in very general terms. Opportunities for self-established roles are more likely in senior positions, but also occur within certain professional, technical or scientific groups, or where there is a demand for creativity or artistic flair. Such opportunities may be greater within an 'organic' organisation and will also be influenced by the style of leadership adopted, for example where a laissez-faire approach is adopted.

#### 4. Role Conflict

The concept of role focuses attention on aspects of behaviour existing independently of an individual's personality. Patterns of behaviour result from both the role and the personality. Role conflict arises from inadequate or inappropriate role definition and needs to be distinguished from personality clashes. These arise from incompatibility between two or more people as individuals even though their roles may be defined clearly and understood fully.

In practice, the manner in which a person actually behaves may not be consistent with their expected pattern of behaviours. This inconsistency may be a result of role conflict. Role conflict as a generic term can include role incompatibility, role ambiguity, role overload, and role underload.

**Fig. 6.3: Role relationships and conflicts**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 185.

## **5. Role Incompatibility**

Role incompatibility arises when a person faces a situation in which simultaneous different or contradictory expectations create inconsistency. Compliance with one set of expectations makes it difficult or impossible to comply with other expectations. The two role expectations are in conflict. A typical example concerns the person 'in the middle', such as the supervisor or section head, who faces opposing and conflicts expectations from workers and from management.

Another example might be the situation of a manager who believes in a relative participative style of behaviour more in keeping with a Theory Y approach, whose superior believes in a Theory X approach and expects the manager to a more formal and directive style of behaviour.

## **6. Role Ambiguity**

Role ambiguity occurs when there is lack of clarity as to the precise requirement of the role and the person is unsure of what to do. The person's own perception their role may differ from the expectations of others. This implies that insufficient information is available for the adequate performance of the role.

Role ambiguity may result from a lack of formally prescribed expectations, is likely to arise in large, diverse groups or at times of constant change. Uncertainties often relates to such matters as the method of performing tasks, the extent of the person's authority and responsibility, standards of work, and the evaluation and appraisal of performance.

## **7. Role Overload**

Role overload is when a person faces too many separate roles or too great a variety of expectations. The person is unable to meet satisfactorily all expectations are some must be neglected in order to satisfy others. This leads to a conflict of priority.

Some writers distinguish between role overload and work overload. Role overload is seen in terms of the total role-set, and implies that the person has so many separate roles to handle. Where there are too many expectations of a simple role, that is, a problem of quantity, this is work overload.

## **8. Role Underload**

Role underload can arise when the prescribed role expectations fall short of the person's own perception of his/her role. The person may feel their role is not demanding enough and that they have the capacity to undertake a larger or more vans role, or an increased number of roles. Role underload may arise, for example, whether a new member of staff is first appointed or from the initial effects of delegation.

## **9. Conflicting Expectation**

Problems of role conflict can also arise from the matrix form of organisation, for example, from the use of flexible project teams. Where staff are assigned temporarily, and

perhaps on a part-time basis from other groups this creates a two-way flow of authority and responsibility.

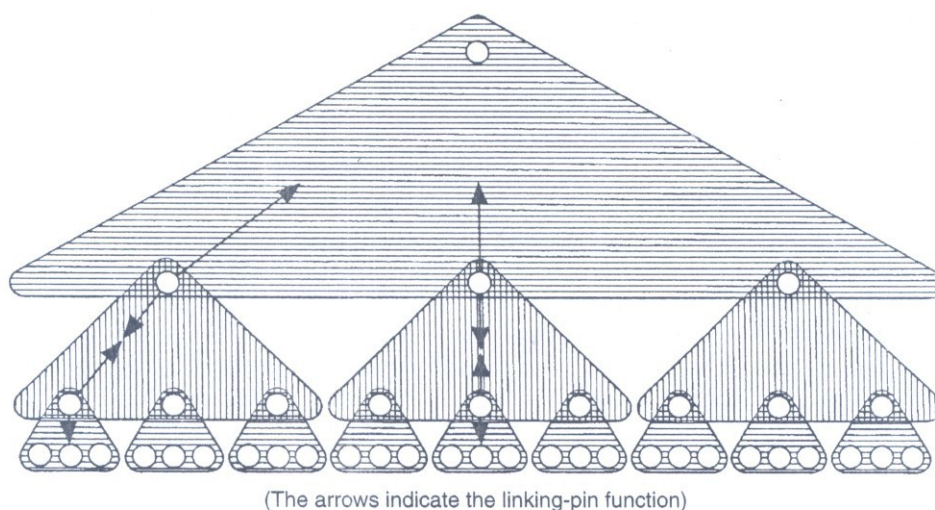
Mullins (2000) observes that unless role differentiations are defined clearly this can result in conflicting expectations from the manager of the person's own functional grouping, and for the manager of the project team (role incompatibility). It can also lead to uncertainty about the exact requirements of the part the person is expected to play as a member of the project team (role ambiguity). The combinations of expectation from managers may also result in role overload.

### 3.7 Overlapping Group Membership

Likert (1967) as cited by Mullins (2000), suggests that organisations function best when members act not as individuals but as members of highly effective work groups. He proposes a structure based membership on overlapping group membership with a 'linking-pin' process by which the superior of one group is a subordinate member of the next group. The superior is, therefore, the linking-pin between a group of subordinates and the next authority level group. See Fig. 7.2 below.

A structure of vertical overlapping groups helps to develop a committed team approach and would improve the flow of communication, co-ordination and decision-making. The use of the overlapping group structure together with a participative style of management form part of the criteria for System 4 management developed by Likert.

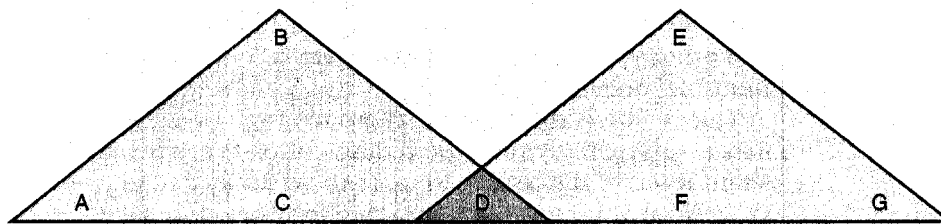
**Fig 6.4: Overlapping Group Structure & Linking Pin**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.185.

According to Mullins (2000), Likert also recognises the position of subordinates serving as horizontal linking-pins between different groups, such as functional or line work groups. Likert recognises that sooner or later the subordinate is likely to be caught in a conflict between membership of both groups and the provision of information for decision-making. He suggests that both groups would need to be involved in group decision-making to resolve differences.

**Fig. 6.5: Horizontal Linking Pin**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.185.

In the above figure, D is a member of both groups and acts as a linking-pin for horizontal communication. Examples are liaison officers, messengers, etc.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed that a group refers to any number of people who interact with one another, aware of one another and perceive themselves to be a group. We also discussed that formal and informal work groups exist in organizational setting. Group cohesiveness, as analyzed in this unit, can enhance workers performance. We discussed that group behaviour is affected by its culture and technology being used in the organization. The analysis in this unit also espoused on the problems inherent in role relationships in work setting, and the problem of overlapping group membership invariably leads to group decision making.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

- Meaning of Work Group
- Types of Work Groups
- Reasons For Formation of Groups
- Group Cohesiveness and Performance
- Understanding Group Behaviour
- Role Relationships, and
- Overlapping Group Membership

In the next study unit, the discussion is centred on group dynamics.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and discuss the problems associated with role relationships in organizational setting.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The reasons for formation of work groups are as follows:

- i. Certain tasks are performed only by combined efforts of individuals working together.
- ii. Groups may encourage collusion between members
- iii. Groups provide companionship support from colleagues.
- iv) Membership of the group provides the individual with a sense of belonging.
- v) The group provides guidelines on generally acceptable behaviour.
- vi) The group may provide protection for its membership.
- vii) Beneficial to group membership.

2. The factors affecting group cohesiveness and performance are as follows:

- (i) Membership
- (ii) Work environment
- (iii) Organisation
- (iv) Group development

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

Allcorn, S. (1989). "Understanding Groups at Work", Personnel, vol. 66, no. 8, August.

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Goldthorpe, J. H. et al (1968). The Affluent Worker, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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## **FURTHER READING**

Likert, R. (1967). The Human Organization, New York: McGraw-Hill.

## **UNIT 7        GROUP DYNAMICS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1    The Group Process
    - 3.1.1 Training Group
    - 3.1.2 Value of Training Groups
    - 3.1.3 The Johari Window
  - 3.2    Factors Affecting Group Effectiveness
  - 3.3    Group Formation and Development
    - 3.3.1 Group Formation
    - 3.3.2 Group Development
  - 3.4    Group Values and Norms
  - 3.5    Socio-technical System
  - 3.6    Analysis of Behaviour in Groups
  - 3.7    Classification of Member Roles
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous study unit, we discussed work group. In the unit, discussion centred on the behaviour of work group and the factors affecting group cohesiveness and the problems inherent in role relationships within the organizational setting.

In this study unit, a related area called group dynamics is the subject of discussion. The subject of group dynamics arises from the interest of some researchers in the study of group process and behaviour. The efforts of the researchers lead to the development of group dynamics and a range of group training methods aimed at increasing group effectiveness through improving social interaction skills in the organizational setting.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the group process in organizational setting
- discuss the use of training group in sensitivity training
- mention and discuss the factors that affect group effectiveness
- discuss group formation and group development
- discuss socio-technical system as it affects groups
- explain behaviour in groups
- identify and explain member roles in groups.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Group Process**

According to Mullins (2000), group dynamics is the study of interactions and forces within small face to face groups. It is concerned with what happens when groups of people meet. A central feature of group dynamics is sensitivity training, in which members of a group direct attention to the understanding of their own behaviour and in perceiving themselves as others see them.

The objectives of the sensitivity training involve the following:

- to increase sensitivity (the ability to perceive accurately how others react to oneself);
- diagnostic ability (the skill of assessing behavioural relationships between others and reasons for such behaviour); and
- behavioural flexibility, or action skill (the ability to relate one's behaviour to the requirements of the situation).

#### **3.1.1 Training Group**

According to Cooper and Mangham (1971) as cited by Mullins (2000), a usual method of sensitivity training, which is increasingly used as a general term, is the training group, sometimes called laboratory training.

A T-group has been defined as 'an approach to human relations training which broadly speaking, provides participants with an opportunity to learn more about themselves and their impact on others, and in particular to learn how to function more effectively in face-to-face situations.

The original form of a training group is a small, leaderless, unstructured, face-to-face grouping. The group normally numbers between 8 and 12 members who may be strangers to each other or who may come from the same organization; a family group. A deliberate attempt is made to minimise any status differentials among members. There is no agenda or planned activities. Trainers are present to help guide the group, but do not usually take an active role or act as formal leader. The agenda becomes the group's own behaviour in attempting to cope with the lack of structure or planned activities. Training is intended to concentrate on process rather than content, that is, on the feeling level of communication rather than the informational value of communication.

Faced with confusion and lack of direction, individuals will act in characteristic ways. With the guidance of the trainers these patterns of behaviour become the focus of attention for the group. Participants are encouraged to examine their own self-concepts and to be more receptive to the feelings and behaviours of others. Feedback received by individuals from other members of the group is the main mechanism for learning.

This feedback creates a feeling of anxiety and tension, and the individual's own self-examination leads to consideration of new values, attitudes and behaviour. Typically, the group meets for a 1-to-2-hour session each day for up to a fortnight. The sessions are supported by related lectures, study groups, case studies and other exercises.



### **3.1.2 Value of Training Groups**

Reactions to the value and effectiveness of training group training are very mixed. Specific benefits and changes in behaviour from group training are:

- Receiving Communications: more effort to understand, attentive listening
- Relational Facility: co-operative, easier to deal with
- Awareness of Human Behaviour: more analytic of others' actions, clear perceptions of people
- Sensitivity to Group Behaviour: more conscious of group process
- Sensitivity to Others' Feelings: sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others
- Acceptance of Other People: more tolerant, considerate, patient
- Tolerant of New Information: willing to accept suggestions, less dogmatic.

There are some shortcomings. The experience can be very disturbing and unpleasant, at least for some members. For example, participants have described it as 'a bloodbath and a psychological nudist colony in which people are stripped bare to their attitudes.

Participants are required to lay bare their inner emotions and may feel an invasion of their privacy. The unstructured situation may permit trainers to impose their own perceptions and social viewpoints on members of the group.

Group training is difficult to evaluate objectively and there is still a main problem of the extent to which training is transferred 'back home' to practical work situations. Nevertheless, a number of studies do suggest that participation as a member of a training group does increase interpersonal skills, induce change, and lead to open communications and more flexible behaviour.

Training groups probably do result in a change of behaviour but it is not always clear whether such change is positive or related to improved organisational performance.

Training groups now take a number of different forms. Some place emphasis on the understanding of group processes, others place more emphasis on the development of the individual's self-awareness and feelings towards the behaviour of other people. They are now used frequently as a means of attempting to improve managerial development and organisational performance.

The Blake and Mouton managerial grid can be seen as an applied and refined form of training group. A number of different training packages have been designed, often under the broad heading of interpersonal skills, which are less confrontational and less disturbing for participants. The training often involves an analysis of group members' relationships with one another and the resolution of conflict( Mullins, 2000).

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

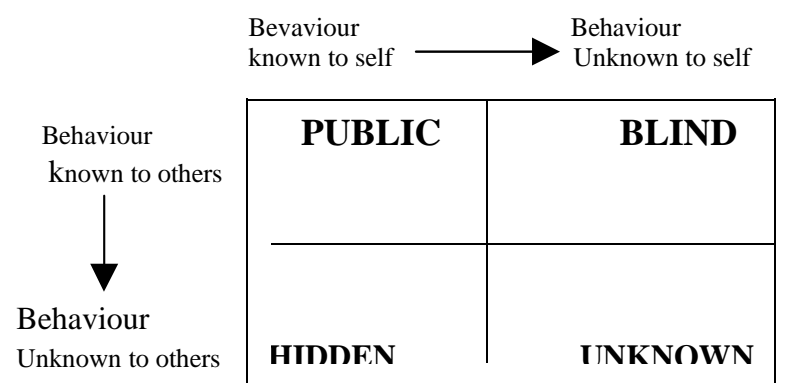
What are the benefits of training groups?

### 3.1.3 The Johari Window

A simple framework for looking at self-insight, which is used frequently to help individuals in the training group process, is the 'Johari window'. This classifies behaviour in matrix form between: what is known-unknown to self; and what is known-unknown to others. This model was developed by Luft and his associate in 1970 .

A central feature of the training group is reduction of the individual's 'hidden' behaviour through self-disclosure and reduction of the 'blind' behaviour through feedback from others.

**Fig. 7.1: The Johari Window**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.233.

**Public behaviour** represents behaviour which is known to self and also known to other members of the group.

**Unknown behaviour** represents behaviour which is known to self and to others.

**Hidden behaviour** is that which the individual wishes to conceal from, or not to communicate to, other group members. It is part of the private self. An important role of the group is to establish whether members conceal too much, or too little, about themselves from other members.

**Blind behaviour** includes mannerisms, gestures, and tone of voice; behaviour of which the impact on others the individual is unaware. This is sometimes referred to as the 'bad breath' area.

The group must establish an atmosphere of openness and trust in order that hidden and blind behaviours are reduced and the public behaviour enhanced.

### **3.2 Factors Affecting Group Effectiveness**

According to Mullins (2000), the factors that affect group effectiveness are as follows:

#### **1. Increase in Size**

Problems arise with communications and coordination as a group increases in size. Large groups are more difficult to handle and require a higher level of supervision. Absenteeism also tends to be higher in larger groups. When a group becomes too large it may split into smaller units and friction may develop between the sub-groups.

According to Mullins (2000), it is difficult to put a precise figure on the ideal size of a work group. Much will depend upon other variables, but it seems to be generally accepted that effectiveness becomes more difficult to achieve when a group exceeds ten to twelve members. Beyond this size the group tends to split into sub-groups. A figure of between five and seven often quoted as an apparent optimum size for full participation within the group.

#### **2. Compatibility of the Members**

The more homogenous the group in terms of such features as shared backgrounds, interests, attitudes and values of its members, the easier it is usually promote effectiveness. Variations in other individual differences, such as the personality or skills of members, may serve to complement each other and help make for a cohesive group. On the other hand, such differences may be the cause of disruption and conflict. Conflict can also arise in a homogeneous group when members are in competition with each other. Individual incentive payment schemes, for example, may be a source of conflict.

#### **3. Permanence of Group Members**

Group spirit and relationships take time to develop. Effectiveness is more likely when members of a group are together for a reasonable length of time, and changes occur only slowly. A frequent turnover of members is likely to have an adverse effect on morale, and on the cohesiveness of the group.

#### **4. The Nature of the Task**

Where workers are involved in similar work, share a common task, or face the same problems, this may assist effectiveness. The nature of the task may serve to bring people together when it is necessary for them to communicate and interact regularly with each other in the performance of their duties, for example members of a research and development team.

Even if members of a group normally work at different locations they may still experience a feeling of cohesiveness if the nature of the task requires frequent communication and interaction; for example, security guards patrolling separate areas who need to check with each other on a regular basis. However, where the task demands a series of relatively separate operations or discrete activities, for example on a machine-paced assembly line, it is more difficult to develop cohesiveness. Individuals may have

interactions with colleagues on either side of them but little opportunity to develop a common group feeling.

## **5. Physical setting**

Where members of a group work in the same location or in close physical proximity to each other this will generally help effectiveness. However, this is not always the case. For example, in large open-plan offices staff often tend to segregate themselves from colleagues and create barriers by the strategic siting of such items as filing cabinets, bookcases or indoor plants. The size of the office and the number of staff in it are, of course, important considerations in this case. Isolation from other groups of workers will also tend to build cohesiveness. This often applies, for example, to a smaller number of workers on a night shift.

## **6. Communications**

The more easily members can communicate freely with each other the more likelihood of group effectiveness. Communications are affected by the work environment, by the nature of the task, and by technology. For example, difficulties in communication can arise with production systems where workers are stationed continuously at a particular point with limited freedom of movement. Even when opportunities exist for interaction with colleagues, physical conditions may limit effective communication. For example, the technological layout and high level noise with some assembly line work can hamper internal group unity.

## **7. Technology**

We can see that the nature of technology and the manner in which work is carried out has an important effect on effectiveness, and relates closely to the nature of the task, physical setting and communications. Where the nature of the work process involves a craft or skill-based 'technology' there is a higher likelihood of group cohesiveness. But, as mentioned above, with machine-paced assembly line work it is more difficult to develop cohesiveness. Technology also has wider implications for the operation and behaviour of groups and therefore is considered in a separate section below.

## **8. Management and Leadership**

The activities of groups cannot be separated from management and the process of leadership. The form of management and style of leadership adopted will influence the relationship between the group and the organisation, and is a major determinant of group effectiveness. In general terms, cohesiveness will be affected by such things as the manner in which the manager gives guidance and encourages management to the group, offers help and support, provides opportunities for participation, attempts to resolve conflicts, and gives attention to both employee relations and task problems.

## **9. Personnel Policies and Procedures**

Harmony and effectiveness within the group are more likely to be achieved if personnel policies and procedures are well developed, and perceived to be equitable with fair treatment for all members. Attention should be given to the effects that appraisal systems,

discipline, promotion and rewards, and opportunities for personal development have on members of the group.

## **10. Success**

The more successful the group, the more cohesive it is likely to be; and cohesive groups are more likely to be successful. Success is usually a strong motivational influence on the level of work performance. Success or reward as a positive motivator can be perceived by group members in a number of ways. Such are, for example, the satisfactory completion of a task through cooperative action; praise from management; a feeling of high status; achievement in competition with other groups benefits gained, such as high wage payments from a group bonus incentive scheme.

## **11. External Threat**

Effectiveness may be enhanced by members co-opting with one another when faced with a common external threat, such as changes in their method of work, or the appointment of a new manager. Even if the threat is subsequently removed, the group may still continue to have a greater degree of cohesiveness than before the threat arose. Conflict between groups will also tend to increase the cohesiveness of each group and the boundaries of the group become drawn more clearly.

## **3.3 Group Formation and Development**

### **3.3.1 Group Formation**

A popular model by Tuckman (1965) as cited by Mullins (2000), identifies four main successive stages of group formation and relationships such as forming, storming, norming and performing.

**Stage 1 – forming.** The initial formation of the group and the bringing together of a number of individuals who identify, tentatively, the purpose of the group, its composition and terms of reference.

At this stage consideration is given to hierarchical structure of the group, pattern of leadership, individual roles and responsibilities, and codes of conduct. There is likely to be considerable anxiety as members attempt to create an impression, to test each other, and to establish their personal identity within the group.

**Stage 2 – storming.** As members of the group get to know each other better they will put forward their views more openly and forcefully. Disagreements will be expressed and challenges offered on the nature of the task and arrangement made in the earlier stage of development. This may lead to conflict and hostility.

The storming stage is important because, if successful, there will be discussions on reforming arrangements for the working and operation of the group, and agreement on more meaningful structures and procedures.

**Stage 3 – norming.** As conflict and hostility start to be controlled members of the group will establish guidelines and standards, and develop their own norms of acceptable behaviour.

The norming stage is important in establishing the need for members to cooperate in order to plan, agree on standards of performance and fulfill the purpose of the group. This co-operation and adherence to group norms can work against effective organisational performance. It may be remembered, for example, that, in the bank wiring room experiment of the Hawthorne studies, group norms imposed a restriction on the level of output of the workers.

**Stage 4 – performing.** When the group has progressed successfully through the three earlier stages of development it would have created structure and cohesiveness to work effectively as a team. At this stage the group can concentrate on the attainment of its purpose and performance of the common task is likely to be at its most effective.

### 3.3.2 Group Development

The group effectiveness is affected by the manner in which groups progress through the various stages of development and maturity. Bass and Ryterband (1979) identify four distinct stages in group development: mutual acceptance and membership; communication and decision-making; motivation and productivity; and control and organisation.

**First stage – developing mutual acceptance and membership.** Members have an initial mistrust of each other and a fear of inadequacies. They remain defensive and limit their behaviour through conformity and ritual. The priority is with questions of likes and dislikes, and power or dependency of group members.

**Second stage – communication and decision-making.** Once members have learned to accept each other they begin to express their feelings and conflicts. Norms of procedure are established and there is acceptance of legitimate influence over the group. Members develop a liking, or at least a sense of caring for each other. There are more open communications and reactions. More constructive problem-solving and decision-making behaviour strategies develop.

**Third stage – motivation and productivity.** Problems of members' motivation have been resolved. Members are involved with the work of the group. They cooperate with each other instead of competing. Members are motivated by intrinsic rewards to achieve a high level of productivity.

**Fourth stage – control and organisation.** The final stage of group development. Work is allocated by agreement and according to the members' abilities. Members work independently and the organisation of the group is flexible and adaptable to new challenges.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention and explain four stages in group development.

### 3.4 Group Values and Norms

According to Roethlisberger (1939) as cited by Mullins (2000), the group developed its own pattern of informal social relations and codes and practices which are called norms', and these constitute and determine proper group behaviour. Some of these codes and practices are as discussed below:

- ☐ Not to be a 'rate buster' – not to produce at too high a rate of output compared with other members or to exceed the production restriction of the group.
- ☐ Not to be a 'chiseller' – not to shirk production or to produce at too low a rate of output compared with other members of the group.
- ☐ Not to be a 'squealer' – not to say anything to the supervisor or management which might be harmful to other members of the group.
- ☐ Not to be 'officious' – people with authority over members of the group, for example supervisors, should not take advantage of their seniority or maintain a social distance from the group.

According to Mullins (2000), the group had their own system of sanctions including sarcasm, damaging completed work, hiding tools, playing tricks on the inspectors, and ostracising those members who did not conform with the group norms. Threats of physical violence are also possible, and the group can develop a system of punishing offenders by 'binging' which involved striking someone a fairly hard blow on the upper part of the arm. This process of binging is also a commonly recognised method of controlling conflict within the group.

All the above norms and practices were discovered from the bank wiring room experiment carried out by Elton Mayo (1932) and his associates at Hawthorne. Another finding of the bank wiring room experiment was that the group did not follow company policy on the reporting of production figures. It was company policy that each man's output should be reported daily by the supervisor.

During the experiment, however, it was discovered by Elton Mayo and associates that the workers preferred to do their own reporting, and in order to remain in favour with the group the supervisor acquiesced to this procedure. On some days the men would actually produce more than they reported to 'build up' extra units for those days when they produced less than reported. It was also discovered that the actual production varied the group reported a relatively standard amount of output for each day. The men would also exchange jobs with each other even though this was contrary to management instructions.

### 3.5 Socio-technical System

According to Mullins (2000), systems approach to organisation and management also gave recognition to the importance of groups in influencing behaviour at work. The concept of the organisation as a socio-technical system is concerned with the interactions between the psychological and social factors, as well as structural and technical requirements.

New methods of working can disrupt the integration of small self-selecting groups of workers who have worked together as independent teams. The change had undesirable

social effects and as a result the new method may not prove as economically beneficial as it should have done with the new technology. According to Mullins (2000), the result will be a composite method of working with more responsibility taken by the team as a whole. This method can prove to be not only more rewarding socially to the workers but also more efficient economically to the organization than the new method of working occasioned by a new technology.

Groups, therefore, help shape the work pattern organisations, and the attitudes and behaviour of members to their jobs. The formation and operation of work groups, and the behaviour of their members, has an important significance for the manager. Likert, for example, has developed a theory of organisation based on work groups. In his discussion of group processes and organisational performance he concludes that 'Group forces are important not only in influencing the behaviour of individual work groups with regard to productivity, waste, absence and the like, they also affect the behavior of entire organisations.

### **3.6 Analysis of Behaviour in Groups**

In order to understand and to influence the functioning and operation of a group it is necessary to study patterns of interaction, and the parts played by individual members. Two of the main methods of analysing the behaviour of individuals in group situations are sociometry and interaction process analysis.

#### **1. Sociometry**

Developed by Moreno (1953), sociometry is a method of indicating the feelings of acceptance or rejection among members of a group. A sociogram is a diagrammatical illustration of the pattern of interpersonal relationships derived from sociometry. The sociogram depicts the choices, preferences, likes or dislikes, and interactions between individual members of a group. It can also be used to the structure of the group and to record the observed frequency and/or contacts among members.

The basis of sociometry, however, is usually 'buddy rating' or 'peer rating'. Each member in the group is asked to nominate or to rate, privately, other members in terms of some given context or characteristic; for example, with whom they communicate, or how influential or how likeable they are. The relevant questions may relate to either work or social activities; for example: who would you most prefer or least prefer as a workmate? or who would make a good leader of the group? or with whom would you choose and not choose to go for lunch?

Positive and negative choices may be recorded for each person, although sometimes positive choices only are required. The choices may be limited to a given number or they may be unlimited. Sometimes individuals may be asked to rank their choices.

#### **2. Interaction Analysis**

The basic assumption behind interaction analysis is that behaviour in groups may be analysed from the viewpoint of its function. This approach has been developed largely from the work of Bales (1950) on methods for the study of small groups. The aim is to



provide ways of describing group process and indications of factors influencing the process.

In Bales's 'Interaction Process Analysis' every act of behaviour is categorised, as it occurs, under twelve headings. These differentiate between 'task' functions and 'socio-emotional' functions. The categories apply to both verbal interaction and non-verbal interaction.

**A. Socio-Emotional: Positive Reactions**

1. Shows solidarity, raises others' status, gives help, reward.
2. Shows tension release, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction.
3. Agrees, shows passive acceptance, understands, concurs, complies.

**B. Task: Attempted Answers**

4. Gives suggestion, direction, implying autonomy for others.
5. Gives opinion, evaluation, analysis, expresses feeling, wish.
6. Gives orientation, information, repeats, clarifies, confirms.

**C. Task: Questions**

7. Asks for orientation, information, repetition, confirmation.
8. Asks for opinion, evaluation, analysis, expression of feeling.
9. Asks for suggestion, direction, possible ways of action.

**D. Socio-Emotional: Negative Reactions**

10. Disagrees, shows passive rejection, formality, withholds help.
11. Shows tension, asks for help, withdraws out of field.
12. Shows antagonism, deflates others' status, defends or asserts self.

**3. Task and Maintenance Functions**

According to Mullins (2000), for a group to be effective, whatever its structure or the pattern of interrelationships among members, there are two main sets of functions or processes that must be undertaken; task functions and maintenance functions.

**Task functions** are directed towards problem-solving, the accomplishment of the tasks of the group and the achievement of its goals. Most of the task-oriented behaviour will be concerned with 'production' activities, or the , exchange and evaluation of ideas and information. .

**Maintenance functions** are concerned with the emotional life of the group' and directed towards building and maintaining the group as an effective working unit. Most of the maintenance-oriented behaviour will be concerned with relationships among group members, giving encouragement and support, maintaining cohesiveness and the resolution of conflict.

Task and maintenance functions may be performed either by the group leader or by members. Ultimately it is the leader's responsibility to ensure that both sets of functions are carried out and the right balance is achieved between them. The appropriate combination of task-oriented behaviour and maintenance-oriented behaviour is essential to the success and continuity of the group.

In addition to these two types of behaviour members of a group may say or do something in attempting to satisfy some personal need or goal. The display of behaviour in this way is termed self-oriented behaviour. This gives a classification of three main types of functional behaviour which can be exhibited by individual members of a group: task-oriented, maintenance-oriented and self-oriented.

### **3. 7 Classification of member roles**

According to Mullins (2000), a popular system for the classification of member roles in the study of group behaviour is that devised originally by Benne and Sheats (1948). The description of member roles performed in well-functioning groups is classified into three broad headings: group task roles, group maintenance roles and individual roles.

#### **1. Group Task Roles**

These assume that the task of the group is to select, define and solve common problems. Any of the following roles may be performed by the various members or the group leader.

- (i) The initiator-contributor
- (ii) The information seeker
- (iii) The opinion seeker
- (iv) The information giver
- (v) The opinion giver
- (vi) The elaborator
- (vii) The co-ordinator
- (viii) The orienter
- (ix) The evaluator-critic
- (x) The energizer
- (xi) The procedural technician
- (xii) The recorder

#### **2. Group Building and Maintenance Roles**

The analysis of member-functions is oriented towards activities which build group-centred attitudes, or maintain group-centred behaviour. Contributions may involve a number of roles, and members or the leader may perform each of the following roles:

- (i) The encourager
- (ii) The harmoniser
- (iii) The compromiser
- (iv) The gatekeeper and expeditor
- (v) The standard-setter or ego ideal
- (vi) The group observer and commentator
- (vii) The follower

### **3. Individual Roles**

These are directed towards the satisfaction of personal needs. Their purpose is not related either to group task or to the group functioning. Such roles are as follow:

- (i) The aggressor
- (ii) The blocker
- (iii) The recognition-seeker
- (iv) The self-confessor
- (v) The playboy (vi) The dominator
- (vii) The help-seeker
- (viii) The special interest pleader.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed that group dynamics is the study of interactions and forces within small groups, and sensitivity training, which involves group members in understanding their own behaviour and perceiving themselves as others see them palying central role. We also discussed that group formation can be differentiated from group development, and that groups have norms and values used for regulating member behaviour. The discussion in this study unit also espoused on behaviour of people in groups, the effect of socio-technical system on group behaviour, and lastly the analysis on group members roles.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

- The Group Process
- Factors Affecting Group Effectiveness
- Group Formation and Development
- Group Values and Norms
- Socio-technical System
- Analysis of Behaviour in Groups, and
- Classification of Member Roles

In the next study unit, the discussion is centred on content theories of motivation.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and discuss the factors affecting group effectiveness.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. Specific benefits and changes in behaviour from training group training are:

- i) Receiving Communications: more effort to understand, attentive listening
- ii) Relational Facility: co-operative, easier to deal with

- iii) Awareness of Human Behaviour: more analytic of others' actions, clear perceptions of people
- iv) Sensitivity to Group Behaviour: more conscious of group process
- v) Sensitivity to Others' Feelings: sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others
- vi) Acceptance of Other People: more tolerant, considerate, patient
- vii) Tolerant of New Information: willing to accept suggestions, less dogmatic.

2. The four stages in group development are as follows:

- i) First stage – developing mutual acceptance and membership
- ii) Second stage – communication and decision-making
- iii) Third stage – motivation and productivity
- iv) Fourth stage – control and organisation.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

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## **FURTHER READING**

Likert, R. (1967). The Human Organization, New York: McGraw-Hill.

## **UNIT 8: CONTENT THEORIES OF MOTIVATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning and Nature of Motivation
    - 3.1.1 Meaning of Motivation
    - 3.1.2 Nature of Motivation
    - 3.1.3 Underlying Concept of Motivation
    - 3.1.4 Classification of Motivation at Work
    - 3.1.5 The Psychological Contract
  - 3.2 Frustration-Induced Behaviour
  - 3.3 Approaches to Motivation at Work
  - 3.4 Contents Theories of Motivation
    - 3.4.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory
    - 3.4.2 Alderfer's ERG Theory of Motivation
    - 3.4.3 Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory
    - 3.4.4 McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory
- 4.0 Conclusion
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- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The major preoccupation in the study of motivation is to determine, basically, why people behave in a certain way. Therefore, in general terms, the realm of motivation has to do with the description of the direction and persistence of action by individuals. Motivation involves the behaviours and actions of individuals in peculiar ways given certain conditions. Hence, it explains the reason people choose a particular course of action in preference to others, and why they continue with a chosen action, often over a long period, and in the face of difficulties and problems.

The individual workers have varied needs to meet and as members of organization such needs and aspirations cannot be ignored by the management. There arises the need for the management to determine the latent explanation for the actions of individual workers in organizational setting. Therefore, this study unit is used to discuss the reasons why individuals behave the way they do and the latent motives responsible for their actions and behaviours.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning and nature of motivation
- discuss frustration-induced behaviour
- identify and explain approaches to motivation at work
- mention and discuss the content theories of motivation

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning and Nature of Motivation**

##### **3.1.1 Meaning of Motivation**

According to Mitchell (1982), the four common characteristics which underlie the nature of motivation are as follows:

**i) Motivation is as an individual phenomenon.**

Every person is unique and all the major theories of motivation allow for this uniqueness to be demonstrated in one way or another.

**ii) Motivation is intentional.**

Motivation is assumed to be under the worker's control, and behaviours that are influenced by motivation, such as effort expended, are seen as choices of action.

**iii) Motivation is multifaceted.**

The two factors of greatest importance in motivation are: what gets people activated (arousal); and the force of an individual to engage in desired behaviour {direction or choice of behaviour}.

**iv) Motivation is action directed.**

Motivation is not the behaviour itself, and it is not performance. Motivation concerns action, and the internal and external forces which influence a person's choice of action.

Hence, on the basis of above characteristics of motivation, Mitchell defines motivation as the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified behaviours.

##### **3.1.2 Nature of Motivation**

According to Mullins (2000), Frederick Winslow Taylor took a startling approach to the problem of motivation at the turn of the century. According to Taylor (1912), if management would only show workers how to do the job better, and then share the return of a better job with them, there would be no problem. Nevertheless, Taylor observed that management will never do that, for fear of driving wages up.

Hence, it means that the most popular schemes for raising levels of workers performance is just to keep people on their jobs without actually solving the problem of motivation. A kind of motivational perceptual stresses the intrinsic motivators (these don't include money, naturally), enrich the job, allow participation in decisions.

A major determinant of behaviour is the particular situation in which individual workers find themselves. Motivation varies over time and according to circumstances. It is often most acute for people at a mid-career position, and especially for those who find opportunities for further advancement or promotion are blocked.

Mullins (2000) observes that the complex nature of motivation is supported by the work of Vroom. Citing more than 500 research investigations, Victor Vroom concludes that there is no all-embracing theory of motivation to work (Krieser, 1982). Differences in patterns of motivation are illustrated by Hunt, who has developed average 'goal profiles' showing the relative importance of different categories of needs for people in different occupations, and changes in profiles at different stages for an average manager (Hunt, 1992).

In the same way that age and the type of job influence a person's motivation, Hunt (1992) also draws attention to how differences among cultures affect the way people prioritise their goals. Managers in nine countries were asked to rank six goal categories in terms of their importance to them now. The goal categories were:

- comfort:-** including primary needs and drives, and a comfortable lifestyle;
- structure:-** including financial security and certainty;
- relationships:-** including love, warmth and friendships;
- recognition:-** including status-and praise;
- power:-** including control and authority; and
- autonomy/creativity/growth:-** including self-actualisation or self-fulfilment.

The results of the research indicate clear differences among the samples. Hunt acknowledges that it is less clear whether these are national culture differences, differences in the use of language, and/or corporate culture influences. Cross-cultural differences are often subtle and impressionistic rather than obvious.

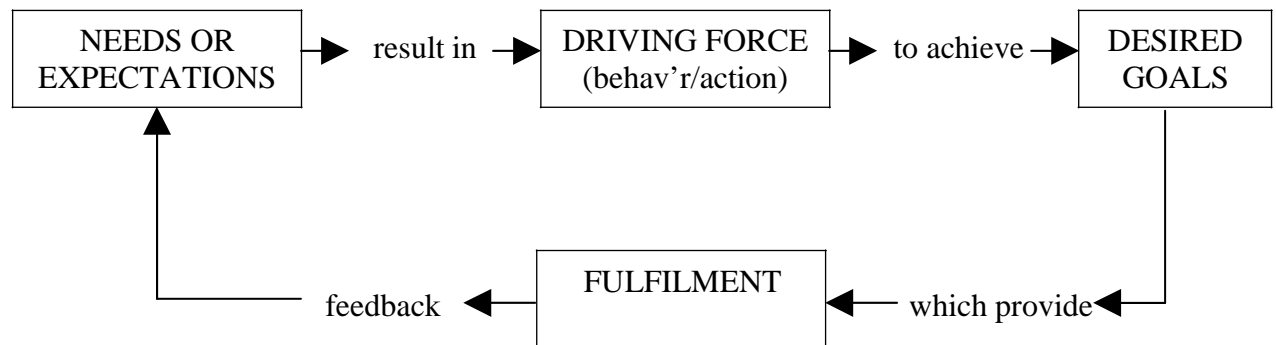
### 3.1.3 Underlying Concept of Motivation

According to Mullins (2000), the underlying concept of motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goal in order to fulfill some need or expectation. This concept gives rise to the basic motivational model (see Fig. 8.1). People's behaviours are determined by what motivates them. Their performance is a product of both ability level and motivation.

$$\text{Performance} = \text{function (ability x motivation)}$$

From above, therefore, if the manager is to enhance the performance of the organisation, attention must be given to the level of motivation of its members. The manager must also encourage staff to direct their efforts (their driving force) towards the successful attainment of the goals and objectives of the organisation.

**Figure: 8.1 The Basic Motivational Model**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 481

Mullins (2000) observes that motivation is a complex subject, it is a very personal thing, and it is influenced by many variables. Individuals have a variety of changing, and often conflicting needs and expectations which they attempt to satisfy in a number of different ways.

### **3.1.4 Classification of Motivation at Work**

The various needs and expectations of the workers can be categorised in a number of ways. According to Rudolph and Kleiner (1989), Such broad classification is as follow:

#### **1. Extrinsic motivation**

This is related to 'tangible' rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, contract of service, the work environment and conditions of work. Such tangible rewards are often determined at the organisational level and may be largely outside the control of individual managers.

#### **2. Intrinsic motivation**

This is related to 'psychological' rewards such as the opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate manner. The psychological rewards are those that can usually be determined by the actions and behaviour of individual managers.

According to Bennett (1981), the following is a useful, broad, three-fold classification for the motivation to work as follow:

**Economic rewards** – such as pay, fringe benefits, pension rights, material goods and security. This is an instrumental orientation to work and concerned with 'other things'.



**Intrinsic satisfaction** – which is derived from the nature of the work itself, interest in the job, and personal growth and development. This is a personal orientation to work and concerned with 'oneself'.

**Social relationships** – such as friendships, group working, and the desire for affiliation, status and dependency. This is a relational orientation to work and concerned with 'other people'.

According to Bennett (1981), a person's motivation, job satisfaction and work performance will be determined by the comparative strength of these sets of needs and expectations, and the extent to which they are fulfilled. For example, some people may make a deliberate choice to forgo intrinsic satisfaction and social relationships, particularly in the short term or in the earlier years of their working life in return for high economic rewards. Other people are happy to accept comparatively lower economic rewards in favour of a job which has high intrinsic satisfaction and/or social relationships.

### **3.1.5 The Psychological Contract**

The motivation to work is also influenced by the concept of the 'psychological contract'. According to Schein (1988), the psychological contract involves a series of expectations between the individual member and the organisation. These expectations are not defined formally, and although the individual member and the organisation may not be consciously aware of the expectations, their relationship is still affected by these expectations.

Under Psychological contract between the workers and the organization., the expectations of individuals, according to Schein, include:

- i) Provision of safe and hygienic working condition;
- ii) Provision of job security;
- iii) Reducing alienating aspects of work;
- iv) Adopting equitable personnel policies;
- v) Allowing staff genuine participation in decision making;
- vi) Implementing reasonable equal opportunities for personal development;
- vii) Treat members of staff with respect; and
- viii) Considerate attitude towards personal problems of staff..

According to French et al (1985), The organizational side of psychological contract places emphasis on expectations, requirements and constraints which differ from an individual's expectations. In the opinion of Schein (1988), the expectations of the organization from the workers are as follow:

- a) Acceptance of the culture and ideology of the organization;
- b) Work diligently in pursuit of organizational objectives;
- c) Avoid abusing goodwill shown by the management;
- d) Uphold the image of the organization;
- e) Show loyalty at all times;
- f) Not to betray position of trust; and
- g) Observe reasonable and acceptable standards of dress and appearance.

According to Mullins (2000), it is unlikely that all expectations of the workers or the organization will be met fully but there is continual process of balancing and implicit and explicit bargaining.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention the expectations of both the organization and the workers under the psychological contract.

### **3.2 Frustration-Induced Behaviour**

According to Mullins (2000), in a situation where a person's motivational driving force is blocked before reaching a desired goal, there are two possible sets of outcomes: constructive behaviour or frustration.

#### **1. Constructive Behaviour**

The constructive behaviour is a positive reaction to the blockage of a desired goal and can take two main forms: problem-solving or restructuring.

- ☐ **Problem-solving** is the removal of the barrier; for example, repairing a damaged machine, or by-passing an uncooperative superior.
- ☐ **Restructuring**, or compromise, is the substitution of an alternative goal, although such a goal may be of a lower order; for example, taking an additional part-time job because of failure to be promoted to a higher grading.

#### **2. Frustration**

According to Mullins (2000), frustration is a negative response to the blockage of a desired goal and results in a negative defensive form of behaviour. There are many possible reactions to frustration caused by the failure to achieve a desired goal. These can be summarised under four broad headings: aggression; regression; fixation.

##### **i) Aggression**

It is a physical or verbal attack on some persons or objects, for example, striking a supervisor, rage or abusive language, destruction of equipment or documents, malicious gossip about a superior. This form of behaviour may be directed against the person or object which is perceived as the source of frustration, that is, the actual barrier or blocking agent.

In the case of displaced aggression the person may find an easier, safer person or object as a scapegoat for the outlet of frustration; for example, picking arguments with colleagues, being short-tempered with subordinates, shouting at the cleaners or kicking the waste-paper bin. A more constructive form of displaced aggression is working off frustrated feelings through demanding physical work or sport, or perhaps by shouting/cursing when alone or in the company of an understanding colleague.

## **ii) Regression**

It is reverting to a childish or more primitive form of behaviour; for example, sulking, crying, tantrums, or kicking a broken machine or piece of equipment.

## **iii) Fixation**

It is persisting in a form of behaviour which has no adaptive value and continuing to repeat actions which have no positive results; for example, the inability to accept change or new ideas, repeatedly trying a machine which clearly will not work, insisting on applying for promotion even though not qualified for the job.

## **iv) Withdrawal**

It is apathy, giving up or resignation; for example, arriving at work late and leaving early, sickness and absenteeism, refusal to accept responsibility; avoiding decision-making, passing work over to colleagues, or leaving the job altogether.

The factors which determine an individual's reaction to frustration are as follow:

- the level and potency of need (see, for example, Maslow's theory of motivation, discussed below);
- the degree of attachment to the desired goal;
- the strength of motivation;
- the perceived nature of the barrier or blocking agent; and
- the personality characteristics of the individual.

In order to reduce potential frustration, managers are advised to make use of the following:

- effective recruitment, selection and socialisation;
- training and development;
- job design and work organisation;
- equitable personnel policies;
- recognition and rewards;
- effective communications;
- participative styles of management;
- attempting to understand the individual's perception of the situation.

## **3.3 Approaches to Motivation at Work**

The development of different approaches to organisation and management has highlighted the changing concept of motivation at work.

## **1. Rational-Economic Motivation**

Writers such as Taylor (1911) believed in economic needs motivation. Workers would be motivated by obtaining the highest possible wages through working in the most efficient and productive way. Performance was limited by physiological fatigue. According to Taylor, motivation was a comparatively simple issue; what the workers wanted from their employers more than anything else was high wages. This approach is the rational-economic concept of motivation.

## **2. Social Concept of Motivation**

The human relations writers, however, demonstrated that people go to work to satisfy a range of different needs, and not simply for monetary reward. They emphasised the importance of the social needs of individuals, and gave recognition to the work organisation as a social organisation. This was illustrated, for example, in the Hawthorne experiments by Elton Mayo in 1930s. The human relations approach to organisation and management led to the social concept of motivation.

## **3. The Systems Approach**

This also supports the social concept of motivation. The socio-technical system is concerned with the interactions between both the psychological and social factors, and the needs and demands of people; and the structural and technical requirements of the organisation.

## **4. Self-Actualisation**

The findings of the Hawthorne experiments, and the subsequent attention to the social organisation and theories of individual motivation, gave rise to the work of the neo-human relations writers. These-writers adopted a more psychological orientation to motivation. Greater attention was focused on the content and meaning of the task, and attempts to make work more intrinsically satisfying. The major focus of concern was the personal adjustment of the individual within the work situation. This approach is the self-actualisation concept of motivation.

## **5. Complex-Person Concept of Motivation**

The contingency approach to organisation and management takes the view that there are a large number of variables, or situational factors, which influence organisational performance. Contingency theory is concerned more with differences between organisations than with similarities. Managers must be adaptable, and vary their behaviour according to the particular situation, and the different needs and motivations of staff. The varying situational factors together with the complicated nature of human behaviour lead to the complex-person concept of motivation.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain various approaches to motivation.

### **3.4 Contents Theories of Motivation**

#### **3.4.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory**

The basic proposition of Maslow (1943) is that people are wanting beings, they always want more, and what they want depends on what they already have. He suggests that human needs are arranged in a series of levels, a hierarchy of importance.

The hierarchy ranges through five levels, from, at the lowest level, physiological needs, through safety needs, love needs, and esteem needs, to the need for self-actualisation at the highest level. The hierarchy may be shown as a series of steps, but is usually displayed in the form of a pyramid. See 8.1 below.

#### **1. The Hierarchy of Needs**

According to Maslow, these needs in hierarchical order are as follows:

##### **Physiological needs.**

These include homeostasis (the body's automatic efforts to retain normal functioning) such as satisfaction of hunger and thirst, the need for oxygen and to maintain temperature regulation. Also sleep, sensory pleasures, activity, maternal behaviour, and arguably sexual desire.

##### **Safety needs**

These include safety and security, freedom from pain or threat of physical attack, protection from danger or deprivation, the need for predictability and orderliness.

##### **Social Love needs**

These include affection, sense of belonging, social activities, friendships, and both the giving and receiving of love.

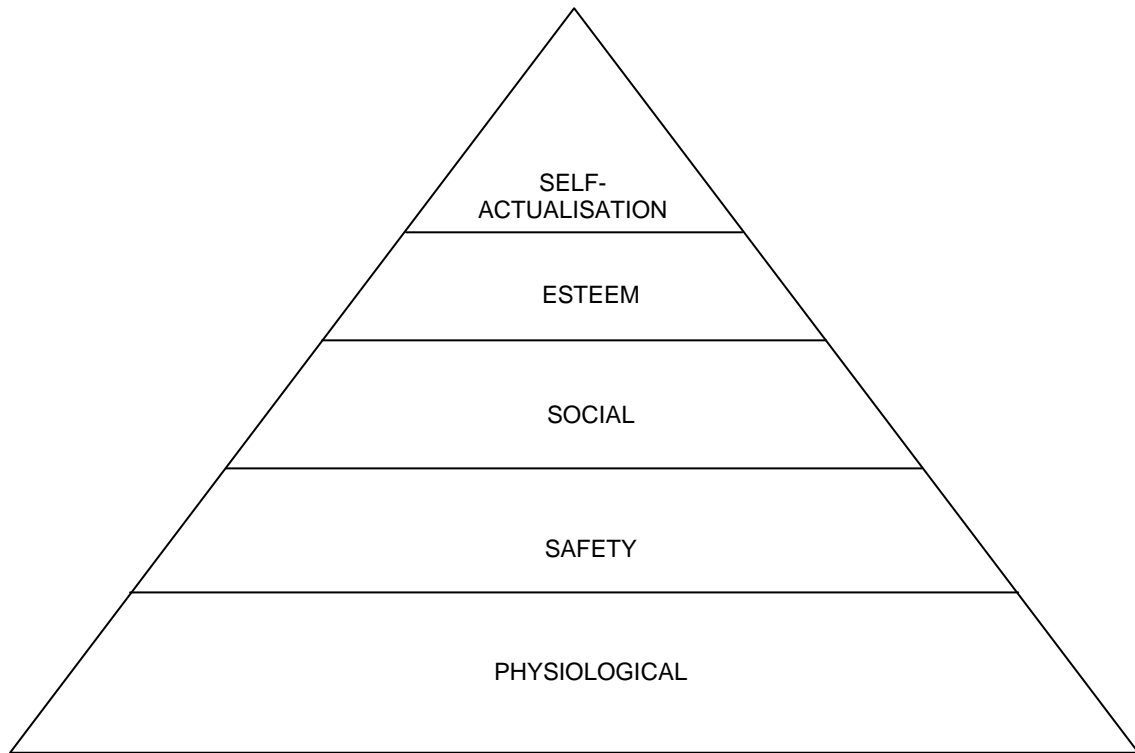
##### **Esteem needs**

It is sometimes referred to as ego needs and these include both self-respect and the esteem of others. Self-respect involves the desire for confidence, strength, independence and freedom, and achievement. Esteem of others involves reputation or prestige, status, recognition, attention and appreciation.

##### **Self-actualisation needs**

This is the development and realisation of one's full potential. Maslow sees this as: 'What humans can be, they must be', or 'becoming everything that one is capable of becoming'. Self-actualisation needs are not necessarily a creative urge, and may take many forms which vary widely from one individual to another.

**Fig. 8.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**



Source: Mullins,. L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.489.

According to Maslow, once a lower need has been satisfied it no longer acts as a strong motivator. The needs of the next higher level in the hierarchy demand satisfaction and become the motivating influence. Only unsatisfied needs motivate a person. Thus Maslow asserts that a satisfied need is no longer a motivator .

## **2. Assessing Maslow's Theory of Motivation**

In assessing Maslow's theory of motivation, the truth is that once lower-level needs have been satisfied (say at the physiological and safety levels) giving more of the same does not provide motivation. Individuals advance up the hierarchy as each lower-level need becomes satisfied. Therefore, to provide motivation for a change in behaviour, the manager must direct attention to the next higher level of needs, in this case, love or social needs that seek satisfaction.

Nevertheless, there are a number of problems in relating Maslow's theory to the work situation. These include the following:

- i) People do not necessarily satisfy their needs, especially higher-level needs, just through the work situation. They satisfy them through other areas of their life as well. Therefore the manager would need to have a complete understanding of people's private and social life, not just their behaviour at work.

- ii) There is doubt about the time which elapses between the satisfaction of a lower-level need and the emergence of a higher-level need.
- iii) Individual differences mean that people place different values on the same need. For example, some people prefer what they might see as the comparative safety of working in a bureaucratic organisation to a more highly paid and higher status position, but with less job security, in a different organisation.
- iv) Some rewards or outcomes at work satisfy more than one need. Higher salary or promotion, for example, can be applied to all levels of the hierarchy.
- v) Even for people within the same level of the hierarchy, the motivating factors will not be the same. There are many different ways in which people may seek satisfaction of, for example, their esteem needs.
- vi) Maslow viewed satisfaction as the main motivational outcome of behaviour. But job satisfaction does not necessarily lead to improved work performance.

**Fig. 8.2: Applying Maslow's Need Hierarchy to Organizational Rewards**

| S/N | Needs levels       | General rewards                             | Organisational factors  |
|-----|--------------------|---|---|
| 1   | Physiological      | Food, water, sex, sleep                     | a. Pay<br>b. Pleasant working conditions<br>c. Cafeteria  |
| 2   | Safety             | Safety, security, stability, protection     | a. Safe working conditions<br>b. Company benefits<br>c. Job security  |
| 3   | Social             | Love, affection, belongingness              | a. Cohesive work group<br>b. Friendly supervision<br>c. Professional associations                                     |
| 4   | Esteem             | Self-esteem, self-respect, prestige, status | a. Social recognition<br>b. Job title<br>c. High status job<br>d. Feedback from the job itself                        |
| 5   | Self-actualisation | Growth, advancement, creativity             | a. Challenging job<br>b. Opportunities for creativity<br>c. Achievement in work<br>d. Advancement in the Organization |

Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.493.

### 3.4.2 Alderfer's ERG Theory of Motivation

According to Mullins (2000), Alderfer's ERG theory of motivation is regarded as a modified need hierarchy model. This model condenses Maslow's five levels of need into

only three levels based on the core needs of existence, relatedness and growth (ERG theory). See Fig. 8.2.

### **1. The ERG Needs**

**Existence needs** are concerned with sustaining human existence and survival, and cover physiological and safety needs of a material nature.

**Relatedness needs** are concerned with relationships to the social environment, and cover love or belonging, affiliation, and meaningful interpersonal relationships of a safety or esteem nature.

**Growth needs** are concerned with the development of potential, and cover self-esteem and self-actualisation.

### **2. Continuum of Needs**

According to Mullins (2000), like Maslow, Alderfer suggests that individuals progress through the hierarchy from existence needs, to relatedness needs, to growth needs, as the lower-level needs become satisfied. However, Alderfer suggests these needs are more a continuum than hierarchical levels.

More than one need may be activated at the same time. Individuals may also progress down the hierarchy. There is a frustration-regression process. For example, if an individual is continually frustrated in attempting to satisfy growth needs, relatedness needs may reassume most importance. The lower-level needs become the main focus of the individual's efforts.

Alderfer proposed a number of basic propositions relating to the three need relationships. Some of these propositions followed Maslow's theory, some were the reverse of the theory. A number of studies were undertaken to test these propositions across different samples of people in different types of organisations.

### **3. Satisfaction of needs**

As observed by Mullins (2000), unlike Maslow's theory, the results of Alderfer's work suggest that lower-level needs do not have to be satisfied before a higher-level need emerges as a motivating influence. The results, however, do support the idea that lower-level needs decrease in strength as they become satisfied.

ERG theory states that an individual is motivated to satisfy one or more basic sets of needs. Therefore if a person's needs at a particular level are blocked then attention should be focused on the satisfaction of needs at the other levels. For example, if a subordinate's growth need allow sufficient opportunity for personal attempt to provide greater opportunities for the subordinates to satisfy existence and relatedness needs.



### **3.4.3 Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory**

According to Mullins (2000), Herzberg's original study consisted of interviews with 203 accountants and engineers, chosen because of their growing importance in the business world, from different industries in the Pittsburgh area of America. He used the critical incident method. Subjects were asked to relate times when they felt exceptionally good or exceptionally bad about their present job or any previous job. They were asked to give reasons and a description of the sequence of events giving rise to the feeling. Responses to the interviews were generally consistent, and revealed that there were two different sets of factors affecting motivation and work. This led to the two-factor theory of motivation and job satisfaction.

#### **1. Hygiene Factors**

They have to do with one set of factors which, if absent, cause dissatisfaction. These factors are related to job context, they are concerned with job environment and extrinsic to the job itself. These factors are the 'hygiene' factors (analogous to the medical term meaning preventive and environmental) or 'maintenance' factors. They serve to prevent dissatisfaction.

According to Mullins (2000), the hygiene factors can be related roughly to Maslow's lower-level needs and the motivators to Maslow's higher-level needs. See Fig 8.3 below. Proper attention to the hygiene factors will tend to prevent dissatisfaction, but does not by itself create a positive attitude or motivation to work. It brings motivation up to a zero state. The opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction but, simply, no dissatisfaction. To motivate workers to give their best the manager must give proper attention to the motivators or growth factors.

#### **2. Motivators**

The other set of factors are those which, if present, serve to motivate the individual to superior effort and performance. These factors are related to job content of the work itself. They are the 'motivators' or growth factors. The strength of these factors will affect feelings of satisfaction or no satisfaction, but not dissatisfaction.

Herzberg emphasises that hygiene factors are not a 'second class citizen system'. They are as important as the motivators, but for different reasons. Hygiene factors are necessary to avoid unpleasantness at work and to deny unfair treatment. Management should never deny people proper treatment at work. The motivators relate to what people are allowed to do at work. They are the variables which actually motivate people.

#### **3. Evaluation of Herzberg's Work**

The motivation-hygiene theory has extended Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and is more directly applicable to the work situation. Herzberg's theory suggests that if management is to provide positive motivation, then attention must be given not only to hygiene factors, but also to the motivating factors. The work of Herzberg indicates that it is more likely good performance leads to job satisfaction, rather than the reverse.

Since the original study, the theory had been replicated many times with different types of workers, including scientists, engineers, technicians, professional workers, nurses, food handlers, assemblers, and maintenance staff. The samples have covered a number of different nationalities. Results of these studies have been largely consistent with the original findings.

Herzberg's theory is, however, a source of frequent debate. There have been many other studies to test the theory. The conclusions have been mixed. Some studies provide support for the theory. However, it has also been attacked by a number of writers. For example, Vroom claims that the two-factor theory was only one of many conclusions that could be drawn from the research.

From a review of the research, House and Wigdor (1967) draw attention to the influence of individual differences. A given factor may be the cause of job satisfaction for one person but job dissatisfaction for another person, or vice versa. Within the sample of people, a given factor can be the source of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, House and Wigdor conclude that the two-factor theory is an over-simplification of the sources of satisfaction and job satisfaction.

**Fig.8.3: Relationships in Maslow's, Alderfer's and Herzberg's Theories of Motivation**

| <i>Maslow's hierarchy of needs</i> | <i>Alderfer's ERG theory</i> | <i>Herzberg's two-factor theory</i> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| PHYSIOLOGICAL                      | EXISTENCE                    | HYGIENE FACTORS                     |
| SAFETY                             | RELATEDNESS                  |                                     |
| SOCIAL                             |                              |                                     |
| ESTEEM                             | GROWTH                       | MOTIVATORS                          |
| SELF-ACTUALISATION                 |                              |                                     |

Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.494.

### 3.4.4 McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory

McClelland's work originated from investigations into the relationship between hunger needs and the extent to which imagery of food dominated thought processes. From subsequent research, McClelland identified four main arousal-based, and socially developed, motives.

#### 1. McClelland's Achievement Motives

These motives according to McClelland are as follow:

- the Achievement motive;
- the Power motive;
- the Affiliative motives; and
- the Avoidance motives.

The first three motives correspond, roughly, to Maslow's self-actualisation, esteem and love needs.

The relative intensity of these motives varies between individuals. It also tends to vary between different occupations. Managers appear to be higher in achievement motivation than in affiliation motivation. McClelland saw the achievement need (n-Ach) as the most critical for the country's economic growth and success. The need to achieve is linked to entrepreneurial spirit and the development of available resources.

## **2. People with High Achievement Needs**

Despite the apparent subjective nature of the judgements, McClelland has, over the years of empirical research, identified four characteristics of people with a strong achievement need (n-Ach): a preference for moderate task difficulty; personal responsibility for performance; the need for feedback; and innovativeness. These achievement needs are discussed below.

People with high need for achievement prefer:

### **Moderate task difficulty**

They regard goals as an achievement incentive. This provides the best opportunity of proving they can do better. If the task is too difficult or too risky, it would reduce the chances of success and of gaining need satisfaction. If the course of action is too easy or too safe, there is little challenge in accomplishing the task and little satisfaction from success.

### **Personal responsibility for performance.**

They like to attain success through the focus of their own abilities and efforts rather than by teamwork or chance factors outside their control. Personal satisfaction is derived from the accomplishment of the task, and recognition need not come from other people.

### **Clear and unambiguous feedback**

They require this to indicate to them on how well they are performing. A knowledge of results within a reasonable time is necessary for self-evaluation. Feedback enables them to determine success or failure in the accomplishment of their goals, and to derive satisfaction from their activities.'

### **More innovative.**

As they always seek moderately challenging tasks, they tend always to be moving on to something a little more challenging. In seeking short-cuts they are more likely to cheat. There is a constant search for variety and for information to find new ways of doing things. They are more restless and avoid routine, and also tend to travel more.

### **3. Extent of Achievement Motivation**

According to Mullins (2000), the extent of achievement motivation vary between individuals. Some people think about achievement a lot more than others. Some people rate very highly in achievement motivation. They are challenged by opportunities and work hard to achieve a goal. Other people rate very low in achievement. They do not care much and have little urge to achieve.

For people with a high achievement motivation, money is not an incentive but may serve as a means of giving feedback on performance. High achievers seem unlikely to remain long with an organisation that does not pay them well for good performance. Money may seem to be important to high achievers, but they value it more as symbolizing successful task performance and goal achievement. For people with low achievement motivation, money may serve more as a direct incentive for performance.

McClelland's research has attempted to understand the characteristics of high achievers. He suggests that n-Ach is not hereditary but results from environmental influences, and he has investigated the possibility of training people to develop a greater motivation to achieve.

### **4. Developing Achievement Drive**

McClelland suggests four steps in attempting to develop achievement drive such as:

Striving to attain feedback on performance. Reinforcement of success serves to strengthen the desire to attain higher performance.

Developing models of achievement by seeking to emulate people who have performed well.

Attempting to modify their self-image and to see themselves as needing challenges and success.

Controlling day-dreaming and thinking about themselves in more positive terms.

McClelland was concerned with economic growth in underdeveloped countries. He has designed training programmes intended to increase the achievement motivation and entrepreneurial activity of managers.

### **5. The Need for Power**

McClelland also suggested that the effective manager should possess a high need for power. However, the effective manager also scores high on inhibition. Power is directed more towards the organisation and concern for group goals, and is exercised on behalf of other people. This is 'socialised' power. It is distinguished from 'personalised' power which is characterised by satisfaction from exercising dominance over other people, and personal aggrandizement.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed that the individual workers as members of organization, have varied needs to meet and such needs and aspirations cannot be ignored by the management. This explains the essence of motivation. Motivation, as we have also goes through a process of needs or expectation giving rise to behaviour towards achievement of desired goals, which provide some fulfilment and feedback that may trigger another behaviour or action. Psychological contract which entails the obligations of both the organization and the workers to each other was also discussed. Lastly, in this study unit, we have also discussed the various content theories of motivation

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

- Nature of Motivation detailing
- Frustration-Induced Behaviour
- Approaches to Motivation at Work
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory
- Alderfer's ERG Theory of Motivation
- Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and
- McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory.

In the next study unit, the discussion is on process theories of motivation.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the basic model of motivation.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The expectations of the organization under the psychological contract are as follows:..
  - ix) Provision of safe and hygienic working condition;
  - x) Provision of job security;
  - xi) Reducing alienating aspects of work;
  - xii) Adopting equitable personnel policies;
  - xiii) Allowing staff genuine participation in decision making;
  - xiv) Implementing reasonable equal opportunities for personal development;
  - xv) Treat members of staff with respect; and
  - xvi) Considerate attitude towards personal problems of staff..

The expectations of the workers under the psychological contract include the following:

- a) Acceptance of the culture and ideology of the organization;
  - b) Work diligently in pursuit of organizational objectives;
  - c) Avoid abusing goodwill shown by the management;
  - d) Uphold the image of the organization;
  - e) Show loyalty at all times;
  - f) Not to betray position of trust; and
  - g) Observe reasonable and acceptable standards of dress and appearance.
2. The various approaches to motivation at work.

- i. Rational-Economic Motivation
- ii. Social Concept of Motivation
- iii. The Systems Approach
- iv. Self-actualisation
- v. Complex-Person Concept of Motivation

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

French, W. L., Kast, F. E. and Rosenzweig, J. F. (1985). Understanding Human Behaviour in Organizations, New York: Harper and Row.

Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, London: Pitman Publishing.

Schein, E. H. (1988). Organizational Psychology, Third Edition, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

## **FURTHER READING**

Robbins, S. (1992). Essentials of Organizational Behaviour, Third Edition, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

## **UNIT 9: PROCESS THEORIES OF MOTIVATION**

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Nature of Process Theories of Motivation
  - 3.2 Expectancy Theory of Motivation
    - 3.2.1 Vroom's Expectancy Theory
    - 3.2.2 The Porter and Lawler Expectancy Model
    - 3.2.3 Lawler's Revised Expectancy Model
    - 3.2.4 Equity Theory of Motivation
    - 3.2.5 Goal Theory
    - 3.2.6 Attribution Theory
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

All organizations have a duty to motivate their teams. Motivated workers are the organizational members who take more pride in their jobs and work better. Many organizations are not known to abide by this simple but time-tested principle. This may be due to the complexity of motivation, and the fact that there is no single answer to what motivates people towards enhanced performance on their jobs. Hence, the different theories of motivation are important to the managers. The motivation theories demonstrate in explicit terms the fact that there are many motives which influence people's behaviour and performance. Therefore, collectively, the different theories provide a framework within which to direct attention to the problem of how best to motivate staff to work willingly and effectively.

In the preceding study unit, we have discussed some of these theories of motivation; the content theories. In this study unit, we shall discuss the process theories of motivation.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the Nature of process theories of motivation
- explain the Expectancy theory of motivation
- analyze Vroom's expectancy theory
- discuss Porter and Lawler expectancy model
- explain the Lawler's revised Expectancy model
- discuss Equity theory of motivation
- analyze the Goal theory
- discuss the Attribution theory.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### 3.1 The Nature of Process Theories of Motivation

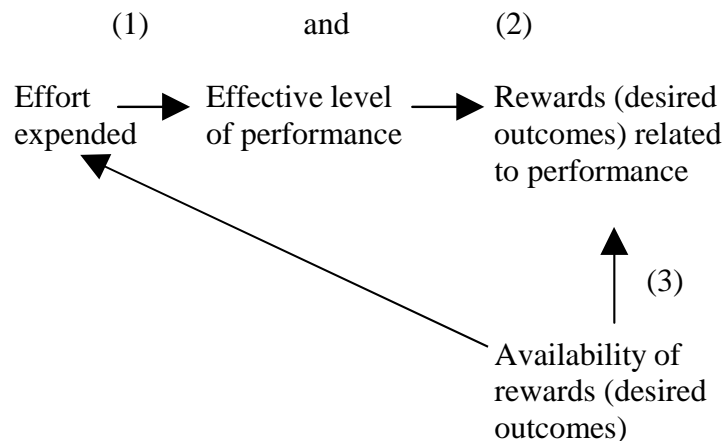
According to Mullins (2000), process theories attempt to identify the relationships among the dynamic variables which make up motivation. They provide a further contribution to the understanding of the complex nature of work motivation. Many of the process theories cannot be linked to a single writer, but major approaches and leading writers under this heading include:

### 3.2 Expectancy Theory of Motivation

The underlying basis of expectancy theory is that people are influenced by the expected results of their actions. According to the theory, motivation is a function of the relationship between effort expended and perceived level of performance; and the expectation that rewards (desired outcomes) will be related to performance. There must also be the expectation that rewards (desired outcomes) are available. These relationships determine the strength of the 'motivational link'. See Fig. 9.1.

**Figure 9.1      Expectancy Theory: The Motivational Link**

Motivation – a function of the perceived relationship between



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.500.

Therefore, from above, it means that performance depends upon the perceived expectation regarding effort expended and achieving the desired outcome. For example, the desire for promotion will result in high performance only if the person believes there is a strong expectation that this will lead to promotion. On the other hand, if the person believes promotion to be based solely on age and length of service there is no motivation to achieve high performance.



A person's behaviour reflects a conscious choice between the comparative evaluation of alternative behaviours. The choice of behaviour is based on the expectancy of the most favourable consequences.

Expectancy theory of motivation is based on the work of a number of number of writers to the extent that there are different versions. More recent approaches to expectancy theory have been associated with the work Vroom and of Porter and Lawler.

### **3.2.1 Vroom's Expectancy Theory**

Vroom was the first person to propose an expectancy theory aimed specifically at work motivation. His model is based on three key variables: valence, instrumentality and expectancy (VIE theory or expectancy/valence theory). The theory is founded on the idea that people prefer certain outcomes from their behaviour over others. They anticipate feelings of satisfaction should the preferred outcome be achieved.

#### **1. Valence**

The feeling about specific outcomes is termed valence. This is the attractiveness of, or preference for, a particular outcome to the individual. Vroom distinguishes valence from value. A person may desire an object but then gain little satisfaction from obtaining it. Alternatively, a person may strive to avoid an object but finds, subsequently, that it provides satisfaction. Valence is the anticipated satisfaction from an outcome. This may differ substantially from value, which is the actual satisfaction provided by an outcome.

The valence of certain outcomes may be derived in their own right, but more usually they are derived from the other outcomes to which they are expected to lead. An obvious example is money. Some people may see money as having an intrinsic worth and derive satisfaction from the actual accumulation of wealth. Most people, however, see money in terms of the many satisfying outcomes to which it can lead.

#### **2. Instrumentality**

The valence of outcomes derive, therefore, from their instrumentality. This leads to a distinction between first-level outcomes and second-level outcomes.

The first-level outcomes are performance-related. They refer to the quantity of output or to the comparative level of performance. Some people may seek to perform well/for its own sake' and without thought to expected consequences of their actions. Usually, however, performance outcomes acquire valence because of the expectation that they will lead to other outcomes as an anticipated source of satisfaction -second-level outcomes.

The second-level outcomes are need-related. They are derived through achievement of first-level outcomes, that is, through achieving high performance. Many need-related outcomes are dependent upon actual performance rather than effort expended. People generally receive rewards for what they have achieved, rather than for effort alone or through trying hard.

The strength of the valence of an outcome is dependent upon the extent to which the outcome serves as a means to other outcomes. An outcome with a high valence is likely

to be one that is perceived to be instrumental in leading to the achievement of a large number of need-related outcomes. Instrumentality is the association between first-level outcomes and second-level outcomes, measured on a range between +1.0 and -1.0. For example, if it is believed that good work performance (a first-level outcome) always results in a pay increase (a second-level outcome) instrumentality will be constant at +1.0. If the person believes a pay increase is certain to be obtained without good performance, or impossible even with it, instrumentality will be -1.0.

### **3. Expectancy**

When a person chooses between alternative behaviours which have uncertain outcomes, the choice is affected not only by the preference for a particular outcome, but, also by the probability that such an outcome will be achieved. People develop a perception of the degree of probability that the choice of a particular action will actually lead to the desired outcome. This is expectancy. It is the relationship between a chosen course of action and its predicted outcome. Expectancy relates effort expended to the achievement of first-level outcomes. Its value ranges from 0, indicating zero probability that an action will be followed by the outcome, and 1, indicating certainty that an action will result in the outcome.

### **4. Motivational force**

The combination of valence and expectancy determines the person's motivation force for a given form of behaviour. This is the motivational force. The force of an action is unaffected by outcomes which have no valence, or by outcomes that are regarded as unlikely to result from a course of action. Expressed as an equation, motivation (M) is the sum of the products of the valences of all outcomes (V), times the strength of expectancies that action will result in achieving these outcomes (E). Therefore, if either, or- both, valence or expectancy is zero, then motivation is zero. The choice between alternative behaviours is indicated by the highest attractiveness score.

$$M = \sum^n E \cdot V$$

There are likely to be a number of different outcomes expected for a given action. Therefore, the measure of E .V is summed across the total number of possible outcomes to arrive at a single figure indicating the attractiveness for the contemplated choice of behaviour.

#### **3.2.2 The Porter and Lawler Expectancy Model**

Vroom's expectancy/valence theory has been developed by Porter and Lawler. Their model goes beyond motivational force and considers performance as a whole. They point out that effort expended (motivational force) does not lead directly to performance. It is mediated by individual abilities and traits, and by the person's role perceptions. They also introduce rewards as an intervening variable. Porter and Lawler see motivation, satisfaction and performance as separate variables, and attempt to explain the complex relationships among them.

## **1. Explanation of relationships**

In contrast to the human relations approach which tended to assume that job satisfaction leads to improved performance, Porter and Lawler suggest that satisfaction is an effect rather than a cause of performance. It is performance that leads to job satisfaction.

Value of reward is similar to valence in Vroom's model. People desire various outcomes (rewards) which they hope to achieve from work. The value placed on a reward depends on the strength of its desirability.

Perceived effort-reward probability is similar to expectancy. It refers to a person's expectation that certain outcomes (rewards) are dependent upon a given amount of effort.

Effort is how hard the person tries, the amount of energy a person exerts on a given activity. It does not relate to how successful a person is in carrying out an activity. The amount of energy exerted is dependent upon the interaction of the input variables of value of reward, and perception of the Effort-reward relationship.

## **2. Abilities and traits**

Porter and Lawler suggest that effort does not lead directly to performance, but is influenced by individual characteristics. Factors such as intelligence, skills, knowledge, training and personality affect the ability to perform a given activity.

### **i) Role perceptions**

These refer to the way in which individuals view their work and the role they should adopt. This influences the type of effort exerted. Role perceptions will influence the direction and level of action which is believed to be necessary for effective performance.

### **ii) Performance**

This depends not only on the amount of effort exerted but also on the intervening influence<sup>6</sup> of the person's abilities and traits, and their role perceptions. If the person lacks the right ability or personality, or has an inaccurate role perception of what is required, then the exertion of a large amount of energy may still result in a low level of performance, or task accomplishment.

### **iii) Rewards**

These are desirable outcomes. Intrinsic rewards derive from the individuals themselves and include a sense of achievement, a feeling of responsibility and recognition. Extrinsic rewards derive from the organisation and the actions of others, and include salary, working conditions and supervision. The proportion of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards will vary among individuals and in different work situations, but there must be a minimum of both. Porter and Lawler see both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to be important and desirable outcomes. They suggest, however, that intrinsic rewards are more likely to produce job satisfaction related to performance than are extrinsic rewards.

#### **iv) Perceived equitable rewards**

This is the level of rewards people feel they should fairly receive for a given standard of performance. Most people have an implicit perception about the level of rewards they should receive commensurate with the requirements and demands-of the job, and the contribution expected of them.

#### **v) Satisfaction**

This is not the same as motivation. It is an attitude, an individual's internal state. Satisfaction is determined by both actual rewards received, and perceived level of rewards-from the organisation for a given standard of performance. If perceived equitable rewards are greater than actual rewards received, the person experiences dissatisfaction. The experience of satisfaction derives from actual rewards which meet or exceed the perceived equitable rewards.

### **3. Performance and Rewards**

The Porter and Lawler model recognises that job satisfaction is more dependent upon performance than performance is upon job satisfaction. Satisfaction only affects performance through a feedback loop to value of reward. When satisfaction follows receipt of a reward it tends to influence the value of the reward. Also to the extent that performance results in reward, this tends to increase the effort-reward relationship.

Originally, Porter and Lawler included rewards as a single variable. After empirical testing the model was redrawn to divide rewards into two variables – intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards. The relationship between performance and intrinsic rewards is shown as a jagged line. This is because the extent of the relationship depends upon the nature of the job. If the design of the job permits variety and challenge, so that people feel able to reward themselves for good performance, there is a direct relationship. Where job design does not involve variety and challenge, there is no direct relationship between good performance and intrinsic rewards. The wavy line between performance and extrinsic rewards indicates that such rewards do not often provide a direct link to performance.

A second revision to the original model involved drawing a link between performance and perceived equitable rewards. Self-rating of performance links directly with the perceived equitable reward variable. Higher levels of self-rated performance are associated with higher levels of expected equitable rewards. The heavily arrowed line indicates a relationship from the self-rated part of performance to perceived equitable rewards.

#### **3.2.3 Lawler's Revised Expectancy Model**

Following the original Porter and Lawler model, further work was undertaken by Lawler. He suggests that in deciding on the attractiveness of alternative behaviours, there are two types of expectancies to be considered: effort-performance expectancies ( $E \rightarrow P$ ); and performance-outcome expectancies ( $P \rightarrow O$ ).

The first expectancy ( $E \rightarrow P$ ) is the person's perception of the probability that a given amount of effort will result in achieving an intended level of performance. It is measured on a scale between 0 and 1. The closer the perceived relationship between effort and performance, the higher the  $E \rightarrow P$  expectancy score.

The second expectancy ( $P \rightarrow O$ ) is the person's perception of the probability that a given level of performance will actually lead to particular need-related outcomes. This is measured also on a scale between 0 and 1. The closer the perceived relationship between performance and outcome, the higher the  $P \rightarrow O$  expectancy score.

In relation to motivational force to perform, the multiplicative combination of the two types of expectancies,  $E \rightarrow P$  and the sum of the products  $P \rightarrow O$ , determines expectancy. The motivational force to perform (effort expended) is determined by multiplying  $E \rightarrow P$  and  $P \rightarrow O$  by the strength of outcome valence ( $V$ ).

$$E(\text{Effort}) = (E \rightarrow P) \times L[(P \rightarrow O) \times V]$$

The distinction between the two types of expectancies arises because they are determined by different conditions.  $E \rightarrow P$  expectancy is determined in part by person's ability and self-confidence, past experience, and the difficulty of the task.  $P \rightarrow O$  expectancy is determined by the attractiveness of the outcomes and the belief about who controls the outcomes, the person him/ herself or other people.

### 3.2.4 Equity Theory of Motivation

One of the major variables of satisfaction in the Porter and Lawler expectancy model is perceived equitable rewards. This leads to the consideration of another process theory of motivation-equity theory. Applied to the work situation, equity theory is usually associated with the work of Adams.

Equity theory focuses on people's feelings of how fairly they have been treated in comparison with the treatment received by others. It is based on exchange theory. People evaluate their social relationships in the same way as buying or selling an item. People expect certain outcomes in exchange for certain contributions, or inputs.

Social relationships involve an exchange process. For example, a person may expect promotion as an outcome of a high level of contribution (input) in helping to achieve an important organisational objective. People also compare their own position with that of others. They determine the perceived equity of their own position. Their feelings about the equity of the exchange are affected by the treatment they receive when compared with what happens to other people.

Most exchanges involve a number of inputs and outcomes. According to equity theory, people place a weighting on these various inputs and outcomes according to how they perceive their importance. When the ratio of a person's total outcomes to total inputs equals the perceived ratio of other people's total outcomes to total inputs there is equity.

When there is an unequal comparison of ratios the person experiences a sense of inequity. The feeling of inequity might arise when an individual's ratio of outcomes to inputs is either less than, or greater than, that of other people. For example, Adams suggests that workers prefer equitable pay to overpayment. Workers on piece-rate incentive payment schemes who feel they are overpaid will reduce their level of productivity in order to restore equity.

## **1. Behaviour as Consequence of Inequity**

A feeling of inequity causes tension, which is an unpleasant experience. The presence of inequity therefore motivates the person to remove or to reduce the level of inequity tension and the perceived inequity. The magnitude of perceived inequity determines the level of tension. The level of tension created determines the strength of motivation.

Adams identifies six broad types of possible behaviour as consequences of inequity.

**Changes to inputs** – a person may increase or decrease the level of his or her equity inputs, for example through the amount or quality of work, absenteeism, or theory of motivation working additional hours without pay.

**Changes of outcomes** – a person may attempt to change outcomes such as pay, working conditions, status and recognition, without changes to inputs.

**Cognitive distortion of inputs and outcomes** – in contrast to actual changes, people may distort, cognitively, their inputs or outcomes to achieve the same results. Adams suggests that although it is difficult for people to distort facts about themselves, it is possible, within limits, to distort the utility of those facts: for example, the belief about how hard they are really working, the relevance of a particular qualification, or what they can or cannot obtain with a given level of pay.

**Leaving the field** – a person may try to find a new situation with a more favourable balance, for example, by absenteeism, request for a transfer, resigning from a job or from the organisation altogether.

**Acting on others** – a person may attempt to bring about changes in others, for example to lower their inputs or accept greater outcomes. Or the person may, cognitively distort the inputs and outcomes of others. Alternatively, a person may try to force others to leave the field.

**Changing the object of comparison** – this involves changing the reference group with whom comparison is made. For example, where another person with a previously similar outcome-input ratio receives greater outcomes without any apparent increase in contribution, that other person may be perceived as now belonging to a different level in the organisation structure. The comparison need not necessarily be made with people who have the same inputs and outcomes. The important thing is a similar ratio of outcomes to inputs.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain the six broad types of possible behaviour as consequences of inequity

### **2. Under the Control of the Manager**

The manager may seek to remove or reduce tension and perceived inequity among staff by influencing these types of behaviour, for example, by attempting to change a person's inputs or encouraging a different object of comparison. However, there are likely to be only two courses of action under the direct control of the manager. Outcomes can be changed by for example increased pay, additional perks or improved working conditions; or by instigating a person leaving the field through transfer, resignation or, as an extreme measure, dismissal.

#### **3.2.5 Goal Theory**

Another theory sometimes considered under the heading of motivation to work is goal theory, or the theory of goal-setting. This theory is based mainly on the work of Locke (1968).

The basic premise of goal theory is that people's goals or intentions play an important part in determining behaviour. Locke accepts the importance of perceived value, as indicated in expectancy theories of motivation, and suggests that these values give rise to the experience of emotions and desires. People strive to achieve goals in order to satisfy their emotions and desires. Goals guide people's responses and actions. Goals direct work behaviour and performance, and lead to certain consequences or feedback.

#### **1. Goal-Setting and Performance**

The combination of goal difficulty and the extent of the person's commitment to achieving the goal regulates the level of effort expended. People with specific quantitative goals, such as a defined level of performance, or a given deadline for completion of a task, will perform better than people with no set goal or only a vague goal such as 'do the best you can'. People who have difficult goals will perform better than people with easier goals.

A number of research studies have attempted to examine the relationship between goal-setting and performance. Although, almost inevitably, there are some contrary findings, the majority of evidence suggests strong support for the theory, and its effects on motivation. Locke subsequently pointed out that 'goal-setting is more appropriately viewed as a motivational technique rather than as a formal theory of motivation'. But, however it is viewed, the theory of goal-setting provides a useful approach to work motivation and performance.

## 2. Practical Implications for the Managers

Goal theory has a number of practical implications for the manager.

Specific performance goals should systematically be identified and set in order to direct behaviour and maintain motivation.

Goals should be set at a challenging but realistic level. Difficult goals lead to higher performance. However, if goals are set at too high a level, or are regarded as impossible to achieve, performance will suffer, especially over a longer period.

Complete, accurate and timely feedback and knowledge of results is usually associated with high performance. Feedback provides a means of checking progress on goal attainment and forms the basis for any revision of goals.

Goals can be determined either by a superior or by individuals themselves. Goals set by other people are more likely to be accepted when there is participation. Employee participation in the setting of goals may lead to higher performance.

Much of the theory of goal-setting is related to the system of Management by Objectives. Management by Objectives is often viewed as an application of goal-setting, although Management by Objectives was devised originally before the development of goal-setting theory.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What are the practical implications of goal theory for the managers?

#### 3.2.6 Attribution Theory

A more recent approach to the study of motivation is attribution theory. Attribution is the process by which people interpret the perceived causes of behaviour. According to Mullins (2000), the initiator of attribution theory is generally recognised as Heider (1958), who suggested that behaviour is determined by a combination of perceived internal forces and external forces.

**Internal forces** relate to personal attributes such as ability, skill, amount of effort or fatigue.

**External forces** relate to environmental factors such as organisational rules and policies, the manner of superiors, or the weather.

Behaviour at work may be explained by the locus of control, that is, whether the individual perceives outcomes as controlled by themselves, or by external factors. Judgements made about other people will also be influenced strongly by whether the cause is seen as internal or external.

#### 1. Basic Criteria in Making Attributions

In making attributions and determining whether an internal or external attribution is chosen, the three basic criteria involved are distinctiveness, consensus and consistency.



**Distinctiveness:** how distinctive or different was the behaviour or action in this particular task or situation compared with behaviour or action on other tasks or situations?

**Consensus:** is the behaviour or action different from, or in keeping with, that displayed by most other people in the same situation?

**Consistency:** is the behaviour or action associated with an enduring personality or motivational characteristic over time, or an unusual one-off situation caused by external factors?

Kelley (1973) hypothesised that people attribute behaviour to internal forces or personal factors when they perceive low distinctiveness, low consensus and high consistency. Behaviour is attributed to external forces or environmental factors when people perceived high distinctiveness, high consensus, and low consistency.

## 2. Classification of Attributions

An additional consideration in the evaluation of task performance within an organisational setting is whether the cause of behaviour was due to ‘stable’ or ‘unstable’ factors.

**Stable factors** are ability, or the ease or difficulty of the task.

**Unstable factors** are the exertion of effort, or luck.

The combination of internal and external attributions, and stable and unstable characteristics, results in four possible interpretations of a person’s task performance as shown below in Fig. 9.2.

**Table 9.2**      **Classification of possible attributions for performance**

|                  | <i>Internal attributions</i> | <i>External attributions</i> |
|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Stable factors   | ABILITY                      | TASK DIFFICULTY              |
| Unstable factors | EFFORT                       | LUCK                         |

Source: Mullins,. L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.156.

## 3. Implications of Attributions Theory

Employees with an internal control orientation are more likely to believe that they can influence their level of performance through their own abilities, skills or efforts. Employees with an external control orientation are more likely to believe that the level of performance is determined by external factors beyond their influence.

Studies appear to support the idea that staff with an internal control orientation are generally more satisfied with their jobs, are more likely to be in managerial positions, and are more satisfied with a participatory style of management, that is, staff with an external

control orientation. As a generalisation it might be implied that internally controlled managers are more effective than those who are externally controlled. However, this does not appear to be always the case.

People with a high achievement motivation may perceive that successful performance is caused by their own internal forces, and their ability and effort, rather than by the nature of the task or by luck. If members of staff fail to perform well on their tasks they may believe that external factors are the cause, and as a result may reduce the level of future effort. On the other hand, if staff perform well but the manager perceives this as due to an easy task or to luck, the appropriate recognition and reward may not be given. If the staff perceive that good performance was due to ability and/or effort the lack of recognition and reward may well have a demotivating effect.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit, we have discussed process theories which constitute an attempt to identify the relationships among the dynamic variables which make up the complex nature of work motivation. We also discussed all the relevant theories in process motivation such as the expectancy theories, equity theory, goal theory and attribution theory.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this study unit, topics covered include the following:

- The Nature of Process Theories of Motivation
- Expectancy Theory of Motivation
- Vroom's Expectancy Theory
- The Porter and Lawler Expectancy Model
- Lawler's Revised Expectancy Model
- Equity Theory of Motivation
- Goal Theory, and
- Attribution Theory

In the next study unit, the discussion is on leadership.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the attribution theory.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The six broad types of possible behaviour as consequences of inequity are as follows:
  - i) Changes to inputs
  - ii) Changes of outcomes
  - iii) Cognitive distortion of inputs and outcomes
  - iv) Leaving the field
  - v) Acting on others

vi) Changing the object of comparison

2. What are the practical implications of goal theory for the managers are as follows:

- i) Specific performance goals should systematically be identified and set in order to direct behaviour and maintain motivation.
- ii) Goals should be set at a challenging but realistic level.
- iii) Complete, accurate and timely feedback and knowledge of results is usually associated with high performance.
- iv) Goals can be determined either by a superior or by individuals themselves.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

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## **FURTHER READING**

Robbins, S. (1992). *Essentials of Organizational Behaviour*, Third Edition, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

## **UNIT 10: LEADERSHIP**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Leadership is a major factor that determines group behaviour in organizations.

Appropriate application of leadership motivates every employee to develop a strong sense of commitment towards achieving organizational goals. This is because, as you will appreciate in the course of analysis on leadership, that leadership is different from rulership.

Leaders are needed in all fields of human endeavours and at all levels of organization to give direction, create teamwork, set examples, share danger and hardship on equal footing with the workers. In this course unit, therefore, the intricacies of leadership is discussed.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and nature of leadership
- Identify and explain the various types of leadership styles
- Mention and discuss the classical theories of leadership
- List and explain factors that influence leadership effectiveness.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Meaning and Nature of Leadership**

Many writers on leadership have posited varied definitions of leadership as well as on the place of leadership in the attainment of organizational goals. Betts (1991) espouses that leadership is one of the main factors determining group behaviour. Therefore, when it is correctly applied, each employee will develop a strong sense of commitment towards achieving organizational goals. In the opinion of Blanchard (1990), leadership may be seen as an influence, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly toward the achievement of group goals, it implies not only willingness to work but willingness to work with zeal and confidence.

Furthermore, Betts stressed that to determine actions and access needs, the supervisor should possess sufficient knowledge of leadership and develop leadership skills. In the same vein, Robin (1989) defines leadership as the direction towards goal attainment. On his own opinion, Swindle (1984) posits that without leadership, confusion will replace vision, workers will drift from their tasks and moral will be ended. Leaders, according to Robin (1989), do stand behind group to prod them in order to produce but they place themselves before the group to achieve organizational goals.

In the opinion of Udeh (1999), for one to be a successful entrepreneur, such person has to be a successful leader. Udeh observes that leadership is synonymous to entrepreneurship in that both must seek opportunities, initiate projects, gather the physical, financial and human resources needed to carry out project. He also observed that they also set goals for themselves and others and direct and guide others to accomplish these goals. For these

reasons, it is now widely recognized that business and indeed organizational success cannot be achieved without true inspired leadership.

According to Akerele (1982), Leadership has been as a process of influence on a group in a particular situation as a given point in time in a specific set of circumstance that stimulates peoples to strive willingly to attain organizational objective. Therefore, when leadership is exercised, it either in conformity with an environment situation or to create influence that is capable of modifying the environment.

Leadership as a process uses a non-coercive influence to direct and co-ordinate the activities of the members of an organization toward the accomplishment of the set goals. This implies is that if the leader is faulty in the role play, the resultant effect will be low productivity. Leadership therefore, is necessary towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives and creating the right environment for workers and organizational performance.

To buttress the above point, Udeh (1999) observes that, it was Socrates in the fourth century B.C. who first taught that leadership tends to be exercised by the person who knows what to do in any given situation. Consequently, he placed much emphasis upon the need to acquire the appropriate technical competence and experience if one wishes to lead others. Nevertheless, knowledge is not the whole story. There are people who are technically competent and highly specialized in their fields, yet they are recognized as leads neither are they capable of being one. Based on this observation that leadership is about human organization, Udeh further recorded that, Socrates focused on leadership as the ability to supply human needs.

It has been argued that the style a leader chooses in a particular situation has a lot of consequences on the organizational goals Consensus and open door system of administration have been fingered by some authors as vital tools for group influence. The essence of leadership in followed because it is the ability of a single authority to command the respect, confidence and loyalty of people to obey and follow his guidance and direction that leadership is all about.

Leadership revolves around an individual and a group where the individual is the focal point. The leader needs the qualities of patience, perseverance and a complete faithfulness to his spoken ideas demonstrated by his actions until the vision has been achieved.

The dynamism of any organization depends to a large extent on the leadership quality and or role which also influence the quality of the followership. On the basis of above point, Betts, (1991) sees a leader as an outstanding member of an organization who has the capability to create conditions within which all members feel a strong commitment towards achieving accepted objectives in a given environment. It follows therefore, that the impact or effect of the leadership quality or role will be reflected in the behaviour of subordinates within the organization.

### **3.2 Types Of Leadership Styles**

According to Awolowo (1997), the foundation for the “style of leadership” approach was the belief that effective leader utilize a particular style to lead individual and groups to achieving certain goals, resulting in high productivity and morale.

Leadership style in an organizational context is the general way in which leaders behave toward subordinates in order to attain objectives. The degree to which a manager delegates authority, the modes of power a manager employs, and his/her relative concern for human relationship or task orientation, all tend to reflect the managers leadership styles.

#### **3.2.1 Autocratic Leadership Style**

The autocratic leader determines all the policy for the group. He commands and expects compliance. The techniques and activities to be carried out are spelt out one at a time so that members of the group are not always sure of what the next step will be.

According to Apala (1990), decision making in this leadership style is solely within the prerogative of the leader. The autocratic leads, assigns tasks, provides facilities and directs without consultation with the individuals carrying out the work. The leader works with the assumption that he or she knows what is best for the organization. He may be friendly or kind to workers but ultimately decides what the subordinates should do.

Mbiti (1977) sees the autocratic leader as a dictator. Oyedeji (1986) supports this description when he described the autocratic leaders as using force, fear, power, authority, initiation and their personal influence to get the followers to obey their will. For an autocratic leader, pay is just a reward and the only reward that can motivate worker. He (autocratic leaders) therefore uses pay as a means of reward and punishment.

Blanchard (1990) refers to the autocratic styles as the telling style. For the leader takes all decision, issues, instruction and expect others to carry them out without question or debate.

The autocratic leadership style has been recommended to be the best in times of emergency or when tasks are needed to be carried out fast. The argument, as you can understand, stems from the fact that decisions making process is very fast in the autocratic setting since it is only the leader that takes decisions. However, it has been criticized as being capable of causing dissatisfaction and ill- feeling among the group, dependence on the leader and passiveness towards the organizational goals.

### **3.2.2 Democratic Leadership Style**

A democratic leader tends to be faithfully high in decisions but allow more participation than the autocrat. He seek suggestions or opinion from his followers but the final decision rest with the leader.

His subordinates are free to consult the leader on any issue they cannot handle on the work should be done.



Blanchard (1990) describes the democratic leader as one who join the group to discuss a problem and reaches a decision on the basis of consensus or agreement. In style, the leader confers with the group before taking decisions and takes account of advises and feelings when reaching his decision.

According to Betts, (1991), he also pointed that democratic leader consults, encourages participation and uses power with, than power over employee”

The democratic leader encourages and assists subordinates, members are free to work with whosoever they choose and division of tasks is left for the group. The democratic leader instills a high sense of belonging and love. The result is increases in efficiency.

Webber (1975) has enumerated some of the benefits of this types of leadership, which include the following:

- (1) The follower to be done will probably understand the decision and agree that a certain course of action is necessary and proper.
- (2) The leader motivates people to contribute and encourages them to be responsible.
- (3) it gives the leader an opportunity to recognize the follower’s power and expertise which he can solicit and combine with his own to reach a joint and perhaps better decision.

Though there are general thinking in favour of this styles, findings shows that the productivity under this style is low and work is done in a sloppy manner.

### **3.2.3 Paternalistic Leadership Style**

This type of leadership style entails an intimate relationship between the leaders and the group, and it manifest in watchful care for the comfort and welfare of the followers.

Contributing on paternalistic leadership style, Apala (1990) said that, “it aims to guide and protect”. It is mostly associated with family business; in which case, the father or the mother is the chief executive and the children constitute the main personnel of the organization.

### **3.2.4 Laissez Faire or Free Rein Leadership Style**

In the laissez faire leadership style, Apala (1990) describes the leader as giving little or no direction and allow group members a great deal of freedom.

According to Betts (1991) “the laissez-faire leader allows a high Amount of independence; employees set their own objectives and decide how they achieve them”.

In this style of leadership, there is total freedom for group or individual decisions, with minimum participation by the leader. Under this leadership styles, decision making process is slow and there can be a great deal of buck passing. As a result the task may not be undertaken and conditions may become some what chaotic

Actually, in this instance, decision making is left to whoever in the group is willing to take on such responsibility. The leader grant the subordinates total freedom to take their decisions, set their own goals and devise means of achieving this set goals. The leader makes little or no effort to regulate, appraise or control the course of events. He comes in only when asked questions or subordinates indicate that they need him.

Contributing further, Betts (1991) observed that, the use of authority forms the basis for these style together with a philosophy variance ranging from fear, single authority decentralized authority through to complete freedom from authority. He further observed that many models have models been particular research findings. According to Mbiti (1977), laissez-faire is a French word and it mean, let people do what they want: the opinions of such a leader is not respected and the followers behaves as they like.

The manager who adopts this leadership style do as little supervision as possible. Also the group is loosely structured the decision making process slow (Apala, 1990). According to Sisk (1981) the leader who adopts this style maybe a deserter, a person who hangs onto a leadership position because it is profitable, but who has no identification with the organizational objectives and no concern for other people.

Concluding, this type of leadership style does not provide effective leadership at all since the followers or subordinates are left on their own, they tackle problems as best as they could.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain various types of leadership styles.

### **3.3 Classical Theories of Leadership**

As earlier observed, theories center on the behaviour and philosophic outlook of leaders towards employee of recent, the study or research on leadership is increasingly gaining recognition for the purposes of this work, the combination of Betts approach to the study on leadership theories in phases. The first phase of the study is known as the, “Trait theory” which attempts to identify and itemize some personal leadership qualities that distinguished leaders from non-leaders.

The second phase referred to as” Behavioral Theory:, which centered on the identification of some personal qualities and behavioural patterns that can be exhibited by leaders. And the third phase is the situation or contingency theory.

#### **3.3.1 Trait Theory**

The leader is here conceived as a great man whose superior endowments induce others to follow him/her. The great man theory of leadership implies that some individuals are born with certain traits that enable them to come out of any situation to become leaders. By this concept, the leaders were exceptional people pre-ordained as it were by the gods to lead, they are born rather than made (Stodgill, 1968).

This school of thought is of the opinion that there exist some universal personality trait, which according to them are in-born in individuals. Thus distinguishing leaders from non-leaders. Betts (1991), referred to the “Great man theory” of Sir, Francis Galton who in his

book called “Hereditary Genius” held the view that, “great leaders are born and leadership qualities are based on heredity”.

There are some traits, which are found to be common for successful leadership. They include intelligence, initiative imagination optimism, individualism, courage, originality, communication ability and sense of fair play, human understanding, supervising ability and self assurance (Stodgily 1968).

Swindle (1984) while contributing on personal factors associated with leadership, toed the same traits line of approach. He maintained that great leaders possessed certain traits such as:

Physical characteristic-height, appearance, energy, level etc.

Ability-high intelligence quotient (IQ) verbal fluency, originality – high initiative, self esteem, ambition and persistence.

Apala (1990) also believes that, “individuals were born with certain traits that allowed them to emerge out of the situation or period of history to become leaders”.

Keith (1972) identified four major traits which seem to have impact on organizational leadership such as intelligence, social maturity, inner motivation and achievement drive, and human relations.

The above have taken an opposite position for instance, Hampton (1980) identified two major weakness, which make trait theories unreliable. These are:

Its failure to consider situational factors

The search by social scientists for universal trait in leadership, has not been successful due to this fact, it has not been possible to isolate and identify specific trait which are common to all leaders.

### **3.3.2 The Ohio State Theory**

According to Betts, the research at Ohio State University was conducted in 1945 shortly after the Second World War. The primary objective of the test hypothesis concerning the situational determination of leader behaviour. Most of there investigations, he maintained focused on the types of leaders behaviours and their effect on work group performance and satisfaction. From their studies, two categories were finally identified as responsible for leadership behaviours described by subordinate. They include initiating and consideration.

Initiating structures refers to the extent to which his or her role and those of subordinate agree in the search for goal attainment. It includes behaviour that attempts to organize work relationship and goals. A leader under this category, will be seen to be assigning group members to particular tasks and expects the maintenance of definite standards and performance from workers and emphasis is on meeting the date-lines.

On the other hand, consideration is described as the extent o which a person is likely to have job relationship that are characterized by mutual trust, respect or subordinates ideas, and regard for their feelings, concern for followers comfort, well-being personal problems, treat all subordinates as high on friendly and approachable, will be regarded as high on consideration.

### **3.3.3 The Michigan Studies**

This study started about the same time with the Ohio study, with similar objectives. According to Betts (1991) the study equally came up with two dimensions of leadership; Employee oriented and production oriented. Employee-oriented leaders emphasized interpersonal relationships, while production-oriented leaders emphasized the technical or task aspect of the job. Their main concern was to accomplish their group tasks and the group members were a means to that end, production-oriented leaders are associated with low group-productivity and lower work satisfaction.

The conclusions arrived at by these researchers strongly favoured the leader who employee-centred their behaviour. Such leaders were associated with higher group productivity and high job satisfaction.

Robbins (1989) opined that these studies have very little success in identifying consistent relationship between patterns of leadership behaviour and group performance. What was missing according to him was consideration of the situation of the factor that influence success or failure.

### **3.3.4 Situational or Contingency Theory**

The first study on contingency theory was championed by Fielder (1971) in the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He propounded three important situational dimensions assumed to influence leadership effectiveness; leadership/member relationship, task structure, and position power.

#### **1. Leadership/Member Relationship**

This refers to the level of confidence that subordinates have in their leader and the loyalty of subordinates to their leaders as well as leader's attractiveness to the workers. This interaction is in threefold:

##### **i) Interacting Group:**

In this category, the ability of one individual to perform his job will depend on the other members of the group whose part of his task have to be completed e.g. football teams.

##### **ii) Coaching Crew**

Another identified group in the interacting group is the coaching crew. Such group on common tasks and accomplishment depends on the performance of each members that make up the group.

##### **iii) Counteracting**

This involves group whose members work towards achieving their own goal, even if it is at the expenses of other group members e.g. trade union..

#### **2. Task Structure**

This refers to the extent to which subordinates jobs are routine as opposed to non-routine.

### **3. Position Power**

This refers to the authority derived from the leadership position. It includes the leader's formal to reward and punish. The power position is based on ranking in management hierarchy and the support the leader get from the organization

Fielder's theory has been criticized using completed studies to rebuild and support his studies. According to Graen (1979) Fielder's work is designed to fit outcomes instead of being subjected to new research testing.

Contingency theory took into account organizational and environmental factors based on the understanding that no one method best fit all circumstances. For instance, the Ohio state researches found that supervisors who scored high initiating structure were relatively more proficient when managing production rather than non production and non promotion worker. According to Donnelly (1992) effective leadership depends on the interaction with the situation and the leader's behaviour.

#### **3.3.5 Path-Goal Theory**

By these theories, certain patterns of leader behaviour facilitate the classification of group goal, while other patterns of behaviour stimulate effective instrumental response in the follower group.

According to Betts (1991), this is a modern approached to leadership and it incorporates expectancy motivation theory and the use of power to smooth the employee's path towards achieving a goal. An adequate explanation includes a version of the focus leadership styles, and identification of two situational factors.

In relation to the choice of leadership, Betts identified four types of leadership styles from which one is expected to choose as:

#### **Directive Leadership**

Specific direction are given and people know exactly what they are expected to do. The leader schedules the work, maintains standards for performance and encourages standard and regulations. No participation is allowed.

### **Supportive Leadership**

Under supportive leadership, Betts posit that, a genuine concern for employees is shown by the leader being always approachable and friendly. Employees are treated as equals and a pleasant atmosphere is encouraged.

### **Participative Leadership**

As stated by Betts, in organizations adopting participating leadership style, suggestions are encouraged from subordinates and such suggestions are used but after due consultation, the leader still make the decisions.

### **3.3. 6 Achievement-Oriented Leadership**

According to Betts, challenging goals are set for employees who see an open display of confidence in their capability to perform well and achieve these goals. Trust is essential and personal responsibility is encouraged.

The influence here is that different styles should be employed by the leader in different situation. Consequently the approached differs from others in this respect. Still contributing on this, Betts further opined that to provide guidance on the choice of style, two situational factors are employed.

The first thing to do is to undertake as assessment of each of the employee's characteristic which include, ability needs and locus of control (Betts, 1991).

#### **Ability**



In the opinion of Betts, if an employee perceives his or her ability as low it is possible that directive leadership will be acceptable, but the opposite will be the case.

### **Needs**

According to Betts, the mental make-up of the individual taking into account needs, drives and personality may also influence the style which will be acceptable. For example, a strong drive for achievement would cause a favourable response to achievement-oriented leadership.

### **Locus of Control**

Betts equality posits that if employees view what happens to them (or their future) as being their control. This is termed internal locus of control. Therefore, a participative leadership style would be acceptable. However, he opined that, if the opposing view is held, the employee feels external control is operating, which means that events are determined by influences outside their control. In this case, directive leadership is more acceptable.

These characteristics are assumed to govern the degree of satisfaction and future satisfaction which is biased on the style of leadership applied. The second factor according to Betts is an assessment of employee's environment which will decide the coaching, guidance, support and reward when he/she expects before effective performance is likely.

In conclusion, Betts opined that, theoretically, the leader's behaviour will be motivational if his or her assessments are correct and the employee's perceptions are influenced and motivated which provides a smoother path through role and goal.

### **3.3.7 Leader Style Theory**

Vroom et al (1973) offered another situational leadership theory called styles theory. The theory tries to identify the appropriate style for a given set of circumstances or situation. They suggested the following leadership styles:

- A-I- The leaders solve the problem using the available information.
- A-II The leaders obtain the information from followers then decide on the solution to the problem.
- G-I The leader shares the problem with subordinates individually. Getting their ideas and suggestions without bringing them together as a group.
- G-II The leader shares problem with subordinates as a group. Together, the group generates and evaluates alternatives and attempts to reach consensus on a solution. The leaders acts as the chairperson.
- C-II Leaders share a problem with subordinates as a group, obtaining their ideas and suggestion.

The codes used are explained as follow:

A stands for autocratic

C stands for consultative, while

G stand for group

### **3.3.8 Tridimensional Leadership Effectiveness Theory**

This theory was propounded by Hersey et al (1988) after identifying two types of behaviour in a group. They named these two types of behaviours as: task and relationship.

They defined task behaviour as the extent to which leaders are likely to organized and define the roles of followers, explain what must be done, and direct the flow of work.

Relationship behaviour is defined as the extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationship with members of their group through being supportive, sensitive and facilitative.

Udeh collaborated this stand when he identified two main types of leadership behaviour as being commonly observed among entrepreneurs as task orientation and person orientation.

To the above two dimensions, a third one, the effectiveness dimension of leaders depends on how their leadership styles interact with the situation. The approach according to Hersey, et al rest on the following premises – when the style of leadership is appropriate in a given situation. It is ineffectiveness, ‘effective’ and ‘ineffective’ . styles are represented on a continuum. This is because effectiveness is a matter of degree range of + 1 to+4 and an ineffective range of – 1 to – 4.

Still on the theories, Betts, (1991) reported the work of Likert, where he classified styles into four groups. These according to him are based upon certain characteristics of organization: degree of freedom which employee feel about communicating with the managers.

The groups (ratings) are:

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| System 1 | = | exploitative authoritarian leadership                       |
| System 2 | = | benevolent authoritarian leadership                         |
| System 3 | = | Participative leadership which demands confidence and trust |

According to Betts, research findings indicated a strong connection between system 4 and sustained high productivity. Hence, suggestions from the study include the following:

Full use of the concept and techniques of motivation

Development of a tightly knit organization of work group committed to achieving organizational objectives.

Establishment of high aims for managers and employees and clarification with them of the aims they are expected to achieve.

Finally, he concluded by making an assertion that the underlying of these styles is the trust to adopt a democratic style.

### **3.3.9 Transformational Leadership Theory**

According to Hersey, et al this rests on human charisma. Max Weber introduced this concept of charisma into the discussion of leadership. He viewed charisma as the possession of some extra-ordinary qualities not commonly obtainable from other people, which compel followers to pay allegiance to the leader. The charismatic leaders have great influence on their followers, who are attached to them, as a result of the exceptional qualities which they (charismatic leaders) possess.

### **3.4 Factors Influencing Leadership Effectiveness.**

Leadership has been defined by Betts, as the capacity to energise a group. That is the ability to persuade others to defined objectives enthusiastically. It has been observed that the trait and contingency theories indicate such things as intelligence, decisiveness and style.

A number of factors have been identified to influence leadership effectiveness or otherwise, among which include:

#### **(i) Perceptual Accuracy**

According to McGregor (1985), perception plays a role in leadership. He stressed that “Managers who misperceive employees may miss the opportunity to achieve optimal results. If you believe someone is Lazy, you tend to treat him or her as a lazy person”. So how the leader perceives his worker may go a long way affect performance of the organization.

#### **(ii) Background Experience And Personality**

##### **(a) Leader:**

The background and experience of the leader affect the choice of leadership style. For example, a leader who had practiced successfully the relationship oriented approach is mostly like to continue the use of the style.

A leader's behaviour in any instance will be influenced greatly by the many forces operating within his personality. He will perceive his operating within his personality.

He will perceive his leadership problems on a basis of his background, knowledge and experience.

Bar Tad et al (1978) have explained the personality traits as the aggregate characteristics that define a unique individual which include physical, biological and psychological traits and are subject to change from birth to death.

**(b) Followers**

Followers have been perceived as important in the leader's choice of style. A leader with technically sound followers is best advised to be more participative than autocratic. But in a situation whereby the followers are in experienced, an autocratic style might be preferred.

**(iii) Supervisor Expectations and Style**

Generally supervisors prefer a leadership style that places them in a comfortable condition. A leader or supervisor who prefers a job-centered, autocratic, encourages followers to adopt the same thing.

**(iv) Task Understanding**

What is to be done is referred to as the task of an individual or a group 'Donnelly (1992:409) pointed out that a "task" has a group of properties. The physical properties involve stimuli surrounding the job, which in turn may be, a set of instruction from management or the way employee interprets. The behavioural properties include the requirements or kinds of responses expected of a person performing the task.

**(v) Peer Expectation**

Leaders form relationships with other leaders, these peer relationships are used to exchanges ideas, opinions, experiences and suggestions.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify and explain the factors which can influence leadership effectiveness.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The foregoing analysis has enabled you to appreciate the fact that leadership involves process of influencing subordinates or followers toward the achievement of group goals. There are various styles which a leader can use to prod the subordinates to perform, and as discussed above, they include autocratic, democratic, paternalistic, and laissez faire. The various classical theories on leadership were also discussed in this unit. Such theories have been discussed to throw light on the fact that some leaders are born while others are made out of prevailing situation. The last issue we discussed in this unit has to do with the factors that affect the effectiveness of a leader in any organization.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This study unit has been used to discuss:

The meaning and nature of leadership.

Styles of leadership which include autocratic, democratic, paternalistic, and laissez faire.

Classical theories of leadership which include trait theory, situational or contingency theory, the Ohio state, theory, the Michigan studies, path-goal theory, achievement-oriented leadership, leader style theory, tridimensional leadership effectiveness theory, and transformational leadership theory

Factors influencing leadership effectiveness such as perceptual accuracy, background experience and personality, supervisor expectations and style, task understanding, and peer expectation.

In the next study unit, you will be taken through organizational structure.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Mention and explain the classical theories of leadership.

Answers to Self Assessment Exercise

1. Types Of Leadership Styles include the following:

- a) Autocratic Leadership Style
- b) Democratic Leadership Style
- c) Paternalistic Leadership Style
- d) Laissez Faire or Free Rein Leadership Style

2. The factors which can influence leadership effectiveness include the following:

- (i) Perceptual Accuracy
- (ii) Background Experience and Personality
- (iii) Supervisor Expectations and Style
- (iv) Task Understanding
- (v) Peer Expectation

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## **FURTHER READING**

- Hersey, P. & Kenneth, H.B. (1988). Management of Organization Behaviour, Eagle Wood Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

## **UNIT 11: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Meaning and Nature of Organisation Structure
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    - 3.1.2 Dimensions of Structure
  - 3.2 Levels of Organisation Structure
  - 3.3 Dimensions of People – Organisation Relationship

- 3.3.2 Clarification of Tasks
- 3.3.1 Clarification of Objectives
- 3.3.3 The Division of Work
- 3.4 Forms of Relationship in Organization
- 3.5 Types of Organizational Structure
- 3.6 Common Features of Organisations
- 3.7 Influence of Technology on Organization
- 3.8 Problems of Work Organisation
- 4.0 Conclusion
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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In every organization, there exists some positions and responsibilities arising from the operations associated with the mission, goals and objectives for the existence of the organization. The formal distribution of tasks, the definition of authority and responsibility and the relationship between members of the organisation is usually established on the basis of an organizational structure. Organization may exist on a small scale basis, which can allow the distribution of authority and responsibilities on somewhat informal basis. However, as the organization grows, with increasing size, there is greater need for a carefully designed and purposeful form of organizational structure. This calls for the entrenchment of a formal structure. The structure cannot, in most cases, be held sacrosanct in all operational situations. Hence, there is also need for a continual review of the structure to ensure that it is the most appropriate form for a particular organizational development, and in keeping with the dictates of both the internal and external environment.

In this study unit, therefore, you will be taken through the general overview of the field of organizational behaviour.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be to:

- explain the meaning of organizational structure
- identify and explain levels of organization structure
- mention and discuss dimensions of people-organization relationship
- identify and explain forms of relationship in organization
- mention and discuss types of organizational structure
- identify and explain common features of organizations
- discuss how technology impacts on organization
- identify and analyze problems inherent in work organization.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**



### **3.1 The Meaning and Nature of Organisation Structure**

#### **3.1.1 Meaning of Organisation Structure**

According to Mullins (2000), structure is the pattern of relationships along positions in the organisation and among members of the organisation. The purpose of structure is the division of work among members of the organisation, and the coordination of their activities so they are directed towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organisation. The structure defines tasks and responsibilities, work roles and relationships and channels of communication.

Structure makes possible the application of the process of management and creates a framework of order and command through which the activities of the organisation can be planned, organised, directed and controlled.

*According to Drucker (1989)* the organisation structure should satisfy three requirements. These requirements are as follows:

#### **It must be organised for business performance.**

The more direct and simple the structure the more efficient it is because there is less change needed in the individual activities directed to business performance and results. Structure should not rest on past achievements but be geared to future demands and growth of the organisation.

#### **The structure should contain the least possible number of management levels.**

The chain of command should be as short as possible. Every additional level makes for difficulties in direction and mutual understanding, distorts objectives, sets up additional stresses, creates inertia and slack, and increases the difficulties of the development of future managers moving up through the chain. The number of levels will tend to grow by themselves without the application of proper principles of organisation.

#### **Organisation structure must make possible the training and testing of future top management.**

In addition to their training, future managers should be tested before they reach the top. They should be given autonomy in positions of actual managerial responsibility while still young enough to benefit from the new experience. They should also have the opportunity of at least observing the operation of the business as a whole, and not be narrowed by too long an experience in the position of a functional specialist.

Drucker suggests that, in order to satisfy these three requirements, the organisation structure must be based preferably on the principle of regional decentralisation, with activities integrated into autonomous product businesses with their own product and market, and with responsibility for their profit and loss. According to Drucker, if regional decentralisation is not possible then the organisation structure should be based on the principle of functional decentralisation with integrated units having the maximum responsibility for major and distinct stages of the business process.

The objectives of organizational Structure, according to Knight (1977), are as follows:

- i) the economic and efficient performance of the organisation and the level of resource utilisation;
- ii) monitoring the activities of the organisation;
- iii) accountability for areas of work undertaken by groups and individual members of the organisation;
- iv) coordination of different parts of the organisation and different areas of work;
- v) flexibility in order to respond to future demands and developments, and adapt to changing environmental influences; and
- vi) the social satisfaction of members working in the organisation.

According to Knight, these objectives provide the criteria for structural effectiveness. Structure, though, is not an end in itself but a means of improving organisational performance.

### **3.1.2 Dimensions of Structure**

According to Mullins (2000), the variables which determine the dimensions of organisation structure can be identified in a number of ways but are usually taken to include the grouping of activities, the responsibilities of individuals, levels of hierarchical authority (the scalar chain), span of control and formal organisational relationships. The dimensions of structure can, however, be identified in a number of ways.

*Child (1988)* suggests six major dimensions as components of an organisation structure which are as follow:

- allocation of individual tasks and responsibilities, job specialisation and definition;
- formal reporting relationships, levels of authority and spans of control;
- grouping together of sections, departments, divisions and larger units;
- systems for communication of information, integration of effort and participation;
- delegation of authority and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the use of discretion;
- motivation of employees through systems for appraisal of performance and reward.

*Mintzberg (1979)* suggests another approach to the identification of dimensions of structure; gives a set of nine essential design parameters which form the basic components of organisation structure.

How many tasks should a given position in the organisation contain and how specialised should each task be?

To what extent should the work content of each position be standardised?

What skills and knowledge should be required for each position?

On what basis should positions be grouped into units and units into larger units?

How large should each unit be; how many individuals should report to a given manager?

To what extent should the output of each position or unit be standardised;

What mechanisms should be established to facilitate mutual adjustment among positions and units?

How much decision-making power should be delegated to the managers of the units down the chain of authority?

How much decision-making power should pass from the line managers to the staff specialists and operators?

These nine design parameters, according to Mullins (2000), can be grouped under four broad headings: design of position; design of superstructure; design of lateral linkages; and design of decision-making systems.

Information technology is an additional dimension of structural design. The computer-based information and decision-support systems influence choices in design of production or service activities, hierarchical structures and organisation of support staffs. Information technology may influence the centralization/decentralisation of decision-making and control systems (Mullins, 2000).

According to Mullins (2000), the impact of information technology will have significant effects on the structure, management and functioning of most organisations. The introduction of new technology will demand new patterns of work organisation. It will affect individual jobs, the formation and structure of groups, the nature of supervision and managerial roles. Information technology results in changes to lines of command and authority, and influences the need for restructuring the organisation and attention to the job design.

Mullins maintains that new technology has typically resulted in a 'flatter' organisational pyramid with fewer levels of management required. In the case of new office technology, it allows the potential for staff at clerical/operator level to carry out a wider range of functions and to check their own work. The result is a change in the traditional supervisory function and a demand for fewer supervisors.

Structure provides the framework for the activities of the organisation and must harmonise with its goals and objectives. The first step, therefore, is to examine the objectives of the organisation. Only when objectives have been clearly defined that alternative forms of structure be analysed and compared.

### **3.2 Levels of Organisation Structure**

According to Parsons (1980), organisations are structured in layers. This implies that the determination of policy and decision-making, the execution of work, and the exercise of authority and responsibility are carried out by different people at varying levels of seniority throughout the organisation structure. Therefore, it is possible to look at organisations in terms of interrelated levels in the hierarchical structure such as the technical level, the managerial level and the community level. These are discussed below.

## **1. The Technical Level**

The technical level is concerned with specific operations and discrete tasks, with the actual job or tasks to be done, and with performance of the technical function. Examples are: the physical production of goods in a manufacturing firm; administrative processes giving direct service to the public in government departments; the actual process of teaching in an educational establishment.

## **2. The Managerial Level**

The technical level interrelates with the managerial level, or organisational level, which is concerned with the coordination and integration of work at the technical level. decisions at the managerial level relate to the resources necessary for performance of the technical function, and to the beneficiaries of the products or services provided. Decisions will be concerned with:

mediating between the organisation and its external environment, such as the users of the organisation's products or services, and the procurement of resources; and the 'administration' of the internal affairs of the organisation including the control of the operations of the technical function.

## **3. The Community Level**

In turn, the managerial level interrelates with the community level or institutional level, concerned with broad objectives and the work of the organisation as a whole. Decisions at the community level will be concerned with the selection of operations, and the development of the organisation in relation to external agencies and the wider social environment.

Examples of the community level within organisations are:

the board of directors of joint stock companies;  
governing bodies of educational establishments which include external representatives; and  
trustees of non-profit organisations.

Such bodies provide a mediating link between the managerial organisation and coordination of work of the technical organisation, and the wider community interests. Control at the institutional level of the organisation may be exercised, for example, by legislation, codes of standards or good practice, trade or professional associations, political or governmental actions, and public interest.

In practice, all these levels are interrelated, and there is not a clear division between determination of policy and decision-making, coordination of activities and the actual execution of work. Most decisions are taken with reference to the execution of wider decisions, and most execution of work involves decision. Decisions taken at the institutional level determine objectives for the managerial level, and decisions at the managerial level set objectives for the technical level. therefore if the oragnisation as a whole is to perform effectively, there must be clear objectives; a soundly designed structure; and good communication, both upwards and downwards, among the different levels of the organization (Mullins, 2000).

The managerial level, for example, would be unable to plan and supervise the execution of work of the technical function without the knowledge, expertise, practical know-how and enthusiasm of people who are closest to the actual tasks to be undertaken. People operating at the technical level should, therefore, make known to higher levels the practical difficulties and operational problems concerning their work. It is the duty of the managerial level to take appropriate action on this information, and to consult with people at the community or institutional level (Mullins, 2000).

### **3.3 Dimensions of People – Organisation Relationship**

#### **3.3.1 Clarification of Objectives**

A clarity of objectives is necessary in order to provide a basis for the division of work and grouping of duties into sub-units. The objectives for these sub-units must be related to the objectives of the organisation as a whole in order that an appropriate pattern of structure can be established.

According to Mullins (2000), clearly stated and agreed objectives will provide a framework for the design of structure, and a suitable pattern of organisation to achieve those objectives. The nature of the organisation and its strategy will indicate the most appropriate organisational levels for different functions and activities, and the formal relationships between them. Clearly defined objectives will help facilitate systems of communication between different parts of the organisation and extent of decentralisation and delegation. The formal structure should help make possible the attainment of objectives. It should assist in the performance of the essential functions of the organisation and the major activities which it needs to undertake.

#### **3.3.2 Clarification of Tasks**

According to Woodward (1980), tasks are the basic activities of the organisation which are related to the actual completion of the productive process and directed towards specific and definable end-results. To ensure the efficient achievement of overall objectives of the organisation, the results of the task functions must be coordinated.

There are four essential functions that the organisation must perform such as follow:

- (i) The good or service must be developed.
- (ii) Something of value must be created. In the case of the business organisation, this might be the production or manufacture of a product; in the case of the public sector organisation, the provision of a service.
- (iii) The product or services must be marketed. They must be distributed or made available to those who are to use them.
- (iv) Finance is needed in order to make available the resources used in the development, creation and distribution of the products or services provided.

There are other activities of the organisation, called element functions, which are not directed towards specific and definable ends but are supportive of the task functions and an intrinsic part of the management process. These include personnel, planning, management services, public relations, quality control and maintenance. In other organisations, noticeably in service industries, personnel can be seen as closely associated with a task function. But in the majority of organisations, the personnel function does not normally have any direct accountability for the performance of a specific end-task.

These two kinds of functions, task and element, differ in a number of ways and these differences have important implications for organisation. Failure to distinguish between the two types of functions can lead to confusion in the planning of structure and in the relationship between members of the organisation.

According to Woodward, for example, activities concerned with raising funds for the business, keeping accounts and determination of financial policy are task functions. But management accounting, concerned with prediction and control of production administration, is an element function, and is primarily a servicing and supportive one.

Relationships between the accountants and other managers seemed better when the two functions were organizationally separate. This is the case especially in divisionalised organisation when each product division has its own accounting staff providing line managers with the necessary information to control their own departments.

### **3.3.3 The Division of Work**

According to Mullins (2000), work has to be divided among its members and different jobs related to each other within the formal structure of an organisation,. The division of work and the grouping together of people should, wherever possible, should be organised by reference to some common characteristic which forms a logical link between the activities involved. It is necessary to maintain a balance between an emphasis on subject matter or function at higher levels of the organisation, and specialisation and concern for staff at the operational level.

Work can be divided, and activities linked together in a variety of different ways such as follows:

#### **i) Major Purpose or Function**

The most commonly used basis for grouping activities is according to specialisation, the use of the same set of resources, or the shared expertise of members of staff. It is a matter for decision in each organisation as to which activities are important enough to be organised into separate functions, departments or sections. Work may be departmentalized and based, for example, on differentiation between task and element functions, discussed above. See Fig. 11.1 below.

#### **ii) Product or Service**

In division by product or service, as shown in Fig. 11.2, the contributions of different specialists are integrated into separate, semi-autonomous units with collective

responsibility for a major part of the business process or for a complete cycle of work. This form of grouping is more common in the larger diversified organisations and may be used as a means of sub-dividing departments into sections.

A good example is the bringing together of all activities concerned with a particular production line, product or service. A different is in a hospital where medical and support staff are grouped together in different units dealing with particular treatments such as accidents and emergency, medical and surgery. The danger is that with grouping by product or service, there is a danger that the divisions may attempt to become too autonomous, presenting management with a problem of coordination and control.

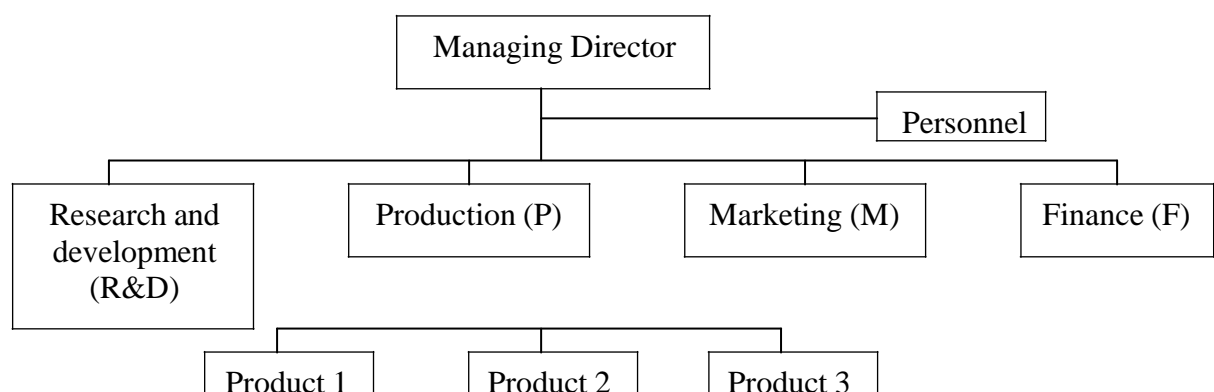
### iii) Location

In division by location, as shown in Fig. 11. 3, different services are provided by area or geographical boundaries according to particular needs or demands, the convenience of consumers, or for ease of administration.

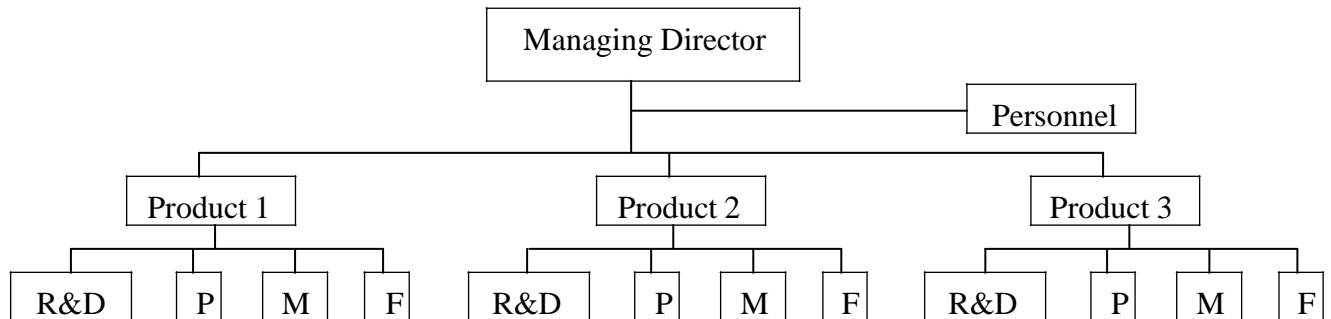
Examples are the provision of local authority services for people living in a particular locality; the siting of hospitals or post offices; the provision of technical or agricultural further education in industrial or rural areas; sales territories for business firms; or the grouping of a number of retail shops under an area manager. Another example is provided by organisations with multi-site working and the grouping of a range of similar activities or functions located together on one site.

One problem with grouping by location is difficulty in the definition of the geographical boundaries and the most appropriate size for a given area. The improvement in communications, particularly telecommunications, tends, however, to reduce the importance of location. For example, administrative staff may no longer need to be located within the main production unit.

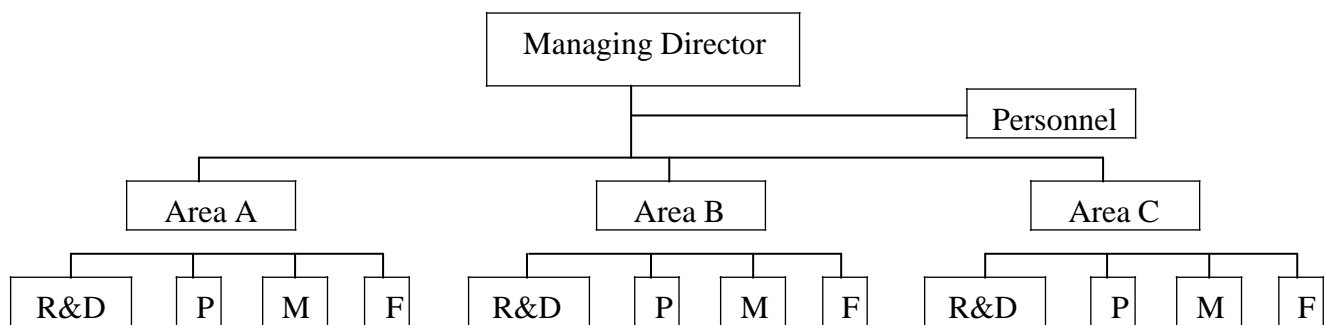
**Figure 11.1: Division of work by major Purpose or Function**



**Figure 11.2: Division of work by Product or Service**



**Figure 11.3: Division of Work by Location**





**Legend:**

R&D:- Research and Development

P :- Product

M :- Marketing

F :- Finance

**iv) Nature of the Work Performed**

Division may be according to the nature of the work performed where there is some special common feature of the work, such as: the need for speedy decisions, accuracy, confidentiality/security, or where local conditions require first-hand knowledge not immediately available elsewhere. Another example may be the grouping together of equipment or machinery which is noisy or which produces dust, fumes or unpleasant odours.

**v) Common Time Scales**

Division may be according to time scales, for example, shift working and the extent to which different tasks should be undertaken by different shifts. In a further education college, there may be separate departments or groupings to deal with the different needs of full-time day students and part-time evening students. Another example of activities grouped according to time is in a hotel.

Activities in the kitchen tend to be short term, especially when guests in the restaurant are waiting to be served, and a range of different tasks have to be coordinated very quickly. Other activities, for example, market research and forecasting future room occupancy, are longer-term decisions, and subject to different organisational requirements.

**vi) Common Processes**

When common processes are used in a range of different activities, this may be used as the basis of division. This method of grouping is similar to the division by nature of the work, but includes, for example, the decision whether to establish a centralised resource centre for all departments of the organisation, or to allow each department to have its own service.

In the manufacturing industries, a range of products may pass through a common production facility or configuration of machines which may be grouped together in a single unit: for example, a batch production engineering firm having departments based on like skills or methods of operation. Services using expensive equipment such as mainframe computers may need to be grouped together in this way for reasons of efficiency and economy.

**vii) Staff Employed**

The allocation of duties and responsibilities may be according to experience, or where a particular technical skill or special qualification is required: for example, the division of work between surgeons, doctors and nurses; or between barristers, solicitors and legal executives. Another good example is the sharing of routine work processes among

members of a supervised group. In smaller organisations, the allocation of work may be on an *ad hoc*, personal basis according to the knowledge and skills contributed by individuals. Work may also be planned deliberately to give a variety of tasks and responsibilities to provide improved job satisfaction or to assist in the training of staff.

#### **viii) Customer to be Served**

Separate groups may be established to deal with different consumer requirements: for example, the division between trade or retail customers, or between home or export sales. In hospitals, there are different groupings dealing with, for example, patients in the gynaecology, paediatric and children's wards. In large clothes shops, there may be separate departments for men's, women's and children's clothing.

Another example is the provision of canteen services which may be grouped by customer demand according to price; range or standard of meals available, speed of service; or type of customer. This gives rise to separate facilities; for instance, directors' dining room, staff dinning room, and separation of students' dining room from lecturers' dining room in educational establishments.

These different ways of dividing work can be combined in various forms most suitable for organisations in terms of their scope of operations. Some activities might be grouped according to one method and the other according to operational activities.

Decisions on the methods of grouping will include considerations of:

- the need for coordination;
- the identification of clearly defined divisions of work;
- economy;
- the process of managing the activities;
- avoiding conflict; and
- the design of work organisation which takes account of the nature of staff employed, their interests and job satisfaction.

The management team must decide upon the most significant factors which will determine the methods for division of work and linking of activities appropriate to the changing circumstances within the particular organisation.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain the various ways through which operations of an organization can be organized.

### **3.4 Forms of Relationship in Organization**

Some formal relationships between individual positions will arise from the defined pattern of responsibilities in any organisation structure. These individual authority relationships may be identified as line, functional, staff or lateral.

The design of organisation structure in terms of the principle of line, functional, staff or lateral, determines the pattern of role relationships and interactions with other roles, discussed in the next unit.

**(i) Line Relationships**

In line relationships, authority flows vertically down through the structure, for example, from the managing director to managers, section leaders, supervisors and other staff. There is a direct relationship between superior and subordinate, with each subordinate responsible to only one person. Line relationships are associated with functional or departmental division of work and organisational control. Line managers have authority and responsibility for all matters and activities within their own department.

**(ii) Functional Relationships**

Functional relationships apply to the relationship between people in specialist or advisory positions, and line managers and their subordinates. The specialist offers a common service throughout all departments of the organisation, but has no direct authority over those who make use of the service. There is only an indirect relationship.

For example, the personnel manager has no authority over staff in other departments – this is the responsibility of the line manager. But, as the position and role of the personnel manager would have been sanctioned by top management, other staff might be expected to accept the advice which is given. The personnel manager, however, could be assigned some direct, executive authority for certain specified responsibilities such as, for example, health and safety matters throughout the whole organisation. Note, however, that specialist in a functional relationship with other managers still have a line relationship with both their own superior and their own departmental subordinate staff.

**(iii) Staff Relationships**

Staff relationships arise from the appointment of personal assistants to senior members of staff. Persons in a staff position normally have little or no direct authority in their own right but act as an extension of their superior and exercise only 'representative' authority. They often act in a 'gatekeeper' role. There is no direct relationship between the personal assistant and other staff except where delegated authority and responsibility have been given for some specific activity. In practice, however, personal assistants often do have some influence over other staff, especially those in the same department or grouping. This may be partially because of the close relationship between the personal assistant and the superior, and partially dependent upon the knowledge and experience of the assistant, and the strength of the assistant's own personality.

**(iv) Lateral Relationships**

Lateral relationships exist between individuals in different departments or sections, especially individuals on the same level. these lateral relationships are

based on contact and consultation and are necessary to maintain coordination and effective organisational performance. Lateral relationships may be specified formally, but in practice, they depend upon the cooperation of staff and in effect are a type of informal relationship.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Mention and explain different forms of relationship in organization.

### **3.5 Types of Organizational Structure**

#### **1. Line and Staff Organisation**

An area of management which causes particular difficulty is the concept of line and staff. As organisations develop in size and work becomes more complex, the range of activities and functions undertaken increases. People with specialist knowledge have to be integrated into the managerial structure. Line and staff organisation is concerned with different functions which are to be undertaken. It provides a means of making full use of specialists while maintaining the concept of line authority. It creates a type of informal matrix structure (See Figure 11.1).

According to Mullins (2000), the concept of line and staff relationships presents a number of difficulties. With the increasing complexity of organisations and the rise of specialist services, it becomes harder to distinguish clearly between what is directly essential to the operation of the organisation, and what might be regarded only as an auxilliary function. The distinction between a line manager and a staff manager is not absolute. There may be a fine division between offering professional advice and the giving of instructions.

Friction inevitably seems to occur between line and staff managers. Neither side may fully understand nor appreciate the purpose and role of the other. Staff managers are often criticised for unnecessary interference in the work of the line manager and for being out of touch with practical realities. Line managers may feel that the staff managers have an easier and less demanding job because they have no direct responsibility for producing a product or providing a service for the customer, and are free from day-to-day operational problems.

Furthermore, staff managers may feel that their own difficulties and work problems are not appreciated fully by the line manager. Staff managers often complain about resistance to their attempts to provide assistance and coordination, and the unnecessary demands for departmental independence by line managers. A major source of difficulty is to persuade line managers to accept, and act upon, the advice and recommendations which are offered.

#### **2 Functional Organization**

Under this structure, the division of work and the grouping together of people is organised by reference to some common characteristic which forms a logical link

between the activities involved. This emphasizes functions of the organisational operations as well as specialization.

The most commonly used bases for grouping activities according to function are: specialization; the use of the same set of resources; and the shared expertise of members of staff. It is a matter for decision in each organisation as to which activities are important enough to be organised into separate functions, departments or sections. Work may be departmentalized and based on differentiation between task and element functions. See Fig. 11.1 below.

### **3. Project Organisation**

The division of work and methods of grouping described earlier tend to be relatively permanent forms of structure. With the growth in newer, complex and technologically advanced systems, it has become necessary for organisations to adapt traditional structures in order to provide greater integration of a wide range of functional activities.

In recent years, greater attention has been given, therefore, to more flexible forms of structure and the creation of groupings based on project teams and matrix organisation. Members of staff from different departments or sections are assigned to the team for the duration of a particular project.

Therefore, a project organization may be set up as a separate unit on a temporary basis for the attainment of a particular task. When this task is completed, the project team is disbanded or members of the unit are reassigned to a new task. Project teams may be used for people working together on a common task or to coordinate work on a specific project such as the design and development, production and testing of a new product; or the design and implementation of a new system or procedure. For example, project teams have been used in many military systems, aeronautics and space programmes. A project team is more likely to be effective when it has a clear objective, a well-defined task, and a definite end-result to be achieve, and the composition of the team is chosen with care.

### **4. Matrix Organisation**

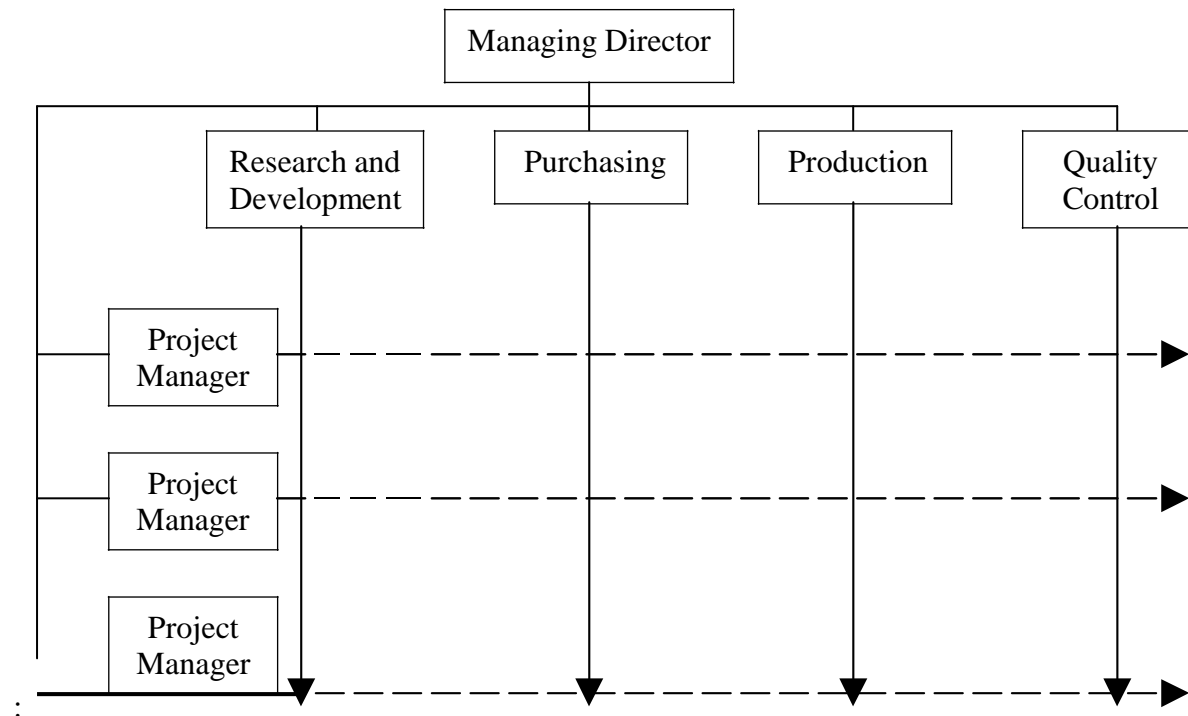
The matrix organisation is a combination of:

- (i) functional departments which provide a stable base for specialised activities and a permanent location for members of staff; and
- (ii) units that integrate various activities of different functional departments on a project team, product, programme, geographical or systems basis. As an example, ICI is organised on matrix lines, by territory, function and business.

A matrix structure might be adopted in a university or college with grouping both by common subject specialism, and by association with particular courses or programmes of study.

Therefore, the matrix organisation establishes a grid, or matrix, with a two-way flow of authority and responsibility. On the basis of the functional departments, authority and responsibility flow vertically down the line, but the authority and responsibility of the project manager flow horizontally across the organisation structure.

**Figure 11.5: A Matrix Structure**



Reasons for the use of a matrix structure include the following:

- (i) More than one critical orientation to the operations of the organisation  
For example, an insurance company that has to respond simultaneously to both functional differentiation such as life, fire, marine, motor, and to different geographical areas;
- (ii) A need to process simultaneously large amounts of information  
For example, a local authority social services department seeking help for an individual will need to know where to go for help from outside agencies such as police, priest, community relations officer; and at the same time whom to contact from internal resources within the organisation such as the appropriate social worker, health visitor or housing officer;
- (iii) The need for sharing of resources  
This could only be justified on a total organisational basis such as the occasional or part-time use by individual departments of specialist staff or services.

Matrix organisation offers the advantages of flexibility; greater security and control of project information; and opportunities for staff development. Nevertheless, there are difficulties associated with matrix structure. Developing an effective matrix organisation, however, takes time, and a willingness to learn new roles and behaviour which means that matrix structures are often difficult for management to implement effectively.

There may be a limited number of staff reporting directly to the project manager with extra staff assigned as required by departmental managers. This may result in a feeling of ambiguity. Staff may be reluctant to accept constant change and prefer the organisational stability from membership of their own functional grouping.

Matrix organisation can result in a more complex structure. By using two methods of grouping, it sacrifices the unity of command and can cause problems of coordination.

There may be a problem of defining the extent of the project manager's authority over staff from other departments and of gaining the support of the functional managers. Functional groups may tend to neglect their normal duties and responsibilities.

According to *Bartlett and Ghoshal (1990)*, matrix structures have proved all but unmanageable. Dual reporting leads to conflict and confusion; the proliferation of channels of communication creates informational log-jams; and overlapping responsibilities result in a loss of accountability.

### **3.6 Common Features Of Organisations**

A basic aim for the study of organisations is to indicate both the common features of organisations and the main distinguishing features between different types of organisations. It provides a useful framework for the comparative study of organisations. Some of these common features to organizations are as discussed below.

#### **1. Organisational Sub-systems**

The transformation or conversion of inputs into outputs is a common feature of all organisations. Within the organisation (system) as a whole, each of the different transformation or conversion activities may themselves be viewed as separate sub-systems with their own input-conversion-output process interrelated to, and interacting with, the other sub-systems. The analysis of an organisation could perhaps be based upon the departmental structure as sub-systems.

The important point is the interrelationships and coordination of sub-systems in terms of the effectiveness of the organisation as an integrated whole. The interrelationship and interdependence of the different parts of the system raise the question of the identification of these sub-systems.

The boundaries are drawn at the discretion of the observer and sub-systems are identified according to the area under study. These sub-systems may be identified, therefore, in a number of different ways, although there is a degree of similarity among the alternative models.

#### **2. Socio-technical System**

According to Mullins (2000), the socio-technical system is concerned with the transformation or conversion process itself, the relationships between technical efficiency and social considerations and the effect on people.

Researchers observed that new methods of work and changes in technology disrupted the social groupings of workers, and therefore, brought about undesirable changes to the psychological and sociological properties of the old method of working. As a result, the new method of work could be less efficient than it could have been despite the introduction of new technology.

The recommendation calls for a socio-technical approach in which an appropriate social system could be developed in keeping with the new technical system. It has been observed that there are three sub-systems common to any organisation such as:

- the **technological** sub-system;
- the sub-system of **formal role structure**;
- the sub-system of **individual members' feelings or sentiments**.

Another form of analysis result in seeing the organisation as an open, socio-technical system with five major sub-systems such as follow:

- ☐ **Goals and values** – the accomplishment of certain goals determined by the broader system and conformity with social requirements.
- ☐ **Technical** – the knowledge required for the performance of tasks, and the techniques and technology involved.
- ☐ **Psychological** – the interactions of individuals and groups, and behaviour of people in the organisation.
- ☐ **Structure** – the division and coordination of tasks, and formal relationships between the technical and psychosocial sub-systems.
- ☐ **Managerial** – covering the whole organisation and its relationship to the environment, setting goals, planning, structure and control.

An alternative model is suggested by *Hersey and Blanchard*, who identify four main interrelated sub-systems.

**Human / social** focuses on the needs and motivations of members of the organisation and styles of leadership.

**Administrative / structural** focuses on authority and responsibility, and the structure within the organisation.

**Informational / decision-making** focuses on key decisions and information needs necessary to keep the organisation operational.

**Economic / technological** focuses on the work to be undertaken and its cost-effectiveness related to the goals of the organisation.

Another useful model is that of *Leavitt* who suggests the organisation consists of four main elements – task, structure, information and control, and people – which interact with each other and with the external environment.

**Task** – involves problem-solving and improving organisational performance.



**Structure** – refers to patterns of organisation, authority and responsibility, and communications.

**Information and control** – techniques for controlling and processing information, such as accounting techniques.

**People** – involves attitudes and interpersonal relations.

According to Mullins (2000), from the above analysis, therefore, five main interrelated sub-systems as a basis for the analysis of work organisations.

**i) Task** – the goals and objectives of the organisation. The nature of inputs and outputs, and the work activities to be carried out in the transformation or conversion process.

**ii) Technology** – the manner in which the tasks of the organisation are carried out and the nature of work performance. The materials, systems and procedures, and equipment used in the transformation or conversion process.

**iii) Structure** – patterns of organisation, lines of authority, formal relationships and channels of communication among members. The division of work and coordination of tasks by which the series of activities are carried out.

**iv) People** – the nature of the members undertaking the series of activities: such as their attitudes, skills and attributes; needs and expectations; interpersonal relations and patterns of behaviour; group functioning and behaviour; informal organisation and styles of leadership.

**v) Management** – coordination of task, technology, structure and people, and policies and procedures for the execution of work. Corporate strategy, direction of the activities of the organisation as a whole and its interactions with the external environment.

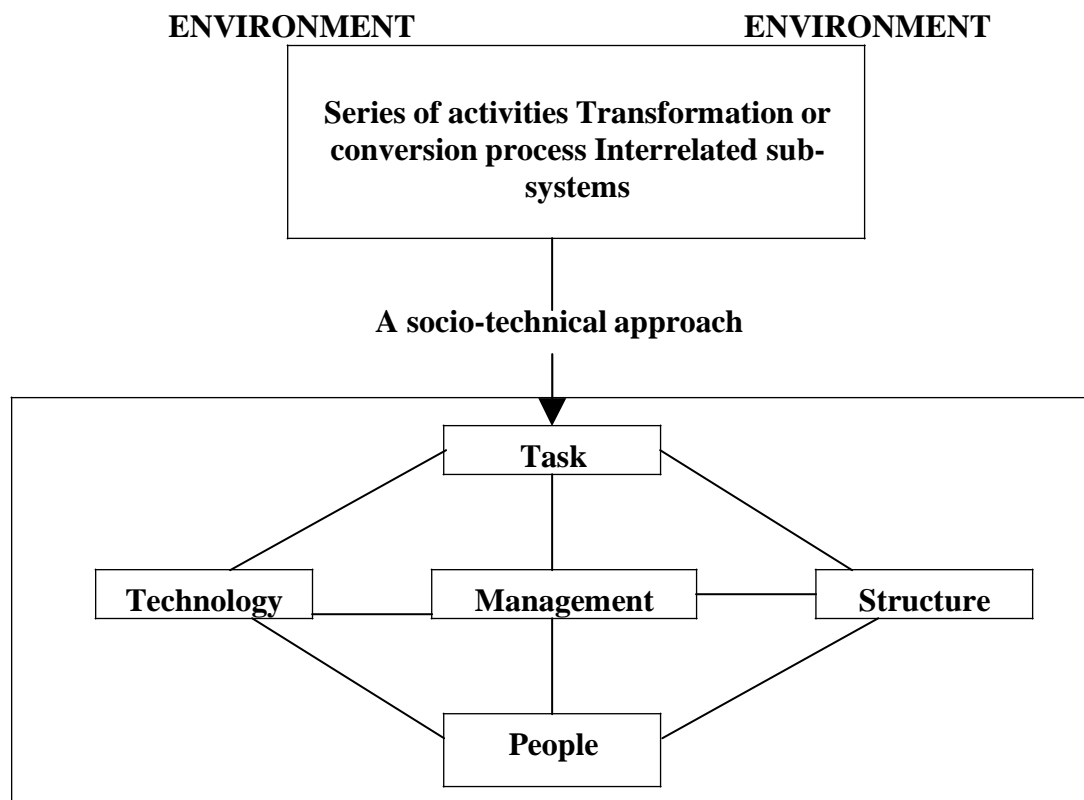
The attention given to organisational sub-systems can be related to developments in management thinking and organisational behaviour. The classical approach emphasised the structural and the managerial sub-systems and the development of general principles of organisation. The human relations approach emphasised the psychological and sociological aspects and gave attention to the importance of people in the organisation and such factors as the social needs of individuals, motivation and group behaviour. The systems approach focuses attention on the organisation as a whole, as a socio-technical system, and considers the interrelationships between the different sub-systems and the importance of environmental influences. The contingency approach concentrates on situational factors as determinants of alternative forms of organisation and management.

### **3. Interaction between Organization and Environment**

An open systems approach is an attempt to view the organisation as a purposeful, unified whole in continual interaction with its external environment. The organisation (system) is composed of a number of interrelated parts (sub-systems). Any one part of the organisation's activities affects other parts. Managers cannot afford to take a narrow, blinkered view. They need to adopt a broader view of the organisation's activities. Managers should recognise the interrelationships between various activities and the effects that their actions and decisions have on other activities.

Using the above framework of five main interrelated sub-systems – task, technology, structure, people, management – provides a useful basis for the analysis of organisational performance and effectiveness.

**Fig. 11.6: Organisational sub-systems**



- Task** - the nature of the work activities to be carried out
- Technology** - the manner in which activities are carried out
- Structure** - patterns of organisation and formal relationships within which activities are carried out
- People** - the nature of members undertaking the activities
- Management** - effective coordination of the sub-systems and direction of activities of the organisation as a unified whole.

The manager must realise that in order to improve organisational effectiveness, attention should be focused on the total work organisation and on the interrelationships between the range of variables which affect organisational performance. The organisation is best viewed as an open system and studied in terms of the interactions between technical and social considerations, and environmental influences. Changes in part of the system will affect other parts and thus the whole organisation. The open systems approach provides a

perspective in which to compare and contrast different types of organisations and their methods of operation.

#### **4. Situational Organisation**

The analysis of organisational effectiveness requires an understanding of relationships within the organisation's structure, the interrelated sub-systems and the nature of its external environment.

Irrespective of the identification of sub-systems, the nature and scale of the series of activities involved in converting inputs to outputs will differ from one organisation to another in terms of the interrelationships between technology, structure, methods of operation, and the nature of environmental influences. Contingency models of organisation highlight these interrelationships and provide a further possible means of differentiation between alternative forms of organisation and management.

The contingency approach takes the view that there is no one best, universal form of organisation. There are a large number of variables, or situational factors, that influence organisational performance. Contingency models can be seen as an '*if-then*' form of relationship. *If* certain situational factors exist, *then* certain organisational and managerial variables are most appropriate. Managers can utilise these models to compare the structure and functioning of their own organisation (Mullins, 2000).

#### **3.7 Influence of Technology on Organization**

According to Mullins (2000), the systems and contingency approaches have drawn attention to the importance of technology in the structure, management and functioning of work organisations. It is important to note that the meaning of technology is interpreted broadly to include both:

the physical aspects of machines, equipment, processes and work layout (machine technology) involved in the transformation or conversion process; and  
the actual methods, systems and procedures involved (knowledge technology) in carrying out the work of the organisation and transforming or converting inputs into outputs.

There is a close interrelationship between the machine side of technology and the specialist knowledge side of technology. The nature of technology can, therefore, be applied to the analysis of all organisations.

In a university, for example, the machine side of technology would include: blackboards or whiteboards; overhead projectors; computers; televisions and video recorders; closed circuit television; scientific and engineering equipment; library facilities. The knowledge side of technology would include: lectures, seminars and tutorials; case studies; role-playing; practical laboratory work; visiting speakers; project and assignment work; examinations.

The work processes of a university, and other educational establishments, give rise to the specialist study of educational technology. A university will receive inputs of students and, through the process of educational technology, 'transform' them and return them as outputs into the broader society.

### **1. Technology and the Behaviour of People**

According to Mullins, the nature of technology can influence the behaviour of people in work organisations in many ways including, for example, the following:

- ☐ It influences the specific design of each member's pattern of work including the nature and variety of activities performed, and the extent of autonomy and freedom of action.
- ☐ It affects the nature of social interactions, for example, the size and nature of work groups, the extent of physical mobility and of contacts with other people. A person working continuously on a single, isolated machine in a mass production factory will have very limited social interactions compared with, say, a team of receptionists in a large conference hotel.
- ☐ It can affect role position and the nature of rewards. People with higher levels of specialist technical knowledge and expertise such as engineers or systems analysts tend to receive higher status and pay than machine operators on an assembly line.
- ☐ It can impose time dimensions on workers and may require set times for attending to operations and a set pace of work; for example, the mechanical pacing of work on a mass-production assembly line.
- ☐ It can result in distinguishing features of appearance; for example, the requirement to wear a standard uniform or protective clothing, compared with a personal choice of smart clothes.

### **2. Technology and General Climate of Organisation**

Technology is a major influence on the general climate of the organisation and the behaviour of people at work.

The nature of technology is also a potential source of tension and stress and affects motivation and job satisfaction. The systems approach should serve to remind managers that activities managed on the basis of technical efficiency alone are unlikely to lead to optimum improvements in organisational performance. It is important to maintain the balance of the socio-technical system. Changes to the work organization as a result of new developments in technology must take account of human and social factors as well as technical and economic factors.

### **3. Information Technology**

The importance of the effective management of technical change has been highlighted by recent and continuing developments in information technology. The term 'information

technology' originated in the computer industry, but it extends beyond computing to include telecommunications and office equipment. Advances in technical knowledge, the search for improved economic efficiency and government support for information technology have all prompted a growing movement towards more automated procedures of work.

The impact of information technology demands new patterns of work organisation, especially in relation to administrative procedures. It affects the nature of individual jobs, and the formation and structure of work groups. There is a movement away from large-scale, centralised organisation to smaller working units. Processes of communication are increasingly linked to computer systems with the rapid transmission of information and immediate access to other national or international offices.

Improvements in telecommunications implies that support staff need no longer be located within the main 'production' unit. Modern methods of communication may reduce the need for head office clerical jobs.

Changes brought by information technology relate to the nature of the management task itself. Information technology bears heavily on the decision-making processes of the organisation and increasingly forms an essential part of management information and corporate strategy.

#### **4. Technology and Conditions of Work**

The growth of information technology implies that individuals may work more on their own, from their personal work stations or even from their own homes, or work more with machines than with other people. One person may be capable of carrying out a wider range of activities. There are changes in the nature of supervision and in the traditional hierarchical structure of jobs and responsibilities.

Computer-based information and decision support systems provide an additional dimension of structural design. They affect choices such as division of work, individual tasks and responsibilities. The introduction of information technology undoubtedly transforms, significantly, the nature of work and employment conditions for staff.

Advances in technical knowledge tend to develop at a faster rate with consideration for related human and social consequences. For example, fatigue and low morale are two major obstacles to the efficiency of staff. Research is now being conducted into possible health hazards such as eye strain, backache, general fatigue and irritability for operators of visual display units. This concern has prompted proposals for recommended working practices for VDU operators. There has been a call for regular health checks and eyesight tests for operators, and a 20-minute break every two hours.

#### **5. Technical Change and Human Behaviour**

Mullins (2000) observes that failure to match technical change to the concomitant human and social considerations means that staff may become resentful, suspicious and defensive. People's cognitive limitations, and their uncertainties and fears, may result in a reluctance to accept change.

The psychological and social implications of technical change, such as information technology and increased automation, must not be underestimated. New ideas and innovations should not be seen by members of staff as threats.

The manager has to balance the need for adaptability in meeting opportunities presented by new technology with an atmosphere of stability and concern for the interests of staff. The manner in which technical change is introduced into the organisation will influence people's attitudes to work, the behaviour of individuals and groups, and their level of performance.

## **6. Technology and Work Design**

According to Mullins (2000), continued technical change is inevitable and likely to develop at an even greater rate. Managers must be responsive to such change. Information technology and automation create a demanding challenge. The systems nature of organisations emphasises the interrelationships among the major variables or sub-systems of the organisation. The implementation and management of technological change needs to be related to its effect on the task, the structure and the people.

Managers need to develop working practices based on an accurate understanding of human behaviour and the integration of people's needs with organisational needs. It is important to avoid destructive conflict, alienating staff including managerial colleagues, or evoking the anger and opposition of unions. At the same time, it is important to avoid incurring increasing costs or a lower level of organisational performance caused by delays in the successful implementation of new technology.

What needs to be considered is the impact of technical change on the design of the work organisation, and the attitudes and behaviour of staff. It will be necessary for managers and supervisors to develop more agile skills in organisation. This calls for the effective management of human resources and a style of managerial behaviour which helps to minimise the problems of technical change. The management of conflict and organisational change is discussed in detail in other units.

## **3.8 Problems of Work Organisation**

As observed by Mullins (2000), the important point is not so much whether competing sub-groups and conflict are seen as inevitable consequences of organisation structure, but how conflict, when found to exist within the structure, is handled and managed.

There are many potential sources of conflict arising from structure, which include the following:

### **1. Differences in perception.**

Individuals see things in different ways. They all have our own, unique picture or image of how we see the 'real' world. Differences in perception result in different people attaching different meanings to the same stimuli. As perceptions become a person's reality, value judgements can be a potential major source of conflict.

## **2. Limited resources.**

Most organisational resources are limited, and individuals and groups have to fight for their share; for example, at the time of the allocation of the next year's budget or when cutbacks have to be made. The greater the limitation of resources, then usually the greater the potential for conflict. In an organisation with reducing profits or revenues, the potential for conflict is likely to be intensified.

## **3. Departmentalisation and specialisation.**

Most work organisations are divided into separate departments with specialised functions. Because of familiarity with the manner in which they undertake their activities, departments tend to turn inwards and to concentrate on the achievement of their own particular goals. When departments need to cooperate with each other this is a frequent source of conflict.

Differing goals and internal environments of departments are also a potential source of conflict. For example, a research and development department is more likely to be concerned with the long-run view and, confronted with pressures for new ideas and production innovation, the department is likely to operate in a dynamic environment and with an organic structure. A production department, however, is concerned more with short-term problems such as quality control and meeting delivery dates. The department tends to operate in a more stable environment and with a bureaucratic structure.

## **4. The nature of work activities.**

Where the task of one person is dependent upon the work of others, there is potential for conflict; for example, if a worker is expected to complete the assembly of a given number of components in a week but the person forwarding the part-assembled components does not supply a sufficient number on time. If reward and punishment systems are perceived to be based on keeping up with performance levels, then the potential for conflict is even greater.

In sequential interdependence where the work of a department is dependent upon the output of another department, a crisis situation could arise, especially if this situation is coupled with limited resources; for example, where the activities of a department, whose budget has been reduced below what is believed necessary to run the department efficiently, are interdependent with those of another department, who appear to have received a more generous budget allocation.

## **5. Role conflict.**

A role is the expected pattern of behaviours associated with members occupying a particular position within the structure of the organisation. In practice, the manner in which people actually behave may not be consistent with their expected pattern of behaviour. Problems of role incompatibility and role ambiguity arise from inadequate or inappropriate role definition and can be a significant source of conflict.

## **6. Inequitable treatment.**

A person's perception of unjust treatment, such as in the operation of personnel policies and practices, or in reward and punishment systems, can lead to tension and conflict. For example, according to the equity theory of motivation, the perception of inequity will motivate a person to take action to restore equity, including changes to inputs or outputs, or through acting on others.

## **7. Violation of territory.**

People tend to become attached to their own 'territory' within work organisations; for example, to their own area of work, or kinds of clients to be dealt with; or to their own room, chair or parking space. Jealousy may arise over other people's territory; for example, size of room, company car, allocation of a secretary or other perks; through access to information, or through membership of groups. A stranger walking into a place of work can create an immediate feeling of suspicion or even resentment because people do not usually like 'their' territory entered by someone they do not know, and whose motives are probably unclear to them.

Mullins (2000) observes that ownership of territory may be conferred formally, for example, by organisation charts, job descriptions or management decisions. It may be established through procedures, for example, circulation lists or membership of committees. Or it may arise informally, for example through group norms, tradition or perceived status symbols. The place where people choose to meet can have a possible, significant symbolic value.

The relevant strategies for managing conflicts arising from work organization include the following:

### **i) Clarification of goals and objectives.**

The clarification and continued refinement of goals and objectives, role definitions and performance standards will help to avoid misunderstandings and conflict. Focusing attention on superordinate goals, that are shared by the parties in conflict, may help to diffuse hostility and lead to more cooperative behaviour.

### **ii) Resource distribution.**

It may not always be possible for managers to increase their allocated share of resources, but they may be able to use imagination and initiative to help overcome conflict situations; for example, making a special case to higher management; flexibility in item headings of the budget; delaying staff appointments in one area to provide more money to another area.

### **iii) Personnel policies and procedures.**

Careful and detailed attention to just and equitable personnel policies and procedures may help to reduce areas of conflict. Examples are: job analysis, recruitment and selection, job evaluation; systems of reward and punishment; appeals, grievance and disciplinary procedures; arbitration and mediation; recognition of trade unions and their officials.



**iv) Non-monetary rewards.**

Where financial resources are limited, it may be possible to pay greater attention to non-monetary rewards. Examples are job design; more interesting, challenging or responsible work; increased delegation or empowerment; flexible working hours; attendance at courses or conferences; unofficial perks or more relaxed working conditions.

**v) Development of interpersonal/group process skills.**

This may help to encourage a better understanding of one's own behaviour, the other person's point of view, communication processes and problem-solving. It may also encourage people to work through conflict situations in a constructive manner.

**vi) Group activities.**

Attention to the composition of groups and to factors which affect group cohesiveness may reduce dysfunctional conflict. Overlapping group membership with a 'linking-pin' process, and the careful selection of project teams or task forces for problems affecting more than one group, may also be beneficial.

**vii) Leadership and management.**

A more participative and supportive style of leadership and managerial behaviour is likely to assist in conflict management; for example, showing an attitude of respect and trust; encouraging personal self-development; creating a work environment in which staff can work cooperatively together. A participative approach to leadership and management may also help to create greater employee commitment.

**viii) Organisational processes.**

Conflict situations may be reduced by attention to such features as: the nature of the authority structure; work organisation; patterns of communication and sharing of information; democratic functioning of the organisation; unnecessary adherence to bureaucratic procedures, and official rules and regulations.

**ix) Socio-technical approach.**

Viewing the organisation as a socio-technical system in which psychological and social factors are developed in keeping with structural and technical requirements, will help in reducing dysfunctional conflict.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The discussion has exposed you to the fact that organizational structure relates to pattern of relationships along positions in the organisation and among members of the organization, which defines tasks and responsibilities, work roles and relationships and channels of communication among organizational members. You have understood that essential factors are normally taken into consideration in designing organization structure. There are different types of structure and relationship in organization. Organizational structure is affected by technology as a critical aspect of the external environment.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This study unit has been used to discuss:

The Meaning and Nature of Organisation Structure; that structure defines positions and responsibilities, and it keeps on changing.

Levels of Organisation Structure such as technical, management, and community levels.

Dimensions of People – Organisation Relationship such as clarification of objectives, clarification of tasks, and division of work.

Forms of Relationship in Organization in areas of line, staff, function and lateral relationships.

Types of Organizational Structure like line and staff, functional, project and matrix organizations.

Common Features of Organisations such as organizational sub-systems, socio-technical system, interaction between the organization and the environment, and situation organization.

Influence of Technology on Organization in areas of behaviour of people, organizational climate, conditions of work, information technology, and work design.

Problems of Work Organisation such as differences in perception, limited resources, specialization, nature of work, role conflict, and violation of territory.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the essential design parameters which form the basic components of organisation structure according to Mintzberg
2. Mention and discuss the forms of relationship in organization.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The various ways through which operations of an organization can be organized are as follows:

- i) Major Purpose or Function
- ii) Product or Service
- iii) Location
- iv) Nature of the Work Performed
- v) Common Time Scales
- vi) Common Processes
- vii) Staff Employed
- viii) Customer to be Served

2. Forms of relationship in organisations are:

- i).Line Relationships
- ii) Functional Relationships
- iii) Staff Relationships
- iv) Lateral Relationships

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## **UNIT 12: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Organizational Culture
  - 3.2 Levels of Organizational Culture
  - 3.3 Types of Organisational Culture
  - 3.4 Four Generic Types of Culture
  - 3.5 Influences on the Development of Culture
  - 3.6 The Importance of Culture
  - 3.7 Culture and Organisational Behaviour
  - 3.8 Cultural Variance and Workplace Behaviour
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Generally, people may be aware consciously of the existence of culture in their various parental background, which is traceable to the influence of the human evolution. This is applicable to various clime the world over. Nevertheless many cannot really appreciate the fact that organizations also have their peculiar culture. Hence, they will not be able to appreciate the pervasive influence organizational culture has over workers behaviour and actions.

In the course of discussion in this study unit, you will appreciate the fact that organizational culture affects the way organizational operations are carried out in workplace. Hence, organisational culture reflects the underlying assumptions about the way work is performed in terms of what is 'acceptable and not acceptable'; and what behaviour and actions are encouraged and discouraged in various organizational setups. This study unit is used to discuss the nitty-gritty of organizational culture.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of organizational culture
- identify and discuss levels and types of organizational culture
- mention and discuss influences on organizational culture
- discuss the importance of organizational culture
- discuss bearing of culture on workplace behaviour.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Meaning of Organizational Culture

Generally, it has been observed that organisational culture is a general concept which is difficult to define or explain precisely. According to Mullins (2000), the concept of culture has developed from anthropology. There is, however, no consensus on its meaning or its applications to the analysis of work organisations. The wide diversity of interpretations relating to organizational development gives rise to a large number of different definitions. Moreso, there is sometimes confusion over the difference between the interpretation of organisational culture and organisational climate.

A more detailed definition is 'the collection of traditions, values, policies, beliefs, and attitudes that constitute a pervasive context for everything we do and think in an organisation. Culture is reinforced through the system of rites and rituals, patterns of communication, the informal organisation, expected patterns of behaviour and perceptions of the psychological contract.

Companies and institutions have both an overt and covert culture that influences both operations and organisational behaviour. The covert set can be quite dysfunctional and costly. Culture which is indicative of the beliefs, values and norms that drive 'the way we do things here' is the largest and most controlling of the systems. This is because it affects not only overt organisational behaviour but also the shadow-side behaviour.

Culture lays down norms for the social system. Culture tells the workers what kind of politics are allowed and just how members of an organisation are allowed to play the political game.

There is the distinction between the 'preferred culture' which serves the operations and relations with outsiders and the 'culture-in-use'. This culture-behind-the-culture carries the real beliefs, values and norms that drive patterns of behaviour within the organization.

According to Mullins (2000), such values and norms remain unnamed, undiscussed and unmentionable and these covert cultures lie outside ordinary managerial control. The first step in changing such limiting behaviour features is to identify the preferred culture and to ensure that the organization's way of operating effectively serves its goals.

#### 3.2 Levels of Organizational Culture

Schein (1985) suggests a view of organisational culture based on distinguishing three levels of culture: artifacts and creations; values and basic assumptions.

**Level 1: Artifacts.** The most visible level of the culture is artifacts and creations – the constructed physical and social environment. This includes physical space and layout, the technological output, written and spoken language and the overt behaviour of group members.

**Level 2: Values.** Cultural learning reflects someone's original values. Solutions about how to deal with a new task, issue or problem are based on convictions of reality. If

the solution works the value can transform into a belief. Values and beliefs become part of the conceptual process by which group members justify actions and behaviour.

**Level 3: Basic underlying assumptions.** When a solution to a problem works repeatedly it comes to be taken for granted. Basic assumptions are unconsciously held learned responses. They are implicit assumptions that actually guide behaviour and determine how group members perceive, think and feel about things.

### **3.3 Types of Organisational Culture**

There are a number of ways in which to classify different types of organisational culture. For example, Mullins (2000) describes four main types of organisational cultures: power culture; role culture; task culture; and person culture. All these are discussed below.

#### **1. Power culture**

This depends on a central power source with rays of influence from the central figure throughout the organisation. A power culture is frequently found in small entrepreneurial organisations and relies on trust, empathy and personal communications for its effectiveness. Control is exercised from the centre by the selection of key individuals. There are few rules and procedures and little bureaucracy. It is a political organisation with decisions taken largely on the balance of influence.

#### **2. Role culture**

It is often stereotyped as a bureaucracy and works by logic and rationality. Role culture rests on the strength of strong organisational 'pillars' – the functions of specialists in, for example, finance, purchasing and production. The work of, and interaction between, the pillars is controlled by procedures and rules, and co-ordinated by the pediment of a small band of senior managers. Role or job description is often more important than the individual and position power is the main source of power.

#### **3. Task culture**

It is job-oriented or project-oriented. In terms of structure the task culture can be likened to a net, some strands of which are stronger than others, and with much of the power and influence at the interstices. An example is the matrix organisation. Task culture seeks to bring together the right resources and people, and utilises the unifying power of the group. Influence is widely spread and based more on expert power than on position or personal power.

#### **4. Person culture**

This is where the individual is the central focus and any structure exists to serve the individuals within it. When a group of people decide that it is in their own interests to band together to do their own thing and share office space, equipment or clerical assistance then the resulting organisation would have a person culture. Examples are groups of barristers, architects, doctors or consultants. Although it is found in only a few organisations many individuals have a preference for person culture, for example university professors and specialists. Management hierarchies and control mechanisms

are possible only by mutual consent. Individuals have almost complete autonomy and any influence over them is likely to be on the basis of personal power.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Mention and explain the four types of organizational culture.

### **3.4 Four Generic Types of Culture**

Corporate cultures are categorised according to two determining factors:

- the degree of risk associated with the organisation's activities; and
- the speed at which organisations and their employees receive feedback on the success of decisions or strategies.

These factors give rise to four generic types of culture: the tough-guy, macro culture; the work-hard/play-hard culture; the bet-your-company culture; and the process culture.

#### **1. Tough-Guy, Macho Culture**

An organisation of individualists who frequently take high risks and receive quick feedback on the right or wrong of their actions. Examples cited include the police, surgeons, construction, cosmetics, management consulting and the entertainment industry. Financial stakes are high and there is a focus on speed. The intense pressure and frenetic pace often results in early 'burn-out'. Internal competition and conflict are normal, stars are temperamental but tolerated. A high staff turnover can create difficulties in building a strong cohesive culture.

#### **2. Work-Hard/Play-Hard Culture**

This is characterised by fun and action where employees take few risks, all with quick feedback. There is a high level of relatively low-risk activity. Examples include sales organisations such as estate agents and computer companies, mass consumer companies such as Mr Biggs, office equipment manufacturers and retail stores. Organisations tend to be highly dynamic and the primary value centres on customers and their needs. It is the team who produce the volume, and the culture encourages games, meetings, promotions and conventions to help maintain motivation. However, although a lot gets done, volume can be at the expense of quality.

#### **3. Bet-Your-Company Culture**

This is where there are large-stake decisions with a high risk but slow feedback so that it maybe years before employees know if decisions were successful. Examples include oil companies, investment banks, architectural firms, and the military. The focus is on the future and the importance of investing in it. There is a sense of deliberateness throughout the organisation typified by the ritual of the business meeting. There is a hierarchical system of authority with decision-making from the top down. The culture leads to high-quality inventions and scientific breakthroughs, but moves only very slowly and is vulnerable to short-term fluctuations.

## **4. Process Culture**

This is a low-risk, slow-feedback culture where employees find difficulty in measuring what they do. Typical examples include banks, insurance companies, financial services, and the civil service. The individual financial stakes are low and employees get very little feedback on their effectiveness. Their memos and reports seem to disappear into a void. Lack of feedback forces employees to focus on how they do something, not what they do. People tend to develop a 'cover your back' mentality. Bureaucracy results with attention to trivial events, minor detail, formality and technical perfection. Process cultures can be effective when there is a need for order and predictability.

## **3.5 Influences on the Development of Culture**

The culture and structure of an organisation develop over time and in response to a complex set of factors. We can, however, identify a number of key influences that are likely to play an important role in the development of any corporate culture. These include: history; primary function and technology; goals and objectives; size; location; management and staffing; and the environment.

### **1. History**

This means that the reason, and manner in which, the organisation was originally formed, its age, and the philosophy and values of its owners and first senior managers will affect culture. A key event in the organisation's history such as a merger or major reorganisation, or a new generation of top management, may bring about a change in culture. Corporate history can be an effective induction tool to assist a growth programme, and to help integrate acquisitions and new employees by infusion with the organisation's culture and identity.

### **2. Primary function and technology**

The nature of the organisation's 'business' and its primary function have an important influence on its culture. This includes the range and quality of products and services provided, the importance of reputation and the type of customers. The primary function of the organisation will determine the nature of the technological processes and methods of undertaking work, which in turn also affect structure and culture.

### **3. Goals and objectives**

The fact that business organisation may pursue profitability is not by itself very clear or a sufficient criterion for its effective management. For example, to what extent is emphasis placed on long-term survival or growth and development? How much attention is given to avoiding risks and uncertainties? Or how much concern is shown for broader social responsibilities? The organisation must give attention to objectives in all key areas of its operations. The combination of objectives in all keys will influence culture, and may itself be influenced by changes in culture.



#### **4. Size of Organization**

Usually larger organisations have more formalized structures and cultures. Increased size is likely to result in separate departments and possibly split-site operations. This may cause difficulties in communication and inter-departmental rivalries with the need for effective coordination. A rapid expansion, or decline, in size and rate of growth, and resultant changes in staffing will influence structure and culture.

#### **5. Location of Organization**

The geographical location and the physical characteristics can have major influence on culture: for example, whether an organisation is located in a quiet rural location or a busy city centre. This can influence the types of customers and the staff employed. It can also affect the nature of services provided, the sense of 'boundary' and distinctive identity, and opportunities for development.

#### **6. Management and Staffing**

The top executives can have considerable influence on the nature of corporate culture. But all members of staff help to shape the dominant culture of an organisation, irrespective of what senior management feel it should be. Culture is also determined by the nature of staff employed and the extent to which they accept management philosophy and policies or pay only 'lip-service'. Another important influence is the match between corporate culture and employees' perception of the psychological contract.

#### **7. The Environment**

In order to be effective the organisation must be responsive to external environmental influences. For example, if the organisation operates within a dynamic environment it requires a structure and culture that are sensitive and readily adaptable to change. An organic structure is more likely to respond effectively to new opportunities and challenges, and risks and limitations presented by the external environment.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify and explain the factors that influence organizational culture.

#### **3.6 The Importance of Culture**

- i) Culture helps to account for variations among organisations and managers, both nationally and internationally.
- ii) It helps to explain why different groups of people perceive things in their own way and perform things differently from other groups.
- iii) Culture can help reduce complexity and uncertainty.
- iv) It provides a consistency in outlook and values, and makes possible the processes of decision-making, coordination and control.
- v) Culture is clearly an important ingredient of effective organisational performance.

Empirical evidence provides that without exception, the dominance and coherence of culture proved to be an essential quality of the excellent companies. Moreover, the stronger the culture and the more it is directed to the marketplace, the less need is there for policy manuals, organization charts, or detailed procedures and rules. In culture-conscious organizations, people way down the hierarchy know what they are supposed to do in most situations because the handful of guiding values is crystal clear.

### 3.7 Culture and Organisational Behaviour

Hofstede (1980) has conducted a large-scale research study using IBM subsidiaries around the world and argued that culture is collective programming, which does indeed affect behaviour. Based on the findings, Hofstede identifies four dimensions of culture: power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individualism; and masculinity.

**Power distance** is essentially used to categorise levels of inequality in organisations, which Hofstede claims will depend upon management style, willingness of subordinates to disagree with superiors, and the educational level and status accruing to particular roles. Countries which displayed a high level of power distance included France, Spain, Hong Kong and Iran. Countries as diverse as Germany, Italy, Australia and the USA were characterised as low power distance societies. Britain also emerged as a low power distance society according to Hofstede's work.

**Uncertainty avoidance** refers to the extent to which members of a society feel threatened by unusual situations. High uncertainty avoidance is said to be characteristic in France, Spain, Germany and many of the Latin American societies. Low-to-medium uncertainty avoidance was displayed in The Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries and Ireland. In this case Britain is said to be low-to-medium together with the USA, Canada and Australia.

**Individualism** describes the relatively individualistic or collectivist ethic evident in that particular society. Thus, the USA, France and Spain display high individualism. This contrasts with Portugal, Hong Kong, India and Greece which are low individualism societies. Britain here is depicted as a high individualism society.

**Masculinity** is the final category suggested by Hofstede. This refers to a continuum between 'masculine' characteristics such as assertiveness and competitiveness; and 'feminine' traits such as caring, a stress upon the quality of life and concern with the environment. High masculinity societies included the USA, Italy, Germany and, Japan. More feminine (low masculinity) societies included The Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries. In this case Britain was located within the high masculinity group.

### 3.8 Cultural Variance and Workplace Behaviour

According to Mullins (2000), Trompenaars has attempted to make a direct link between cultural variance and workplace behaviour. Trompenaars identifies seven areas in which cultural differences may affect aspects of organisational behaviour.

Relationships and rules. Here societies may be more or less universal, in which case there is relative rigidity in respect of rule-based behaviour, or particular, in which case the importance of relationships may lead to flexibility in interpretation of situations.

Societies may be more oriented to the individual or collective. The collective may take different forms; the corporation in Japan, the family in Italy or the Catholic Church in the Republic of Ireland. There may be implications here for such matters as individual responsibility or payment systems.

It may also be true that societies differ to the extent it is thought appropriate for members to show emotion in public. Neutral societies favour the 'stiff upper lip' while overt displays of feeling are more likely in emotional societies.

In diffuse cultures, the whole person would be involved in a business relationship and it would take time to build such relationships. In a specific culture such as the USA the basic relationship would be limited to the contractual. This distinction clearly has implications for those seeking to develop new international links.

Achievement-based societies value recent success or an overall record of accomplishment. In contrast, in societies relying more on ascription, status could be bestowed on you through such factors as age, gender or educational record.

Trompenaars suggests that societies view time in different ways which may in turn influence business activities. The American dream is the French nightmare. Americans generally start from zero and what matters is their present performance and their plan to 'make it' in the future. This is 'nouveau riche' for the French, who prefer the 'ancien pauvre'; they have an enormous sense of the past.

Finally, it is suggested that there are differences with regard to attitudes to the environment. In western societies, individuals are typically masters of their fate. In other parts of the world such as the African countries, however, the world is more powerful than individuals.

Trompenaars' work is based on lengthy academic and field research. It is potentially useful in linking the dimensions of culture to aspects of organisational behaviour which are of direct relevance, particularly to people approaching a new culture for the first time.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The analysis in this study unit has exposed you the fact that organization has its own culture. Such organizational culture is manifested in artifacts and creations, values and unconsciously held learned responses to issues. There are some basic types of organizational culture which are power culture, role culture, task culture, and person culture. Organizational culture is influenced by variables such as historical development of the organization, the primary function and technology being used by the organization, its goals and objectives, the size of organization, the location of organization, its management and staffing, and the external environment. The analysis has showed that there is a direct link between cultural variance and workplace behaviour.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This study unit has been used to discuss:

The meaning and nature of organizational culture.

Levels and types of organizational culture.

The influences on development of organizational culture.

The Importance of Culture

Culture and Organisational Behaviour, and

Cultural Variance and Workplace Behaviour

In the next study unit, you will be taken through organizational conflict and conflict management.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify and explain the factors that influence organizational culture.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The four types of organizational culture are as follows:

i) Power culture:-

This has to do with a central power source with rays of influence from the central figure throughout the organization. It is frequently found in small entrepreneurial organisations and relies on trust, empathy and personal communications for its effectiveness.

ii) Role culture:-

It is associated with a bureaucracy and works by logic and rationality. Role culture rests on the strength of strong organisational 'pillars' such as the functions of specialists.

iii) Task culture:-

It is job-oriented and can be likened to a net, some strands of which are stronger than others. An example is the matrix organisation.

iv) Person culture:-

This is where the individual is the central focus and any structure exists to serve the individuals within it. Such as groups of barristers, architects, doctors or consultants.

2. The factors that influence organizational culture are as follows:

i) History:-

The reason, and manner in which, the organisation was originally formed, its age, and the philosophy and values of its owners and first senior managers will affect culture.

ii) Primary function and technology:-

The nature of the organisation's 'business' and its primary function have an important influence on its culture.

iii) Goals and objectives:-

The combination of organizational goals and objectives influence culture, and may itself be influenced by changes in culture.

iv) Size of Organization:-

Larger organisations have more formalized structures and cultures as compare with small ones.

v) Location of Organization:-

The geographical location and the physical characteristics of an organisation can have major influence on culture.

vi) Management and Staffing:-

The top executives can have considerable influence on the nature of corporate culture.

Vii) The Environment:-

The external environment affects organizational culture because it must be responsive to external environmental influences.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

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Robbins, S. (1992). Essentials of Organizational Behaviour, Third Edition, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

## **UNIT 13: ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT & CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning and Nature of Organizational Conflict
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  - 3.2 Various Types and Levels of Conflict
  - 3.3 Causes of Conflict
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  - 3.5 The Conflict Episode
  - 3.6 Conflict Management and Resolution
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The nature of work situation as far as organizations are concerned is inherently conflict-laden. Conflict is a fact of life and an essential element in all social interaction such as what obtains in work situation. Since a measure of conflict is unavoidable in all social systems, then it becomes very imperative for the management team of any organization to understand why and how various forms of conflict occur, and how they can be identified and employed to the advantage of the organization. In this study unit, therefore, you are taken the discussion of all aspects of conflict in the workplace.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and nature of organizational conflict
- Identify and discuss the various types and levels of conflict.
- Identify and describe the causes of conflict
- Identify and describe the variables aggravate conflict.
- Explain the meaning of conflict episode
- Identity and explain the strategies for conflict management and resolution

Identify and explain the appropriate situations to use conflict-handling orientations.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning and Nature of organizational Conflict**

##### **3.1.1 Meaning of organizational Conflict**

In simple terms, an organizational conflict has been viewed as a perceived condition that exists between parties in which one or more of the parties perceives goal incompatibility and some opportunity for interfering with the goal attainment of others.

As observed by Albanese (1998), there are three propositions about conflict. These propositions are that: conflict arises within a context of interdependence; conflict can occur or grow out of the similarities of the requirements of organization members; and conflict can emerge out of the differences in the requirements of organization members. Hence, managing conflict requires both the reduction and stimulation of the level of conflict.

Albanese (1998) posits that conflict is a dynamic process in nature. It also means that conflict involves an element of time sequence and a series of events rather than a discrete event that occurs at one moment.

Furthermore, according to Albanese (1998), the process models of behaviour place the parties in conflict in a temporal sequence of events. And behaviour of the parties in conflict is assumed to be directly influenced by preceding events and anticipation of subsequent events.

Knowing how to manage and cope with conflict, as observed by Albanese (1998), is a skill of increasing importance to managers or superior officers in any organization. This view is true because of a variety of forces, operating within and outside the organizations that make conflict to assume a more problematic dimension to managerial or administrative process.

Conflict is very often associated with hostility, defensive behaviour and protracted trouble leading to loss, suffering, damage and bad intentions. Therefore, conflict is usually perceived as a negative element that should be avoided as far as possible. Most informed people regard these assumptions as being incorrect, and they point out that conflict is a normal byproduct of all human interaction, which is why it is present in any work situation.

Conflict situations are common in all organizations, and such conflict is usually accompanied by certain types of behaviour. There is also conflict within the management group. Conflict does occur when there is a gap between the points of view of various individuals or parties, or when they have contradictory objectives, needs and ideas. Conflict may occur even when there is only a perception that such a gap or contradiction exists.

From this analysis, you can appreciate the fact that conflict is inevitable in all work settings. Basically, therefore, conflict can affect all organizational operations and by extension, all components of job performance; such as role perception, abilities and skills, motivation, and the situational context of organizational setting.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain the term organizational conflict.

a perceived condition that exists between parties in which one or more of the parties perceives goal incompatibility and some opportunity for interfering with the goal attainment of others.

#### **3.1.2 Nature of organizational Conflict**

A number of studies have shown that organizational conflict, correctly handled, can be a powerful, constructive force that invigorates a social entity and in fact revives relationships. This is a situation of functional conflict. For example, conflict can:

- i) be a source of energy, thus becoming a catalyst for change and adjustment
- ii) be used to maintain internal group identity and solidarity when groups are in conflict with one another-thus it can be instrumental in meeting the need “to belong”
- iii) stimulate the structuring or regulations of situations so that rules, procedures and process can be designed for the management of conflict.
- iv) sensitize people to different needs, perceptions and ideas, which results in better understanding of people.
- v) motivate parties to assess the power balance between them.
- vi) be used as the catalyst for a new, cooperative type of relationship, especially if the parties, in handling the conflict, can identify common ground
- vii) make the parties more sensitive and objective when seeking solutions to problems.
- viii) help to define the limits of acceptable behaviour in the future.
- ix) help to defuse accumulated frustration and tension, thereby creating a more positive climate.

Conflict can, of course, become dysfunctional (ie can damage relationship and organizations) when it is too intense (or even not intense enough), but such type of conflict can also be put to good use. As noted earlier, it can strengthen relationships and produce negotiated results that are beneficial to everybody. However, if the potential advantages or benefits of conflict are to be realized, the whole topic must be thoroughly understood and conflict must be managed professionally, not only during collective bargaining but on a day-to-day basis as an integral part of management.

### **3.2 Various Types and Levels of Conflict**

Functional conflict is that type of conflict, which actualizes the positive effect that is inherent in any conflict situation. There are others ways of categorizing different types of conflict without labeling them “dysfunctional” or “functional”. One of these methods focuses on the level or point in the system where conflict occurs.



### 1. Intrapersonal conflict.

It is a conflict that occurs within an individual (eg an employee cannot decide which trade union to join).

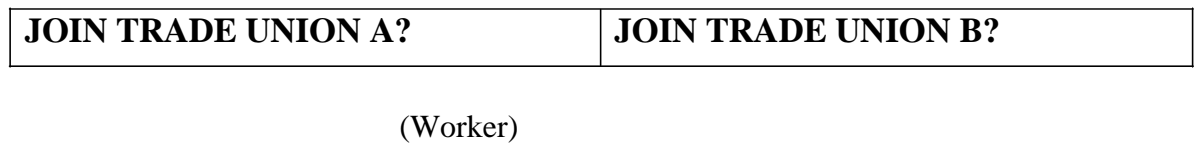


Figure 14.1 Intrapersonal Conflict

### 2. Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict is a conflict between two individuals (e.g., a supervisor treats a trade union representative unjustly because he or she belongs to a trade union which the supervisor thoroughly dislikes).It means that the workers are in conflict with each other.

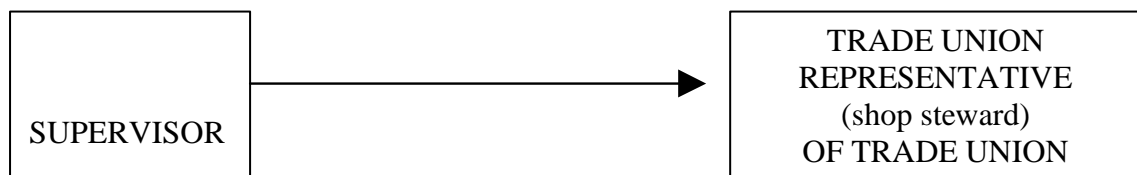


Fig 14.2 Interpersonal Conflict

### 3. Intragroup Conflict

Intragroup conflict is a conflict between members of the same group (e.g. differences of opinion arise between members and officials of the same trade union about how to approach negotiations or differences arise between members of the management team about wage negotiation zones).

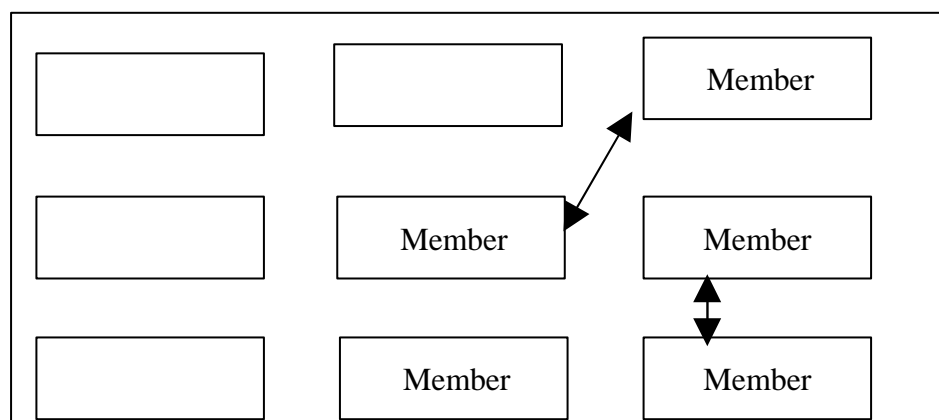


Fig. 14.3 Members of the same trade union conflict with one another

#### 4. Intergroup Conflict

Intergroup conflict is a conflict between various groups (e.g., differences of opinion between the management team as a group and trade union representatives as a group, or between various departments in an organization).

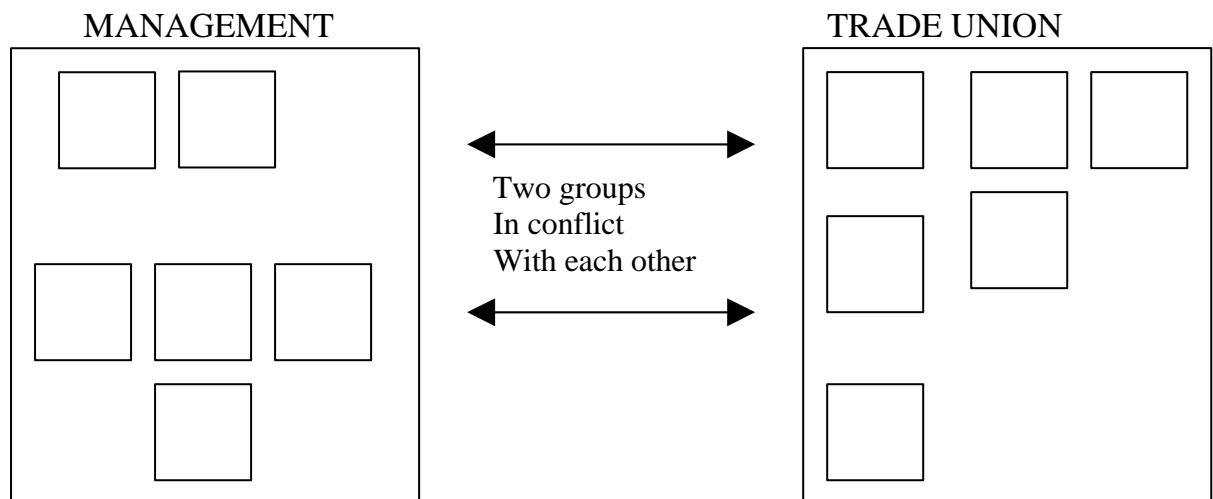


Figure 14.4 Intergroup conflict

#### 5. Suspected (or Latent) or Observed Conflict

This relates to the likely potential for conflict which is experienced by a person or group, but which has not been manifested in their behaviour. In other words, there is only “suspected” conflict, because no outward signs of it have yet appeared.

#### 6. Unmistakable or Actual conflict:

This type of conflict is usually observed between people or groups during the later phases of conflict episodes. It may even occur in the form of “abnormal”, defiant or aggressive behaviour.

#### 7. Spontaneous or natural conflict:

This type of conflict may arise from natural causes, such as the simple fact that people are different.

#### 8. Engineered or orchestrated conflict:

This occurs when one party deliberately creates conditions that promote conflict. For instance, if person A dislikes person B, A might tell tales about B to C, thereby causing conflict between C and B.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify and discuss various types of organizational conflict.

### **3.3 Causes of Conflict**

Conflict has many causes, including the following:

#### **1. Different objectives.**

This is more particularly the case where people seek to realize opposing objectives, but, at the same time, need one another (ie are interdependent). This is what happens in the case of employers and employees. Employees need jobs and employers need employees, but employees want more money and want to work shorter hours, whereas employers want to cut down on costs, including labour costs, and want employees to work longer hours, harder and more efficiently.

#### **2. Limited resources.**

This is closely related to the previous cause. Due to limited financial resources and time restrictions, managers typically want workers to put more into their jobs, whereas workers want to get more out of them. This leads to competition between the parties for scarce resources.

#### **3. Structural imbalance.**

This arises when parties perceive imbalances in a system; in other words, when for instance, a perception exists that some people have too much money and power, whereas others have none at all. This perception is part of the Marxist theory that criticizes capitalism because it creates an unfair structural imbalance between the owners of capital and the working class. Class conflict therefore arises, and “status” becomes an important variable. This emerges clearly from the multiple levels of organizational structures, where jobs are graded – some “higher” (in status) and some “lower”.

#### **4. Communication or information-related causes.**

These may include the following:

- i) A lack of communication.** The interdependence and integration of job-related actions requires effective communication between individuals and groups, something that does not always happen in practice.
- ii) Availability of information.** The conservation, retrieval and interpretation (or, rather, misinterpretation) of information may in itself be a cause of conflict.
- iii) An interruption in the flow of information.** Conflict also occurs when the flow of information is interrupted. This may mean that people do not know what is going on, or that they are kept in the dark. Information is sometimes deliberately blocked, or

incorrect information is furnished (disinformation). In addition, correct information may be misinterpreted because of a phenomenon known as psychological noise.

- iv) **Language differences.** This is evident where so many different languages are spoken. Managers often think that some workers are saying something negative, when the problem may simply be that they do not understand the workers' language. This a possible cause of conflict and disunity.
- v) **Problems with the media.** Information gathered by the media is not always accurate, which means that the "news" they disseminate may create further conflict. Sometimes, of course, the media are out to create sensation, in which case inaccurate or exaggerated information may increase the levels of conflict between the parties.

Other potential sources of conflict include; historical factors, ideological differences, low levels of trust, cultural differences, a flawed collective bargaining system, differences in education levels, and uncertainty and ambiguity.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Identify and explain the various causes of organizational conflict.

#### **3.4 Variables that Aggravate Organizational Conflict.**

While some factors may be the direct cause of conflict others may at times simply be variables that raise or lower conflict levels. For instance, an organization's labour relations history might influence current cooperation or conflict levels. Or, to put it more directly, when a trade union and management have had serious differences for some time, it is likely that conflict negotiations are going to take place in that organization, even after the historical issues have been resolved. The following are some of the factors that can aggravate or temper conflict.

##### **1. Mutual Recognition of Legitimacy**

An important factor in labour relations is the extent to which the two parties recognize the validity of the other's objectives. This recognition of legitimacy also means that the other party is accepted as a partner in dialogue. The entire collective bargaining process is based on acceptance of the other party's right to hold an opinion and to act in a certain way.

The negotiation process is therefore, based on the extent to which the parties recognize one another's viewpoints and right to a viewpoint, and accept one another's right to exist and to use certain methods of operation. In the absence of such recognition and acceptance, conflict levels will probably increase.

##### **2. Personal qualities of the leaders**

Obviously, the personalities of trade union leaders and management representatives may have a significant effect on how the relationship between the two groups develops. You will appreciate the fact that a highly authoritarian personality; that is a person who is

conservative, callous, power hungry and hostile to outsiders is more likely to create distrust and advocate a “win lose” approach to collective bargaining.

### **3. Professionalism and maturity of the parties**

People who have learnt from past conflict situations are usually better equipped to handle conflict than inexperienced persons. By the same token, parties who do not understand conflict and who are not trained to handle it may act incorrectly, thus causing the conflict to rise to dysfunctional levels.

### **4. Competing Goals**

In a sense this refers to a relationship between parties who compete for scarce resources. The division of economic benefits between labour and management self-evidently becomes a cause of conflict. Collective relationships could therefore be more harmonious if both parties use every opportunity to cooperate in matters of mutual interests.

Many of the issues faced by management and labour are power-related, and a power struggle may be dealt with in a number of ways. On the one hand, trade unions may see the entire collective bargaining process in the light of absolute power, in which case they will engage in a constant battle for supremacy, and any advantage which they gain will be seen as a loss to the employer. If, on the other hand, management and labour see their task as a matter of problem solving, both will try to reach a compromise when faced with conflict, or at least a solution that will require a minimum of sacrifice from both parties. In other words, conflict levels are raised or lowered according to whether the parties choose an integrative or divisive type of bargaining.

### **5. Superordinate Goals**

An issue closely related to the previous one is the matter of superordinate goals. It has been found that the most effective way of reducing excessively high intergroup levels of conflict to optimal levels is to lay down a series of superordinate objectives or goals. This places the emphasis on “us” rather than on the separate parties (labour and management).

The areas and modes in which hostility and frustration between management and labour (hence dysfunctional conflict levels) may be reduced could include the following:

- a. Training and education programmes that benefit both parties
- b. Joint inspection of the reduction of expertise and waste
- c. Promotion of occupational health and safety in the workplace
- d. Promotion of human dignity, regardless of race, gender, colour, etc.
- e. Measures to alleviate the housing needs of workers and their families
- f. The pursuit of a better –quality working life.

These are potential areas of common interest for which more integrative or cooperative bargaining styles are needed. In other words, it involves working towards a situation that

is to everybody's advantage. Basically there are some external factors which can cause conflicts in an organization labour relation in organizations cannot be viewed in isolation. Any study of labour relations must take into account the general social and political milieu in which management and labour find themselves.

The government promulgates and enacts labour legislations in accordance with which management and trade unions are required to function. Such legislation is designed to institutionalize conflict between these two parties. The IAP and the Industrial Court were for instance established as independent entities with the tasks of assisting management and trade unions to resolve the conflict between them.

It is important that we distinguish between pure conflict resolution and true conflict management (Bendix 2001). Conflict resolution refers to the achievement of an agreement between two parties who initially differed regarding a particular matter. However, it often happens that such an agreement is reached because one of the parties has more power than the other and the "weaker" party merely acquiesced. In this situation, one or more of the parties will consequently still be dissatisfied, despite the agreement that has been reached. To truly manage conflict, no duress must emanate from one of the parties, or from a third party. Both parties must be satisfied with the outcome and the potential for future conflict must be reduced. The overarching goal must therefore be to improve the relationship between the two parties.

### **3.5 The Conflict Episode**

The conflict episode, according to Albanese (1998), portrays that conflict is a series of stages: latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, conflict resolution, and conflict aftermath. Basically, therefore, a conflict episode is a gradual escalation of conflict through the series of stages. Figure 14.5 below portrays vividly the conflict episode.

#### **1. Latent Conflict**

It provides the necessary antecedent conditions for conflict in organizations. The basic types of conditions are competition for scarce resources, role conflict, competition for positions in the organization, and divergence in the goals of organization members.

#### **2. Perceived Conflict**

It is the conflict about which organization members are aware. It may, according to Albanese (1998), result from misunderstanding or lack of understanding and does not necessarily emerge out of latent conflict. Some latent conflicts are never perceived as conflicts; that is, they never reach the level of awareness.

#### **3. Felt Conflict**

Felt conflict is a situation whereby A is aware that B and A are in serious disagreement over some policy, but it may not make A tense or anxious, and it may have no effect whatsoever on A's affection towards B.

This happens most often in organizations whereby the head of marketing department is aware that the head of sales department is in serious disagreement with him over, say, a promotion policy. However, this situation may not make the former to be tense or make him to lose interpersonal affection for the latter in the organizational relationship.

#### **4. Manifest Conflict**

The manifest conflict takes the form of overt behaviour, including sabotage, open aggression, apathy, withdrawal, and minimal job performance. This situation can occur when a subordinate is in conflict with his superior officer such as his head of department. The subordinate as expected, may resort to withdrawal, apathy, and sabotage. The subordinate may even resort to open confrontation against the superior officer, which will affect his job performance.

#### **5. Conflict Resolution**

The conflict resolution or suppression can range from approaches that essentially avoid facing up to the conflict to approaches that confront the conflict in an attempt to resolve it so that all the parties achieve their goals.

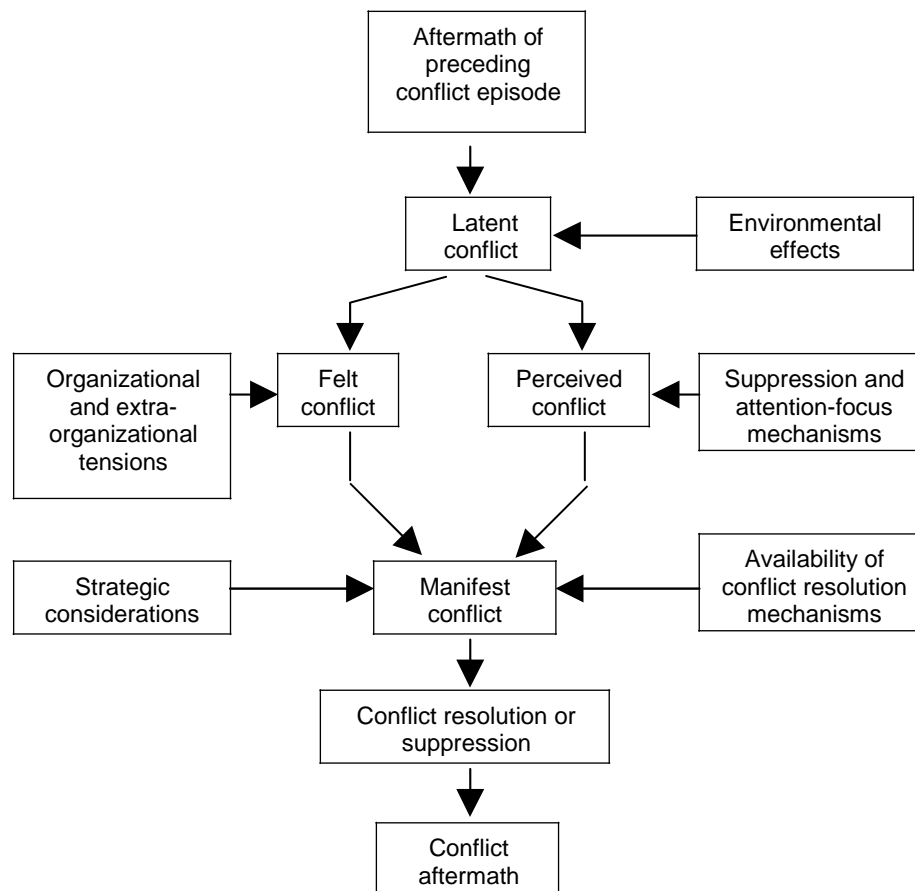
#### **6. Conflict Aftermath**

This represents the conditions that result from the resolution of conflict. According to Albanese (1998), if the conflict is genuinely resolved, it can lead to an improved relationship between organizational participants. On the other hand, if the conflict is inadequately resolved, it can provide the conditions for additional conflict.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Enumerate and discuss the various stages of conflict episode.

**Figure 14.5: The Conflict Episode**



Source: Albanese, R. (1998) *Managing: Toward Accountability for Performance*, p. 461.

### 3.6 Conflict Management and Resolution

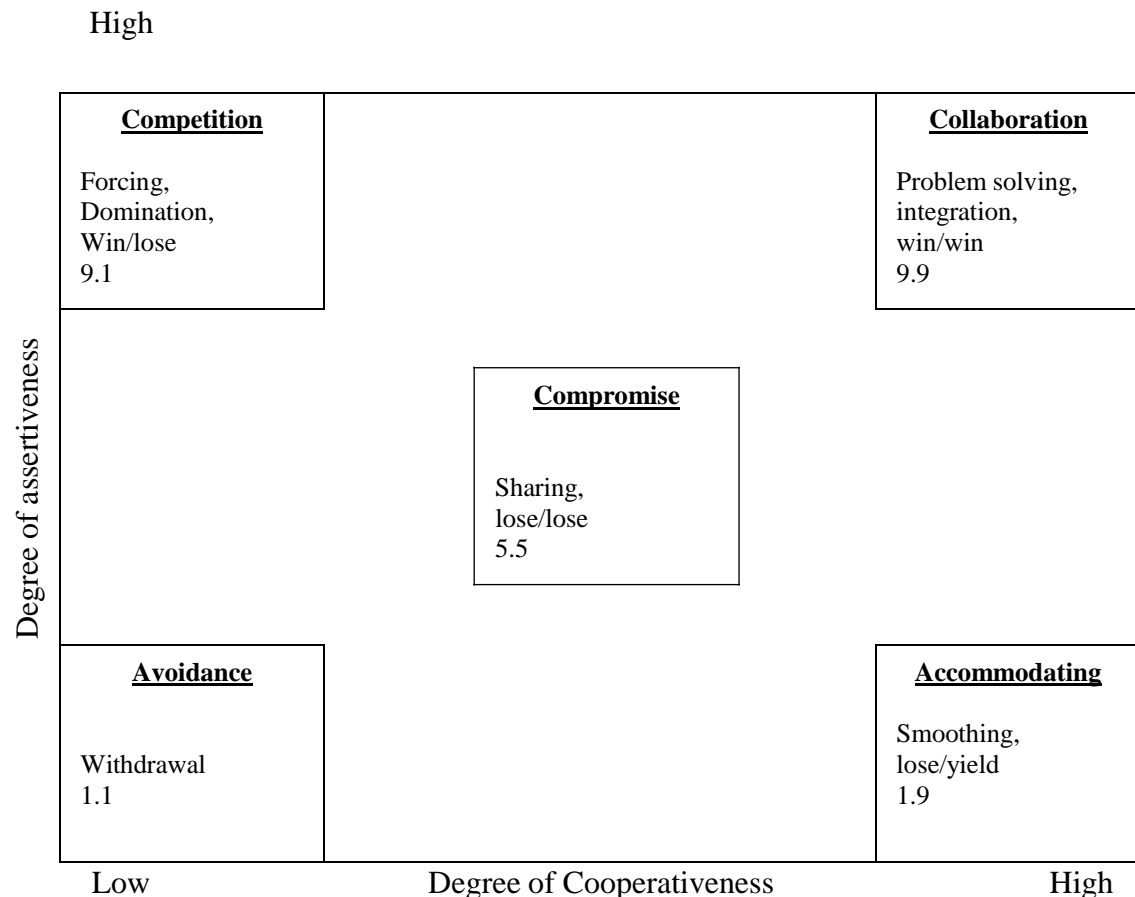
Mary Parker Follett, as quoted in Albanese (1998), proposed three main ways of dealing with conflict such as domination, compromise, and integration. Accordingly domination is regarded as a style used by someone operating from a position of power. This is a style regarded these days as a “win-lose style”. On the other hand, integration style is the “win-win” style of managing conflict. The style involves the use of creative, problem-solving approach to conflict management. Compromise indicates creating a situation for the parties in conflict to partake in share of some winning and losing.

In modern times there is a two-dimensional approach to the management of organizational conflict. In essence, therefore, the approach is viewed in terms of a two dimensional graph. One axis of the graph represents a person’s degree of concern for his or her own interest or goals. The other axis of the graph represents the person’s degree of concern for the other person’s interest or goals. This is a simplistic view of the modern approach to the management of organizational conflict because, as you are aware, the parties to a conflict, in addition to individuals, can be groups, departments, or other social groupings (Albanese, 1998).



The graph of Figure 14.6 below serves the basis for the discussion of the management of organizational conflict in terms of the modern approaches to conflict resolution.

**Figure 14.6: Graph of Conflict-Management Styles**



Source: Albanese, R. (1998) Managing: Toward Accountability for Performance, p.463.

The Y-axis of the graph represents the degree to which the person in conflict asserts his or her own goals. The X-axis represents the degree to which the person co-operates with the other person. There are five basic conflict-management styles as portrayed in Fig. 14.2. These styles are competition, avoidance, accommodating, compromise and collaboration, and they are discussed below.

### 3.6.1 Competition

The approach involves high assertiveness and low on cooperativeness. The style is essentially power oriented and approaches conflict in terms of a win-lose strategy. On the negative side, according to Albanese (1998), a competitor may suppress, intimidate, or coerce the other parties to a conflict. Hence it may result in making others to be afraid to communicate with the superior officer who uses this style.

The competing style could prevent the real causes of a conflict from being noticed, and therefore, the style tends to generally create forces which aggravate the conflict and does little to bring about innovative, constructive solutions acceptable to all the parties involved in the conflict.

On the positive side according to Albanese (1998), the style is useful in many circumstances such as: when you know you are right on a conflict issue; as a protection against those use a competitive style against you; when important but unpopular courses of action must be taken; and when a quick, decisive action must be taken.

The style therefore, is frequently used by managers because of the fact that they are in a position of formal authority and they often are able to assert their views and impose them on their subordinates. Nevertheless, such assertive behaviour may not be as effective in the long run when compared with more cooperative type of behaviour from the managers.

### **3.6.2 Avoidance**

Albanese (1998) posits that an avoiding style may reflect the failure to address important issues and a tendency to remain neutral when there is a need to take a position and therefore, of no value as a model of managing a conflict. An avoidance approach may also involve the exhibition of detachment from conflict and a readiness to comply or conform that indicates an indifference position.

The style is useful in circumstances when: a conflict situation has relatively minor implications for managerial effectiveness; there appears to be little chance for a person to win; and the benefits of confronting a conflict situation are overshadowed by the potential damage of confrontation. The avoidance style is also appropriate when it is imperative to reduce tensions, to regain perspective, and to generate additional information.

### **3.6.3 Accommodating**

The accommodating style portrays low position on assertiveness and high consideration for cooperativeness. Accordingly, Albanese (1998) posits that a person who uses an accommodating style as the primary approach to conflict management may be showing too little concern for his personal goals. This can lead to loss of influence and recognition. Nevertheless, the style may be employed for gaining acceptance and affiliation.

The inherent snag in the style is the fact that conflicts can be resolved without each party to the conflict presenting their views in a force manner. An accommodating person may appear to be agreeable cooperative, but on a subtle posture. Nevertheless, underling the accommodating style may be a failure to realize that interpersonal relations can be strengthened by a process of working through conflicts.

The accommodating style is useful when: the issue in conflict is more important to the other person; one of the other style is more disadvantageous than the accommodating style; maintaining harmony is important; it is advantageous to allow the other person to experience winning; and an accommodating style on one issue may make the person more receptive on another, more important issue.

#### **3.6.4 Accommodating**

The style involves considering expediency above principle as regards seeking short-term solutions at the expense of long-term objectives. The approach enables each party in conflict to share in some degree of winning and losing position.

Albanese (1998) posits that if the compromise position is based on a genuine consideration for reaching a solution to a conflict, then the style can be a variant of the win-win strategy. On the other hand, if it serves to prevent an airing of the real issues in a conflict, and it tends to undermine trust between the parties in conflict, then the approach more closely approximates to a lose-lose strategy.

The compromise style is a common practical approach to conflict management it often conforms to the realities of situations in organizational setting. This becomes imperative when a conflict is not important enough to warrant the time and “psychological investment” in one of the more assertive modes of conflict management. Furthermore, compromise may serve as the only viable way of handling a conflict situation in which two equally strong and persuasive parties are interested in working out a solution to the conflict. It is also useful when the time allowed for the resolution of a conflict does not favour the consideration of any other style.

#### **3.6.5 Collaboration**

The collaborative approach involves the position of high assertiveness and high cooperativeness in terms of personal goals and the goals of others respectively. Hence the style can only be used when the parties to a conflict are ready to consider it as problem-solving situation.

Albanese (1998) observes that a problem-solving approach requires the following conditions.

1. There is an attempt to depersonalize the conflict in the sense that the parties to the conflict channel their energies to solving the problem rather than defeating each other.
2. The goals, opinions, attitudes, and feelings of all parties to the conflict are seen as legitimate and acceptable concerns, and all the parties are seen as playing a constructive role.
3. The parties realize that a conflict issue can make a constructive contribution to the quality of human relationship[s] if the issue is worked through in a supportive and trusting climate in which opinions, information, and differences are freely aired and openly shared.

The collaborative style to conflict management, based on the above requirements is not an easy approach because of the fact people who engage in conflict may be greatly emotionally involved. Hence it may be difficult for the parties involved to treat the conflict as a problem-solving situation;; which is simply asking the parties for a complete rethinking of all elements of the conflict situation.

The general view is that the collaborative style should be used to manage conflict when:

1. The source of the conflict is rooted in semantic misunderstandings because the style may allow doubts and misconceptions to surface;
2. The issues involved are very important to both parties, thus warranting the time and effort required in using it;
3. The issues in conflict cannot be compromise;
4. They have implications for long-term benefits to all parties involved in conflict;
5. The parties involved are mutually dependent, where the use of creative resources by the parties involved is important. The collaborative style should be used in managing conflict with a lot of caution due to the following reasons:
8. The conflict issue may not be important enough to justify the time and effort required;
9. The parties involved may lack the necessary problem-solving skills;
10. The conditions of support, trust, and open sharing of information may be absent;
11. The parties involved may lack power parity, thus making candid and creative interaction difficult; and
12. The conflict issue may be such that neither party can cooperate with the other, for instance, a conflict arising out of differences in values that are “non-negotiable”.

Hence the collaborative style to conflict management is not always appropriate because it is not the “one best way” to resolve and manage conflict. The style can only be used when all the parties share appropriate cooperative values such as openness, trust, sharing, and mutual respect and support for each other.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The foregoing analysis has enabled you to appreciate the fact that organizational conflict is a series of stages, which involve latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, conflict resolution, and conflict aftermath, a process called conflict episode; a gradual escalation of conflict through the series of stages. From the preceding study unit, you observe that organizational conflict cannot be avoided or wished away by the management of any organization. Therefore, it is imperative that you should understand the nature of the available strategies through which organizational conflict can be managed and resolved by the management.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This study unit has been used to discuss

Meaning and nature of organizational conflict

Types, Levels and Causes of Conflict

Variables that Aggravate Organizational conflict

Conflict Episode and Conflict Management

In the next study unit, you will be taken through organizational change and development.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Enumerate and discuss the various strategies through which organizational conflict can be managed and resolved.

Answers to Self Assessment Exercise

1. Organizational conflict refers to a perceived condition that exists between parties in which one or more of the parties perceives goal incompatibility and some opportunity for interfering with the goal attainment of others.

2. Conflict has many causes, including the following:

- i. Different objectives:- more particularly the case where people seek to realize opposing objectives, but, at the same time, need one another
- ii. Limited resources:- arises because managers typically want high level of performance from workers whereas workers want to get more out of them; resulting to competition between the parties for scarce resources.
- iii. Structural imbalance:- arises when a perception exists that some people have too much money and power, whereas others have none at all.
- iv. Communication or information-related causes include lack of communication, availability of information, an interruption in the flow of information, language differences, and problems with the media.

Others include historical factors, ideological differences, low levels of trust, cultural differences, a flawed collective bargaining system, differences in education levels, and uncertainty and ambiguity.

3. The conflict episode goes through a series of stages such as:

- i. Latent Conflict:- provides the necessary antecedent conditions for conflict in organizations such as competition for resources, role conflict, competition for positions, and divergence in members' goals.
- ii. Perceived Conflict:- the conflict about which organization members are aware such as misunderstanding or lack of understanding.
- iii. Felt Conflict:- a situation whereby A is aware that B and A are in serious disagreement over some policy, but it may not make A tense or anxious.
- iv. Manifest Conflict:- takes the nature of overt behaviour, including sabotage, open aggression, apathy, withdrawal, and minimal job performance. This situation can occur when a subordinate is in conflict with his superior officer.
- v. Conflict Resolution:- this can range from approaches that essentially avoid facing up to the conflict to approaches that confront the conflict in an attempt to resolve it so that all the parties achieve their goals.

- vi. Conflict Aftermath:- this represents the conditions that result from the resolution of conflict, which can lead to an improved relationship between organizational participants if genuinely resolved.

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## **UNIT 14      ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Nature of Organizational Change
  - 3.2 Planned Organisational Change
    - 3.2.1 Behaviour modification
    - 3.2.2 S Systems Approach to Organisational Change
  - 3.3 Forces Shaping Change in Organizations
  - 3.4 Resistance To Change
    - 3.4.1 Individual Resistance
    - 3.4.2 Organisational Resistance
  - 3.5 The Management of Organistional Change
  - 3.6 Minimizing Problems of Change
  - 3.7 Organizational Development
    - 3.7.1 Meaning of Organisational Development
    - 3.7.2 Implementation of Organization Development
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

An organisation exists and operates within the broader external environment. Therefore, the structure and functioning of the organisation must reflect the nature of the environment in which it is operating. Environmental variables such as uncertain economic conditions, fierce world competition, the level of government intervention, scarcity of natural resources and rapid developments in new technology create an increasingly volatile environment. Hence, in order to help ensure its survival and future success the organisation must be readily adaptable to the external demands placed upon it. This means that the organisation must expect and be responsive to change. This study unit is used to discuss the nature of organizational change and by extension, organizational development.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the nature of organizational change
- Identify and discuss approaches to planned organizational change
- Mention and explain various forces that shape organizational change
- Discuss resistance to change in organization
- Discuss how problems of change can be minimized.
- Discuss management of organizational change and development.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Nature of Organizational Change

Organizational change can originate within the organisation itself but the main pressure of change is from external forces. Much of this change is part of a natural process of organizational life and operations. For example, change can occur in operational variables as material resources such as buildings, equipment or machinery deteriorate or lose efficiency; or as human resources get older, or as skills and abilities become outdated.

You are aware that these changes can be mitigated and managed through careful planning; for example, regular repairs and maintenance; choice of introducing new technology or methods of work; effective human resource planning to prevent a large number of staff retiring at the same time; management succession planning; training and staff development.

As succinctly held by Mullins (2000), change is a pervasive influence. Change is an inescapable part of both social and organisational life. Due to its pervasive nature, change at anyone level is interrelated with changes at other levels. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the management team of any organization focus attention on the management of organisational change.

Organisational change can be initiated deliberately by managers. Such organizational changes can evolve slowly within a department. It can also be imposed by specific changes in policy or procedures, or it can arise through external pressures. Change can affect all aspects of the operation and functioning of the organisation.

#### 3.2 Planned Organisational Change

According to Mullins (2000), most planned organisational change is triggered by the need to respond to new challenges or opportunities presented by the external environment, or in anticipation of the need to cope with potential future problems; for example, intended government legislation, a new product development by a major competitor or further technological advances. Planned change represents an intentional attempt to improve, in some important way, the operational effectiveness of the organisation.

The basic underlying objectives can be seen in general terms as: modifying the behavioural patterns of members of the organisation; and improving the ability of the organisation to cope with changes in its environment.

##### 3.2.1 Behaviour Modification

A programme of planned change and improved performance developed by Lewin (1951) involves the management of a three-phase process of behaviour modification:

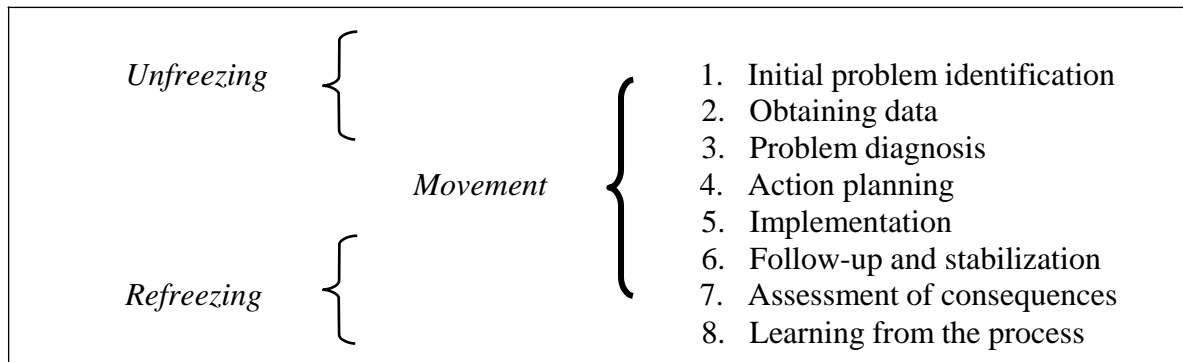
**unfreezing** – reducing those forces which maintain behaviour in its present form, recognition of the need for change and improvement to occur;

**movement** – development of new attitudes or behaviour and the implementation of the change;



**refreezing** – stabilising change at the new level of reinforcement through supporting mechanisms, for example policies, structure or norms.

**Fig. 14.1: Stages in a Planned-Change Effort**



Source: Mullins, L. J. (2000). Management and Organizational Behaviour, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 730.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Mention and explain the stages involved in planned organizational Change.

### 3.2.2 S Systems Approach to Organisational Change

Mullins (2000) posits that one strategy of change is through the adoption of a systems approach. The organisation can be viewed as a system and analysed in terms of its major interrelated variables (sub-systems). The variables can be identified in a number of ways including: task, technology, structure, people and management.

According to Mullins (2000), in practice, change in any one variable is likely to involve changes in the other variables. The implementation of change can be approached, therefore, in terms of a choice of strategies relating to modifications of the task, the technology, the structure, the people or the management. Applying a systems approach managers understanding the interrelationships among all major variables (subsystem) of the organisation.

Wilson (1987) opines that overlooking the systems nature of organisations can result in the failure of even well-conceived change programmes. Wilson observes that no unit is an island, and changes planned for one part of an organisation invariably have knock-on effects on the other parts. According to Wilson, it is crucial in planning any changes to be aware of the likely impact of those changes on other parts of the organisation. If a change has an unanticipated effect on a unit, a considerable amount of resistance to the change will develop. It is better to consider the effects.

### 3.3 Forces Shaping Change in Organizations

According to Hellreigal (1987), there are a wide range of forces acting upon organisations and which make the need for change inevitable. These forces of change can be grouped under five broad headings: changing technology, knowledge explosion, rapid product obsolescence, changing nature of the workforce, and quality of working life. These forces are discussed below.

#### **i. Changing technology.**

The rate of technological change is greater now than at any time in the past for example, advances in information technology, automation and robotics.

#### **ii. Knowledge explosion.**

The amount of knowledge is increasing continually; for example, the number of people in some form of education, the number of scientific journals and new books. With this knowledge explosion, knowledge in a particular field quickly becomes outdated or obsolete.

#### **iii. Rapid product obsolescence.**

Changes in consumer preferences, together with rapidly changing technology, have shortened the life-cycle of many products and services. Many products and services available today did not exist a few years ago and many do not remain available for long.

#### **iv. Changing nature of the workforce.**

This includes changes in the composition of the working population, broader educational opportunities, part-time working, changes in family lifestyles, and equal opportunities.

#### **v) Quality of working life**

Increased importance attached to the quality of working life has drawn attention to the satisfaction of people's needs and expectations at work; and to such factors as frustration and alienation, job design and work organisation, and styles of managerial behaviour. It has also drawn attention to relationships between the quality of working life and employee commitment, levels of work performance and productivity.

Stewart (1991) advances other factors that can cause organizational change. He describes how changes in organisations affect the kinds of jobs management that managers have to do and the nature of their lives and careers. He elaborates on these changes as follows:

**The changing nature of business** – the growth of service industries and the decline of manufacturing industries; more frequent changes in ownership through acquisition by another company including more foreign-controlled companies; public sector organisations affected by privatisation; the increasing globalisation of international companies.

**Changes in the composition of the workforce** – a higher proportion of staff employed for their knowledge rather than their brawn or skill; a declining number of school-leavers and an increasing number of older workers; the employment of more women; an increasing number of part-time members of (staff including better opportunities for women to return to work.

**Changes within organisations** – many organisations becoming smaller although some are larger because of acquisitions; greater flexibility in the use of labour including distance working; changing relationships with staff including those engaged as sub-contractors, self-employed or agency temporaries; greater entrepreneurial activity in looking for new products and business opportunities.

As a result of these changes, Stewart suggests that older managers now work for very different kinds of organisations from those in which they first became managers. Although hierarchies of authority will continue to exist in large organisations they will be shorter and there will be wider networking. There will be a smaller number of middle managers but with more responsible roles. Managers' jobs are more complex and demanding, and managers' careers are much less predictable. But managers now have a greater choice in their work and careers.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

List and discuss the major forces that can trigger organizational change.

### **3.4 Resistance To Change**

According to Stewart (1991), despite the potential positive outcomes, change is often resisted at both the individual and the organisational level. Resistance to change, or the thought of the implications of the change appears to be a common phenomenon. People are naturally wary of change. 'Among many there is an uneasy mood – a suspicion that change-is out of control.

Resistance to change can take many forms and it is often difficult to pinpoint the exact reasons for the resistance. The forces against change in work organisations include: ignoring the needs and expectations of members when members have insufficient information about the nature of the change; or if they do not perceive the need for change. Fears may be expressed over such matters as employment levels and job security, de-skilling of work, loss of job satisfaction, wage rate differentials, changes to social structures and working conditions, loss of individual control over work, and greater management control.

#### **3.4.1 Individual Resistance**

Mullins (2000) identifies some common reasons for individual resistance to change within organisations include the following:

**Selective perception.** People's own interpretation of stimuli presents a unique picture or image of the 'real' world and can result in selective perception. This can lead to a biased view of a particular situation, which fits most comfortably into a person's own perception of reality, and can cause resistance to change. For example, trade unionists may have a stereotyped view of management as untrustworthy and therefore oppose any management change however well founded might have been the intention. Managers exposed to different theories or ideas may tend to categorise these as either:

those they already practised and have no need to worry about or those that are of practical value and which can be discarded are of no concern to them.

**Habit.** People tend to respond to situations in an established and accustomed manner. Habits may serve as a means of comfort and security, and as a guide for easy decision-making. Proposed changes to habits, especially if the habits are well established and require little effort, may well be resisted. However, If there is a clearly perceived advantage, for example a reduction in working hour without loss of pay, there is likely to be less, if any, resistance to the change, although some people may, because of habit, still find it difficult to adjust to the new times.

**Inconvenience or loss of freedom.** If the change is seen as likely to prove inconvenient, make life more difficult, reduce freedom of action or result in increased control, there will be resistance.

**Economic implications.** People are likely to resist change which is perceived as reducing either directly or indirectly their pay or other rewards, requiring an increase in work for the same level of pay or acting as a threat to their job security. People tend to have established patterns of working and a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

**Security in the past.** There is a tendency for some people to find a sense of security in the past. In times of frustration or difficulty, or when faced with new or unfamiliar ideas or methods, people may reflect on the past. There is a wish to retain old and comfortable ways. For example, in bureaucratic organisations, officials often tend to place faith in well-established ('tried and trusted') procedures and cling to these as giving a feeling of security.

**Fear of the unknown.** Changes which confront people with the unknown tend to cause anxiety or fear. Many major changes in a work organisation present a degree of uncertainty; for example, the introduction of new technology or methods of working. A person may resist promotion because of uncertainty over changes in responsibilities or the increased social demands of the higher position.

### 3.4.2 Organisational Resistance

Mullins (2000) observed that although organisations have to adapt to their environment, they tend to feel comfortable operating within the structure, policies and procedures which have been formulated to deal with a range of present situations. To ensure operational effectiveness, organisations often set up defences against change and prefer to concentrate on the routine things they perform well.

Some of the main reasons for organisational resistance against change are as follows:

**Maintaining stability.** Organisations; especially large-scale ones, pay much attention to maintaining stability and predictability. The need for formal organisation structure and the division of work, narrow definitions of assigned duties and responsibilities, established rules, procedures and methods of work, can result in resistance to change.

**Investment in resources.** Change often requires large resources which may already be committed to investments in other areas or strategies. Assets such as buildings, technology, equipment and people cannot easily be altered. For example, a car manufacturer may not find it easy to change to a socio-technical approach and the use of autonomous work groups because it cannot afford the cost of a new purpose-built plant and specialised equipment.

**Past contracts or agreements.** Organisations enter into contracts or agreements with other parties, such as the government, other organisations, trade unions, suppliers and customers. These contracts and agreements can limit changes in behaviour; for example, organisations operating under a special licence or permit, or a fixed-price contract to supply goods/services to a government agency. Another example might be an agreement with trade unions which limits the opportunity to introduce compulsory redundancies, or the introduction of certain new technology or working practices.

**Threats to power or influence.** Change may be seen as a threat to the power or influence of certain groups within the organisation, such as their control over decisions, resources or information. For example, managers may resist the introduction of quality circles or worker-directors because they set this as increasing the role and influence of non-managerial staff, and a threat to the power in their own positions. Where a group of people have, over a period of time, established what they perceive as their 'territorial rights', they are likely to resist change.

### **3.5 Management of Organisational Change**

You have seen from the preceding discussion that people tend to be resistant to change. It is important, therefore, for management to adopt a clearly defined strategy for the initiation of change because the successful management of change is an increasingly important managerial responsibility.

According to Burnes (1992), new ideas and innovations should not be perceived as threats by members of the organisation. Therefore, the efforts made by management to maintain the balance of the socio-technical system will influence people's attitudes, the behaviour of individuals and groups, and thereby the level of organisational performance and effectiveness.

#### **1. Understanding of Human Behaviour**

The effective management of change must be based on a clear understanding of human behaviour at work. Most people are not detached from their work but experience a range of emotional involvements through their membership of the organisation. People may also be concerned about the effects of change including the possible loss of financial needs, security, status or self-esteem. Organisational change can result in a feeling of a lack of identity, a lack of involvement, a lack of direction and a lack of affection (Burnes, 1992).

Most people feel threatened and disoriented by the challenge of change. Emotions such as uncertainty, frustration or fear are common reactions. It is understandable therefore that people often adopt a defensive and negative attitude, and demonstrate resistance to change.

Elliott (1990) explains change as a complex, psychological event. The power of change needs to be respected and managed. Managing change places emphasis on employee (and customer) needs as the highest priority. To be successful, organisations need a dedicated workforce and this involves the effective management of change. But not everyone reacts to change in the same way. Change impacts each person differently and management must accept the individual nature of change.

According to Elliott (1990), senior managers responsible for initiating a restructuring may be filled with great expectations. They do not see the sense of resistance and find it hard to accept the negative impact of change. But the change may mean inconvenience, uncertainty and loss for other people. Loss and grief are just as normal reactions to change as are excitement and anticipation.

## **2. Style of managerial behaviour**

Mullins (2000) observes that one of the most important factors in the successful implementation of organisational change is the style of managerial behaviour. In certain situations, and with certain members of staff, it may be necessary for management to make use of hierarchical authority and to attempt to impose change through a coercive, autocratic style of behaviour. Some members may actually prefer, and respond better, to a directed and controlled style of management.

In most cases, however, the introduction of change is more likely to be effective with a participative style of managerial behaviour. If staff are kept fully informed of proposals, are encouraged to adopt a positive attitude and have personal involvement in the implementation of the change, there is a greater likelihood of their acceptance of the change.

According to Hersey (1988), with the participative change cycle, a significant advantage is that once the change is accepted it tends to be long lasting. Since everyone has been involved in the development of the change, each person tends to be more highly committed to its implementation. The disadvantage of participative change is that it tends to be slow and evolutionary; it may take years to implement a significant change. An advantage of directive change, on the other hand, is speed. Using position power, leaders can often impose change immediately. A disadvantage of this change strategy is that it tends to be volatile. It can be maintained only as long as the leader has position power to make it stick. It often results in animosity, hostility, and, in some cases, overt and covert behavior to undermine and overthrow.

## **3.6 Minimizing Problems of Change**

According to Mullins (2000), activities managed on the basis of technical efficiency alone are unlikely to lead to optimum improvement in organisational performance. A major source of resistance to change arises from the need of organisations to adapt to new technological developments.

The following principles on how to minimise the problems of change are applicable to management of change arising from other factors.

- i) An important priority is to create an environment of trust and shared commitment, and to involve staff in decisions and actions which affect them.**

There is a considerable body of research and experience which demonstrates clearly the positive advantages to be gained from participation. Government is desirous of participation which implores all companies to revise annually the steps taken to introduce, maintain or develop arrangements of employee consultation and involvement, information sharing, employee share schemes and related matters. It is important to remember, however, that the implications of information technology will need to be faced even by small organisations.

- ii) There should be full and genuine participation of all staff concerned as early as possible, preferably well before the actual introduction of new equipment or systems.**

Information about proposed change, its implications and potential benefits should be communicated clearly to all interested parties. Staff should be actively encouraged to contribute their own ideas, suggestions and experiences, and to voice openly their worries or concerns. Managers should discuss problems directly with staff and handle any foreseen difficulties in working practices or relationships by attempting to find solutions agreed with them. The use of working parties, liaison committees, steering groups and joint consultation may assist discussion and participation, and help to maintain the momentum of the change process.

- iii) Team management, a co-operative spirit among staff and unions and a genuine feeling of shared involvement will help create a greater willingness to accept change.**

A participative style of managerial behaviour which encourages supportive relationships between superiors and subordinates, and group methods of organisation, decision-making and supervision, are more likely to lead to a sustained improvement in work performance. A system of Management by Objectives (MBO) may allow staff to accept greater responsibility and to make a higher level of personal contribution. Participation is inherent if MBO is to work well, and there is an assumption that most people will direct and control themselves willingly if they share in the setting of their objectives.

- iv) As part of the pre-planning for new technology there should be a carefully designed 'personnel management action programme'.**

The development of information technology together with the growth of service organisations may, in the longer term, lead to the creation of new jobs. However, it must be recognised that the extra efficiency of new technology and automation can result in the more immediate consequence of job losses. The action programme should be directed to a review of: recruitment and selection; natural wastage of staff; potential for training, retraining and the development of new skills; and other strategies to reduce the possible level of redundancies or other harmful effects on staff.

Where appropriate, arrangements for a shorter working week, and redeployment of staff with full financial support, should be developed in full consultation with those concerned. If job losses are totally unavoidable, there should be a fair and equitable redundancy

scheme and provision for early retirement with protected pension rights. Every possible financial and other support should be given in assisting staff to find suitable alternative employment.

- v) The introduction of incentive payment schemes may help-in motivating staff by an equitable allocation of savings which results in new technology and more efficient methods of work.**

Incentive schemes may be on an individual basis, with bonuses payable to each member of staff according to effort and performance; or on a group basis, where bonus is paid to staff in relation to the performance of the group as a whole. An alternative system is 'measured day work' Staff receive a regular, guaranteed rate of pay in return for an agreed quantity and quality of work based on the capabilities of new equipment and systems. Management may also be able to negotiate a productivity bargain with unions. By accepting changes in work methods and practices, staff share in the economic benefits gained from the improved efficiency of information technology and automated systems.

- vi) Changes to the work organisation must maintain the balance of the socio-technical system.**

Increased technology and automation may result in jobs becoming more repetitive and boring, and providing only a limited challenge and satisfaction to staff. It is important, therefore, to attempt to improve the quality of work, to remove frustration and stress from jobs, and to make them more responsible and interesting. Actual working arrangements rely heavily on the informal organisation and effective teamwork. Groups and teams are a major feature of organizational life and can have a significant influence on the successful implementation of change. New working practices should take account of how best to satisfy people's needs and expectations at work through the practical application of behavioural science.

- vii) Careful attention should be given to job design, methods of work organisation, the development of cohesive groups, and relationships between the nature and content of jobs and their task functions.**

The introduction of new technology has also highlighted the need to give attention to the wider organisational context including the design of technology itself, broader approaches to improved job design, employee involvement and empowerment, the development of skills and problem-solving capacity, and the effective management of change.

### **3.7 The Nature of Organisational Development**

#### **3.7.1 Meaning of Organisational Development**

According to Mullins (2000), organisation development (OD) is concerned with the diagnosis of organisational health and performance, and adaptability to change. In the opinion of French and Bell (1995), organisation development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organisation's visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organisation culture – with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations – utilising the consultant-facilitator



role and the theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including action research.

In a very general sense, organizational development is concerned attempts to improve the overall performance and effectiveness of an organisation. Essentially, it is an applied behavioural science approach to planned change and development of an organization (Mullins, 2000).

### **3.7.2 Implementation of Organization Development**

According to Mullins (2000), in order to bring about effective change, organizational development makes use of a number of approaches – often referred to as intervention strategies -including: survey research and feedback, T -groups, team building and grid training.

The process involves the following stages:

**Survey research and feedback** involves the use of questionnaire survey help determine the attitudes of members to the functioning of the organisation. Results of the surveys are fed back to top management and then to workers for interpretation and analysis. Group members participate in discussion on the implications of the information, the diagnosis of problems and the development of action plans to help overcome the problems identified.

**T -groups (or sensitivity training)** involves small, unstructured, face-to-face groupings who meet without a planned agenda or set activities. Training intended to concentrate on process rather than content: that is, on the level of communication rather than the informational value of communication. With the guidance of the trainers, participants' patterns of behaviour on the focus of attention for the group. The objectives are usually to increase participants' sensitivity to the emotional reactions in themselves and other diagnostic ability, and their behavioural flexibility and effectiveness.

**Team building** is the process of diagnosing task procedures and particular human interaction within a work group. The basic objective is to improve the overall performance of the organisation through improvements in the cohesiveness of teams. Attention is focused on work procedures and interrelationships, and especially the role of the leader in relation to other members of the group.

**Grid training** is a development from the Blake and Mouton Management approach. An implied goal of grid training is changes are aimed at attaining a 9,9 orientation, maximum concerning production and people, on the Grid.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have discussed in this study unit that organisational change can be initiated deliberately by managers. Such organizational changes can be imposed by specific changes in policy or procedures, or it can arise through external pressures. Change can affect all aspects of the operation and functioning of the organisation. In the process of

organisational change, there is bound to be some resistance from the organizational members. It is important, therefore, for management to adopt a clearly defined strategy for the initiation of change because the successful management of change is an increasingly important managerial responsibility.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This study unit has been used to discuss:

- the nature of organizational change approaches
- to planned organizational change various forces
- that shape organizational change resistance to
- change in organization
- how problems of change can be minimized.
- management of organizational change and development.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

What are the various ways through which problems of change can be minimized.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. The stages involved in a programme of planned organizational change are as follows:

- i) unfreezing – reducing those forces which maintain behaviour in its present form, recognition of the need for change and improvement to occur;
- ii) movement – development of new attitudes or behaviour and the implementation of the change;
- iii) refreezing – stabilising change at the new level of reinforcement through supporting mechanisms, for example policies, structure or norms.

2. Forces that can trigger change in organization are as follows:

i. Changing technology.

The technological changes such advances in information technology, automation and robotics.

ii. Knowledge explosion.

The amount of knowledge is increasing continually; in areas such as the number of people in some form of education, the number of scientific journals and new books.

iii. Rapid product obsolescence.

Changes in consumer preferences coupled with rapidly changing technology have shortened the life-cycle of many products and services.

iv. Changing nature of the workforce.

This results from changes in the composition of the working population, broader educational opportunities, part-time working, changes in family lifestyles, and equal opportunities.

v) Quality of working life

Increased importance is attached to the quality of working life resulting in attention to satisfaction of people's needs and expectations at work.

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## **FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 15: CASE STUDY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Case Study
  - 3.2 Objectives of Case Study
  - 3.3 Preliminary Considerations in Case Analysis
  - 3.4 Principles for Analysis of a Case Material
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Case studies constitute an integral aspect of the study of organizational behaviour. Case studies are in varied forms and may be presented in a number of different ways. They range from: a brief account of events in organization, which may be actual, contrived or a combination of both; cases based on hypothetical situations; to complex and multi-dimensional cases portraying the descriptive account of actual situations in real organizations.

All the preceding study has been used to discuss the theoretical underpinnings of organizational behaviour. The case study in this unit, therefore, is necessary to introduce you to the practical situations which will require you to make use of the concepts and ideas to which you have been exposed in such study units.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept of case study
- mention and discuss the objectives of case study
- identify and explain the necessary considerations in case analysis
- list and analyse the principles of case analysis.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Case Study**

According to Hill and Jones (2004), case study presents an account of what happened to business over a number of years. Furthermore, it chronicles the events that managers have to deal with in the course of steering the affairs of the organization. In the same vein, Mullins (2000), posits that case study is basically problem solving analysis and decision-

making exercise. Therefore, a case study refers to a problem solving analysis and decision-making exercise which requires the use of transfer learning and sound theoretical background in the area of the subject matter.

The treatment of cases may require you to work on individual basis or it may involve group work with your classmates. In analyzing cases, you have to assume the position of either a manager in the company involved or a consultant. This is simply because you are required to solve the case as if you are a manager in the company or an outside consultant.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What do understand by the concept of case study?

### **3.2 Objectives of Case Study**

According to Mullins (2000) and Hill and Jones (2004), the objectives of a case study are as follow:

- i) It is meant to make you apply the theoretical knowledge to practical situations;
- ii) It is meant to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate analytical ability, logical reasoning, judgement and persuasiveness and skills of communication in the presentation of answers;
- iii) It also provides a means of assessing your performance and ability to apply the knowledge you have gained from the theoretical background of organizational behaviour;
- iv) If the case analysis is undertaken as a group, it provides a means of assessing both the performance of the group as a whole;
- v) It provide you with experience of organizational problems that you probably have not had the opportunity to experience firsthand;
- vi) Case analysis makes you have the opportunity to appreciate the problems faced by many different companies;
- vii) It also expose to the application of transfer learning which you should have gained from other areas such as your own organization;
- viii) You will be able to evaluate the actions some managers had taken which backfired that results in the case situation;
- ix) By analyzing cases, you will be able to improve your skills of diagnostic investigation.
- x) You will enjoy the thrill of testing your problem-solving ability in the real world.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Mention reasons why case study is important to you.

### 3.3 Preliminary Considerations in Case Analysis

These preliminary considerations are as follow:

- i) Nature of the company's management systems (e.g., centralized, decentralized, etc);
- ii) Nature company's organizational structure;
- iii) The leadership styles of the managers in the company;
- iv) The company's control system;
- v) Composition of the staff strength of the company;
- vi) The company's strategies for motivating the workers;
- vii) Promotion policies of the company;
- viii) The company's organizational culture;
- ix) Disciplinary and grievance procedures of the company;
- x) Nature of group dynamics in the company;
- xi) Level of labour unionism in the company; and
- xii) Relationship among various departments, units or subsidiaries of the company.

### 3.4 Principles for Analysis of a Case Material

The following principles, according to Mullins (2000), are important in the analysis of a case material:

- i) Read the whole of the case study
- ii) Read the case study a second time
- iii) Look the material carefully and try to identify with the situation
- iv) Check carefully on exactly what you are required to do and instructions to present your answer.
- v) Apportion available time to different parts of the case, if any; and
- vi) Approach the analysis of the case with an open mind;
- vii) Refrain from bias or prejudice to avoid any predisposition that may influence your perception of the case material;
- viii) Adopt a brainstorming approach and take the case apart by exploring all reasonably possible considerations;
- ix) Search for any hidden meanings and implicit issues and information;
- x) Study all the details provided in the case material to extract facts for relevant deductions or inferences from the case material;
- xi) Concentrate on what you think to be the more important matters as opposed to irrelevant or any red herrings that may confuse you;
- xii) The use of margin notes, underlining, numbering, colours or highlighting pens may all be useful;
- xiii) Do not make your analysis too complicated or confused
- xiv) Where necessary, relate your analysis of the case material to your theoretical studies, general points of principle and the work of leading writers;
- xv) The use of diagrams, charts or tables may enhance the presentation of your answer, but make sure such displays are accurate and clear and relate directly to your analysis of the case material, and to the questions of the case;
- xvi) Bearing in mind the question, clearly identify existing or potential difficulties or problem areas and indicate where you see the need for most urgent action;
- xvii) Draw up a plan of key points as the basis of your answer

- xviii) Where you have identified a number of possible courses of action, indicate your recommendation priorities;
- xix) Give reasons in support of your recommendations; and
- xx) Allow time to read through and check your work.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The foregoing analysis has enabled you to understand the essence of case study. We discussed the objectives of a case study, which are the benefits you can derive from analyzing a case material. We also discussed the preliminary considerations for analysis of a case material. Lastly, the approach to case analysis was also considered in this study unit.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This study unit has been used to discuss.

Meaning of case study

The objectives of a case study

Preliminary considerations in the Analysis of a Case Material

Principles for Analysis of a Case Material.

This being the last study unit of the course, it is expected that you have covered the preceding study units in a very meticulous manner. This is important because you need to study all the units towards gaining appropriate knowledge that will put you in good stead for surmounting challenges of dealing with human beings in your own organization.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Amina is an employee of a textile company based in textile industrial area of Asuwani Isolo in Lagos mainland. Amina does not see anything good in her manager. Her work is barely of standard. Under union rules, there is no question of dismissal of any employee in the company.

- i) What are the likely reasons for the behaviour of Amina?
- ii) What are the possible solutions to the problem?
- iii) Give recommendation for the resolution of the problem.
- iv) Advise reasons for your recommendation.

Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1. A case study is basically problem solving analysis and decision-making exercise which requires the use of transfer learning and sound theoretical background in the area of the subject matter.
2. Reasons why case study is important to you are as follows:

- i) Makes you apply the theoretical knowledge to practical situations;
- ii) Provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate analytical ability and skills of communication;
- iii) Provides you with a means of assessing your performance and ability to apply the knowledge you have gained from the theoretical background of organizational behaviour;
- iv) Provides you with experience of organizational problems;
- v) Makes you have the opportunity to appreciate the problems faced by many different companies;
- vi) Exposes you to the application of transfer learning;
- vii) Makes you to evaluate the actions managers had taken which backfired;
- viii) Helps to improve your skills of diagnostic investigation.
- ix) Affords you the opportunity of testing your problem-solving ability in the real world.

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