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RESEARCH PAPER

Organization Development: An Exploratory Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to explore the evolution of organization development (OD) and the ways in which experts have provided definitions from the beginning to the present day. This is because there is "ambiguity" for potential readers. OD is new to academics, students and practitioners. We conducted this exploratory literature review to explore the phenomena and to resolve the difficulty of "ambiguity." The findings are "strategic revolution" and provide corporate solutions in the context of the current "polycrisis." OD suggests "rethinking", "system renewal" and "human values" and advocate for the "human factor" in decision-making. OD is a "systematic change." The findings of the study are useful for practitioners as well as students earning masters and doctoral degrees in business administration and management sciences.

| **Keywords:** | OD Interventions, OD Models, Organizational Change, Organizational Performance, OD Definition |

Introduction

At The difficulty of "ambiguity" arises while defining OD because it is a broad and multifaceted field (McLean, 2005). When interpreting OD, professionals should endeavor to eliminate ambiguity and complexity (Hassan, 2023). OD is a strategy that is used to initiate systematic changes in organisations and is based on logical standards. As part of a change process, OD practitioners and consultants identify, create, implement, and evaluate OD interventions to raise an organization's performance, productivity, efficacy, and efficiency. Since OD is still in its infancy, it is not yet well-known among Pakistani academics, students, and practitioners. We are aware of OD's importance because it offers a corporate solutions. The key components of future organisations will be people and OD. According to Patrovani (2023), OD will be primarily focused in 2023 and onward on assisting individuals in developing greater self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-sufficiency. OD is a long-term, methodical, and continuous process that solves issues, boosts productivity, and increases performance. This research study aims to explore the definitions of OD given by gurus and its evolution. We conducted this study specifically to support Pakistani students earning degrees in management sciences disciplines. The study broadens our understanding of OD and corporate change.

We discovered that studies have been carried out to look into the relationships between various OD-related variables and performance (Khattak et al., 2023). The process of evolution has been neglected. First, students studying research and management fields need to have a solid understanding of OD and its evolution. However, OD has developed and spread globally in industrialized countries, where it is used as a problem-solving technique (Egan, 2014). This is due to the fact that OD now includes organizations' alignment with their

complex and quickly evolving environments (MBN, 2023). OD can now be used as a long-range strategy to further enhance the corporate growth (Malik, 2023; Patrovani, 2023).

Literature Review

When we started this research study, we had a single agenda. The goal of the agenda was to find the answer to a question. What is OD? What gurus have given definitions of OD and how it evolved throughout the time? Today, OD can be applied as a long-term plan to boost business expansion even more (Malik, 2023). Evolutionary processes have received little attention. First and foremost, students majoring in research and management must have a firm grasp of OD and its development. However, OD has grown and dispersed throughout industrialized nations, where it is applied as a method of problem-solving (Egan, 2014).

According to Miller and Davis-Howard (2023), it is the time for organisations to advance. Organizational survival will be the main priority in the future. In order to adapt to new business models and workforce expectations, organisations must drastically alter their policies and practices if they are to survive and prosper in this new circumstances. The practical implementation of corporate change techniques by change management practitioners has been explained by Phillips and Klein (2023). Future studies should look at why practitioners are not using these strategies more frequently given that change is only necessary for survival. The importance of strategic OD models is evident in this case. "Rethinking" performance is something that future organisations should strive towards (Institute for Conservation Leadership, 2023). It is not simple to comprehend OD. Raia (1972) first coined the term "canned" to describe OD, which is extremely complex.

OD was always going to be something that was complex. According to research studies (Girod et al., 2023) "business agility" is now recommended, meaning the ability to adjust to changing external situations. The concept of OD is still up for controversy, according to Norman (2023), the OD community is still having challenges resolving on the key competencies for practitioners. Now, in the most difficult of situations—a "polycrisis"—OD is about to occur. "We are in a polycrisis" (WEF, 2023). After reviewing previous research, we have come to the conclusion that additional work needs to be done to clarify the definitions and evolution of OD (Hassan, 2023). This is because practitioners, students, and academics do not yet fully understand the OD or even the "new OD". According to the Institute for Conservation Leadership (2023), for instance, all stakeholders should have access to OD exploration.

Therefore, we have a good reason to carry out this investigation. Our agenda was singular. The agenda's objective was to resolve a question. What is OD? Which gurus have defined OD and explained how it changed over time?

Material and Methods

This study is an exploratory literature review. Exploratory research has the following qualities: it is inexpensive, extremely entertaining, and open-ended. It is relatively dispersed and adaptable. By utilizing keywords such as "OD history," "OD evolution," "OD definitions," and "OD and change," research papers using Google Scholar. We found that numerous studies have employed the exploratory design (Brown, 2016; Stebbins, 2011; Koseoglu & Bozkurt, 2018). A good literature review is always thorough and contextualized in relation to the topic and recommended for research studies in social sciences (Dash, 2019).

Results and Discussion

We sought clarification and an answer to a question. What is OD? The definitions and its evolution by reviewing the literature. Prior to learning about OD, we studied what

"organization" meant. Organisations are social structures designed to bring people and resources together in a planned, organized way to accomplish particular goals. An organization is thought of as a collection of individuals who collaborate to accomplish shared objectives, such producing goods or services, generating a profit, advancing a cause, or carrying out research. The relevance of creativity, flexibility, and agility in organizational design is emphasized by contemporary organizational theory. The theory also values other elements such as performance, globalization, technology, and the internal and external environment (Bozic, 2023). OD experts, consultants, and previous research studies have all given distinct definitions of OD. We gathered definitions for the advantages of Pakistani business students from works that were published. The majority of the definitions are based on work that IntelliVen (2020) has cited. We appreciate IntelliVen for their work.

"OD is an effort that is: (1) planned, (2) organization-wide and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organizations "processes", using behavioral-science knowledge" (Beckhard, 1969).

"OD is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenge, and the dizzying rate of change itself" (Bennis, 1969).

"OD is the strengthening of those human processes in organizations which improve the functioning of the organic system so as to achieve its objectives" (Lippitt, 1969).

"OD can be defined as a planned and sustained effort to apply behavioral science for system improvement, using reflexive, self-analytic methods" (Schmuck & Miles, 1971)

"OD is a coordinated effort by organization members (usually with the aid of outside consultants) to uncover and remove attitudinal, behavior, procedural, policy, and structural barriers to effective performance across the entire sociotechnical system, gaining in the process increased awareness of the system's internal and external dynamics so that future adaptations are enhanced. In practice, OD turns out to be whatever people are doing under that title" (Miles, 1975).

"OD is a system-wide process of data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention, and evaluation aimed at (1) enhancing congruence between organizational structure, processes, strategy, people, and culture; (2) developing new and creative organizational solutions; and (3) developing the organization's self-renewing capacity. It occurs through the collaboration of organizational members working with a change agent using behavioral science theory, research, and technology" (Beer, 1980).

OD is a planned process of change in an organization's culture through the utilization of behavioral science technology, research, and theory" (Burke, 1982).

"OD is an organizational process for understanding and improving any and all substantives processes and an organization may develop for performing any tasks and pursuing any objectives" (Vaill, 1989).

"OD focuses on assuring healthy inter- and intra-unit relationships and helping groups initiate and manage change. Organization development's primary emphasis is on relationships and processes between and among individuals and groups. Its primary intervention is influence on the relationship of individuals and groups to effect an impact on the organization as a system" (McLagan, 1989).

"OD is a set of behavioral science-based theories, values, strategies, and techniques aimed at the planned change of the organization work setting for the purpose of enhancing individual development and improving organizational performance, through the alteration of organizational members' on-the-job behavior" (Porras & Robertson, 1992).

"OD is a long-term effort, lead 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—with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations—using the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research" (French & Bell, 1999).

"OD is any process or activity, based on the behavioral sciences, that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop in an organizational setting enhanced knowledge, expertise, productivity, satisfaction, income, interpersonal relationships, and other desired outcomes, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation, region, or, ultimately, the whole of humanity" (McLean & McLean, 2001).

"OD is to 1) advance organizational renewal 2) engage organization culture change 3) Enhance profitability and competitiveness 4) Ensure health and well-being of organizations and employees 5) Facilitate learning and development 6) Improve problem solving 7) Increase effectiveness 8) Initiate and/or manage change 9) Strengthen system and process improvement 10) Support adaptation to change" (Egan, 2002).

"Based on (1) a set of values, largely humanistic; (2) application of the behavioral science; and (3) open system theory, organization development is a system-wide process of planned change aimed toward improving overall organization effectiveness by way of enhanced congruence of such key organizational dimensions as external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information and reward systems, and work policies and procedures" (Bradford & Burke, 2005).

"OD is a system-wide application and transfer of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness" (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

"OD facilitates change through a better understanding of how complex, adaptive systems operate and interconnect, remembering that change in group behavior is always social and major changes are inevitably cultural. Change is a response to an external challenge that threatens group survival but more particularly is about change that affects our ability to improve and grow as individuals, as teams and as an organization" (Stevenson, 2012).

"The legitimate use of power through interventions that seek to shift the playing field to liberate the potential of others in service of the wider mission of the enterprise" (Goldberg & Jules, 2012).

"OD is the process of increasing organizational effectiveness and facilitating personal and organizational change through the use of interventions driven by social and behavior science knowledge" (Anderson, 2015).

According to Organization Development Network, the OD Gathering gathered definitions (Egan, 2002). Following a thorough investigation and participation process involving the representative assembly of more than 100 academics and professionals, the group offered a definition of OD as

"OD *refers to the interdisciplinary field of scholars and practitioners who work collaboratively with organizations and communities to develop their system-wide capacity for effectiveness and vitality. It is grounded in the organization and social sciences" (OD Gathering, 2018).*

OD is an area of professional and academic research. Every stakeholder has a crucial role to play during the transformation process. People who prioritize change in

organisations can be found among OD practitioners. Human values are taken into consideration when designing, implementing, and evaluating OD interventions.

"OD is the planned and sustained effort to improve organization performance in a specific way by helping the people in it practically apply behavioral theory to work better together as individuals and teams" (IntelliVen, 2020).

"OD refers to the interdisciplinary field of scholars and practitioners who work collaboratively with organizations and communities to develop their system-wide capacity for effectiveness and vitality. It is grounded in the organization and social sciences" (Organization Development Network, 2023; Smendzuik-O'Brien & Gilpin-Jackson, 2021).

Khattak (2019) investigated how OD affected performance. The findings of the study signify a "strategic revolution" in the field of OD. The outcomes are strategically important for the "OD community" in Pakistan. The study clarifies for OD practitioners the importance of performance in bringing about change. The study looked into the concept of Green OD. Green OD programmes mitigate the adverse impacts that organisations have on the environment and society. The study is a step towards building a "Green-OD-Community" in Pakistan.

"OD is a dynamic, values-based approach to systems change in organizations and communities; it strives to build the capacity to achieve and sustain a new desired state that benefits the organization or community and the world around them. The OD principles of practice include: (1) values-based (respect and inclusion, collaboration, authenticity, self-awareness, and empowerment); (2) supported by theory; (3) systems focused; (4) action research based; (5) process focused; (6) informed by data; (7) client centered; and (8) focused on effectiveness and health" (Organization Development Network, 2023).

Conclusion

The findings and conclusion provide important information for practitioners, scholars, and academics. Since OD is a vast and complex field, "ambiguity" becomes problematic when describing it (McLean, 2005). The findings are helpful to resolve the problem of "ambiguity". OD is a logical standards-based approach used to start systematic improvements in organisations. To improve an organization's performance, productivity, efficacy, and efficiency, OD practitioners and consultants identify, develop, implement, and assess OD interventions as part of a change process.

The study's conclusions demonstrate that OD is a planned, ongoing effort made to improve company performance. A theory from the behavioral sciences underpins OD. OD is a values-driven method of changing systems. Any transformation process gives careful thought to the values of the workforce. OD favor and consider the traits of the personality. Additionally, OD emphasizes staff cooperation during any transformation process. The success of the transformation process depends on management commitment and the top-down strategy.

Congruence between organizational structure, processes, strategy, people, and culture is improved through OD, a system-wide process. All organizational segments are favored by OD. According to Beer (1980), OD offers innovative organizational solutions. Even though OD is also a technique for changing business culture, the relationship between OD interventions and performance is mediated by the company culture. According to Burke (1982), science and technology play a significant role in the process of cultural transformation.

OD is a sustained endeavor to enhance learning, problem-solving, employee empowerment, and vision. The behavioral sciences provide the foundation for OD initiatives and procedures. In order to better serve the organisations, community, country, region, and

all of humanity, OD is a useful instrument for changing the strategic stance of organisations. According to McLean and McLean (2001), OD is a superior strategy for fostering relationships and empowering employees.

OD is the process of supporting change adaptation and promoting learning and growth. The external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information and incentive systems, and work policies and procedures are just a few of the organizational aspects that are the focus of OD (Burke & Bradford, 2005). OD is the process of using interventions informed by social and behaviour science understanding to promote organizational effectiveness and support individual and organizational change (Goldberg & Jules, 2012; Anderson, 2015).

Khattak (2019) studied the impact of OD on performance. The study's conclusions represent a "strategic revolution" in the OD field. The results hold strategic significance for Pakistan's "OD community." The study sheds light on OD practitioners and shows them that performance is a major factor in change. The idea of Green OD was investigated in the study. Green OD initiatives lessen the negative effects that organisations have on society and the environment. In Pakistan, the study is a step towards creating a "Green-OD-Community".

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