
UNIT 1 DEFINITION, FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED, NATURE AND CLASSIFICATION OF OD INTERVENTIONS

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Meaning of Organisational Development
 - 1.2.1 Definition of OD
 - 1.2.2 Characteristics of OD
 - 1.2.3 Process of OD
 - 1.2.4 Role of Consultant in OD
 - 1.2.5 Objectives and Values of OD
- 1.3 Definition and Concept of OD Interventions
 - 1.3.1 Factors of OD Interventions
 - 1.3.2 Readiness for Change
 - 1.3.3 Capability to Change
 - 1.3.4 Cultural Context
 - 1.3.5 Capabilities of the Change Agent
 - 1.3.6 Contingencies Related to the target of Charge
- 1.4 Organisational Issues
 - 1.4.1 Rules for Implementation
- 1.5 Nature and Classification of Organisational Development Interventions
 - 1.5.1 Human Processes
 - 1.5.2 Techno Structural
 - 1.5.3 Human Resource Management
 - 1.5.4 Intervention Based on the Underlying Causal Mechanisms
- 1.6 Major “Families” of OD Intervention Activities
- 1.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.8 Unit end Questions
- 1.9 Suggested Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will be dealing with organisational development. We start with Meaning of organisational development, definition, characteristics and process of OD. We then discuss the role of a consultant in organisational development. The next section deals with OSD interventions in which we start with definition and concept of of OD interventions. Then we discuss the various factors that are associated with OD interventions. Then the discussion passes on to the readiness for change and OD interventions. Whether the organisation has the capability to change and what the cultural contexts in which the OD intervention is to be taken up and how the cultural factors affect OD interventions. Then we take up the capabilities of the change

agent. Following this we deal with organisational issues, and the the implementation rules thereof. We then discuss the nature and classification of OD intervention and deal with human processes, the techno structural factors and the management of human resources. Finally we discuss the major aspects of the OD intervention activities

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- Define and give the meaning of organisational development;
- Describe the characteristics of OD;
- Explain the Process of OD;
- Analyse the role of consultant in OD;
- Elucidate the objectives and values of OD;
- Define and conceptualise OD Interventions;
- Delineate the factors of OD interventions;
- Analyse the readiness for change through OD;
- Discuss the organisational issues;
- Classify the organisational interventions; and
- Elucidate the major families of OD intervention activities.

1.2 MEANING OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Change has become a way of life for most organisations. Pressures from increasing competition, globalisation, technological developments and other forces have created an environment that rewards organisations that are capable of identifying trends and issues and responding quickly to them. The element of HRD that can best enable organisations to embrace and manage change is organisation development. It is not entirely clear as to who coined the term “Organisation Development” but in all probability it was Robert Blake, Herbert Shephard and Jane Mouton. The OD movement gained tremendous momentum by 70s and is increasingly applied throughout the globe in the present day. It has now been evolved into accepted field of study and professional practice. It has been estimated that in USA alone more than 5000 persons refer themselves as OD practitioners. Early OD efforts primarily addressed first order change that is, making moderate adjustments to the organisation, its people and its processes. Today the demands of the organisation are so great that the second order change is required in many instances. The fundamental nature of work and organisation is changing.

Organisation development most frequently referred to as OD is a systematic and practical approach to launching and defusing change in organisations. It is not a one time training or development program but is an ongoing and cycling process. It is a complex educational strategy which aims to bring about a better fit between human beings who work in organisations and expect things to take place as they visualise and the busy, unrelenting environment, with its insistence on adapting to changing times. OD is employed as “comprehensive strategy for organisation improvement”.

1.2.1 Definition of OD

Organisational development is a process that is an identifiable flow of interrelated events moving overtime towards goals of organisational improvement and individual development. It is a journey and not a destination. Organisational development is an effort planned, organisation – wide and managed from the top to increase organisation effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organisation's processes using behavioural science knowledge (Beckhard, 1996). Organisational development is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values and structure of organisations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets and challenges and the dizzying rate to change itself (Bennis,1969). OD can be defined as a planned and sustained effort to apply behavioural science for system improvement, using reflexive, self analytic methods. (Schmuck and Miles, 1971). The aims of OD are...enhancing congruence between organisational structure, processes, strategy, people and culture, developing new and creative organisational solutions and developing the organisations self renewing capacity. (Beer, 1980). OD is a systematic application of behavioural science knowledge to the planned development and reinforcement of organisational strategies, structures and processes for improving organisation's effectiveness. (Cummings and Worley, 1993). To sum up, Organisational Development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organisation's visioning, empowerment, learning and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organisation culture – with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations- using the consultant- facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including action research.

The field of OD is so rapidly changing that in few years the label of OD may be applied to somewhat different set of activities. Every program is unique as every organisation has unique problems and opportunities. Organisational development is both a professional field of social action and an area of scientific inquiry. The practice of OD covers a wide spectrum of activities with a lot of variations. It emphasises both macro and micro organisational changes: macro changes are intended to ultimately improve the effectiveness of the organisation, whereas micro changes are directed at individuals, small groups and teams. The fundamental difference between organisational development and other organisation improvement programs is found in the OD consultant's role and relationship to clients.

1.2.2 Characteristic of OD

- 1) **Long Range Effort:** OD is not designed to solve short term temporary or isolated problems. It is long term approach meant to elevate the organisation to a higher level of functioning by improving the performance and satisfaction of organisation members.
- 2) **Broad Based:** OD is used broadly to describe a variety of change programs. It essentially deals with big picture – The Organisation.
- 3) **Dynamic Process:** OD includes the effort to guide and direct change as well as to cope with or adopt to impose change.
- 4) **System View:** OD utilises system thinking. It is based on an open, adaptive system concept. It recognises organisation structure and management performance are mutually interdependent. The organisation is treated as an interrelated whole and no part of the organisation can be changed without affecting other parts.

- 5) **Research Based:** Most OD interventions are research based, not just introspect employees rather collect data, evaluate and take decisions.
- 6) **Goal Setting and Planning:** Since OD is concerned with the entire organisation, the change agents define goals of the group and will see to it that together they all work to achieve the goal.
- 7) **Normative re-educative strategy:** OD is based on the principle that “norms found the basis of behaviour and change is re-educative process of replacing old by new ones”.

1.2.3 Process of OD

- 1) Plan the changes and the process of change, necessarily, in consultations with the trained and experienced consultants/behavioural experts by advising the top management and seek their approval. It is primarily initiated by the top management.
- 2) Change the attitudes and habits of individuals, particularly, in the areas of interpersonal behaviour.
- 3) Create a team culture in the organisation.
- 4) Work out appropriate new structures.
- 5) Solve short term day-to-day and long term problems involving external and internal change.

1.2.4 Role of a Consultant in Organisational Development

OD consultants establish a collaborative relationship of relative equality with the organisation members as they together identify and take action on problems and opportunities. The role of the OD consultant is to structure activities to help organisation members learn to solve their own problems and learn to do it better over time. They do not provide solutions to the problems but create learning situations in which problems are identified and solutions are developed. The aim of leaving the organisation members better able to solve their own problems is a distinctive feature of organisation development. As an organisational development consultant, the person is devoted to developing organisations and the people in them through planned change. This includes working with individuals, teams and large systems.

The organisational development consultant (OD consultant) can take a variety of approaches to the role ranging from expert to process consultant. They can operate from the process consultant model which means that the consultant partners with his clients to identify problems and create solutions. The point of this approach is to leave the client system more capable of diagnosing and solving its own problems in the future. Rather than foster dependency, the consultant's aim is to foster independence.

By its nature, OD consulting is fresh and unique to each client situation. Many organisations need outside help to continue or improve their operations. As an organisational development consultant, the person's role is to assist the company in determining what its main problems are, how to cope effectively with them, and how to manage any resistance to changes.

One of the first roles of an organisational development consultant is to identify, quantify, and accurately describe problems within the company. This is not as easy as it sounds. The issues often are complex, multifaceted, and intertwined with one

another. Observation and employee questionnaires are two tools consultants often use to determine areas of trouble.

Solving a company's problems is at the heart of organisational development consulting. After changes are recommended, consultants advise employers on the best way to implement them while causing the least amount of disruption to the business's day-to-day operations.

One of the greatest challenges faced by organisational development consultants is helping employees accept any changes that are recommended. Consultants should be encouraged to make employees part of the change process whenever possible, valuing the input they provide. Employees are less likely to resist changes that they helped implement.

1.2.5 Objectives and Values of OD

OD is way of looking at the whole humanistic side of organisational life. OD emphasises on the human dimension of an organisation consisting of main humanistic values: 1) Opportunities to people to function like human beings rather than be treated as mere inputs. 2) Opportunities for individual and the organisation to develop to their full potential. 3). Increasing the effectiveness of individual and organisation. 4) Creating an organisational environment that generates exciting and challenging work. Thus it focuses on the following objectives:

- 1) Improving mutual trust and emotional support among all the employees.
- 2) Promoting, in a healthy manner, incidences of intra-group and inter-group confrontations.
- 3) Creating a culture in which authority is based on knowledge and skills.
- 4) Encouraging open communication bottom up, top down, sideways and diagonally.
- 5) Increasing the level of enthusiasm and satisfaction among the employees.
- 6) Promoting problem solving culture.
- 7) Improving individual employee participation and group participation to plan and implement.
- 8) To find Synergistic solutions to problem with greater frequency.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What is the role of the consultant in Organisation Development Intervention?
 - a) Team building
 - b) Group Development
 - c) Structuring activities
 - d) Behaviour modification
- 2) OD objectives do not focus on which of the following?
 - a) Promoting problem solving culture
 - b) find synergistic solutions
 - c) open communication
 - d) Survey feedback
- 3) The organisation is treated as an interrelated whole and no part of the organisation can be changed without affecting other parts is _____
 - a) Sensitivity training
 - b) goal setting
 - c) Group development
 - d) Systems view

1.3 DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF OD INTERVENTIONS

OD interventions are sets of structured activities in which selected organisational units (target groups or individuals) engage in a task or a sequence of tasks with the goal of organisational improvement and individual development. Interventions constitute the action thrust of organisation development. Behind every program is an overall game plan or intervention strategy. This plan integrates the problems or opportunity to be addressed, the desired outcomes of the program, and the sequencing and timing of the various interventions. Intervention strategies are based on diagnosis and the goals desired by the client system. The number of OD intervention is not small but they all vary in range and depth into the penetration into the organisational system and the purpose they serve. Most of the OD interventions are inherited from the predecessor – the Human Relation Movement. OD intervention is not a management development, not exclusively concerned with people, not a no fail formula, not aimed at simply making organisation more productive and efficient, not gimmick or Fad, not a separate discipline.

The different interventions are needed to serve different purposes in the organisation. It is difficult to classify OD interventions because of their overlapping and interrelated nature, for instance French and Bell designated 12 families of intervention. OD practitioner employs any one or range of these interventions depending on the nature of the problem. They are:

Diagnostic, Team building, Intergroup Activities, Survey Feedback Method, Education and Training Programs, Techno Structural Activity, Process consultation, The Management Grid, Mediation and Negotiation Activities, Coaching and Counseling and Career planning and goal setting activities.

1.3.1 Factors of OD Interventions

In OD, three major criteria define an effective intervention:

- 1) the extent to which it fits the needs of the organisation;
- 2) the degree to which it is based on causal knowledge of intended outcomes; and
- 3) the extent to which it transfers change-management competence to organisation members.

The first criterion concerns the extent to which the intervention is relevant to the organisation and its members. Effective interventions are based on valid information about the organisation's functioning; they provide organisation members with opportunities to make free and informed choices; and they gain members' internal commitment to those choices. Valid information is the result of an accurate diagnosis of the organisation's functioning. It must reflect fairly what organisation members perceive and feel about their primary concerns and issues. Free and informed choice suggests that members are actively involved in making decisions about the changes that will affect them.

It means that they can choose not to participate and that interventions will not be imposed on them. Internal commitment means that organisation members accept ownership of the intervention and take responsibility for implementing it. If interventions are to result in meaningful changes, management, staff, and other relevant members

must be committed to carrying them out. The second criterion of an effective intervention involves knowledge of outcomes. Because interventions are intended to produce specific results, they must be based on valid knowledge that those outcomes actually can be produced. Otherwise there is no scientific basis for designing an effective OD intervention. Unfortunately, and in contrast to other applied disciplines such as medicine and engineering, knowledge of intervention effects is in a rudimentary stage of development in OD. Much of the evaluation research lacks sufficient rigor to make strong causal inferences about the success or failure of change programs. Moreover, few attempts have been made to examine the comparative effects of different OD techniques. All of these factors make it difficult to know whether one method is more effective than another.

Despite these problems, more attempts are being made to assess systematically the strengths and weaknesses of OD interventions and to compare the impact of different techniques on organisation effectiveness. The third criterion of an effective intervention involves the extent to which it enhances the organisation's capacity to manage change. The values underlying OD suggest that organisation members should be better able to carry out planned change activities on their own following an intervention. They should gain knowledge and skill in managing change from active participation in designing and implementing the intervention. Competence in change management is essential in today's environment, where technological, social, economic, and political changes are rapid and persistent. They include the following are situational factors that must be considered in designing any intervention: the organisation's readiness for change, its change capability, its cultural context, and the change agent's skills and abilities.

1.3.2 Readiness for Change

Intervention success depends heavily on the organisation being ready for planned change. Indicators of readiness for change include sensitivity to pressures for change, dissatisfaction with the status quo, availability of resources to support change, and commitment of significant management time. When such conditions are present, interventions can be designed to address the organisational issues uncovered during diagnosis. When readiness for change is low, however, interventions need to focus first on increasing the organisation's willingness to change.

1.3.3 Capability to Change

Managing planned change requires particular knowledge and skills, including the ability to motivate change, to lead change, to develop political support, to manage the transition, and to sustain momentum. If organisation members do not have these capabilities, then a preliminary training intervention may be needed before members can engage meaningfully in intervention design.

1.3.4 Cultural Context

The national culture within which the organisation is embedded can exert a powerful influence on members' reactions to change, so intervention design must account for the cultural values and assumptions held by organisation members. Interventions may have to be modified to fit the local culture, particularly when OD practices developed in one culture are applied to organisations in another culture. For example, a team-building intervention designed for top managers at an American firm may need to be modified when applied to the company's foreign subsidiaries.

1.3.5 Capabilities of the Change Agent

Many failures in OD result when change agents apply interventions beyond their competence. In designing interventions, OD practitioners should assess their experience and expertise against the requirements needed to implement the intervention effectively. When a mismatch is discovered, practitioners can explore whether the intervention can be modified to fit their talents better, whether another intervention more suited to their skills can satisfy the organisation's needs, or whether they should enlist the assistance of another change agent who can guide the process more effectively. The ethical guidelines under which OD practitioners operate requires full disclosure of the applicability of their knowledge and expertise to the client situation. Practitioners are expected to intervene within their capabilities or to recommend someone more suited to the client's needs.

1.3.6 Contingencies Related to the Target of Change

OD interventions seek to change specific features or parts of organisations. These targets of change are the main focus of interventions, and researchers have identified two key contingencies related to change targets that can affect intervention success: the organisational issues that the intervention is intended to resolve and the level of organisational system at which the intervention is expected to have a primary impact.

1.4 ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

Organisations need to address certain issues to operate effectively. These issues along with the OD interventions are intended to resolve them. It shows the following four interrelated issues that are key targets of OD interventions:

- 1) **Strategic issues:** Organisations need to decide what products or services they will provide and the markets in which they will compete, as well as how to relate to their environments and how to transform themselves to keep pace with changing conditions. These strategic issues are among the most critical facing organisations in today's changing and highly competitive environments. OD methods aimed at these issues are called strategic interventions. The methods are among the most recent additions to OD and include integrated strategic change, mergers and acquisitions, trans-organisational development, and organisation learning.
- 2) **Technology and structure issues:** Organisations must decide how to divide work into departments and then how to coordinate among those departments to support strategic directions. They also must make decisions about how to deliver products or services and how to link people to tasks. OD methods for dealing with these structural and technological issues are called techno-structural interventions and include OD activities relating to organisation design, employee involvement, and work design.
- 3) **Human resources issues:** These issues are concerned with attracting competent people to the organisation, setting goals for them, appraising and rewarding their performance, and ensuring that they develop their careers and manage stress. OD techniques aimed at these issues are called human resources management interventions.
- 4) **Human process issues:** These issues have to do with social processes occurring among organisation members, such as communication, decision making, leadership, and group dynamics. OD methods focusing on these kinds of issues

are called human process interventions; included among them are some of the most common OD techniques, such as conflict resolution and team building.

1.4.1 Rules for Implementation

There are rules for managing the implementation process.

- 1) Maximize diagnostic data: In general, interventions will provide data needed to make subsequent intervention decisions should come first.
- 2) Maximize effectiveness: Interventions should be sequenced so that early intervention enhances the effectiveness of subsequent interventions.
- 3) Maximize efficiency: Interventions should be sequenced to conserve organisation resources such as time, energy and money.
- 4) Maximize speed: Interventions should be sequenced to maximize the speed which ultimate organisational improvement is attained.
- 5) Maximize relevance: Interventions that management sees as most relevant to indicate problems should come first.
- 6) Minimize Psychological and organisational strain: A sequence of intervention should be chosen that is least likely to create dysfunctional effects such as and insecurity, distrust, dashed expectations, psychological damage to people, and anticipated and unwanted effects on organisational performance.

Self Assessment Questions 2

- 1) Interventions will provide data needed to make subsequent intervention decisions should come first to———.
 - a) Maximize efficiency
 - b) Maximize diagnostic data
 - c) Maximize relevance
 - d) Maximize speed
- 2) These —— are among the most critical facing organisations in today's changing and highly competitive environments.
 - a) Technology issues
 - b) Cultural issues
 - c) Human resource issues
 - d) Strategic issues
- 3) Issues that have to with social processes occurring among organisation members, such as communication, decision making, leadership, and group dynamics are———.
 - a) Human process issues
 - b) Technology issues
 - d) Cultural issues
 - d) Strategic issues

1.5 NATURE AND CLASSIFICATION OF OD INTERVENTIONS

Different interventions have different dynamics; they do different things because they are based on different casual mechanisms. It is important to know the underline casual mechanisms of interventions to ensure the interventions fit the desire outcome.

Interventions do different things; they cause different things to happen. One intervention's major result may be increasing interaction and communication between

parties. Other interventions' major results may be increasing feedback, or increasing accountability. These differential results are often exactly what is needed to produce change in the particular situations. There are some of the results one can expect from OD intervention: Feedback, Awareness of changing socio cultural norms or dysfunctional current norms, increased interaction and communication, Confrontation, education, participation, increased accountability, increased energy and optimism.

Following are some of the OD interventions given under four major classifications:

1.5.1 Human Processes

T group, process consultation, third party intervention, team building, organisational confrontation meetings, survey research.

1.5.2 Techno Structural

Formal structural change, differentiation and integration, cooperative union-management projects, total quality management, kaizen, quality circles, work design.

1.5.3 Human Resource Management

Goal setting, performance appraisal, reward systems, career planning and development, managing work force diversity, employee wellness.

Strategic: Integrated strategic management, culture change, strategic change, self designing organisations.

1.5.4 Interventions Based On the Underlying Causal Mechanisms

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton identified the following types of interventions based on the underlying causal mechanisms:

- 1) *Discrepancy intervention*, which calls attention to a contradiction in action or that then, leads to exploration.
- 2) *Theory intervention*, where behavioural science knowledge and theory are used as plain present behaviour and assumptions underlying the behaviour.
- 3) *Procedural intervention*, which represents a critiquing of how something is, be done to determine whether the best methods are being used.
- 4) *Relationship intervention*, which focuses attention on interpersonal relations (particularly those where there are strong negative feelings) and surfaces the exploration and possible resolution.
- 5) *Experimentation intervention*, in which two different action plans are tested for consequences before a final decision on one is made.
- 6) *Dilemma intervention*, in which an imposed or emergent dilemma is used to force examination of the possible choices involved and assumptions underlying them
- 7) *Perspective intervention*, which draws attention away from immediate actions and demands and allows a look at historical background, context and future objectives order to assess whether or not the actions are “still on target”.
- 8) *Organisational structure intervention*, which calls for examination and evaluation structural causes for organisational ineffectiveness.

- 9) *Cultural intervention*, which examines traditions, precedents, and practices- the of the organisation's culture- in a direct, a focused approach.

1.6 MAJOR “FAMILIES” OF OD INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES

The inventory of OD interventions is quite extensive. We will explore several classification schemes here to help you understand how interventions “clump” together terms of (1) the objectives of the interventions, and (2) the targets of the interventions. Becoming familiar with how interventions relate to one another is useful for planning the overall OD strategy. The major “families” of OD intervention activities are:

- 1) *Diagnostic Activities*: Fact finding activities designed to ascertain the state of the system. The status of a problem, the “way things are.” Available methods range from projective devices such as “build a college that represents your place in this organisation” to the more traditional data collection methods of interviews, questionnaires, surveys, meetings, and examining organisational records.
- 2) *Team Building Activities*: Activities designed to enhance the effective operation of system teams. These activities focus on the task issues, such as the way things are done, the skills and resources needed to accomplish tasks, the quality of relationship among the team members or between members and the leader, and how well the team gets its job done.
- 3) *Intergroup Activities*: Activities designed to improve the effectiveness of interdependent groups-groups that must work together to produce a common output.
- 4) *Survey Feedback Activities*: Activities that rely on questionnaire surveys to generate information that is then used to identify problems and opportunities.
- 5) *Education and Training Activities*. Activities designed to improve individual's skills, abilities and knowledge. Several activities are available and several approaches possible.
- 6) *Techno structural or Structural Activities*: Activities designed to improve the effectiveness of organisational structures and job designs. The activities may take the form of (a) experimenting with new organisation structures and evaluating their effectiveness in terms of specific goals or (b) devising new ways to bring technical resources to bear on problems.
- 7) *Process Consultation Activities*: Activities that “help the client to perceive understand and act upon process events which occur in the client's environment.” These activities perhaps more accurately describe an approach, a consulting mode in which the client gains insight into the human processes in organisation and learns skills in diagnosing and managing them.
- 8) *Grid Organisation Development Activities*: Activities developed by Robert Blake and Jou Mouton, which constitute a six phase change model involving the total organisations internal resources are developed to conduct most of the programs, which may take from to five years to complete.
- 9) *Third- party Peacemaking Activities*: Activities conducted by a skilled consultant (the third party). Designed to “help two members of an organisation manage their interpersonal conflict”.

- 10) *Coaching and Counseling Activities*: Activities that entail the consultant or other organisation member working with individual to help (a) define learning goals, (b) learn how others see their behaviour, and (c) learn new behaviours to help them better achieve their goals.
- 11) *Life and Career Planning Activities*: Activities that enable individuals to focus on their and career objectives and how to go about achieving them. Structured activities include producing life and career inventories, discussing goals and objective and assessing abilities, needed additional training and area of strength and deficiency.
- 12) *Planning and Goal Setting Activities*: that include theory and experience in planning and goal setting problem-solving models, planning paradigms, ideal organisations status real organisation “discrepancy” models, and the like.
- 13) *Strategic management Activities*: Activities that help key policymakers to reflect systematically on the organisation’s basic mission and goals and environmental demands, thrums and opportunity and to engage in long-range action planning of both a reactive and active nature.
- 14) *Organisational Transformation Activities*: Activities that involve large scale system change activities designed to fundamentally change the nature of the organisation.

Self Assessment Questions 3

- 1) Which of these is not labeled as Organisation Development Intervention?

a) Team building	b) Group Development
c) Process consultation	d) Behaviour modification
- 2) _____is an intervention that helps to motivate people to contribute towards a future that is desirable.

a) Behaviour modifications	b) Visioning
c) Sensitivity Training	d) Survey feedback
- 3) Activities designed to improve the effectiveness of organisational structures and job designs are_____

a) Tecno structural activity	b) Team building activity
c) Coaching and counseling activities	d) Inter group activity

1.7 LET US SUM UP

Each of these families of intervention includes many activities. They involve both conceptual material and actual experience with the phenomenon being studied. Some families are directed toward specific, targets, problems or processes. Another way to classify OD interventions is by the primary target of the intervention, for example, individuals, dyads and triads, teams and group, intergroup relations, and the total organisational.

1.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) “Organisational development has become imperative in view of dynamics of external environmental conditions and internal tensions and strain”. Justify this statement.
- 2) What is an OD Intervention? Discuss its concept and nature.
- 3) Describe the factors to be considered for OD interventions.
- 4) Discuss the types of interventions based on the underlying causal mechanisms given by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton.
- 5) Elucidate the major “families” of OD intervention activities.

1.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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