ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

Organizational Development of Higher Learning Institutions in The Changing Environment

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Abstract

In the 21st century, different organizations are under pressure due to international demands and the changing mode of local clients. For every society, the role of higher learning organization is to generate knowledge for the new era and to equip the individuals for international market. Now, with traditional procedure, it is very difficult for leaning organization to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Higher learning organizations are working hard to face the challenges; organizational development is becoming essential component of the learning organizations. The study explored the phenomenon of organizational development and the steps necessary for higher learning institutions to survive in the changing environment. It is found that organizational development of higher learning institutions is the need of the time and it is necessary for the higher learning institutions to launch new ways for facilitating its clients.
Introduction

Twenty first century is witnessed of marvelous changes in every field of life. Lines in the banks or at railway stations are the stories of the past. Technologies have changed the old standards of life and gave new scope to life styles. Compute replace the old manual system and introduce new fashions in every walk of life. In the changing scenario, technologies are forcing people to adjust their needs by providing them more and more opportunities. Currently, technologies are the critical part of majority of the people. Technologies affect the thinking of the people and change the old perceptions, now a person wants rapidness and accuracy in all manners.

On one hand, technologies and globalization influenced the people in all respects. On other hand, this phenomenon put pressure on organizations to develop new strategies to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Two decades ago, Education was not as it is now. The main aim of education was to prepare young generation for the local market who may play their role in the economic development of the nation. Then the concept of globalization appears which shrinks the distances and changed the entire configuration of distances. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are offering more opportunities to the clients for selection of educational programs. One can earn any type of degree of through E-learning without attending institutions. As it is considered that learning is a lifelong process and it is impossible for individuals to attend the traditional institutions for a long period.

Change is a natural process and it has been started with the birth of man on this planet. Change implies a perceived difference or transformation in a situation, person, work team, a relationship or an organization when viewed from two different points of time (Wamwangi, 2003). In the past, change was a slow process and in the 21st century, it occurs at a rapid speed. Change has
created tremendous differences within a short period. In terms of 21st century’s changing context, the role of educational organizations also changed. Now, the main objective of educational organizations is to prepare youth with such skills which are necessary to meet the challenges of globalization. In the start of 21st century, educational organizations began to think on broader canvas. New approaches come into sight and replaced traditional styles of teaching. It became clear to the educational organizations that for survival in the global age, new ways must be defined for working in the competitive market.

Higher Education Alliance (2005) states that

Higher education will be a dominant, if not decisive, factor in preparing workers with the robust skills needed to adapt to changing job requirements. The transition from manufacturing to the technology-based new economy dramatically raised the skill level needed to get a job.

Renowned higher learning institutions of advanced countries established their sub-campuses globally, start collaboration degree programs and provide online education programs, which start a race for excellence among the higher learning institutions and present different challenges to the local higher learning institutions. In order to meet the demands of learning society and a lifelong learner, the institutions are offering flexible learning and providing a number of mechanisms such as modularizations (Manjulika & Reddy, 2006). In Pakistan, Higher learning institutions try to attract maximum clients through renowned faculty members and advertisement of successes. Especial discount, need base scholarships, rewards on high achievements are some offers presented by the educational organizations for attracting clients. No doubt, all these offers
are beneficial for learners but the demands of learners have also been changed. Students want to learn skills necessary for working in the challenging atmosphere.

To meet the pressures of 21st century, organizations embraced ICTs, started collaboration degree programs and start dual degree programs. The HEC focuses on strengthening HEIs in new and emerging technologies through the introduction of new disciplines and courses. Several new cutting edge disciplines are now being taught at Pakistani universities (Higher Education Commission Report 2002-2008).

Educational organizations have been shifted from teacher centered to learner centered, from rote memorization to concept based learning, from face to face instruction to flexible mode of learning and from local to global. Modern curriculum, human resources, www based facilities, qualified faculty, service delivery, building’s environment, physical facilities and quality education are the parameters for the growth of learning organizations in the changing environment.

Leadership of learning organizations focuses on embedding new approaches of teaching; highly qualified local and foreign faculty, performance management system and innovative academic programs for the organizational development. According to Porras &Robertson (1992, p.721)

Organizational Development is a planned, behavioral science-based interventions in work settings for the purpose of improving organizational functioning and individual development.
Literature

Organizational Development

Higher Learning Institutions are imperative for the development of the nations. Currently, development of societies depends on working of its learning organizations. In the changing context, the needs of learning organizations are entirely different from the past. Organizational Development is a process of change according to the needs of the hour and is an important phenomenon for better survival in the global age. Well managed institutions are a fundamental building block for promoting change in societies (USAID, 2010).

French and Bell (1999) provided the definition of Organizational Development as a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organization culture…using the consultant/facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science.

Wamwangi (2003, p.4) describes organizational development as a methodology or technique used to effect change in an organization or section of an organization with a view of improving the organization’s effectiveness and It has the following attributes:

- A planned process of change.
- Applies behavioral science knowledge.
- Aims at the change of organization culture.
• Aims at reinforcement of organization strategies, structures and processes for improving organization’s effectiveness and health.

• Applies to an entire system of an organization, department or group as opposed to an aspect of a system.

• Targets long term institutionalization of new activities such as operation of self managed or autonomous work teams and other problem solving capabilities.

• Encompasses strategy, structure and process changes.

• A process managed from the top.

Organizational development is the process through which an organization develops the internal capacity to be the most effective it can be in its mission work and to sustain itself over the long term (Mikush and Philbin, n.d). McLean, an American Expert on Organizational Development analysis the core characteristics of organizational development and concluded that:

• OD recognizes the importance of top management’s commitment, support, and involvement. It also affirms a bottom-up approach when the culture of the organization supports such efforts to improve an organization.

• It is a planned and long-range strategy for managing change, while also recognizing that the dynamic environment in which we live requires the ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances.

• The major focus of OD is on the total system and its interdependent parts.
• OD uses a collaborative approach that involves those affected by the change in the change process.

Organization development (OD) applies behavioral-science knowledge and practices to help organizations change to achieve greater effectiveness. It seeks to improve how organizations relate to their external environments and function internally to attain high performance and high quality of work life (Cummings, 2004). Organizational Development is necessary for (1) for survival of organization for a long time (2) for “Be the best” in the local market (3) Renowned for its work (4) To compete the business market.

Higher Learning Institutions

Higher Learning Institutions are considered the nurseries for generating new knowledge. Throughout the history of mankind, learning organizations, at the same time did different works for societies. Learning organizations preserve the culture of societies, transfer the traditions to next generation and prepare the youth for future. Some would even say survival, in today’s organizations. Knowledge should be continuously enriched through both internal and external learning. For this to happen, it is necessary to support and energize organization, people, knowledge, and technology for learning (Serrat, 2009). Institutions of higher learning are the knowledge repositories whose faculty and students accrue knowledge and apply it to understand and address local issues (National Education Policy, 2009). Knowledge Is Like Light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere…. Knowledge also illuminates every economic transaction, revealing preferences, giving clarity to exchanges, informing markets. (World Bank, 1999). Higher education does not mean to produce degree holders but to prepare the youth for existing challenges due to ICTs or globalization and train them for the future.
**Role of Higher Learning Institutions in the 21st Century**

At present, around the world, there is a war of intellectuality, the nations who have more intellectuals are more success and the nations who have less intellectual repository are lagging behind. The developed world understood much earlier the fact that individuals with higher education have an edge over their counterparts (Rena, 2010). The role of higher learning institution is crucial in acquiring knowledge and uses it in an appropriate manner. It means that there is a dual role of higher learning institution, first to prepare the youth to absorb the knowledge and second is, to organize them for communication of that knowledge. Knowledge is ineffective unless the persons seeking to use it are appropriately organized and supported by suitable institutions and policies (Zahlan, 2007).

**Need of New Interventions for Organizational Development**

In the changing context of higher education, traditional approaches become ineffective. Research in higher education is the emerging aspect in the 21st century, which changes the old concepts of higher learning and produces a wave of innovations which is necessary for the growth in the global age. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) shadow great impact on the higher learning institutions. ICTs collect maximum knowledge and present it on Internet with the opportunity to trace out knowledge and add it here for others. On one hand, this role of ICT facilitates the nations and on other hand creates problems for the nations with less capital in terms of Human resources and finance.
Capacity Building

With the passage of every day, new knowledge is appearing on the base of previous knowledge, which is helping mankind in solving the problems and also compels to learn more for understanding and utilizing the new knowledge. Today, one learns the existing knowledge and may be tomorrow there is some new advance form of it. For survival, it is necessary to learn the related knowledge, revisit the ability to absorb the new knowledge and develop the skills to use the new knowledge for the solution of the problems. Capacity building is an ongoing process of updating skills, abilities and knowledge to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Capacity building is the Process of developing and strengthening the skills, abilities, processes and resources that organizations…need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast-changing world (USAID, 2010).

Teachers’ Capacity Building

The role of the teacher in higher learning institution is different from the role of school or college teacher. At higher learning institution, teacher is a considered a researcher who does not rely on the old knowledge but also generate new knowledge.

World Bank Report (2000) says that:

A well-qualified and highly motivated faculty is critical to the quality of higher education institutions. Unfortunately, even at flagship universities in developing countries, many faculty members have little, if any, graduate level training. This limits the level of
knowledge imparted to students and restricts the students’ ability to access existing knowledge and generate new ideas.

In OD of higher learning institutions, teacher’s role is at the top because the product depends on the teacher. Teacher will convey what he/she knows, and for better delivery of knowledge, it is necessary that teacher must have an eye on the latest “on-going” in the relevant area. Capacity building programs are the key components for the OD of higher learning institutions. In the competitive atmosphere, for higher learning institutions research work is a solution for new challenges and teachers at their own learn about innovations in the field for facing the new situations in the classrooms.

Revision Curriculum

The dawn of 21st century brings marvelous changes in the entire span of life of human beings through globalization. In the 21st century, the role of higher learning institutions has been shifted from traditional learning to learning for the 21st century, which stress on brain storming rather than learning of degrees. Changing environment of 21st century demands the curriculum which has potential to groom young generation for the global market. Without modern curriculum, higher learning institutions cannot work in the 21st century. To large extant OD depend on curriculum which is taught in the classrooms, it is necessary that old conceptions must be furnished in the light of new theories.
Human Resource Development

Human resource is the key for any organization. Human Resource development is the need of the 21st century for producing skilled workforce for the economic growth. Human resource development has a direct link with higher learning institutions. Economic Survey of Pakistan (2011, p.138) states that high skilled workforce has become a basic need to meet the challenges of contemporary era which is all about competitiveness and efficiency. Participation in the knowledge economy requires a new set of human skills. People need to have higher qualifications and to be capable of greater intellectual independence (The Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000).

Quality Higher Education for Organizational Development

In the 21st century, higher education means to develop multiple characteristics among young graduates. Raza and Naqvi (2011) conducted a research about quality of Pakistani university graduates and found that the employers of different companies were not fully satisfied with the quality of university graduates in terms of intellectual development skills, personal development skills, professional development skills and social development skills. For the 21st century, organizational development of higher learning institutions demands to prepare young graduates beyond the local market and equip them skills which enable them to survive in the global village.

University-Industry Cooperation

Higher education cannot work in isolation. Industry works as a laboratory for higher education where the worth of higher education may be checked and verified for the implementation in the
real situation. University-Industry Cooperation is an emerging need of the 21st century. Countries around the world felt the importance of this relation and are showing much concern about it. Academia-industry linkages are essential not only to ensure that the knowledge base has relevance to a country's needs but also to provide opportunity for industry to benefit from the efforts of academia (Higher Education Commission Report, 2008).

Conclusion

The changing environment of 21st century affect the higher learning institutions from various angles and change the role of higher learning institutions from static to dynamic, from degree holders to skilled personnel and from learning to quality learning. Organizational development remains a topic of interest for employers and it got tremendous fame in the 21st century. Now, quality education, qualified faculty members, modern curriculum and human resource development are the icons for organizational development. New innovations in the field of information and communication technologies are facilitating the higher learning institutions and considered an essential tool for the organizational development.
References


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