
UNIT 1 MODELS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Change as well as resistance to change are attributes of all social institutions and organizations. This general statement is true for education as a social institution as well as for educational organizations – schools, colleges and universities. Further, education is perceived as an instrument of social change. This brings additional burden on education since only a resilient and self-renewing system of education can ensure desirable changes in society.

What can happen to educational systems and organizations over a period of time? They can improve, degenerate or remain where they are.

The motivation for change comes from the dissatisfaction of the people in the system. The sources of such dissatisfaction are:

- unhappiness with the performance though there are no apparent problems; in other words, urge for capacity optimization of the system; and
- perceptible problems that need solutions for smooth functioning of the system.

Degeneration occurs largely due to laissez-faire-ism in management. In Kurt Lewin's theory of Field Force Analysis (Fig.1), improvement or degeneration depends upon the relative strength of the positive and the negative forces.

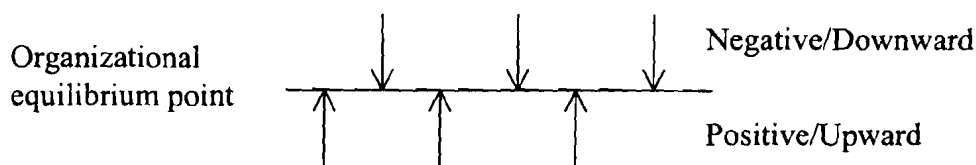


Figure 1: Field Force Analysis (Kurt Lewin)

Maintaining status-quo, where every other thing is changing, is a near impossibility.

The subject of change and management of change has been of enormous interest to social scientists – anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists as well as educationists. While the interest in understanding the process of change has been there for centuries, a definite spurt in research on innovations and change can be traced to the early 60's of the 20th century. Major contributions have come from the fields of agricultural, and rural development, medical innovations, cultural anthropology and education.

Diffusion of Innovation by Everett Rogers (1962), *Innovations in Education* by Mathew B. Miles (1964), *Communication of Innovation* by Rogers and Shoemaker, (1971) *Planning for Innovations* by Ronald Havelock (1973) are some of the landmark publications in this area.

In this Unit, an effort has been made to bring the issues and models of educational change before you for closer scrutiny. There are three main sections in this Unit.

- the first section deals with the broad socio-cultural parameters that determine the process of change in education,
- the second section deals with the mechanics of change – the structural aspect of the system of changes, and
- the third section deals with various models of change put forward by researchers.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to

- explain the socio-cultural dimensions of change,
- identify the components of the process of management of change,
- explain different models of management of change, and
- describe the process of management of change in your own organisation.

1.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL PARAMETERS OF CHANGE

Change is a human necessity. It evolves rather than take shape in fits and starts. Change in education is no exception. Nevertheless, innovations that negotiate the actual change in the system and the society at large show dolphin-like behaviour – leaping above the surface at different places and times. However, innovations are only an instrumentality of change, not change per se.

Societies, systems and institutions particularly with long traditions have a tendency to resist innovations and efforts at change. This is both due to self-fulfilling prophecies of the systems with time-tested methods and also lack of resilience to restore the dynamic equilibrium that is always disturbed by new methods, practices and processes. The older the society and the institution, exceptions apart, the more difficult it is to change.

Educational change is integrally linked to the various processes and institutions in the society. Within a societal framework, the various social institutions including education, adopt innovations to change. Such acts of innovating are either pro-active, reactive or retro-active. In fact, though education has been proclaimed as an instrument of social change (assigned a proactive role), it has primarily been reactive, and more often inactive. The core process of education namely, curriculum design and transaction in the developing countries has remained rather unchanged, at best, has changed only marginally.

As mentioned earlier, if education has to play a pro-active role in ushering in social change, change within education becomes a necessary pre-condition, as stagnation in education hinders changes in society.

1.2.1 Nature and magnitude of change

Change occurs naturally as a response to both socio-economical and technological changes. Educational change can also be effected deliberately through planned intervention – ‘planned change’ is one of the major schools of thought today.

Change as a responsive process – both planned and unplanned-can take two different shapes. In one form it takes the entire system into its fold. For example, right at the dawn of her independence, India resorted to five year plans for development, covering the entire country and all aspects of life. This is a case of planned holistic change. Let us take the example of Eritrea, a newly liberated country. As a matter of policy and practice, part of summer vacation is devoted by all students and teachers for national reconstruction with the goal of speeding up the process of development and sensitizing the budding youth about the development related problems of the country. Since the programme encompasses all, it is both systemic and planned.

Another form of change is incremental, through intervention in a chosen area of a system. For example, examination reforms in education are introduced to modernise examination system without necessarily changing the curriculum and the instructional process. This approach is also called piece-meal social engineering. Modernization of examination may indicate need for change in the instructional process and changes will follow in the instructional system. In fact, much of the institutional changes are efforts in piece-meal social engineering.

Check Your Progress1

Identify the following statements as 'true (T)' or 'false' (F), and write your answer in the parenthesis against each statement.

Note : Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

- i) Innovations are only an instrumentality of change, and not change per se. ()
- ii) The core process of education has changed significantly in the developing countries. ()
- iii) Incremental change is also known as piece-meal social engineering. ()

1.2.2 Change and the cultural paradigm - India, Eritrea, South Africa

Indian education, as we noted earlier, is a complex mix of tradition and modernity. It was shaped and developed by the highest levels of scholarship and spirituality as well as by the influence of religious philosophy and thoughts notably of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. While these traditional influences persist in Indian education, the overwhelming influence of the modern system, introduced in the middle of the 19th century, is very apparent. This system which had the stated objective of supporting public administration has not been able to break free from that objective and become an effective instrument of social change. Much of the present turmoil in Indian education has its origin in this socio-cultural outlook.

The socio-political structure of India is a major issue in considering the process of change in education. India with a federal structure and education being on the concurrent list has a rheostatic control system generally allowing greater flow of power to the state government at lower levels of education and to the Union Government at higher levels of education. This constitutional provision provides scope for state level and local level politicians to take part in education. Political influence on education has primarily been in the area of establishment of new institutions at various levels. Thus, Indian education is a field of active interplay for politicians, bureaucrats, institutional managers,

teachers, students and parents. One has to consider the process of educational change in India and its management against this multidimensional context.

The case of South Africa is another interesting example. After the African National Congress came to power, the major agenda was to bring about real equity and equality among the whites and coloured people. Removal of apartheid was just the first step. The schooling and college facilities were starkly different as much as the purchasing capacity of the various groups of people. The comparatively poorer community, majority of them blacks, are in the rural areas. Urban schools were segregated community-wise. National reconstruction required major efforts to provide in equality of opportunity to all classes of people. There were problems like improving the quality of rural schools, integrating whites and coloured in the urban schools, and training teachers with a different orientation. Some of these changes which are structural in nature could be brought about by governmental intervention, but those that need change in the mindset is not all that easy. For example, whites are now sharing the same classroom with the blacks, but the thin wall separating them is not yet invisible. The emergence of an equal society requires a cultural change, that impacts on education as well.

Let us take the case of Eritrea, a newly liberated small country. Determined to cut the corners of development and catch on with the rest of the world and ensure its capability to withstand any further effort in subjugating it to the foreign forces, the Government brought in a major innovation in education. Every student and every teacher was required, as stated earlier, to contribute part of his/her summer vacation in national reconstruction. Not just training, they actually contributed to construction of roads and bridges, literacy and public education, health programs, etc. A colony so long used to submitting, though unwillingly, to the dictations of the rulers had a mindset. The objective of the effort was to alter this mindset. The impact and the extent of change depend upon the development of a new cultural and national identity through education.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

A) Changes in socio-cultural outlook are a necessary precondition for educational changes. What is the Indian experience?

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B) What are the main points that are emerging from the South Africa and Eritrea cases?

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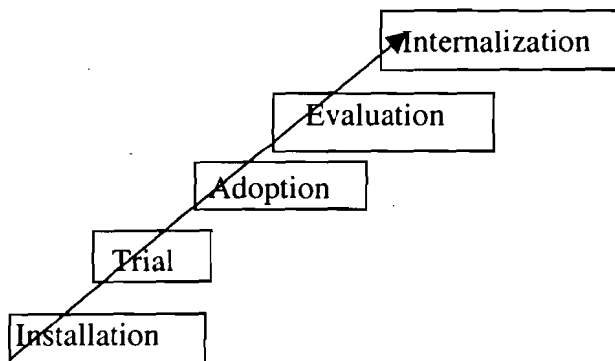
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1.3 MECHANICS OF CHANGE

The mechanics of change can be examined from several inter-related conceptual strands, namely, stages of adoption of innovation, adopter categories, structural aspect of change, etc.

1.3.1 Stages of adoption of innovation and adopter categories

Innovation is as an instrument of change, and the process of change is indeed the process of adoption of innovation. From both experience and research studies, the adoption of innovation can be seen to pass through five stages:



- installation/awareness signifies first implantation of the idea in the mind of the potential adopter;
- trial, at this stage, is the mental exercise in terms of assessing feasibility, preparation for adoption and possible adverse consequences;
- adoption is the actual translation of the idea at the field level – pilot or full scale;
- evaluation is the assessment of the process efficiency and impact of the innovation; evaluation in this case is not summative, basic intention being corrective to final adoption; and

- internalization is the mechanism of making the innovation part and parcel of the system, rendering it out of the 'zone of innovation'.

These stages are not sacrosanct and each one actually comprises several micro stages.

1.3.2 Categories of adopters of innovations

Just as an innovation is installed, it generates different reactions among the potential adopters. Researchers have classified adopters into several categories, namely,

- **Innovators** -- Innovators are those who actually innovate the idea itself and try out.
- **Early Adopters** -- people who react to a new idea immediately and take to adoption.
- **Adopters** -- those who take to adoption, but wait on the fence to see the experience of adoption of innovation by others.
- **Late Adopters** -- are the reluctant respondents to a new idea.
- **Laggards** -- the confirmed rejecters of innovations.

Generally, innovators and laggards are a smaller percentage and adopters the largest single group in most organised systems.

1.3.3 Structural aspects of change

The mechanics of change can be presented in several ways. The most frequently used frame work and the most acceptable premise is 'Change as a function of adoption of innovation'. This framework presupposes a structure comprising :

- one who communicates innovation, say, the Resource System;
- one to whom innovation is communicated for adoption, say the Adopter System;
- innovation itself; and
- the process through which innovative ideas are transferred, say, the Communication System.

Should we put these elements in the form of a diagram, it would look like the one given in Figure.2

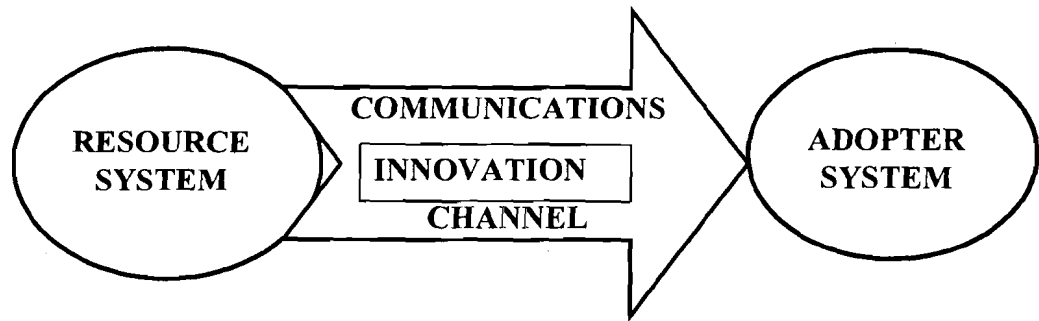


Figure 2: Elements in Change Process

There are two other relevant questions. Once an innovation is communicated and the adopter system initiates steps for its adoption, it may find some difficulty. Hence, there has to be a provision in the system for sending problem messages from the adopter to the resource system and a reverse path sending solution messages from the resource system to the adopter system. If we incorporate these elements also in our diagram, it would look like this (Figure 3):

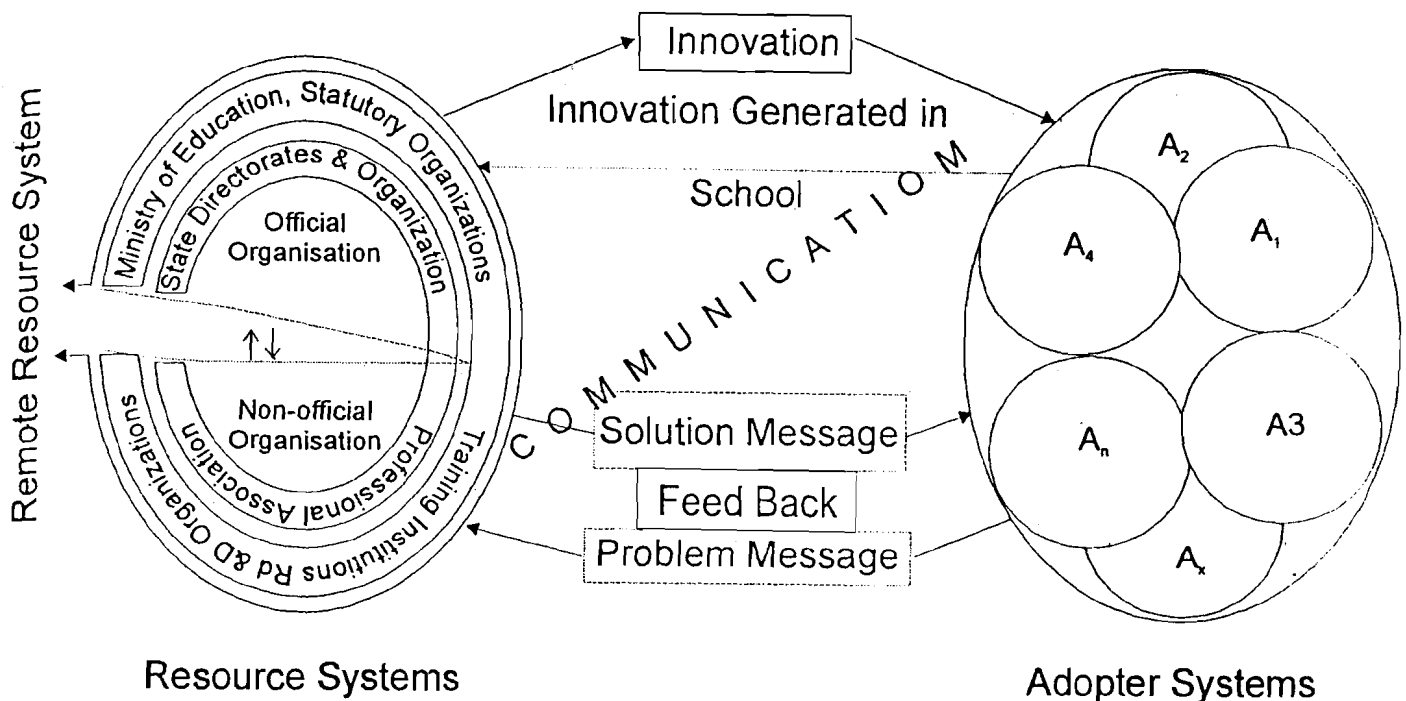


Figure 3. Dynamic Model of Innovation Diffusion

At this stage, we shall take a look, in greater details, at the attributes of these four components of the system of change.

Resource Systems

Resource system is an individual or an organization who/that acts as the source of innovation and also as the expert source of technology of implementation of innovation. Three types of agencies are prevalent in the educational scene that can be treated as resource systems. These are :

- academic bodies apex research, development and training institutions at the international, national and sub-national levels;
- administrative or bureaucratic set ups like the ministries of education, science and technology, provincial and sub-provincial directorates of education;
- non-formal and non-governmental agencies like professional groups, voluntary bodies, professional associations, etc.

One interesting feature is that while the academic bodies which are more capable of designing, processing and diffusing innovations, may not have the necessary authority the administrative bodies which have powers and responsibilities do not have the corresponding academic and professional capabilities. The third category of the organizations are primarily involved in processing of innovations and are adept in offering process solutions to adoption of innovations.

Three related important questions also need consideration:

- Are resource systems necessarily organizations?
- Are resource systems necessarily external to the adopting organizations?
- Are resource systems stand alone systems?

The answer is in the negative. Resource system can be an individual, a group, or an organization. Resource systems can be internal to the organization, for example, an innovative teacher or a group of innovative teachers can act as resource system to the organization. Resource systems are neither stand alone nor are these a permanent designate for the role. Resource system in order to maintain their own source credibility, need to change continuously (role expectation of an adopter system). Hence such organizations, even if they are structurally designated as resource systems maintain linkage with remote resource systems as source of innovation. For example, international agencies like the UNESCO, UNICEF, etc, act as remote resource systems to national agencies in member countries.

An innovation can bring about change only when it is internalized by the system. To transform an innovation from the stage of awareness to

internalization, the resource agencies need to provide expert support to the process of adoption. However, resource agencies generally consider that their role is largely confined to diffusing innovations to the adopting system. In other words, beyond creating awareness, resource agencies do not yet perceive any specific role in managing the process of educational change. The professional roles of resource agencies comprise process support to the adopting organizations to move from the level of installation to internalization.

Innovation

'Innovation' is defined in several ways. The most acceptable definition probably is an idea or a practice 'perceived to be new'. This definition brings in relativism and this is necessary. An idea that is new to one may not be so to another depending upon the extent of exposure that an individual or a system has had. However, all innovations are not adoptable or adaptable, nor are all innovations worthwhile. Similarly, same innovation may not be relevant to all categories of institutions and individuals within the institution. An innovation that is worth trying in IGNOU, may not be relevant to the Open University in Jordan, for example. Or, an innovation that is now relevant to a state open university in India has already been tried out and internalized at the national open university.

There have been several studies both internationally and in India on characteristics of innovation and their adaptability for ushering in change. Some of these characteristics are:

- Relative advantage
- Simplicity or complexity
- Compatibility
- Divisibility
- Communicability
- Value loading
- Scientific status of the knowledge.

The relative advantage of an innovation as perceived by the potential adopter over the prevailing practice influences to a great extent the adopter's decision. While a minority of the adopters look at the relative advantage from the angle of organizational advantage and scientific status of knowledge, a majority considers relative advantage from the angle of benefits accruing to individuals, e.g. less workload, simpler procedure, etc. On the other hand, innovations that are less communicable, less divisible, more complex, and relatively less advantageous are likely to be resisted and are more liable to failure.

Check Your Progress 3

Which are the three types of agencies that can act as resource systems and which one among them is effective in designing innovations and why? Answer in about 50 words.

Note : i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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Communication

Communication signifies conveyance of innovation from one party to another through some media. Research on communication of innovation has thrown up significant understanding of its role in innovation adoption.

- Difference in status between the communicator and the recipient is a significant determinant of success. The wider the gap between the communicator's status and innovativeness and the adopter system, the greater is the likelihood of failure.
- Community norm is another determinant. The innovation adoption behaviour is directly linked to the norms of the social system in which the adopting organization or the individual is located. Lack of communication between the adopter system with the external resource agencies hinders change.
- Whatever be the media, efficient use is the key to success. Demonstration is the most powerful medium. However, it can be most damaging and can permanently inhibit, if the demonstration fails. In cases of innovations where controversy is a likelihood, oral presentation seems to be more effective.

One of the features of educational planning and management in the developing countries, is its relative centralization. For faster and equitable development,

planning including innovations are centrally designed and initiated. The centrally designed innovations as well as those flowing from the academic bodies provide a triangular structure of communication (see figure 4 below).

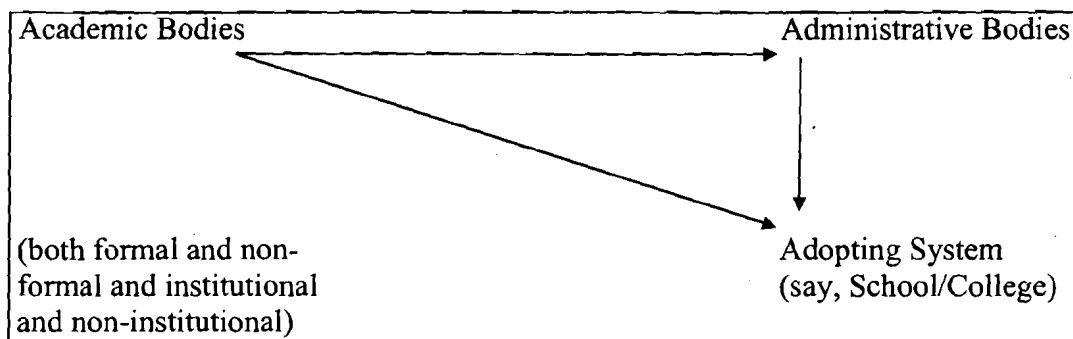


Figure 4. Simultaneous and sequential communication of innovation

If this is further broken down to central, state, and district level authorities, Fig. 5 would look like the following:

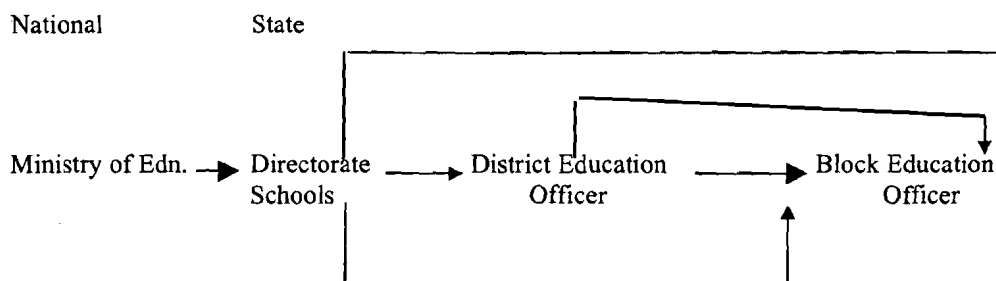


Figure 5: Hierarchic and unidirectional communication

Because of the typical bureaucratic system of management in centralized systems, the flow of communication is usually unidirectional. One of the basic problems of communication is inherent in the organizational structure of education. As we have seen in Block-1, all major educational systems comprise multi-layer structures of national, state and local level agencies. This complex structure makes an equally complex flow of communication through multiple channels, some of which may not even have any direct stake in a specific innovative initiative. Unlike the industrial system, education system is yet to develop a communication model relevant and functional to the management of change.

Adopter Organization

Adoption of innovation, particularly for qualitative improvement in education, is the function of the agencies like schools, colleges, universities, etc. However, there is evidence that individuals and small groups play a significant role in management of change as well as in organizational renewal.

Certain organizational characters like open, paternal or familial climate, linkage with resource agencies and a pro-active administration (Board of Governors/ Executive Council, etc.) have been found to be conducive to change. Several studies have established the key role played by the principal, specially his/her leadership capability, professional awareness, encouragement as well as control of teachers, and communication behaviours. The group behaviour of teachers, their willingness to change, professional awareness, initiative, and inter-personal relationships are some of the major factors that influence the process of adoption of innovation.

The findings from a wide range of research on the characteristics of the adopting system that either promotes or resists change, are summarised in the two tables that follow :

Table 1: Individual Characteristics that resist innovation

<i>Individual Characteristics</i>	
<i>Personality Oriented</i>	<i>Others</i>
a. Conservative attitude b. Sense of insecurity and fear of failure c. Low self-esteem d. Closed mindedness e. Inability to sense needs f. Defence mechanism – distortion of innovation g. Unwillingness to work – lack of motivation h. Loss of interest i. Inadequate exposure to mass media j. Inadequate contact with change agents and resource agencies	a. Role conflict b. Lack of training c. Absence of clarity of innovation d. Lack of competence e. Non-availability of literature f. Lack of access to guidance g. Work load h. Fatigue from innovation i. Unrealistic time target j. Lower socio-economic status

Table 2: Organizational Characteristics that resist innovation

<i>Organizational</i>			
<i>External</i>	<i>Internal</i>		
	<i>General</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Small Groups</i>
a. Demand of change in social relations b. Threat on the dynamic equilibrium of the system c. Lack of openness	a. Division of labour b. Hierarchic organization c. Reward for traditional behaviour d. Interference of higher management e. Organizational climate – closed type f. Physical distance between the sub-systems	a. Directive and autocratic	a. Cohesive b. Lack of autonomy and involvement in decision making c. Peer criticism d. Sense of imposition e. Vested interest

Management of Change

d. Lack of permeability from one layer of organization to another due to coding systems and system myths	g. Inadequate financial and physical facilities		
e. Localism	h. Size of the organization – small in particular		
f. Lack of communication and linkage with resource systems.			

These studies have also shown that most of the adopting organizations, the schools and colleges for example, live in isolation, and do not have any significant linkage with outside agencies. Thus they have little functional input of innovations. Secondly, the role perceived by the principals is of maintenance rather than change and renewal. The institutes, a very large majority of them, engage themselves in routine activities in a routine manner. Thus the process capability for innovation and self-renewal remains unchanged. The situation is further aggravated by lack of, if not absence of, management training for the personnel administering the institutions.

In effecting change, management of innovations by the adopting organizations is of crucial importance. Successful management of innovations calls for

- planning of innovations;
- determining objectives for development;
- identifying innovations;
- planning resources;
- providing authority support;
- building up consensus among the members of the adopting group; and
- developing linkages with relevant outside agencies, and also with the environment.

The adopter organizations do not usually plan innovations. They implement innovation as they come through the pipeline of the administrative channel. Nor does one find very often, an awareness of resistance that may accompany an innovation. Resultantly, casualties occur without adequate, if at all, contingency arrangements. Further, the adopter organizations within themselves can develop a network where innovations, and experiences accruing from innovations, can be shared. Although there are some evidences, more as exceptions, the models for functional replication are not too many. One of the major problems is the lack of documentation in the form of cases – both

successful and unsuccessful ones – on adoption of innovation and management of change that can be used by others for emulation and replication.

Check Your Progress 4

Identify the following sentences as 'true' (T), or 'false' (F) and answer in the brackets provided against each.

Note: Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

- i) Difference in status between 'communicator' and recipient is not a significant determinant of success. ()
- ii) In a centralized bureaucratic system of management of education, the flow of communication is usually unidirectional. ()
- iii) The adopter organizations do not usually plan innovation but implement the ones which come through administrative channels. ()

1.4 MODELS OF CHANGE

There have been several efforts to capture the process of change in a conceptual framework in the form of models of change. Such efforts have documented behaviour modification models at the individual level as well as organizational change models. You are advised to refer to the classical work, Ronald Havelock and Shoemaker's meta analysis of research in innovation – **Planning for Innovation** (in case you are interested in this area).

Different models proposed by various authors can be classified largely into two categories on the basis of source of initiation or origin of concern for change. These are indicated in the table below. A caution however; none of the models is exclusive so far as their source of origin is concerned. The variation is only in degree; self-initiated models emerge from internal concern but seek external help and vice-versa.

Self-initiated Models	Externally initiated Models
Problem Solving	Rational-Empirical
Social Interaction	Normative Re-educative
RD & D	Power-Coercion
Organization Development	Systems Model

1.4.1 Self-initiated models

The first three under this head are institutional models – relevant to a school; a college, a university, an open university and the like.

Problem Solving Model

Problem solving model is essentially a need-reduction model where the client's perceived need is the starting point of intervention. Havelock (1973) refers to terms like "client-centred therapy", and "student centered teaching" as expressions of a need-reduction model. Although the role of external change agents is not ruled out in this model, the need for collaboration and understanding of the client's need are two important components. The Organization Development Model can be one of the practical applications of Problem solving Model.

As Havelock maintained, "The model is a general one and could apply to a process inside a single person, or inside a group, an organization, a community, or society as a whole". As viewed by this model, the problem solvers may also be outside specialists ("change agents", "resource persons", etc) but they will act in a two-way reciprocal and collaborative manner, if they are to be effective.

The R, D&D Process Model

R,D&D (Research, Development and Diffusion) Model has been quite popular in the western world, the USA in particular. The starting point in this case is research and new products through research. It presumes that if there is knowledge (or a new product), there will also be a consumer. Unlike the problem solver model, consumer need is only implicit, research does not necessarily address itself to need-reduction of the client.

The progress in medical field, engineering, more particularly agriculture has been possible through knowledge development. "There is a transformation of knowledge from basic research to applied research and development which goes on in the agriculture-related departments of the land grant colleges and universities. This R&D process is systematically linked to the Cooperative Extension Service, an elaborate mechanism which diffuses the developed knowledge to the farmer. This system, taken as a whole, thus seems to exemplify the orderly transition of knowledge from research to development to diffusion and finally to adoption by the consumer" (Havelock, 1973).

Of late, examples can be found in education particularly in open and distance education. In early 60's, research was initiated on programmed learning largely to find new means for optimizing human learning. Research over the next two decades bore it out that self-instructional programmed or semi-programmed material is more effective than conventional lectures. Open and Distance Education system all over the world utilized this important knowledge. Similarly, modern communication technologies like interactive video, and internet were originally researched for communication outside education. The results of research and development have ushered in a new multi-channel learning system in open and distance education.

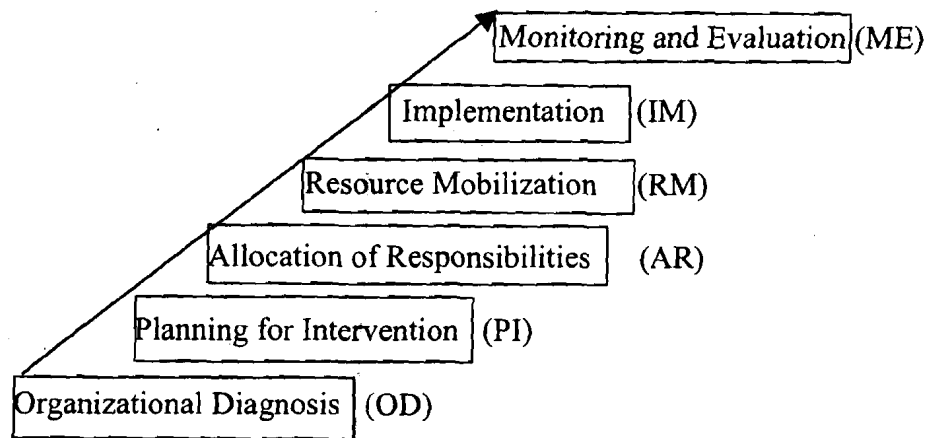
The Social Interaction Model

The nature of this model is implicit in the title itself. It visualizes society, or for that matter organizations within the society, as a network of units, 'roles, and channels of communication with organization and formal and informal associations forming barriers and overlapping connections'. It does not view society as a system; instead it gears all the various components towards a common goal and output. The primary focus is on management of change through interaction between and among various stake holders in the change process. According to Havelock, this approach has contributed the largest amount of empirical data on dissemination and utilization of knowledge.

Besides these three clearly defined models, there is a synthetic model where the beginning point is need-reduction. In order to find means of need-reduction and in search of tested alternative solutions, RD&D approach can provide good support. As organizations are social systems, changes happen due to, and through, the people in the organization. The tenets of social interaction model provide the firm basis of human involvement in the management of change.

Organization Development

Organization Development or OD is one of the widely used technique of management of change. It comprises five sequential stages of action –



In this model, it is important to mention that there are several alternative techniques in organizational diagnosis – SWOT Analysis and Survey Feedback are the two common ones. The second important feature of this model is participatory process. In this model, right from diagnosis to monitoring, every thing is done collectively by the people in the organisation.

Rather than in steps, the model is better represented by a spiral as given below (Fig.6).

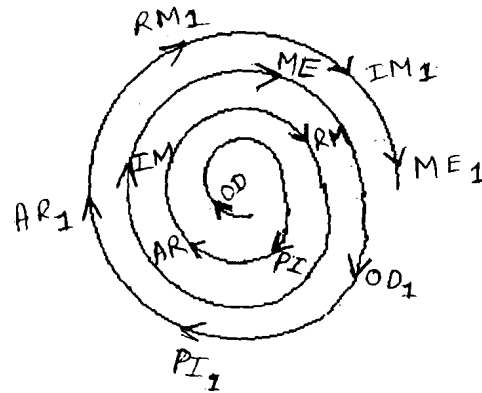


Figure 6: OD-Spiral Model

Check Your Progress 5

List one significant feature of each of the self-initiated models.

- Note:** i) Space is given below for your answer.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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1.4.2 Externally initiated models

The three models – Power-Coercion, Normative-Reeducative and the Rational-Empirical have been extensively dealt with by Bennis and Others in “Planning of Change”.

The basis of the Rational-Empirical Model is the assumption that reason is the basis of change. Empirical evidences, corroborated with reason, can form the basis of organizational diagnosis and planning for intervention. Research provides a sound foundation for planning for change through this model.

The Power-Coercion model indicates the use of top-down power, rather authority, in the approach to planning and management of change. Innovations in this case are decided at the top and pushed down for implementation. In a larger context, changes in the totalitarian systems illustrate this model. Not only are innovations pushed down, this model also uses coercion for adoption.

Normative –Reeducative model is largely based on the cognitive restructuring concept. The first element is normative – setting norms by demonstration. This is different from prescription of the power orientation. The second component is re-education of the potential adopters. Setting norms on the one hand, and re-educating, on the other, leads to easier acceptance of innovation.

Unlike the Power-Coercion Model, both Normative-Reeducative and the Rational-Empirical approaches are diffusion of innovation through creating conviction. These two models are slow in adoption of innovation, but are more sustainable and self-renewing. The Power-Coercion Model is fast but runs the risk of distortion of innovation and rejection at the first opportunity of change in the power structure.

1.4.3 Strategies for change at systems level or systems model

So far we have dealt largely with management of change at the individual or sub-institutional level. In this section, let us examine how management of change is effected at the system level. To illustrate the systems model of management of change let us look at Figure7.

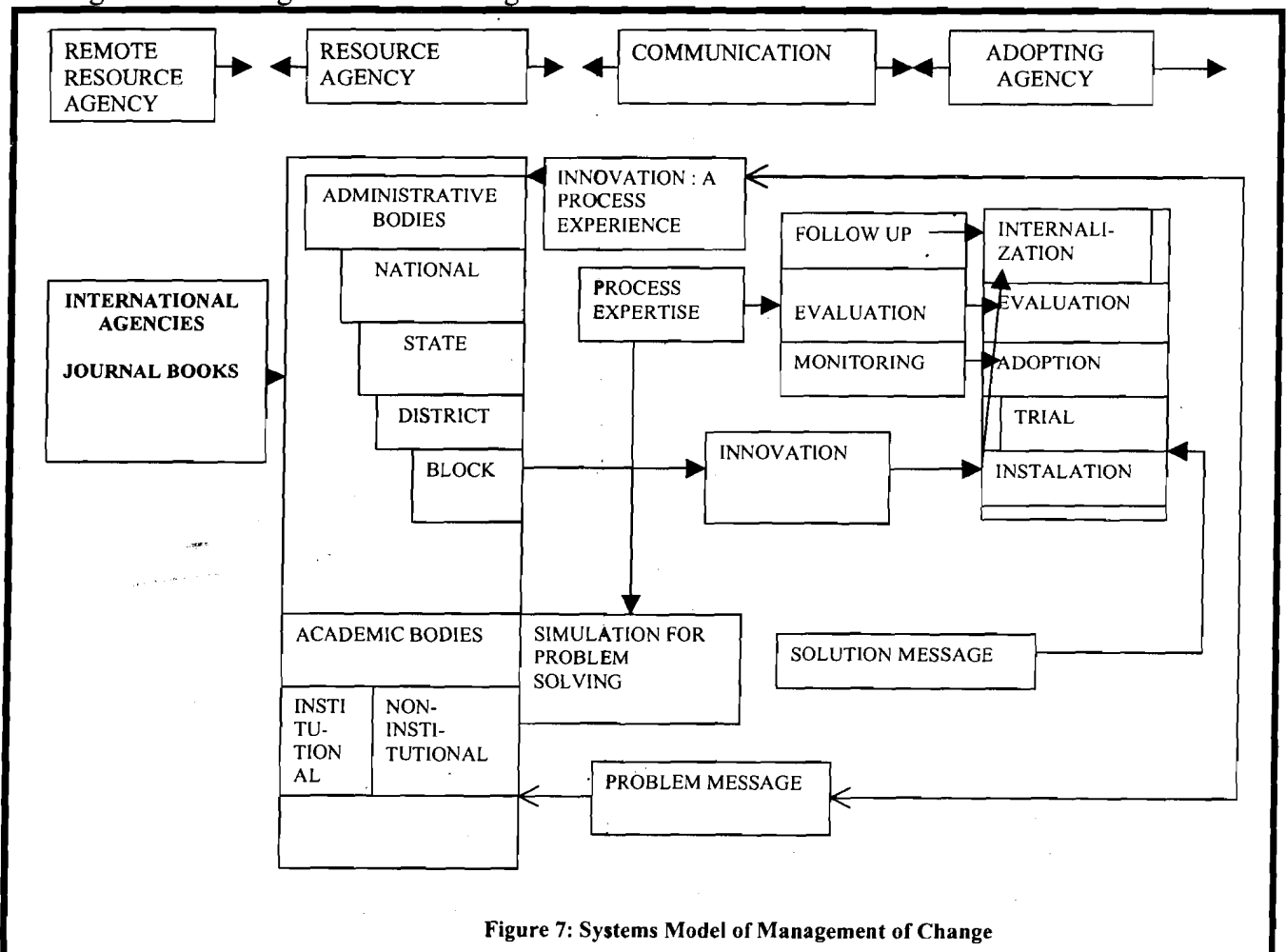


Figure 7: Systems Model of Management of Change

There are four components – remote resource agencies, resource agencies, innovations communication mechanisms and adopting organizations. We have discussed each one of these earlier. Changes are brought about when these systems interact with one another through policy, planning and management processes. Fig. 8 illustrates this point. As you would notice, the policy provides the basic framework, rather direction of change. Planning, ingrained in policy translates policy into action plan and management, ingrained in planning actually implements the plan. To highlight the role of humans in management of change, self is ingrained at the centre.

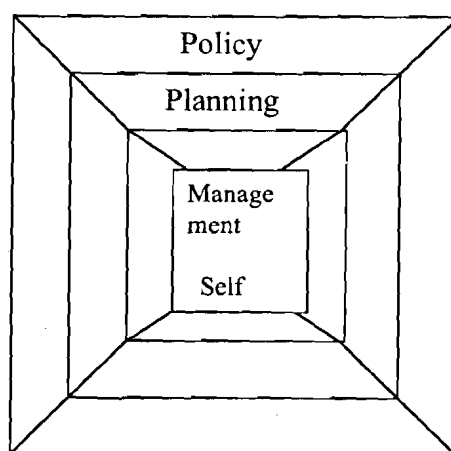


Figure 8. Policy, Planning, Management Perspectives in Change

You will recall that while discussing the significance of planning, we have dealt at length with the role of strategic planning earlier in this course. We had also illustrated how national policies, plans and strategies have shaped and developed the system of distance education in India. We hope that you would be able to reflect on them as a practical example of the principles enunciated here.

Innovations are disseminated or communicated to the adopting agencies by the resource systems, through the communication channel. While adopting innovation, the adopting system may encounter problems. These problems are communicated back – problem message – to the resource agency which simulates, finds a solution and then communicates it back to the adopting agency – the solution message. Besides communicating innovation, the resource agency also provides process expertise comprising monitoring, evaluation and follow-up. As and when an innovation is successfully adopted by an adopting agency, the process experience of adoption is communicated back to the resource agency. Thus, communication itself is a complicated multi-directional process.

The resource system primarily installs the innovation in the cognitive map of the adopting agency. This is followed up by the adopting agency through a four-stage process of internalization. It will now refer back to the three models summarised by Havlock, namely, problem solving, research development and

dissemination and social interaction models. You will find implications of all the three models in this particular systems model. For example, when an institution communicates a problem message to a resource agency, be it internal or external, and gets a solution through simulated problem solving, it is basically an operation of problem solver model for need reduction. There is, however, a difference. If the problem message is with respect to the innovation communicated externally to the system, it may not exactly present the problem solver model. However, if only this segment is accommodated, it provides a problem solver model image.

As mentioned earlier, the national and state resource agencies, the academic institutions in particular, actually conceptualize research and then process innovation for dissemination. This is a typical reflection of R&D model. Finally, the model looks at various players involved in the process of management of change in a system. The initiation and management of the process is based on interaction of the various players in the game at a social level.

It is, however, difficult to reflect the three models proposed by Benis in this systems model of management of change. However, rational empirical models are very much in operation as would be indicated by research and development activities by resource agencies and large scale training programmes and capacity building exercises that are carried out at all levels. Thus, the systems model of management of change offers a comprehensive conceptualised paradigm of management of change.

Check Your Progress 6

Identify the following sentences as 'true' (T), or 'false' (F) and answer in the brackets provided against each,

Note: Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

- i) Innovation is decided at the top and pushed down for implementation in the power coercion model. ()
- ii) Normative re-educative and the rational – empirical models are fast in adoption of innovation. ()
- iii) Planning is an inset in the policy. ()
- iv) In system model communication takes a two-way interactive mode. ()

1.5 LET US SUM UP

This unit discussed the patterns and mechanics of changes that education systems and organisations follow in different contexts and circumstances. In discussing these issues, we have addressed the theoretical foundations that recent research findings have provided us in understanding various models of change, the factors that influence change and also the processes by which changes get absorbed in the existing system and its structures. We hope that this discussion would have given you some insight into the complexities and constraints that managements often confront while attempting to introduce changes in the education system.

1.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. (i) T (ii) F (iii) T
2. A) Indian education is a complex mix of tradition and modernity. The impact of high levels of scholarship and spirituality established over several centuries and the preponderance of modern education which was initially launched to support governmental infrastructure, are the prime movers of educational development in India. Perhaps, what India needs is a blend of both, and a new mindset that can support an integrated system.

B) The cases of South Africa and Eritrea reveal that changes at large in society occur only through cultural change, in which 'education' play a vital role. The other issue is that educational change takes shape with in the broad cultural canvas of a society.
3. The three types of resource systems are: (i) academic agencies, (ii) administrative or bureaucratic agencies, (iii) non-formal and non-governmental agencies. Out of these three, academic agencies are more capable in designing, processing and diffusing innovations because of the academic expertise available with them.
4. (i) F (ii) T (iii) T
5. Problem-solving model identifies client's needs and tries to resolve them. The client can be an individual or a group or a community or society as a whole.

RD&D model depends on research and new products of research, which can be applied to find solutions to specific problems.

Social Interaction model focuses on management of change through interaction between and among various stake holders such as society or organisations within the society, in the change process.

The main feature of organization and development model is the participatory process in which all members of the organization participate from diagnosis to monitoring

6. (i) T (ii) F (iii) T (iv) T

UNIT 2: FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Factors Affecting Change
 - 2.2.1 Resistance to change: some general factors
 - 2.2.2 Resistance to change: some specific factors
- 2.3 Accepting Resistance
- 2.4 The Language of Resistance
- 2.5 Sources of Resistance
- 2.6 Management of Resistance
- 2.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.8 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Organisations of today are caught up in rapid growth of technologies, global competition, organisational restructuring and shifting values. As such, they have to be flexible and should have forethought. No organisation can survive without change. Change is essential. Change is the mark of growth and survival in today's world.

Though adopting change is essential, adaptability varies from organisation to organisation. Any change affects the employees first in one way or another, so employee's acceptability is essential for successful introduction and management of change. The reaction to change in the first instance is resistance, because it is a break from the routine and hence is not acceptable.

The first unit of this block dealt with the need for change and various models of change. The major issue in implementation of change is resistance or barriers. Resistance can be from various factors; particularly in educational institutions, it comes from teachers, students, administrators or management, depending upon the issue/change that is to be implemented. This unit deals with these issues and the factors that affect change.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to

- describe and discuss various factors that affect the change process,
- identify resistance factors and sources of resistance, and
- apply the mechanisms for managing resistance in the change process.

2.2 FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE

There can be many factors affecting change depending upon the situation and the issue at hand. Broadly these factors are of three types which are given below:

Radiant Causes

The changes related to technology induction is affected by the following factors which are known as Radiant causes.

- The change in technology is administratively less feasible.
- Costs of changes are high.
- Leads to skill downgrading or other undesirable conditions.
- Requires extra efforts to learn and relearn.

When there is change in technology in an organisation, often there will be resistance from the employees/workers. Because they are so used to the routine way of doing things, they fear when there is a change in the way they work. For example, when computer was introduced in many organisations, it was resisted by employees because they thought they would loose their jobs. When it was explained properly by authorities, employees accepted it. The source of such fears which provoke resistance is the lack of awareness. It follows that before significant changes are introduced in the work patterns, the employees who are likely to be affected by the change should be taken into confidence and conditions created in which the level of resistance is minimised.

Psychological Causes

People who have introduced innovations in one field or another know what type of psychological factors crop up during implementation. The major ones are:

- Lack of appreciation or tolerance.
- Conflict between the employees and the management.
- Fear of the unknown or uncertain outcomes of the change.
- Lack of trust in others.
- Need for security.
- Desire for existing position.

Whenever there is any change, the first reaction from those likely to be affected is "fear" to accept it. There are several reasons for not accepting change.

Factors Affecting Change

There might be some false impressions set in the mind that change outcomes are not positive, and an insecure feeling that change is not good or comfortable. For example, in a university if any examination reforms are contemplated, immediate reaction is negative both from the students and teachers. If both teachers and students are consulted before hand on the proposed changes and their usefulness in the long run is explained to them, then they are likely to accept the change relatively in an easy manner. So any change required should not be initiated without consulting all the parties concerned. Even after consultation, hastiness in execution of change (without well thought-out plan), and implementation of acceptable change coaxed by an unacceptable strategy result in negative attitude towards change.

Sociological Causes

Every organisation has to operate in a society, and therefore, various sociological issues influence the organisation, and at times affect the implementation of innovation due to interests/disinterests of various groups in the society. The main causes that affect changes are:

- Vested interest of some social groups and employees to continue in the present position.
- Desire to maintain the existing formal and informal relationship.
- Narrow outlook of the employees and others in society.
- Social group values are opposite to the values of the proposed change and policies and power alliances are in conflict with the change situation.

If change is not suitable to group norms, or deviates from what is expected, then there is resistance. If change is not acceptable to the entire group, each individual starts showing resistance, at times out of fear from the group also. Acceptance of change by the society plays a major role in implementation of the change. For example, till a decade back correspondence education was looked down upon by society as a second rate and second chance education mainly for dropouts. Gradually, there is a significant change in the thinking of the society towards correspondence and distance education in positive terms, and with that, demand for distance education programmes and courses has been increasing from all sections of the society.

2.2.1 Resistance to change: some general factors

Resistance to change is not a new phenomenon. In the mid-nineteenth century, when trains entered Indian villages for the first time, people resisted its use. Now, the story is different with trains reaching many remote villages. Tribals refused to occupy new houses constructed for them by the government because plans of those houses were not according to their faith and beliefs.

Changes are resisted mainly on the following grounds in organisations and institutions:

- Non-involvement of the employees in designing the change.
- Non-preparation of the individuals to live up to the changed situation.
- Lack of provision for equal sharing of the costs and benefits of change.
- Non-inclination on the part of management to positively motivate and take the employees and workers with them in implementing change.

As mentioned earlier, generally reaction to change is resistance. Change involves costs as well as benefits. Psychological costs are the highest in change process. Effects of resistance may be 'overt', 'implicit', 'immediate' or 'deferred'. It is easy to deal with resistance when it is 'overt' and 'immediate'; more effort is required in managing resistance when it is, 'implicit' or 'deferred'. Indicators of implicit resistance are more subtle-loss of loyalty to the organisation, loss of motivation to work, increased errors or mistakes, increased absenteeism due to "sickness" and other reasons that are difficult to recognise. Deferred resistance could be the link between the source of resistance and the reaction to it. Resistance to change could be because of some basic human characteristics such as perceptions, personalities, and needs. It may be also due to some personal, economic or social reasons. Organisational resistance generally centres round the structure, organisational constraints, threats to power and influence or threat to established resource allocation systems, by both the external agencies and the internal groups.

2.2.2 Resistance to change: some specific factors

The specific reasons for resistance to change could be because of several factors. Some of them are mentioned below:

Obsolescence of Job Skills

This kind of resistance could come from employees who have no real marketable skills and whose job knowledge has become obsolete. For example, when technology changes in an industry, proper orientation to the newly required skill is essential. Academics in a university require new skills to use internet, till that time they resist introduction of internet because their old habit/skill of referring to books and journals, they know, is getting obsolete.

Need for Retooling and Retraining

Constant updating of knowledge and retooling especially in professions like Medicine, Technology, Law, Economics and Finance is essential. In the

Factors Affecting Change

absence of such retraining and retooling, resistance to changes from employees is more likely.

Economic Threat

A change may be perceived as a threat to the economic well being of individuals at work. If a change is likely to reduce the number of people at work, there would be resistance to it.

Social Concerns

Changes in the layout of the work place in an organization might be resisted because of group norms and established proximity etc. So social displacement is another reason for resistance to change.

Lack of Information

When employees do not know what the change is all about and what is going to happen with the change, they are likely to resist change. When they are unable to understand also, they resist change.

Non-involvement in Change Process

If the employees are not consulted before initiating the change process, they resist change. On other hand, if they are involved in this process, they will work hard to ensure its success.

Ego Defectiveness

Suggestions from subordinates are usually turned down, because the managers feel that his/her ego is affected by accepting it.

Comfort of the Statusquo

Employees are used to the routine procedures and are comfortable in maintaining them. They are not interested in any change in those procedures.

Short Sightedness

A change might be useful in the long run; when employees do not have this vision, they will not be able to appreciate the change.

Peer Group Pressure

If the change is not acceptable to the colleagues of the concerned person then the person is unwilling to accept the change, even though personally he/she is not against the change.

Personality Factors

Employees/workers with low tolerance for ambiguity and low propensity to take risks and challenges are more likely to resist change than those who have higher level of tolerance for ambiguity and risk taking.

Check Your Progress 1

Out of three major factors which affect change i.e. radiant, psychological and sociological in an organization, according to you which factor affects the most in the case of a distance education institution while implementing change and why? Answer in about 50 words.

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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2.3 ACCEPTING RESISTANCE

Resistance has usually been seen in negative terms. The proponents of a change are unhappy with resistance shown by some persons or groups. The general experience has been that in many cases resistance plays a positive role. If individuals and groups had not resisted some changes like urbanisation of rural or forest areas, or construction of roads which disturbed ecological balance and so on, we would have been poorer in our ecological heritage. In the flush of enthusiasm, the proponents of a change do not see some negative (and often unintended) consequences of that change. Resistance helps to bring

Factors Affecting Change

to their notice, these issues as well as the likely difficulties in the implementation of the change. So, resistance at least gives warning which if heeded can lead to better implementation of change.

Resistance to change is like dissent. The value of dissent is to stimulate the individuals and the groups to consider many factors they may otherwise have overlooked. It also helps to generate alternatives. Resistance may bring to the attention of those involved in introducing change factors that are likely to disrupt the basic cultural fabric, or threaten core values of the group. The earlier attention is paid to them the better it is for the change programme.

Resistance may also point out flaw in the process of introducing change. If a change is being introduced by outsiders in the organisation or the community, it will not be "owned" by them. Resistance may show lack of "ownership" of the change programme by the community, in which it is being introduced.

Resistance may show that the process of change has not been participatory. Resistance may, therefore, be helpful in bringing attention to some aspects neglected by the change planners – threat to the core values and life styles, unintended disturbances causing problems, "bad" process of introducing change etc. Resistance can be used for making the change process more effective. Taking such a positive approach to resistance Karp suggests a four – step approach to resistance as shown in Table 1. This relates to bringing out resistance (surfacing) by encouraging people to express resistance; giving importance to it as reflected in listening and acknowledging; exploring the reasons of resistance to learn what can be done; and rechecking after analysis if the resistance is still substantial.

Table 1: Four Step Treatment of Resistance adapted from Karp, 1988

1. Surfacing	● Make expression of resistance safe ● Ask all for it
2. Honouring	● Listen ● Acknowledge ● Reinforce permission to resist
3. Exploring	● Distinguish authentic from pseudo resistance
4. Rechecking	● Probe

A good planner or administrator of change would study the resistance in all its dimensions as explained above and manage the same for effective implementation of change.

Check Your Progress 2

What are the major consequences of resistance, when one looks at it in a positive way? Answer in about 50 words

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the ones given at the end of the Unit.

2.4 THE LANGUAGE OF RESISTANCE

In a change process, some gain and some lose. Resistance may show that some persons are threatened by change. If resistance is not legitimised, it is likely to come out in different ways of expressing difficulties with change. Various alibis are likely to be given against the change process. In the absence of legitimate channels of exploring the dissent, as discussed in the previous section, the language of alibis is likely to distract attention to non-issues. Murthy in his study identified a large number of alibis people use for resistance to change, which are given in Table 2. The more an organisation encourages and analyses resistance, the less are the alibis likely to be used.

Table 2: Alibis for Resistance to Change
(Source: PVR Murthy's Managing Change, Unpublished Study)

Bad theory alibis

1. This is all theory
2. Theory is different from practice
3. It is nice to hear and easy to say but difficult to practice
4. We have been doing it for thirty years
5. It is not the best solution
Let us get the best solution then we shall implement it
6. We have to get more facts
7. Let us form a committee

Unsuitable alibi

1. We are not in Japan
2. We should all visit Japan if we have to believe all that
3. We are all divided by Caste, Community etc. So we can't bring changes
4. It won't work in our company/institution
5. We tried it before and it didn't work
6. The other company/institution tried and gave up
7. No one can help us. Company is beyond repair
8. We are not yet ready
9. We don't have money for all these changes
10. We don't have time at all

Too risky alibis

1. We need consistency. We cannot keep on changing
2. We can't take risk...you see
3. It is impossible
4. What will happen to the present people ?
5. We need the change...but you see
6. The customer will jump on us
7. The competitor will exploit our failure

Unacceptable to others alibis

1. I follow, but our people are bad
2. I understand but others cannot
3. It is not my problem
4. The problem is with the government
5. The problem is with the top management
6. Boss won't like it
7. All the problems are because of the top management's incompetency
8. My bosses should change first
9. The problem is with the middle management
10. The problem is with the supervisors
11. The union won't like it
12. The problem is with the inter-union conflict
13. The workmen can never understand
14. The old employees won't understand
15. The young employees do not have patience
16. Our youngsters do not have maturity

No gains alibis

1. We are not paid Japanese salaries
 2. What do I get out of the change
 3. Why should I work for the change
 4. Last year I worked hard what did I get in turn
 5. Why do we have to stretch ourselves?
 6. I suggested all that long back. Nobody bothered at that time. Why should I listen to them now
 7. Benefits are limited, why trouble ourselves?
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The above alibis are not uncommon in any organization – whether it is business or industry or education, while implementing change, and introducing innovation.

2.5 SOURCES OF RESISTANCE

Resistance results from disturbance of equilibrium in individuals or groups (organisations). Resistance has been seen as a natural way of keeping homeostasis. Change may produce some stress (Watson, 1969) as any physical exercise increases the pulse rate, but the body's resistance mechanism brings the heart rate back to normal. 'Similarly', a training programme may bring about temporary change in employees influenced by it, but they soon revert to their old habits (unless the training effect is reinforced by other means). In this sense resistance is a natural phenomenon of homeostasis. Similarly, things learned first become "resisters" for new things. Watson has identified various forces of resistance, relating to personality of individuals and the organisational dynamics, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Forces of Resistance to Change in Individuals and Organisations
(Source: Watson, 1969)

Individual

1. Homeostasis (the tendency to revert to old ways)
2. Habit (ingrained accustomed ways of doing things)
3. Primacy (first experiences powerfully determining one's actions)
4. Selective perception and retention (using one's own ideas)
5. Dependence (learning from role models becoming internalised)
6. Super-ego (internalised traditions determining behaviour)
7. Self-distrust (blaming oneself rather than seeking external change)

Organisations

- 1 Conformity to norms (tendency to follow known ways of behaviour)
- 2 Systemic and cultural coherence (tendency to remain homogeneous)
- 3 Vested interests (groups or individuals affected by change)
- 4 The sacrosanct (some areas having strong emotional sensitivity)
- 5 Rejection of "outsiders" (the question of "ownership"). Considering both the individuals and the organisations, ten sources of resistance are suggested in Table 4. (next section).

2.6 MANAGEMENT OF RESISTANCE

Managing resistance will involve using resistance as a positive force of the change process, preventing resistance, and coping with it. An effective change agent would give serious attention to this aspect of resistance.

Watson (1969) has suggested some ways of reducing or preventing resistance. These relate to ownership of change, nature of change, and the process of changing.

Ownership: Resistance is likely to be low if the change is perceived as being the need of and suggested (owned) by those affected by it, and when it has the top management support.

Nature of Change: Resistance is likely to be less if change is seen as reducing problems and burdens, conforming to the core values of the group, offering new and interesting experience to the group, and not threatening autonomy and security.

Change Process: Resistance can be reduced by joint and agreed diagnosis of the problem, consensus on the broad design of change, listening to "objections" (and learning from them), periodical review and feedback, development of high interpersonal trust and cohesive teams, and openness to revision.

Various sources of resistance and the possible mechanisms to cope up with that resistance are summarised in Table 4.

Table - 4: Sources of Resistance and Coping Mechanisms

Sources of Resistance	Coping Mechanisms
1. Perceived peripherality of change	Participation in diagnosis
2. Perception of imposition	Participation and involvement
3. Indifference of the top management	Active support from the top
4. Vested interests	Fait accompli
5. Complacency and inertia	Fait accompli
6. Fear of large scale disturbance	Phasing of change
7. Fear of inadequate resource	Support of resources
8. Fear of obsolescence	Development of skills
9. Fear of loss of power	Role of redefinition and reorientation
10. Fear of overload	Role clarity and definition

Coping strategy to be adopted may also depend on the situations. Maheshwari (1991) has suggested six strategies, each of which would work in specific situations. These are - education and communication, participation and involvement, facilitation and support (e.g. training in new skills), negotiation and agreement (e.g. modify details), manipulation and cooperation, explicit or implicit coercion.

Any change agent who is capable of identifying in advance the potential or likely resistance factors will be in a position to take preventive measures while planning the change process. This preventive step reduces the forces of resistance paving the way for smooth implementation of the change process and achieving the expected outcomes.

Check Your Progress 3

What measures would you take, as the Head of a Distance Education Institution, planning to implement change which will have large scale disturbances/dislocations in the institution? Answer in about 50 words

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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2.7 LET US SUM UP

Implementation of change is not a smooth affair, in any organization particularly more so in a distance education institution. 'Resistance' is the main issue that one encounters in the implementation of change. Unless this issue is understood in the real perspective, and the source of resistance is identified and effective measures taken to manage the resistance, no agent of change can be successful in the real sense. Hence this unit dealt with all the issues related to 'resistance' with examples wherever needed and relevant. You will notice that we have tried to provide these examples, mainly in the context of the distance education system, as we hope that you have by now familiarised yourself with its organisation, structure, methods and practices. It would also have, hopefully given you an opportunity to reflect on the problems involved in changing the status quo and addressing those problems and finding solutions to them.

2.8. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

- 1 Psychological factors affect change to a large extent in distance education institutions. The main reason for this is that several categories of personnel are involved: teachers, computer professionals, media persons, academics, support staff etc. Implementing any change in such a situation is complex because there is lack of appreciation of each category by the other, there is no trust between any two categories, and at times there is conflict among themselves and between them and the management etc.
- 2 Any change agent who looks at resistance in a positive way, can turn it to advantages such as (i) source for information on likely hurdles which can come in the way of implementation of change, ii) based on this information, change agent/manager can plan, design the change processes for smooth execution, and iii) in the absence of any resistance surfacing, the management would not be aware of potential impediments to change after it has gone a long way with change. Resistance also gives expression to the expectations of the employees/beneficiaries from change, and to what they don't want, etc.
- 3 As head of the institution I would take the following two major measures to implement change which is likely to lead to large scale disturbances in the institution. (i) Involving employees at all levels in the discussion on the subject of change to be implemented, conveying my plan and accepting their constructive suggestions so that together, we arrive at an agreement on implementation (ii) implementing change of such magnitude in phases, in such a way that the impact of change is not sudden disturbances, but a gradual and smooth transition. .

UNIT 3 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Success of Change – Issues and Factors
- 3.3 Role, Characteristics and Skills of Change Agent
 - 3.3.1 Role of change agent
 - 3.3.2 Characteristics of change agent
 - 3.3.3 Skills of a change agent
- 3.4 Organisations and their Orientation to Change
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit-1 of this block we discussed various theoretical models of change, while Unit-2 dealt with major factors affecting change and resistance to change in organisations. This unit focusses on critical success factors that facilitate change. A change agent plays a significant role in the process of change. We look at the role and characteristics of the change agent and the various skills required by the change agent, in this unit. If organisations are not prone to change, then no other factor can contribute to changes in them. Organisations and Institutions which are prone to change, and which are not, have been identified on certain parameters and presented in this unit.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to

- identify various factors that are responsible for the success of change,
- analyse the role and characteristics of the change agent,
- examine the skills required by change agents, and
- identify institutions and organisations which have a change orientation.

3.2 SUCCESS OF CHANGE – ISSUES AND FACTORS

Organisations frequently need to undertake planned, programmatic changes to transform or bring about fundamental changes in, a) what drives the organisation, b) relationship between and among organisational components, c) ways of doing work, d) means, values or reward systems. Consultants or external change agents are often used to help bring about such transformation.

Consultants are experts who have both knowledge and experience in relevant areas. More importantly, they are outsiders to the internal organisational dynamics and can therefore, transcend the constraints of the organisation and take an objective and rational view.

However, no change effort can be accomplished and implemented by consultants alone. Internal change agents or Internal Resource Persons have to be associated with the external consultants linking, coordinating or acting as the nodal point between the Consultants and the organisation. Internal Change Agents have a significant role in the success of a change effort. Particularly in educational organisations and institutions without internal change agents, implementation of change is difficult due to the delicate and complex processes involved in educational activities and transactions. On the contrary, when innovations – whether it is use of teaching aids in teaching-learning process, or use of technology based teaching, training methods or new methods in assessment and evaluation - are conceived, implemented and evaluated by the teachers, heads of institutions or any other member from the institution itself without the help of external change agent or consultant, they are most likely to succeed.

Organizations of today are profoundly affected by the rapidly increasing pace of change, and the organization of the future will be even more profoundly affected. The concept of force-field analysis – the tendency of an organization to seek an equilibrium, or balance, and the analysis of deviation-amplifying and deviation-reducing forces to help optimize the balance is useful in understanding change efforts. This involves two sets of forces representing two opposing vectors: the deviation-reducing (reactive) forces work towards reducing the deviation amplifying forces and the attainment of a more optimal balance in the system.

Organizational equilibrium can be altered by either increasing the set of forces in the desired direction or reducing the set of opposing vectors. One noted author, Chris Argyris, believes that the strongest reactive forces lie not only within the managers, but also within the other individuals in the organisation. He postulates that most individuals are “systematically blind” to their behaviour and are therefore “culturally programmed” to behave in ways that reduce the probability of change. In the previous unit, when we discussed resistance to change, we noted that any change is likely to encounter stiff resistance to start with. Despite resistance, when the change is implemented those forces which resisted earlier would try to reduce the impact of change. The strength of these reactive forces cannot be lessened simply by increasing the amount and degree of the proactive forces. Rather, a much more effective approach is to reduce the amount and degree of the resistance to change by reducing the strength of the reactive forces. To mention a case in brief in a distance education institution, out of many groups among academics, there was one group which was very vocal and

critical of any change introduced by the authorities and always labelled changes as anti-academic measures. At one point of time, the authorities identified the members of this group and involved them in planning and implementing the changes, which they resisted earlier. The group contributed a lot to implement the change and to convince others about the desirability of change. To put it in order, the success of change efforts depends upon

- the skill in identifying and analysing the problems which require solutions and in articulating the objectives of change accordingly;
- the skill in devising successful methods to accomplish the objectives of the proposed change and thus solving the problems;
- the skill in enlisting the support of members/employees for the objectives and also the methods of change (Judson, 1968).

Greiner reviewed 18 studies of organizational change and found that the more successful change attempts involved six major steps.

Pressure and Arousal: Change as a response to pressures from either external forces – competitor breakthroughs or stockholder discontent- or internal events – interdepartmental conflict, decreased productivity, or a union strike.

Intervention and Re-orientation: This step usually involves bringing in a newcomer, an outside consultant, who has a more objective view point, can appraise organizational needs, and can reorient the thinking of top managers by getting them to re-examine their practices and procedures, there by helping them to define the real problem.

Diagnosis and Recognition: Here, the newcomer, or consultant, helps the organization at all levels to do a better job of “seeking the location and causes of problems”. In the more successful attempts at change, this is a shared rather than a unilateral or delegated approach. In the unilateral approach, the top brass makes the decisions; in the delegated approach, top management delegates, but remains involved.

Invention and Commitment: Effort is now directed toward developing more effective solutions to problems, using the shared approach to obtain full commitment to the implementation of the new solutions. Griener stresses that successful change approaches involve intensive searches for new, innovative solutions which depend on the collaboration of many people who provide their own solutions. In his study, Griener found that none of the less successful attempts at change, reached this stage and that rather than commitment, there was serious resistance to the proposed changes. (In other words, the reactive forces became stronger than the proactive forces).

Experimentation and Search: The successful change approaches used “reality testing” to determine the usefulness of the solution prior to the introduction of large-scale changes. Griener stresses that the concept of shared power ensures that a number of minor decisions are implemented at all levels of the organization. In short, the decision-making process is tentative rather than final.

Reinforcement and Acceptance: Successful change leads to clear improvements in organizational performance, with corresponding support for change from all levels of the organization. This reinforces the impact of the change, particularly as it involves a sense of experimentation and reward for those who continue with change efforts.

From these studies of successful and less successful change attempts, Griener concludes that successful organizational changes require four positive actions:

- The myth that organizational change must consist of a master blueprint designed and executed at the top by an “omniscient consultant or top manager” must be dispelled.
- Managers too often assume that change is for those lower in the organization, who are seen to be less productive and less intelligent than those who are higher in the hierarchy.
- Successful change efforts cannot rely on either unilateral or delegated approaches to change.
- Those involved in the change must develop broader outlooks and become less parochial in their view points toward change.

The organisation and institution tend to be conducive to change effort, if it is seen:

- to be beneficial to the employees in the unit concerned and they are involved in the change process;
- to have any positive consequences for the other sub-systems, or any effect on inter-unit or inter-departmental coordination and cooperation;
- to result in the improvement in the unit’s performance in terms of a better product, an effective procedure or better design as the case may be to improve one’s own performance without undue demands on oneself;
- to contribute to one’s own development whereby one is able to acquire more knowledge, better job skills, etc.

Check Your Progress 1

What are the major steps that are responsible for the success of change efforts according to Griener? Which one of them is more important in the process of change?

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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3.3 ROLE, CHARACTERISTICS AND SKILLS OF CHANGE AGENT

To help the organization/institution adjust to variations in its external or internal environment, change may be brought about by a professional consultant outside the organisation or by the managers/ academics/ administrators within. The change agent, hence may be defined as "a professional person who influences innovations-decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency" (Roger & Shoemaker, 1971). It is the job of the manager to introduce and implement a change so that the desired innovations/decisions are effected in the organisation/ institution.

Selecting an internal or an external change agent is a matter of choice. There are certain advantages as well as disadvantages associated with both external and the internal change agents.

The internal change agent possesses intimate knowledge of the organisation/institution and also the managerial powers to legitimise decisions. He/she may not generate suspicion and mistrust as an external agent does. He/she might be accepted to a greater degree and have credibility due to his/her organisational status. However, being an insider he/she might be biased in his/her outlook and may not perceive problems objectively. On the other hand, an external consultant may be more objective in problem-analysis. He/she might bring with him/her more of professionalism. Generally, he/she derives power from his/her expertise. Less of polarisation is likely to arise among the executives to his/her ideas and hence confronting cliques or groups are less likely to

form. The clients may be more open and less different. However, he/she may not have a comprehensive understanding of the organisation/institution, its people and culture. Some of the external change agents may be more interested in the change itself than in the existing social system-thus leading to some blind spots.

3.3.1 Role of a change agent

The change agents come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Personality differences in the agents and wide variations in the client organisations in terms of goals, products, norms, culture and problems make it difficult to delineate what exactly the functions of a change agent are. The role of change agent depends upon the people involved, the organisation and the problem or crisis at hand.

Generally, change agents are said to perform seven roles in the change-process (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

- They analyse the situation and outline the need for change on the part of their clients. The client system is made to realise the importance and benefits of the intended change.
- They establish a 'change' relationship with them. The clients feel that the change can be effectively brought about with the help and support of the change agents.
- They are able to identify and list the problems faced by the client after they diagnose them. Also they are able to anticipate the problems likely to be faced by the client during and after the change is effected and ways and means of minimising and remedying them.
- They make the clients feel the need for change, the change is not thrust on them. They are made to understand the relevance and necessity of change to support it.
- They prepare a blue print of action for implementing the change. The support of the client system is enlisted for translating the planned change into an action process. Thereby resistance to change is minimised.
- They stabilise change and prevent discontinuance. A change moves the organisation/institution towards a newer equilibrium from the earlier one. If the new equilibrium is not maintained, the organisation/institution is likely to revert to the earlier equilibrium and the change effort fails, however well planned and executed it may have been. The client system is made to realise the importance of this fact and thus the new behaviour finds support to get stabilised.
- They achieve a terminal relationship with clients. No change agent can continue to be associated with a change effort too long. At some time, during the change process, the client should feel confident to take over

and maintain the change effort. That is the opportune time for the change agent to terminate relations with the client system.

- This ensures non-dependence on the change agent as the client system must carry on the on-going activity with confidence.

It may be that some more roles, other than the seven listed above, have to be played by a change agent depending on the situation and the problem at hand. In the case of DEIs the internal change agents can be senior administrators, senior academics or high level committees. Their role should be clearly spelled out in terms of the jurisdiction of change and their powers, otherwise there is always a possibility of their misusing and misdirecting the change effort.

Check Your Progress 2

Define a change agent. Is it advisable to have an internal or an external change agent in an educational organisation and why?

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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3.3.2 Characteristics of change agent

Although various authors and researchers have attempted to identify the personal characteristics of successful change agents, most of their studies contain little useful information. They have produced lists of desirable and

undesirable personal characteristics that are based principally on people's beliefs and impressions about what characteristics effective change agents ought to have. It has been suggested, for example, that the effective change agent is an extrovert, has considerable interpersonal skills, is creative and takes risks, has the ability to conceptualize and clearly present ideas, and is good at organizing activities. It would be hard not to agree with a list of such attractive characteristics.

An extensive review of the research literature, however, has enabled Havelock and Sashkin (1983) to identify a set of factors characteristic of effective change agents. These factors, briefly defined below, really refer to the way that the change agent manages the process of change, rather than to personal characteristics.

Empathy: The skill of understanding the feelings and thoughts of another person. Like most skills it can be learned by most people and thus is not really a personal characteristic of the change agent. Empathy leads to improved communication and understanding between the change agent and the other employees.

Linkage: The degree of collaboration between the change agent and the others- the extent to which they are linked to one another as equal participants in the change process. The greater the collaborative involvement (the tighter the linkage), the more likely it is that the change agent will be successful.

Proximity: The more accessible the change agent, the more likely it is that the change agent will be successful. Increased proximity obviously makes it easier to develop collaborative linkages.

Structuring: The ability to clearly plan and organize activities with respect to the change effort. When the change effort is outlined and presented clearly, it is more likely to be understood and thus more likely to be effective. A clearly organized change effort also facilitates implementation of the change approach in a straight forward step-by-step fashion.

Openness: The degree to which the change agent is receptive to ideas, needs, and feelings. The preceding four factors can all facilitate the development of such openness or, when absent, they can effectively hinder the development of openness between the change agent and client.

Energy: The extent of the effort that the change agent puts into the change activity. It is not unusual for a change agent to be "spread thin" across many activities. Similarly, when immediate operational problems are so pressing that they take all of the energy, it is unlikely that he will be able to devote the effort needed to make the change successful.

Synergy: The positively reinforcing effects that each of the preceding six factors have upon one another. Synergy means the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The more favourable each of the preceding factors is, the more synergy there will be for the success of the organisational development effort.

3.3.3 Skills of a change agent

The various skills that a change agent ought to possess are classified under three broad categories: cognitive skills, action skills and communication skills. These, however, should not be considered watertight categories; skills under a given category may overlap with those in other categories. Hence the classification attempted below is only an approximation, but at the same time it helps in appreciating the diverse skills that a change agent should possess and the diverse roles that he/she plays. The basis for classification is the list of change agent skills suggested in the organisational development (OD) literature of the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioural Science, U.S.A.

Cognitive Skills

They include the following:

Self-understanding

The change agent should be able to analyse and comprehend his/her own motivation in perceiving a need for change and the desire to bring about a change. He/she should be able to determine his/her own strategic role in the light of the given context and his/her abilities to manage that context.

Conceptualisation

- The change agent should be able to determine the possible units of change.
- Every change tends to influence other sub-systems, the related positions, roles and members. The change agent should be able to foresee these inter-relationships and visualise how a particular change is related to other possible changes either for the present or the future.
- He/she should clearly define objectives of the intended change.
- He/she must conduct an anticipatory exercise in carrying out a stepwise plan.
- He/she must be capable of eliciting and eliminating alternatives and provide for replanning and assessment at later stages.

- He/she must be able to anticipate the barriers and/or resistance to change and devise ways and means of overcoming both.
- He/she must be able to anticipate the degree of favour for the intended changes among the clients.

Evaluation

The change agent should possess the skills of assessment/evaluation. He/she should be able to assess the client group in terms of its nature, expectations and internal dynamics. He/she should be able to use the appropriate methodology to obtain feedback about the client's problems, expectations and the felt need for change as well as the utility of the evaluative measures. Specifically, the required skills of evaluation are

- determining the size, character and structural make up of the client group;
- determining the degree or extent of the felt need for change;
- using diagnostic instrument such as surveys, rating scales, observation schedules, etc., appropriate to the problem;
- evaluating the problems, causes, etc., objectively and not in terms of one's own likes and dislikes;
- diagnosing causes of failure as well as success as the case may be;
- identifying the methods of change which the clients believe as appropriate.

Action skills

A change agent plays the roles of a consultant, counsellor, facilitator, trainer, etc.

As a *counsellor*, he/she should possess the skills to

- make catharsis possible if it is seen to be a starting point for a change process (Catharsis refers to giving an opportunity to the client to give vent to his/her feelings, in other words 'unburden his/her heart');
- help the clients examine their attitudes, expectations and motivations;
- deal with the client's ideology, myths, values, etc., wisely and effectively (Any intended change should be in consonance with the client's expectations, value system, etc. Otherwise, resistance to change efforts is bound to develop at one or the other point of time. The change agent should orient the change effort in such a way that it fits with the client's frame of reference);

- clarify the nature of relationship and inter-dependence between the client and the change agent.

As a *facilitator*, he/she should be able to

- raise the level of aspiration of the clients (these aspirations, however, should be realistic. The change effort should be perceived to have a reinforcing value for the client's increased aspirations.);
- develop an awareness of the potentialities of the change among the clients, and thus their positive expectations from the change;
- create among the concerned a willingness and a sense of responsibility to participate in the change process;
- encourage the clients to use a step-wise plan and also have patience in its execution;
- develop an awareness about the possible sources of help for the change process.

A *consultant* is required to

- make a step-wise plan (the change plan has to be outlined in a number of stages or steps, one leading to another rather than something that indicates drastic action);
- make use of appropriate techniques to arrive at group consensus;
- examine decisions in terms of their 'pros and cons';
- evaluate the progress made at each of the stages of implementation and determine what has been achieved and what has yet to be achieved;
- build and maintain morale and team-spirit of the clients while the change is taking place.

The change agent, as a communicator is concerned with spreading relevant information and the ultimate adoption of the change by the client's system. For this, he/she should have the necessary persuasive skills to enable the client system realise the need for change and the importance of the change to organisational effectiveness. Since the flow of information must follow a multi-step path the consultant should be able to positively influence the opinion of leaders at the different organisational levels. His/Her ability to communicate effectively can be assessed in terms of the extent to which he/she is able to enlist the client's support for the intended change and create in them the eagerness to participate in and implement the change effort.

To be a successful communicator the change agent should

- be clear about the goals and objectives of each of his/her communication plan or activity;

- develop his/her communication play in a way that it is consonant with the clients' needs, attitudes and beliefs;
- be persuasive enough to minimise the possibilities of rejection without giving the feeling of forcing or driving his/her ideas on the clients;
- obtain feedback to determine the effectiveness of his/her communications from time to time;
- make strategic use of informal communication networks so that the formal change efforts are supported by all and not resisted by anybody at all.

3.4 ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR ORIENTATION TO CHANGE

Whether industrial or educational, all organisations/institutions do not show the same orientation towards change. As explained above, various factors contribute to initiating a change in an organisation and several other factors contribute to make a success of the change effort. Basing on the few broad parameters, the organisations/institutions can be categorised into two – i) less oriented to change and ii) highly oriented to change. These are:

i) Organisation/institutions less oriented to change seem to be characterised by

- a simpler technology;
- status quo in their internal environment in which personal relationships among members are generally highly valued as ends in themselves;
- a closed system with a minimum of interaction or liaison with outside organisations or people;
- stereotyped roles with more or less rigid patterns of inter- and intra-role behaviours - consequently individual members lack the ability to emphasise or see themselves in differing roles;
- a stabler external environment or greater control over it;
- a greater degree of horizontal and/or vertical specialisation of jobs and formalisation;
- lack of favourable orientation to change.

Educational institutions, particularly the conventional types, come under this category.

ii) On the other hand, organisations/institutions which are highly oriented to change are characterised by

- technology that is complex and likely to change or improve from time to time;

- rather unstable, or relatively less stable, external and internal environment;
- an open system with a greater degree of interaction with external organisations and people;
- business - like social relationships among the members- the relations are purpose-oriented rather than emotional and affective;
- less of formalisation and horizontal and vertical job specialisation;
- individual members high on empathy as they can see themselves in differing roles;
- basically proactive approach with a positive orientation towards change.

DEIs with high technological inputs and greater degree of interaction and openness are highly prone to change.

To reiterate further, the following major factors have to be kept in mind by any planner, administrator, teacher or any one who wants to introduce change and succeed in the effort.

It is important to communicate the changes to be brought about initially and also to communicate changes after they are implemented so that, there will not be any distortion in communication. This will make the changes effective.

Participation : People at all levels should be involved in implementing change, particularly in distance education institutions where team work is an unavoidable and crucial component. This brings about commitment from all sections otherwise it leads to withdrawal and resistance.

Perception of the Leader: Unless the leader is clear about objectives and methods of change, and is committed to its implementation, others would not take the change effort seriously.

Benefit Analysis: Employees always look into costs, when the change is going to be implemented on a large scale. They may fear that their welfare measures will be affected by these costs. If employees are made aware of these things then they may support change effort without reservation.

Top Level Management: Top Management has to be convinced that change is introduced only when everybody in the organisation is concerned and ready. Top managers who feel that they know everything about the organisation without bothering about others' attitude and concern will not be successful in change effort.

Trust: Before the change is implemented trust has to be built up with regard to security of jobs and other benefits which are essential to overcome

Management of Change

resistance and fear in the minds of employees. This has to be done by top management or change agent or by both.

Involvement of the unions: Most of the problems with regard to change implementation is from the unions in case of industrial organisations and associations in educational institutions. For any change to be effective, their involvement is a must, then the change can be implemented successfully.

Early Success: If change is initiated on large scale, then it will take some time for them to adapt to change. Once they are adapted in phases, success of change will be more certain.

The success of change also depends on whether it is individual based or team-based. Secondly, a flexible plan is required. A number of alternatives should always be made available when change is initiated in the organisation.

Ultimate success of any change effort is not just the implementation alone. A change already implemented should be evaluated after some period. If the results are positive, change efforts have to be consolidated and finally measures have to be initiated for internalization of change in all components of the organisation/institution.

Check Your Progress 3

List the main characteristics which make the organisations/institutions highly oriented to change.

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

Organisational change, unless it is a chance happening, has always an initiator behind it. This initiator could be an individual, a group or an organisation who may, or maynot be, from within the system or organisation that undergoes change. What we have done in this unit is to look at who

these initiators are, what roles they play, what their characteristics are and what skills they possess to become effective change agents.

3.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. Griener found that pressure and arousal; intervention and re-orientation; diagnosis and recognition; invention and commitment; experimentation and search; and reinforcement and acceptance are the major steps for success in any change effort.

Intervention and reorientation is more important because here only the consultant and change agent can study, analyse and see the need for change and accordingly orient the top management.

2. A change agent, whether internal or external is a professional who has expertise in planning, and implementing the change and consolidating the results of the process of change in the organisation.

Both internal and external change agents are necessary for effecting change. While internal change agent will have indepth knowledge of the problem at hand and is acceptable to all sections of employees, he/she may run the risk of being labelled 'subjective'.

External agents are usually considered more objective. However, because of the softer processes and delicate relations which operate in educational institutions, internal change agent will be better.

3. Organisations/institutions which are highly oriented to change are characterised by: technology applications that need constant updating for improvement; less stable external and internal environment; openness and flexibility in interacting with other organisations; and pro-active and positive orientation towards change.

UNIT 4 ORGANISATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR SELF-RENEWAL

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 A Learning Organisation
 - 4.2.1 The learning paradigm
 - 4.2.2 Education-environment relationship
 - 4.2.3 Search for alternatives
 - 4.2.4 Collective wisdom in problem-solving
- 4.3 How do Organisations Learn?
 - 4.3.1 Problem-solving approach and mechanisms
 - 4.3.2 Integrating internal knowledge and experience with functions
 - 4.3.3 Induction or development of new technologies
 - 4.3.4 Innovations and experiments
 - 4.3.5 Monitoring the environment
- 4.4 Organisational Renewal
 - 4.4.1 Building core competence
 - 4.4.2 Motivating and encouraging people to work with new models
 - 4.4.3 Information flows and sharing
 - 4.4.4 Team building
 - 4.4.5 Systemic thinking
- 4.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.6 Check Your Progress : Possible Answers

4.0 INTRODUCTION

We have come to the last unit of the course 'Management of Distance Education'. From the previous Blocks, you will have learnt a good deal about organisation and management of enterprises, how objectives are set, what strategies are adopted to achieve those objectives, how functions are organised and structured, what processes are developed and how the final outcomes are assessed in relation to the objectives with which it all started. Since management literature is so profusely enriched with business theories and practices, the foregoing discussion would have had a fair share of influence of the business metaphor. Be assured, however that we are not talking about distance education as a 'business' in the narrow sense, but as a larger service that requires organisation and management that is closely paralalled to business enterprises.

As in business, so in education. When the activity was initiated, we started with a set of assumptions about whom to teach, what to teach and how, as well as who would provide the resources for the initiative. Over a period of time, all these assumptions would have changed, some very marginally, and some very

substantially. Since these assumptions are basic to the organisation's existence and survival, it is necessary that the objectives, strategies, structures and processes are all adjusted to the changing conditions. It is this process of adjustment that is often called the management of change.

Changes can occur in many different ways as we discussed in unit-1 of this block. There can be upheavals in the environment that can force organisations to change as socialist revolutions did to private enterprise. Competition could change business practices, forcing competitors to improve the quality of their products and services to stay in business, and sometimes even forcing mergers and amalgamations. New technologies could force several products out of the market as did computers to typewriters. How do organisations manage these changes? Some are overtaken by changes, while others anticipate changes and keep themselves always prepared to adjust to changes. In this unit, we shall explore some of the ways in which distance education institutions manage changes and the mechanisms that they set up for their organisational renewal.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be able to

- describe the essential attributes of a learning organisation,
- examine the instruments and processes which are necessary for a distance education institution to establish a knowledge base from its own experiences,
- analyse how important it is for organisations to be proactive in responding to changes in the environment, and
- decide what mechanisms should be in place within the institution to manage changes.

4.2 A LEARNING ORGANISATION

A distance education institution is essentially a teaching institution. Quite simply, it cannot teach without learning. We are not however discussing here just the content of what it teaches that requires continuous updating and revision but, more importantly, the strategies and the styles as well as the methods and the practices that require to be constantly watched, analysed and redesigned to meet a variety of changing situations. In order to be able to do it, the institution has to be continuously learning from its own experiences, by distilling that experience into knowledge, and applying that knowledge to emerging situations and uncertainties.

4.2.1 The learning paradigm

The world has become far too complex to discover any simplicity in it any more. Uncertainties created by environmental turbulence like competition, new discoveries, and changes in life styles are all contributing to the existing complexities constantly. It is no longer possible to visualise a coherent picture of the future in a long-term perspective. If the knowledge about the future is inadequate, it becomes still more difficult to control the consequences that would flow in the long-term. If these consequences remain completely out of control, one can only imagine the anxiety and the tension that any organisation is likely to experience about its own survival.

Organisations however do not resign themselves to these tensions and anxieties. They engage themselves in sustained questioning, developing new perspectives, searching alternatives, and doing things differently. This exercise will involve reexamination of the basic assumptions on which the current operations were launched, and modify them where necessary, to establish the correct relationship between the organisation and its environment. In order to be able to engage meaningfully in such an exercise, organisations have to consciously cultivate a learning environment within themselves. In other words, a learning organisation is one in which the set of philosophy, principles and values that inform its people in shaping their attitudes and behaviour to the attainment of its goals is firmly based on their own collective knowledge and wisdom.

The major characteristics of a learning organisation are that :

- it considers knowledge and learning as well as creativity and innovation as its key resources;
- it has a holistic approach that integrates problem solving, innovation and experimentation with internal knowledge as well as information from outside;
- it has systems in place for creation, acquisition and transfer of new knowledge and also for modifications in its behaviour and attitudes reflecting the changes in knowledge and its application;
- it is willing to change with new ways of working and with new technologies.

No organisation can absorb changes without learning new and better ways of doing, working and organising. It is only through these efforts that new products and processes as well as new techniques and methods are developed; it is these efforts that contribute to improvements in efficiency and productivity; and the success or failure of these efforts will ultimately depend upon the knowledge resource that an organisation creates for itself.

In the whole field of education, the imperatives of innovation and experimentation are more critical in distance education. After all, the emergence of distance education itself owes much to the innovativeness of educational planners and managers, and when once it came to be established, the providers of distance education are facing stiff competition both from local as well as global providers. The traditional system itself is absorbing many of the methods and practices of distance education and it would be no exaggeration to say that the 21st century will be witness to a major turmoil in the field of education, with respect to its functions and also the ways of its functioning.

Educational planners and managers cannot remain oblivious of these developments. Another significant consequence of this development would be that no single provider will be able to meet all the learning needs in a given society or territory. Learners will have to approach several institutions to satisfy their needs. A proactive education system will anticipate these changing patterns of learner needs and prepare itself with the creation of collaborative and networked learning environments rather than letting their potential learner groups scout for information and facilities.

4.2.2 Education- environment relationship

Earlier in this course, we have had occasion to look at the many factors in the environment that have an influence on the planning and management of the distance education system at the macro level, or a distance teaching institution at the micro level. While examining these factors, we had talked about the changing demographic profile of learners with respect to their age, gender, occupation, income levels, place of residence, etc. At another level, we also considered the varying needs to be met: the need for widening access to promote social justice, provision of equal opportunities, improving productivity through skill development and technology upgradation, induction of new technologies, etc.

With the emergence of new learner groups, and new learning needs, new learning styles and preferences also emerge which require different pedagogic methods and techniques as well. The potential of new communication technologies provides both a challenge and an opportunity to the instructional system designers. Educational providers cannot get away from these realities.

Still more complex is the challenge that education systems across the world are facing today, the challenge of diminishing resources. This is assuming almost the proportions of a threat. Governments are finding it increasingly difficult to provide all the resources that education systems need; within the education system itself there are competing claims as in the case of primary education against higher education; and even when funds are somehow mobilised, there are problems of putting together the intellectual resources, required for

teaching. As a consequence, educational resource mobilisation which has traditionally been a responsibility of the governments is progressively getting diversified, and with several private providers entering the 'market', the methods of organisation and management of education are also changing significantly.

These environmental changes will have a decisive impact on education. As we have said earlier, education cannot afford to be overtaken by these changes. It has to anticipate, and prepare for the change. It is in this preparation that the qualities of a learning organisation will be severely tested. How do the educational institutions prepare for this change? We mentioned in the previous section that when the future is uncertain, in fact, when there are no ways of knowing the future with any degree of accuracy, it is not possible for an institution to put in place structures and processes, or systems and procedures, that can control future events. In cases like this, it is only the knowledge and experience gained from the working of the institution itself that can be of any help. It is therefore imperative that systems and procedures are established by organisations to internalise their experience, convert it into knowledge and share it widely within the organisations.

How does a distance education institution go about this task? A checklist of items that could have an impact on the relationship between the institution and its environment is given below:

- the demographic profile of students enrolled;
- the demographic profile of students who are seeking opportunities through enquiries, advice; etc.
- the proportion of learners from the assumed target groups who have actually enrolled;
- the patterns of retention and drop-outs;
- the changes, if any, in occupational patterns and levels;
- training and retraining needs for job change;
- introduction of new technologies;
- patterns of resource allocation for education;
- globalisation and competition in education;
- strengths and weaknesses in the existing system in facing new challenges;
- availability of competent personnel (teaching and professional);
- directions of national economic development.

What is given above are only illustrative indicators. The important point to be emphasised here is that a distance education institution, if it has to proactively manage environmental changes, should have in place a system that will constantly monitor all relevant information (internal as well as external) and

evaluate the impact that any change in its current assumptions that govern its operations will have on its future operations. It will then have prepared itself in substantial measure to respond to any change and manage it well.

Check Your Progress 1

- (i) What is a learning organization? Write two important characteristics of such an organisation?
- (ii) How environmental changes affect education and what preparations are required by educational institutions to face these changes? Answer in about 50 words each.

Note : i) Space is given below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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4.2.3 Search for alternatives

It is an established fact that success often depends upon doing things differently. It is a natural tendency to follow the beaten track – it is safe, there is no risk, and in any case, every one else is doing it. In traditional education, based entirely on classroom-centred, face-to-face interaction, the method remains substantially the same; there can only be marginal or incremental changes. Teaching aids may be used to supplement oral transmission, but they do not substitute classroom instruction. Slides, graphs, charts or audio and video tapes may be used to support the teachers' effort at communication, the teacher still remains centre-stage. But not so in distance education.

In distance education, there is a significant substitution of the traditional role of the teacher. Face-to-face interaction, if at all, is limited and takes place at different locations and with different sets of teachers for the same course. This substitution factor offers several alternatives to choose from. For instance, a large number of part-time tutors recruited locally at the study centres can offer tutorials to students registered on the same courses. Alternatively, a single teacher at a central location can reach all students at several locations, synchronously or asynchronously, through the medium of one or more communication technology devices. Satellite-based communication technologies offer opportunities for establishing virtual class-rooms at various locations using multimedia transmission facilities. What method is eventually used is a judgement of the management depending upon its own assessment of the effectiveness of the medium, its accessibility to learners, its cost and also its appropriateness to the environment. Whatever the initial choice, with improvements in technologies and their applications, the management has to engage itself in continuously looking for more effective alternatives, if its has to satisfy the remote learner(s).

A distance education institution has several other important functions, the production and distribution of materials being the most important among them. In this case also, there are several options available to the management. These are

- in-house production;
- outsourcing all production functions;
- just-in-time production;
- large scale production and warehousing;
- contracting out all distribution functions;
- centralised distribution;
- decentralised production and distribution.

The choices are many. But the issue is how the management chooses one method or another, or a combination of methods?

We have referred earlier to the significance of the Management Information System (MIS) in the context of the issues in planning and management of distance education institutions. It is the effectiveness of the MIS that will ultimately assist the management in its search for alternatives and the choices to be made. In order to be effective, the MIS will have to constantly provide the feedback on the performance of current operations, their costs, their strengths and weaknesses, and also the opportunities that new methods will offer.

4.2.4 Collective wisdom in problem solving

Organisations routinely handle large volumes of information. A distance education institution has to deal with masses of information on all aspects of its functioning. It has to collect, collate and analyse demographic data to assess the potential number of learners; it has to survey and analyse economic development and employment data to estimate the needs of various employment sectors for additional human resources; it has to assess the education and training needs, in terms of levels and professional/technical/vocational categories; it has to evaluate the response to programmes on offer from students, employers, the professions, and so on; it has also, almost regularly, monitor information on technologies and their application, new and emerging thrusts in social and economic development, public policies and the like. There is a bewildering variety of sources from which a dynamic institution meets its information needs. The processing of all this information creates the knowledge base of the institution.

An institution does not create knowledge just for accumulation only. It applies that knowledge in its operations which in turn generates experience. From a critical analysis of this experience, it draws lessons. In other words, knowledge is also a structured form of distilled experience. This knowledge is purely internal, and owned entirely by the institution.

At this stage, it is important to remember that an organisation or an institution is essentially the people who comprise that organisation or institution. Knowledge of any institution, therefore, is the knowledge of its people. It is not enough if knowledge is accumulated and owned; what is made of that knowledge, and how, is of still greater importance. It is the application of its knowledge by an institution in solving its problems that makes for wisdom. This is a crucial process in a learning organisation – distilling knowledge from information and experience and applying that knowledge to make wise choices.

We have mentioned earlier in this section that organisational survival depends in a large measure on the processes for free flow and sharing of information among the people within the organisation, and the systems and procedures which are in place to enable them to participate effectively in its management. It is this approach that makes for the strength of an institution – drawing upon its collective wisdom in problem-solving and decision-making.

Check Your Progress 2

Identify the following statements as True 'T' or False 'F' and mention against each statement

Note: Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

- | | |
|------|--|
| i) | In traditional education teacher still remains at centre-stage
() |
| ii) | Satellite-based communication technologies offer opportunities for establishing virtual class-rooms at various locations using multimedia transmission facilities
() |
| iii) | In order to be effective, the MIS need not provide feedback constantly on the performance of current operations
() |
| iv) | An organisation or institution is essentially the people who comprise that organisation or institution
() |

4.3 HOW DO ORGANISATIONS LEARN ?

Any organisation is a collective of the people who make it. This collective is not however a loose conglomeration of disparate elements; it is nearly always structured formally around sets of coherent functions that help the organisation achieve its goals. In structuring an organisation, generally, functions are defined, roles are specified and boundaries are demarcated. This structure makes most organisations reflect varying degrees of complexity depending upon the extent of interdependence of functional units, most of which often perform their roles as though each one of them is autonomous of the rest. Even when roles are defined and jobs are specified, there is a natural tendency among people to look at these roles and tasks independently, and not from the perspective of the organisation as a whole. Since functionally, most of them occupy the same levels in the hierarchy of the organisation, coordination of the performance of their functions becomes essential. It is this horizontal coordination of performance that often turns out to be a serious challenge to the management of many organisations.

Several organisations establish mechanisms, formally or informally, to ensure this coordination. Whatever form this mechanism takes, it is an important element in the organisation's structure. The essential purpose of this instrument is to encourage Unit Heads to consider their individual problems and challenges as those of the organisation as a whole, and to bring to bear on the search for their solutions the entire knowledge and wisdom of the organisation. In order to foster and develop such a culture, there should be within the organisations a climate of respect and concern for persons with established reputation of performance, and from whom there are high expectations. Wide dissemination of information throughout the system especially at the horizontal levels, promotes equality of relationships and facilitates informal interaction in facing problems and challenges.

4.3.1 Problem-solving approach and mechanisms

A distance education institution could face a variety of problems both in its current operations as well as in its future tasks. For instance, the enrolment could be much below or above the expected levels; there could be failures in the production and distribution systems; there could be challenges from other providers.

We have discussed earlier in this course the organisational structure of a distance education institution and the issues in its planning and management. In that discussion, we have considered, at some length, the roles and functions of the units in charge of planning and development, internal coordination and management information system. All these three centres are crucial to the institution's knowledge resource base. They create knowledge, disseminate it and in solving current problems, they can also transfer this knowledge to any other operational centre. In other words, these centres should help create an atmosphere in which any problem or challenge is perceived within the organisation as some thing that the whole organisation has to grapple with, and in so doing, the unit immediately concerned with the issue should feel that it has the backing of the whole organisation in addressing it.

It is this approach to problem-solving that we discussed earlier in this section as the application of collective wisdom in addressing any issue. It has however to be admitted that this approach is not something that can be taken for granted; it has to be cultivated and practised. It is only then that a sense of participation would develop and through it, the more essential commitment of all concerned to the survival and growth of the institution. At the core of this approach is willingness to share information, frequent exchange of views and experience, and above all, mutual respect and collegiality, among all functionaries who constitute the system.

4.3.2 Integrating internal knowledge and experience with functions

In the discussion on the organisation and structure of a distance education institution, we had occasion to explain that it consists of three major systems, namely, course development and production, delivery of programmes and services, and organisation and management. We had also seen that each of these major systems has several sub-systems, each of which has a set of specific functions devolving on it. The initial design of the structure of a distance education institution will necessarily be based on our knowledge of the ways in which institutions elsewhere are functioning. As the new institution's operations get under way, it begins to generate experience. It has to be remembered that the objectives of a distance education institution, the ways of its working and the attitudes and behaviour of the public including those in authority as well as the potential learners, are all conditioned significantly by its

environment. It follows therefore that a distance education institution has to be constantly alive to its environment and should be willing to look at its own functions, processes and practices with a view to improve upon them and make them more effective and relevant.

There are many ways in which an institution can obtain this feedback from the environment. We have discussed in the previous Blocks the usefulness of systems for evaluation of programmes as well as institutional performance. We have also explained the need for surveys and studies about the acceptability of the graduates in the job market, the employer's attitude towards the institution's qualifications, and the response from other institutions to its efforts at resource mobilisation, and so on. You will be wondering why all these issues which were already discussed at some length are again and again brought back into focus. The answer is simple. We discussed these issues earlier in the context of the functionality of current operations; we are now referring to them in the context of the needs of the future. Perhaps, what we set out at the beginning may have delivered; perhaps, they may not have. Whatever the outcome, do we persist with these structures and processes? Or, do we look at them again in the context of contemporary need and future changes in direction? Yes, a dynamic organisation needs to do it. That is how a learning organisation conceives the initial design of its structures so that knowledge and experience gained in the future can be ploughed back into the structures and get them modified from time to time.

To refresh your memory, we may recall a few instances we discussed earlier that would illustrate how experience can inform the desirability or otherwise of systemic changes. Here are a few examples:

- centralisation or decentralisation of certain operations like admission of students or distribution of materials;
- combining coherent functions like admission with student record maintenance or maintenance of assignment evaluation records with examination records maintenance, even though they were separately organised initially;
- setting up appropriate mechanisms to deal with emerging issues like quality control, cost analysis, evaluation research and so on.

Check Your Progress 3

How does the problem-solving approach work in a Distance Education institution?

- Note :**
- i) Space is given below for your answer.
 - ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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4.3.3 Induction or development of new technologies

There is no getting away from the fact that Information and Communication Technologies are integral to the distance learning systems. Since developments in these fields are taking place at a breathtaking speed, no system can at any given point of time, feel confident and secure that it has inducted the most modern technologies into its operations. The technologies used are not ends in themselves, but there is no denying the fact that distance education is driven by technologies. They are used to augment opportunities and widen access, they can make learning more efficient and flexible, they can also enrich the learning processes.

A large variety of technologies, of varying degrees and levels of sophistication are now available and are used in distance education in the developed and developing countries. We have already discussed the concerns that would influence the choice of any one or more technologies in a given environment. The point is that in a rapidly changing technology environment, the choice once made does not stay for all times to come. In the induction of new technologies or in moving from a lower level of sophistication to higher levels, the management has to be guided by two important considerations. First, it has to settle for these technologies which are compatible with the environment in terms of availability, accessibility, costs and user friendliness. Secondly, the management has also to anticipate the future and prepare the environment for absorption of new technologies. In this latter case, the distance education institutions are also functioning as change agents for technology induction and upgradation to meet future needs.

It is not surprising that in today's world, highly successful distance education systems are also managing very specialised communication networks. They are developing and using many varieties of interactive software to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching-learning environment. The management of any distance learning system has to be alert about these developments and should be constantly endeavouring to develop or acquire new technologies for its survival.

4.3.4 Innovations and experiments

The primary focus of a distance education institution is the creation of an effective learning environment. The development of such an environment is

the function of several factors ranging from institutional policies on programmes and their delivery, students and personnel, to the methods and practices of delivery of various services. Unlike the established, class-room based education, distance learning is still an evolving system and there is no single approach or strategy that makes for an effective distance learning environment. As we have seen earlier, distance education programmes have their own unique characteristics, the most important among them being flexibility in structures, processes, methods and practices. It is this flexibility that permits a distance education institution to innovate and experiment continuously.

Innovations and experiments do not take place in an environment devoid of initiatives and risk-taking. Innovation is not a chance happening; it is a continuous process consciously sustained. We demand new technology, new ideas; we want change. But seldom do we realise that change also destroys the stable state. Innovation leads to changes, changes in the attitudes of the people, and their value system. From this point, we fear innovation, and discourage it. Innovation involves uncertainties and risks. It is not an orderly, risk-reducing process. Nevertheless, a dynamic management process can still anticipate the uncertainties and convert them into manageable risks. This is a fundamental issue in the management of innovation.

It would be appropriate at this stage to look at some factors that might still inhibit innovations in distance education. The education system is still conditioned in a substantial measure by the standards and values that tradition has shaped over centuries. It is not surprising, therefore, that at every stage of its evolution and almost in every activity and process, there is a preoccupation with parallels in the conventional system which, more often than not, tends to hold back initiative and enterprise from distance educators.

Preparing people for an innovative enterprise is not an easy task. Innovation often exposes the inadequacy of established professional authority. It demands that all participants in the innovation process learn a great deal more than what they already know. This learning always cuts across the immediate professional concerns of the personnel involved. This process demands that each participant gives up his stereo-typed view, and become willing to listen to each other. Sometimes, this might lead to mutual frustration. This can be avoided only if all of them are willing to test openly the nature and appropriateness of the assumptions that they have of themselves, and of each other, against an equally open examination of what innovation demands from them. This is the essence of a truly innovative process. It is through such interaction among the participants in an innovative endeavour that they can jointly discover themselves, and their true potential for effective collaboration and team work which indeed is one of the core competencies of a distance education institution.

4.3.5 Monitoring the environment

In the section on Education-Environment Relationship (4.2.2), we discussed at some length several environmental factors that can influence the functions and working of a distance education institution. While discussing these factors, we have also drawn attention to the need for constantly monitoring these factors in order to be able to proactively respond to emerging changes in the environment. Without again going over these factors, we pause for a brief moment here to look at the instruments and mechanisms that should be in place for this activity.

As we mentioned earlier, a distance education institution interacts with the environment in many different ways. Its own structures, as we noted earlier, make provision for involvement of external experts in the consideration and decision on several issues of policy, programmes, strategies and so on. This is a valuable source to feel the environment. The interphase with governments is another major opportunity to assess the environmental factors that could have an impact on the institution. These might be reflected, for example, on the funding pattern or making greater provision for education and training in specific sectors. For instance, if the Government policies envisage a major expansion in school education, the institution should be ready to augment its facilities for teacher training, if such facilities are already available, or create them quickly if they do not exist.

In the best of times, it is not an easy task to assess the future needs for education and training in any society. The complexity of factors involved in the exercise is indeed bewildering. Nevertheless, there are trends and indicators available from a variety of sources. If these can be monitored systematically and fed into the system, considerable spadework would have been done to prepare the institution to take on new and additional responsibilities in education and training at relatively short notice. Some suggestions follow:

- It is now common for most governments to prepare long-term perspective plans for economic development. A forward-looking distance education institution would be critically looking at these perspective plans to identify the major growth areas, the order of magnitudes of expected growth, the existing employment pattern in the concerned sectors, the projected need for additional human resources in those sectors, etc.
- Once the areas and their training needs are known, it should be possible to break them up into different branches of specialisation, different levels of training, and then assess the instructional infrastructure required to organise them. This is a major exercise that institutions should continuously be engaged in.
- Globalisation and competition are major environmental influences on distance education. Communication technologies provide access to any body anywhere in the world to any institution any where. Logically,

therefore, the best institutions can force the bad and the poor ones out of the 'market'. It is therefore necessary for every institution to develop certain core competencies and a competitive edge in terms of quality, relevance, or any other parameter, if it has to survive.

- 'Collaboration and networking' is going to be the new paradigm of educational provision. A forward-looking institution should be able to transform competition into collaboration and cooperation by consolidating its areas of strength and striving for excellence in its own core competence.

This list can be long. But the question that remains is who in the institution should be doing all this. That is why distance education institutions, unlike the traditional universities, emphasise planning and development and create structures within its organisational set up for performing the development function.

Check Your Progress 4

Innovation and experimentation is unavoidable in Distance Education institutions –why? Answer in about 50 words.

- Note :** i) Space is given below for your answer
ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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4.4 ORGANISATIONAL RENEWAL

These days we hear a great deal about management theories and practices. Classical theories of management are all being rewritten. Management literature is replete with new jargons: downsizing, outsourcing, process reengineering, core competencies, system integration, value addition, globalisation, the list is endless. What do all these signify? *Change*, in one word. When rapid changes are taking place around you, you cannot stand still and watch helplessly. You have to adjust to the changes, reposition yourself at some point of advantage so that you are not overtaken by changes. It is this process of adjustment, the transformation of an adversity into an advantage, that management of change is all about.

You cannot change and still remain the same. Every change signifies something new, something which was not there in the first place. You might have started doing things differently, you might have shed some flab, you might have integrated several operations or decentralised them. What you do, and how you do it, will depend upon your perceptions about your strengths and weaknesses, and about the opportunities and threats that any change in the environment might offer. It is this process of assessing the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats that Management Science calls the SWOT analysis, an essential tool for management of change and organisational renewal.

4.4.1 Building core competence

Open and Distance Education has slowly, but surely, emerged as a strategic means in the provision of education and training. New communication technologies are providing more effective tools to governments, educational institutions, business establishments and other public and private agencies to reach out to large numbers at relatively lower costs. In this new environment, the real challenge before the management of education is going to be the development of a new pedagogy for technology-mediated learning and teaching.

In an earlier unit in Block 3, we have discussed some of the competencies to be developed in distance educators in the context of the staff development needs. We had listed several areas in which it is necessary to get the staff trained. This list is long and possibly, no single institution can develop all the competence in all the areas. A little proficiency in most of them will be adequate enough to get an institution started. But, in the long-term, as institutions face new challenges of several kinds, posed by new technologies, competition, new needs to be met, or new resources to be mobilised, they will necessarily have to do a SWOT analysis and concentrate more on their strengths and develop competencies that can seize the new opportunities and convert them to their advantage.

A key area of competence that distance education has to develop is the creation of a distance learning environment. It involves the integration of open and distance learning technologies with the learning environments of the actual and potential learners. Creation of this environment depends on several factors:

- the technological means currently available to the institution and the levels of their sophistication;
- the scope for technology upgradation including the availability of both hardware and software for such upgradation;
- the accessibility of the technology and its user-friendliness;

- professional competence in designing instructional systems using the available technologies, keeping also in view the styles and preferences of learners, the need for interactivity and access to learning resources;
- networking the resources for design, development and delivery of programmes and services.

Distance education institutions cannot afford to ignore these areas of competence in the future. Strengthening these areas continuously is a pre-requisite for their survival.

4.4.2 Motivating and encouraging people to work with new models

We have already discussed the significance of innovation and experimentation as a tool for organisational learning and knowledge creation. However, it has to be emphasised that innovations do not happen by chances or in a vacuum; organisations have to make innovations happen. In the final analysis, it will depend on what value the organisation as a whole attaches to its people innovating on the processes, products and services. Motivating and encouraging people to work with new models is crucial to promoting innovation. Involving people in brainstorming, collectively thinking through issues and problems as they arise, helping people continuously think and clarify their vision about their roles vis-à-vis the vision of the institution, making them analyse their mental models by presenting them to others so that they become more open to be influenced by the peer groups are some of the means that could motivate people to experiment with new ideas and concepts. However, it has to be borne in mind that there is no magic formula that can bring about innovations.

Distance education itself is the outcome of innovations in what was traditionally the only system of education. If education is conceived as the outcome of interactive teaching-learning processes, distance education is just another method of the same process. It is possible to visualise infinite variations of this process as new technologies become available, and new models of collaboration and networking become possible. To the extent an institution creates conditions in which its people can experiment with new and different ways by varying the processes, with their feet deeply rooted in their environment, we are likely to see much greater creativity and innovativeness in distance education technologies.

4.4.3 Information flows and sharing

You will notice that in this section, and perhaps all through this unit, there is a great deal of repetition of what has already been discussed. This is inevitable because we have exhaustively discussed management theories and practices in

distance education in different contexts and perspectives. What we are now doing is to look at them again from the point of view of rethinking strategies, restructuring organisational models, reassessing the achievements and reformulating goals to achieve the institution's mission.

It is not necessary to go over the crucial role that information plays in this exercise. Enough has been said already in this unit as well as in the previous Blocks on the role of information in the larger context of planning and management. Suffice it to say here that there can be no review, no revision, and no renewal unless the people in the institution know what is being reviewed, revised and renewed. If this has to be carried out as an informed exercise, all the participants in the process should have the relevant information and to make this possible, the MIS should be effectively organised within the institution.

4.4.4 Team building

Distance education as an activity is essentially a team effort. We have seen from the previous Blocks that almost at every stage of design, development and delivery, it is the function of teams of people- academics, professionals, managers and administrators – that makes distance education the dynamic system that it is. At this stage, it has to be remembered that traditionally education is a one person effort, the effort of the teacher. Not surprisingly, teachers do not work in teams; perhaps they may not have much respect for team-work either. It is against this background that one has to consider the importance of team-building in distance education.

Academics have to play a major role in distance education, but they have to do it in conjunction with a large number of others from professional, techno-managerial and administrative fields. Building cohesive and purposeful teams of people drawn from different fields of competence is by no means an easy task in the best of times. Training and orientation can play some part in this respect. But ultimately it is the working ethos of the institution, the totality of its philosophy, principles and values, and the environment in which it functions that will determine an institutions' team building potential.

4.4.5 Systemic thinking

We have said at several places in this course that distance education is a complex and large system, comprising several major sub-systems each of which has many components and constituents. Any effort at piece-meal changes in distance education has therefore to be avoided. The consequences of a minor change in one part of the system can have serious consequence for other parts; they can lead to dislocation of schedules, delays in output flows, and dysfunctionality of processes. It is therefore imperative that planners and managers of distance education systems think through all the consequences that

any change can lead to in a complex and independent system of several variables.

It has to be reemphasised that management of a distance education system is not about applying a set of theories on education; it is more about continuously evolving good practices that can offer the right solutions to problems and situations as they arise. It is therefore of great significance that 'good practices' are documented and shared with several institutions so that in course of time a body of knowledge gets developed which can be drawn upon by distance education practitioners especially in the less developed, and the developing countries. The role played by International Organisations and agencies like the International Council of Distance Education (ICDE), The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and several Distance Education Institutions themselves in organizing international conferences to exchange views and experiences is of great value in this context.

Check Your Progress 5

What are the major components that are to be addressed in bringing about change/organisational renewal in DE institutions? Answer in about 50 words.

Note : i) Space is given below for your answer

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the Unit.

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4.5 LET US SUM UP

This unit completes the course on 'Management of Distance Education'. As we have pointed out repeatedly in this course, the emergence of distance education is a stage in the evolution of the contemporary education system. This process of evolution signified continuous assimilation of changes in what exists, shedding some elements while absorbing others. This process of evolution of in education, in the final analysis, is the function of changes which become inevitable due to several reasons. We thought it worthwhile to bring together

the issues and concerns associated with changes in education and their management. The relevance of this theme for distance education is significant, as in a short span of about three decades we have seen spectacular changes in the methods and styles of distance education. It is in this context that we thought it useful to discuss the theme of change in education as a management concern even if the discussion turned out to be too theoretical. We have tried however to bring the focus back on distance education in this last unit while considering the methods and practices that distance education institutions follow in attempting organisational restructuring and renewal.

We hope that you would have found this discussion interesting and useful.

4.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. i) A learning organisation is one which continuously questions its existing practices, develops new perspectives, searches for alternatives and tries to do things differently, to face new challenges and to adjust itself to changing conditions.

The two characteristics of a learning organisation are :

- a) it considers knowledge, learning, creativity and innovation as key resources (b) follows a holistic approach which integrates problem solving, innovation and experimentation.
- ii) Environmental changes consists of changing demographic profile of learners, need for widening access for promotion of social justice and equal opportunities, improving productivity. These changes force educational institutions to anticipate new challenges, and prepare themselves to face and solve them with the help of knowledge and experience gained from the working of the institution.
2. (i) T (ii) T (iii) F (iv) T
3. In a distance education institution, there are certain critical organisational units like planning and development, management information and internal coordination that become knowledge centres. As and when problems arise in any unit in the organisation, these knowledge centres help transfer relevant knowledge to the concerned unit and help it in solving the current problems.
4. A distance education institution has to create an effective learning environment for its diverse learner groups in varied locations. There is no single approach or strategy that can respond to this need. A Distance Education institution has to continuously endeavour to do so through its

policies, programmes and their delivery, and use of advanced technologies . These efforts are possible with the help of innovation and experiment in these institutions because of their flexibility in terms of its procedures and operations.

5. The major components to be focussed by any DE institution in its organisational renewal efforts are : building core competence through training; motivating and encouraging personnel to work with new models; MIS for effective information flow and sharing team building, systemic thinking. (not piece meal changes).

REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

(Given below are the titles of a few books/journals which have been used to prepare this Block. It is NOT suggested that you should go looking for these books to study them in original. If you can manage, you may look for a few titles, but they are not obligatory for completing the course successfully).

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