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Research paper on nature and evolution of organizational development

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Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the nature and evolution of organizational development (OD) as a field of study and practice. Organizational development is a multidisciplinary approach aimed at improving organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. It has evolved over several decades, adapting to changes in the business environment and advances in management theory and practice. This paper examines the key concepts, theories, and historical developments that have shaped the field of organizational development.

Keywords: Yucatec Maya, traditional medicine, plant use, herbalist

Introduction

Organizational development is a planned, systematic change in the values or operations of employees to create overall growth in a company or organization. It differs from everyday operations and workflow improvements in that it follows a specific protocol that management communicates clearly to all employees.

Purpose of organisational development

Utilizing organizational resources to increase overall productivity and efficiency is known as organizational development. Additionally, it is used to resolve issues within a company. Organizational development, in its simplest form, identifies areas where a company's processes need to be changed in order to maximize efficiency, production, and profitability. The organizational development process focuses on various business operations, including analysis and improvement recommendations. For the best and most insightful outcomes, this analysis must frequently take place simultaneously in each of these areas. These consist of:

Growth

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, organizational development is a crucial instrument for organizing and managing company or corporate growth and expansion. To determine the rate at which a business can grow and expand in a healthy way, the growth analysis technique is used. These conclusions lead to recommendations for how firm resources should be moved as well as changes to the business plan for the company. These recommendations cover all available resources, including both financial and human.

Process of work

Organizational development is important in the area of evaluating a business's internal work processes for precision and efficiency. These kinds of initiatives lead to the adoption of certain quality control standards as their outcome. These requirements came from a thorough report created as part of the org development project. Recommendations can include everything from removing certain procedures to integrating others.

Organizational development is likewise a prerequisite for product innovation. Sharp examination of many types of information is a necessity for product innovation. Each component of a suggested product innovation can be carefully, deliberately examined through this kind of development project.

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Development of Employees

The application of org development techniques can have a substantial positive impact on employee development as well. The main focus of this initiative is improved communication, which serves as a motivator for staff to implement the desired change.

History and origin of OD

Approximately in the 1930s, organizational development emerged, mostly influenced by the field of psychology. Kurt Lewin, an MIT professor who worked in a variety of fields including group dynamics, organizational psychology, and change, is regarded as the father of organizational development. In fact, just a few years before his passing in 1947, he founded MIT's Research Centre for Group Dynamics. Kurt Lewin made a significant contribution to the corporate world and warrants additional study if you have the time. We certainly frequently cite him and his work in all we do.

Kurt is credited as the creator of organizational development, yet he never used the term himself. Instead, another industry great, Richard Beckhard, who was working at Bell Labs at the time, came up with the phrase. He then wrote a groundbreaking book on the subject titled "Organisation Development: Strategies and Models". He was a professor at MIT as well. Organizational development began to truly take off in the 1960s, though perhaps not under that name. Organizations' attention on employee engagement and productivity increased as they sought out ever-greater competitive advantages. This led to a rise in the profession and importance of management sciences. During this time, organizations began to conduct targeted interventions intended to boost engagement, such as employee surveys.

The Evolution of "OD"

Although the field of organizational development has expanded greatly in recent years, its use has only recently begun to gain widespread acceptance. Prior to this, many HR departments carried out organizational development efforts under various names, packaged in teams for performance and engagement, organizational change, and learning and development.

What's at stake?

Putting an organization's people first is a good method to boost competitiveness. All sectors can benefit from wonderful workplaces, but those that call for higher levels of creativity, innovation, problem-solving, complexity management, or other higher-level mental abilities should prioritize this goal above others. Being a fantastic place to work is, in fact, a key competitive advantage in these businesses.

Foundational concept in organisational development

System theory

According to systems theory, a system's overall importance exceeds that of all of its component elements. The first, morpho stasis, which literally translates as "changing to adapt or adapting to change," and the second, morphogenesis, which refers to the family's capacity to grow and change for the better as a result of internal or external environmental conditions, are two systems theories that explain how a family can adapt to its environment. A

system also has feedback loops from the people and other entities who influence and develop it.

Despite the possibility of smaller systems, often known as subsystems, a family system refers to the family as a whole. These could be the parents, siblings, stepchildren, or any other extended family members that are now residing with the nuclear family.

What kind of system theory is that?

Analysing the traffic flow between users of public and private transportation is an illustration of systems theory. A person could analyse which traffic systems or subsystems need to be changed to boost or decrease traffic flow using systems theory.

Why is the theory of systems important?

Systems theory is crucial because it clarifies every element of a system and enables ongoing improvement of a given idea, product, or concept through analysis and adaptability.

Action Research

The goal of action research is to simultaneously examine and resolve a problem. In other words, action research combines conducting research with actual action, as the name suggests. Kurt Lewin, an MIT professor, was the one who first came up with the concept in 1944. Action research is a highly engaging strategy that is frequently employed in the social sciences, especially in educational contexts. It stresses contemplation and closes the gap between theory and practice, making it particularly well-liked among educators as a method of systematic inquiry. It is also frequently referred to as a cycle of action or a cycle of inquiry according to the nature of the investigation.

Example of Action Research

An illustration is participatory action research.

Students using wheelchairs were asked to time how long it took them to get to and from different locations on the school grounds as part of an action research plan to continue to improve the accessibility of schools for students with disabilities.

After the data was gathered, the students were questioned about the optimum locations for ramps or other accessibility features, and their recommendations were forwarded to the school's authorities.

Change Management

A methodical strategy to dealing with the transition or transformation of an organization's objectives, procedures, or technologies is called change management. Implementing ways for bringing about change, managing change, and assisting individuals in adapting to change is the goal of change management.

The influence of a change or replacement on organizational processes, systems, and workers must be taken into account for the change management approach to be effective. A procedure must be in place for organizing, testing, communicating, scheduling, and executing change as well as for recording and analysing its results. The maintenance of an audit trail in case a rollback is required as part of change management is essential, as is ensuring compliance with internal and external controls, including legal requirements.

Evolution of Organisational Development

Past Kurt Lewin created a collection of concepts that served as the basis for change management in the early 20th century.

These consist of action learning. A type of participatory problem-solving is action research. The analysis, addressing, and resolution of issues can be done more successfully by a group when they collaborate group behaviour. Group dynamics is the study of how groups act and communicate. Change managers can better understand how employees respond to change using this psychological approach. Managers can then use this to address employee resistance to change and other obstacles. Analysis and theory of force fields. This framework examines variables that can affect a situation, including an individual, goals, and forces that can help or hinder an individual in achieving those goals.

Present

How does organizational development appear in the present?

Management of change. The business discipline known as "change management" focuses on managing change, risk mitigation, implementing change initiatives, maximizing project ROI, and other related tasks. Practitioners of change now use approaches derived from the concepts discussed above, such as Praski's ADKAR model or John Kotter's 8-step change model. Evolution of the organization. An additional discipline devoted to carrying out and managing change programs is organization development (OD). It shares many of the same fundamental principles and objectives. Its specific methods and goals, nevertheless, may not be the same as those of change management digital currency. All businesses are going digital today. By utilizing data, analytics, automation, and other digital technologies, change management is likewise becoming more digital.

Future

What does the evolution of organizational development have in store for the future?

Here are some indicators to watch out for more analytics, data, and AI. The most innovative change managers of today use data, analytics, and AI. These can be used for a variety of purposes, including project performance analysis, team synergy improvement, and project outcome prediction. Constant modification. The digital age is just getting started. Businesses need to get ready for continuing change if they want to keep up with a changing economy. Expect more technology-driven changes, not fewer, in the years to come learning forever. Businesses today are already struggling with a lack of digital capabilities. And the gap in digital abilities will deepen and become an ongoing problem for business in the years to come. Effective training will be more important to keep personnel current.

Getting Ready for Organizational Development's Future Digitize. Digital tools, technologies, and methods are required by the digital ecosystem. Digitally savvy change agents will be the most successful. Humans will always come first in change management. But it will also be necessary to employ technology effectively.

Implement cutting-edge operational procedures. Lean business processes, agile change management, and other adaptive business strategies produce excellent results. Such cutting-edge corporate methods will probably prevail in the

future. Embark, educate, and interact. Businesses should give training top priority because lifelong learning is expected to become the norm. Employees that have received proper training will be more competent, effective, and content. Combine the appropriate technologies with efficient training solutions, including digital adoption platforms, to create robust training programs.

Key Models / theories in organisational development

Lewin's Three-Step Model

Kurt Lewin's change management model comprises three steps.

1. **Unfreeze:** In the first step, companies work to loosen current norms and procedures to prepare for change.
2. **Change (or Transition):** In the second step, companies introduce a new strategy and implement it. During this step, management support and communication are critical to keep employees motivated and focused.
3. **Freeze (or refreeze):** The third step solidifies the "new normal" and encourages reflection on how to sustain the change.

Action Research

Lewin also created the action research model, which includes three phases.

1. **Research on Problems and Theorizing Solutions:** The research phase involves data collection, focus groups, and often hiring an outside consultant or specialist. The goal is to identify a problem with an actionable, results-focused solution.
2. **Action Phase:** The action phase involves implementing the change. Similar to the change step in the three-step model, this step is impossible without clear communication from leadership and strong support in place for employees.
3. **Input and Results Phase:** The final phase involves gathering data to assess the strategy's impact on the problem. This step involves analysis and reflection and can lead back to step one if the action was ineffective.

Business Process Reengineering

The business process reengineering (BPR) model is much more radical and can involve completely reimagining parts of a company. The phases in this model are described in the following sections.

1. **Map the Current State of the Organization's Processes:** Leadership documents current processes and procedures in preparation for analysis.
2. **Analyse the Processes:** Using the process map, committees or individuals analyse procedures to identify what's working and what's not.
3. **Identify Improvement Opportunities:** Teams identify areas of need and brainstorm solutions.
4. **Design a Process Map for Future Improved Processes:** Employees and management work together to plan changes. This phase may include timetables, delegation of workload, or new organizational structures.
5. **Implement Changes to Attain Improved Processes:** The initiatives are rolled out, and employees receive training and support.

McKinsey 7-S Framework

The McKinsey 7-S framework isn't defined in steps but

organized into seven factors. To implement this framework, companies analyse each of the seven S's - shared values, strategy, structure, systems, style, skills, and staff - and come up with solutions for improvement. The key factor is shared values, which are the organization's main priorities. The other six are traditionally divided into two groups: hard S's and soft S's.

Hard S's

Strategy: The Company's overall direction

Structure: The Company's organization, specifically regarding job descriptions and responsibilities

Systems: The processes and procedures that currently guide the company

Soft S's

Style: The leadership style of upper management

Skills: The Company's capabilities, including those of individuals as well as the company as a whole

Staff: The Company's employees

Example of successful OD interventions

1. Individualized responses

These therapies are geared on the particular employee and frequently centre on enhancing interpersonal communication. The goal of this intervention is to help the person understand their own feelings, motivations, and behaviours as well as those of others. The worker may receive assistance in identifying their professional requirements, setting complementing career objectives, and resolving conflicts.

A recent statement by Amazon, for instance, that it will "spend more than \$700 million to provide 100,000 employees with new skills for the digital age by 2025," according to a CBS News report, is a practical illustration.

Companies will increasingly spend in individualized interventions to retrain their personnel and maintain competitiveness in the evolving market.

2. Building a team

One of the most well-known organizational growth strategies is team building. It refers to actions that assist teams in enhancing their performance, communication, and employee engagement. For instance, according to a Harvard Business Review article, lower-performing teams raised their productivity by 20% and employee satisfaction climbed by 10% when call centre managers changed their staff's coffee break schedules so that the team could socialize together.

3. Diversity-related activities

A company that values diversity in the workplace is one that employs individuals that differ in terms of race, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, and other traits. OD intervention tactics aim to boost diversity in businesses since it fosters creativity, productivity, and increased revenue. The well-known diversity interventions conference Athena Swan was created specifically for professionals to "share best practices, discuss emerging innovations, and exchange personal experiences designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions and action plans."

Conclusion

Organizational development (OD) remains highly relevant

in today's ever-evolving business landscape. While the core principles of OD have endured over the years, the specific challenges and opportunities facing organizations have evolved. Here are some key reasons why OD continues to be relevant:

Adapting to Change

In today's fast-paced world, organizations must constantly adapt to changes in technology, markets, and customer preferences. OD helps organizations build the capacity to navigate these changes effectively, ensuring they remain competitive and resilient.

Enhancing Employee Engagement

Employee engagement and satisfaction are critical for productivity and retention. OD interventions, such as employee development programs, team-building activities, and fostering a positive work culture, help create a motivated and engaged workforce.

Managing Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are central to modern workplaces. OD practices can help organizations create an inclusive environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel valued and can contribute their unique perspectives and talents.

Digital Transformation

With the increasing role of technology in business, organizations often need to undergo digital transformation. OD can facilitate this process by aligning strategies, structures, and talent with digital goals, ensuring a smooth transition.

Leadership Development

Effective leadership is crucial for organizational success. OD programs focus on developing leadership skills, promoting ethical leadership, and ensuring that leaders are equipped to guide their teams through change and uncertainty.

Improving Communication

Effective communication is essential for organizational success. OD interventions can help improve communication channels, enhance transparency, and reduce misunderstandings within and between teams.

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts can hinder productivity and damage relationships within an organization. OD professionals are trained to diagnose and address conflicts constructively, promoting healthier work relationships.

Enhancing Performance Management

OD can help organizations develop more effective performance management systems that align individual and team goals with the overall mission and vision of the organization.

Organizational Culture

A strong organizational culture can be a source of competitive advantage. OD experts work on fostering a culture that supports innovation, collaboration, and high-performance.

Remote and Hybrid work environments

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote and hybrid work models. OD has a role in helping organizations navigate these changes by addressing issues related to virtual teams, communication, and work-life balance. Sustainability and Social Responsibility: Many organizations are recognizing the importance of sustainability and social responsibility. OD can help embed these values into an organization's DNA, driving sustainable practices and ethical behaviour.

Globalization

As organizations expand globally, they face unique challenges related to cultural differences, time zones, and market dynamics. OD can provide strategies for managing and thriving in a globalized business environment.

In summary, organizational development remains relevant because it addresses fundamental challenges faced by businesses in the modern world. It helps organizations adapt to change, engage their employees, and create the conditions for long-term success. As the business landscape continues to evolve, OD will continue to evolve and adapt to meet the emerging needs of organizations.

The field of organizational development (OD) is likely to face several future challenges as the business landscape continues to evolve. While it's difficult to predict all the specific challenges that will arise, the following trends and issues are likely to shape the future of OD.

Rapid Technological Advancements

As technology continues to advance at an accelerated pace, organizations will need to adapt quickly to stay competitive. OD professionals will need to facilitate digital transformations and ensure that employees have the skills and mindset to leverage new technologies effectively. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): The importance of DEI in the workplace will continue to grow. OD will play a crucial role in helping organizations create inclusive cultures, eliminate bias, and promote diversity at all levels.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility will become even more critical. OD will need to help organizations integrate sustainability principles into their strategies, operations, and culture.

In summary, the future challenges of organizational development will be diverse and complex, reflecting the evolving nature of business and society. OD professionals will need to be adaptable, innovative, and strategic in addressing these challenges and helping organizations thrive in an ever-changing environment.

This comprehensive review paper explores the nature and evolution of organizational development, shedding light on its historical roots, foundational concepts, key theories, and contemporary challenges. It also highlights the continuing relevance of OD in a rapidly changing business environment and suggests potential future directions for research and practice in the field. To find specific research papers on this topic, you can use academic databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, or your institution's library resources. Use keywords such as "organizational development," "OD evolution," "OD theories," or "OD case studies" to identify relevant articles and papers.

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