

## 29

# WORK IN ORGANISATIONS

### 29.1 Introduction

You have seen shops in your locality. In most of these shops, two or more people work together to sell specific things (e.g. groceries, clothes, furniture etc.).

In modern societies, people get together and work in order to reach a common goal for that they have to co-ordinate their work and do it in a systematic manner. Such a group of people for what is called an organisation. The shops in the above said example are examples of small organisations. You may have also seen a factory or someone may have told you about factories. A factory is a place where a large number of people work together to produce some item (e.g cars, steel, sugar, cement etc.). Factories are examples of larger organisations.

In every organisation, in order to achieve its goals, all the workers have to follow certain rules and regulations. Also in every work place the owner or supervisor has a way of dealing with his employees, and also has certain expectations from them.

The values beliefs, assumptions, expectations and norms (rules) which are considered important in an organisation constitute what is called the culture of the organisation. When an individual joins any specific organisation, they have to be taught about the culture of the organisation. This lesson will help you in understanding about an organisation and the related concepts.

### 29.2 Objective

After reading this lesson you will be able to :

- describe what an organisation is;
  - see work as a major organisational goal;
-

- describe the patterns of communication in organisations;
- explain the concept of organisational culture;
- describe how a worker is socialised in the organisational culture;

### 29.3 What is an organisation ?

An organisation is a social unit which is formed with a specific purpose. It is made up of two or more people who work together on a regular basis in order to reach a common goal or set of goals. Thus in all organisations, people work together to reach specific goals.

Earlier, we had given you two examples, one of a shop and the other a factory, as two different types of organisations. Given below are some more examples of organisations.

**School** : Schools are organisations where people (teachers and students) work together to reach the goal of basic education of the students.

**Bank** : Bank is an organisation where employees work together to keep the money of the people safely and to give loans to people.

**Police Station** : Police Station is an organisation where employees (policemen) work together to provide safety and security to the people.

**Insurance Company** : Insurance companies like LIC and GIC are organisations where employees work together to offer financial security and protection to people for their goods and their lives.

**College and Universities** : These are organisations where people work together to give students training in specific subjects (e.g. Mathematics, Biology etc.) and specific professional skills (e.g. Doctor, Engineer).

**District Courts & High Courts** : These are organisations where employees work together to help people in settling their disputes and conflicts and for giving punishment to criminals.

Organisations are places where people work together to reach certain goals.

---

#### Intext Question 29.1

---

1. What is an organisation ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  2. What do you understand by the term organisational culture ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. Give three examples of organisations which are not mentioned above.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
-

### Try it yourself

Take a walk in your neighbourhood and make a list of all organisations which you notice (for example, bank, insurance company etc.)

## 29.4 The nature of organisations

By now you must be quite clear that organisations are places where people work towards common goals. But organisations do not exist in isolation. They are part of the larger society in which they are located. Within the organisation, also, there are several sub-system or parts. These are :

- (i) **Goal Subsystem** : This consists of overall goals of the organisation, the goals of different departments of the organisation, and goals of individual persons in the organisation.
- (ii) **Technical Subsystem** : People using knowledge, techniques, equipment, and facilities.
- (iii) **Structural Subsystem** : People working together on integrated activities in different departments of the organisation.
- (iv) **Psychosocial Subsystem** : This consists of people in social relationships in the organisation.
- (v) **Managerial Subsystem** : People in the organisation planning and controlling the overall efforts.

Any organisation can be viewed as a social and technical system made up of a number of subsystems or parts, as shown in Figure 1. An organisation is not technical or social only. It is a continuous structuring and co-ordination of human activities using various technologies. In other words, organisations consist of people using different technologies to reach organisational goals.

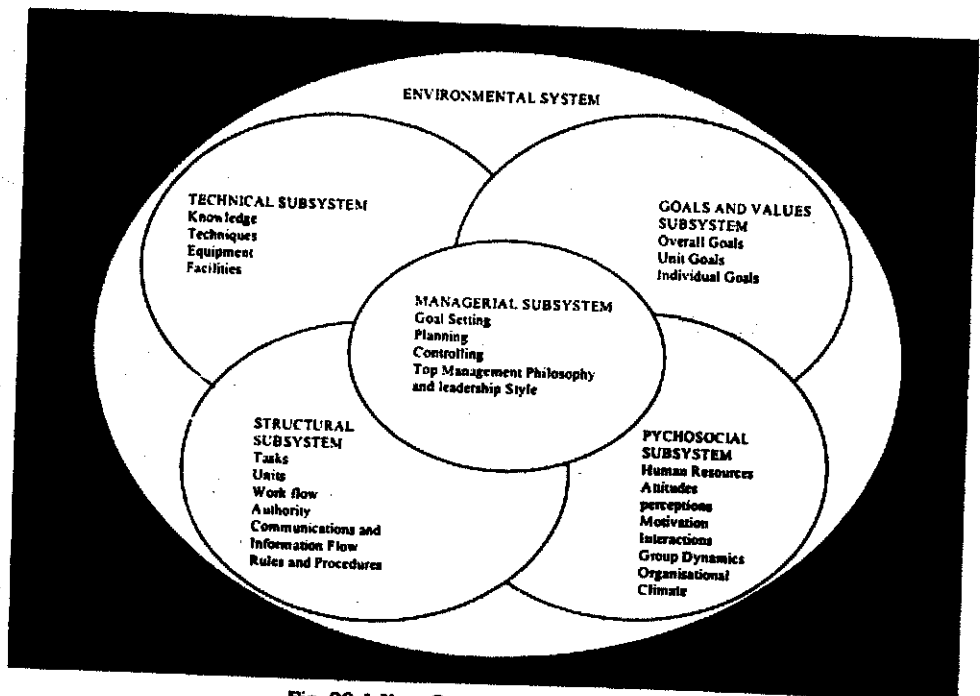


Fig. 29.1 Key Organizational Subsystems

As mentioned before, when we look at any organisation closely, we see it as made up of a number of subsystems. The organisational goals and values are important because they determine the types of work activities and the general environment in the organisation. Every organisation is a sub-part or subsystem of society. Therefore, the goals of the organisation have to be acceptable by the society in which it is located. The organisation carries out functions for society, so if it has to be successful, it must follow the rules and values and expectations of the society.

---

### **INTEXT QUESTIONS 29.2**

---

1. Give the names of different subparts of an organisation.

---

---

---

2. Do the goals of an organisation have to be acceptable by society ?

---

---

---

---

### **29.5 Communication in Organisations**

As you already know, there are different parts in an organisation. People work individually and in groups in the different departments and subsystems of organisations. In order for the work to be carried out smoothly and efficiently, there must be good communication between individuals and groups. In fact, any organisation which is successful has to have effective communication.

#### **29.5.1 Meaning of Communication in Organisations**

The basic meaning of communication is the transfer of meaning or information between sender and receiver. Communication involves the successful transfer of intended meaning from one human being to another. When we refer to communication in organisation, the situation becomes more complicated because problems arise from unintended consequences of communication acts. Lack of understanding or misunderstanding are common organisational problems.

In modern organisation, communication often involves the use of computers. Therefore both machine-machine and human machine communication becomes very important.

---

Communication begins with an information source that provides the message which is to be transmitted to a destination, and continues over time in a series of interactions. Communication always requires three basic elements—the source, the message, and the destination or receiver.

In communication systems the goal is understanding—making the sender and receiver “matched” together for a particular message. But there are always problems in the message reaching from the sender to the receiver. Some of the sender’s meaning is lost in the process of sending the message. A message which is written may not convey the manager’s feeling about a situation. Direct talking is better in making the message clear, but the tone of the voice and expression of the face can also cause confusion.

### **(1) Intrapersonal Communication**

The term intrapersonal communication refers to the ways in which the receiver of the message understands, interprets and reacts to the message. The meaning of communication is more dependent on the response it elicits than on the intention of the communicator. The reactions of people — their behaviour tell as about the message they have received. We need to know about the values and beliefs of people— their conceptual system — in order to understand how they perceive, interpret and organise messages and information. The concept of intrapersonal communication includes talking to oneself.

### **(2) Interpersonal Communication**

Any organisation is made up of two or more people in social relationships. A relationship requires communication— verbal, nonverbal, or both. And, communication is behaviour. Therefore, to really understand human behaviour in organisations we need to know more about interpersonal communication : its goals, outcomes, problems, and strategies for improvement.

For example somebody asks your name and you give the reply, the communication is perfect. When we move to more complex messages, the probability of 100 percent effectiveness decreases very quickly. When your teacher says “Your work in generally satisfactory,” you may be unclear about the specific message intended. You may hear the first part and ignore the second part or do the reverse of that.

There are many different ways of improving inter-personal communication. Listed below are some important guidelines for receiving feed back skills, each of them is important in improving interpersonal communication.

### **A SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES FOR CLEAR INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

*The communicator seeking to improve his communication clarity should :*

1. *Have a clear picture of what he wants the other person to understand.*
2. *Analyze the nature and magnitude of his attitudes toward both the topic and the person with whom he is communicating.*
3. *Assess his own communication skills and those of the person listening.*
4. *Seek to identify himself with the psychological frame of reference of the person receiving his ideas.*
5. *Develop a realistic expectation for the degree of clarity obtainable in a given context.*
6. *Make the message relevant to the person listening by using that person's language and terms.*
7. *State his ideas in the simplest possible terms.*
8. *Define before developing and explain before amplifying.*
9. *Develop one idea at a time, take one step at a time.*
10. *Use appropriate repetition.*
11. *Compare and contrast ideas by associating the unknown with the known.*
12. *Determine which ideas need special emphasis.*
13. *Use as many channels as necessary for clarity.*
14. *Watch for and elicit corrective feedback in a variety of channels.*
15. *Eliminate or reduce noise if it is interfering.*
16. *Pace his communication according to the information processing capacities of the channel and the person listening.*

### **29.5.2 Organisational Communication Systems**

We have seen how difficult it is to transfer meaning accurately from one person to another. When we add people to the communication system, the network of pairs and groups becomes increasingly complex. On the technical level, we have to develop a capacity for transmitting all of the potential messages. Our telephone system is a good example. In the older telephone system, the operator could connect the sender and receiver manually. Modern systems require electronic switching devices to handle the connection of calls. Within organisations, the same technical requirements exist and have been dealt with the help of highly developed communica-

tion equipment. For example, there are typewriters which remember, photocopy machines which copy and help in combining information to be communicated, and computers that store and process huge amounts of information.

The more the people who are involved in the communication process, the more difficult it is to make sure that everyone gets the message. Communication networks take many forms such as person-to-group, group-to-group, and mass communication (one-to-many or group-to-many).

Organisational communication systems include messages between members of the organisation (internal communication) and messages between members and persons outside of the organisation (external communications). Any person may either be a sender or a receiver of a communication a message containing information). Organisations often have separate departments or people whose jobs is to handle the various types of communication.

Effective communication is a difficult human activity, but there are ways of improving communication, as described earlier. Try and apply some of these methods and see the improvement in communication with people around you.

---

### Intext Questions 29.3

---

1. What do you understand by the word "communication" ?

---

---

2. Name the two types of communication as described in this section.

---

---

3. What are the three basic elements of communication ?

---

---

---

### ACTIVITY

1. Think of the communication process in your own life with your family, friends, etc. and illustrate some communication problems.
  2. Over a period of one day, pay special attention to whether verbal and nonverbal messages of people around you match with each other. Note whether or not their facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language
-

fit the spoken words. If the messages do not match (verbal and nonverbal), note which aspect of the message (verbals or nonverbal), you give more importance to.

## **29.6 Organisational Culture and Socialisation**

Work organisations offer a person for more than just a job. From the day individuals enter an organisation to the time they leave their membership behind, they experience and often commit themselves to a distinct way of life complete with its own routine, rewards, relationships, demands and potentials.

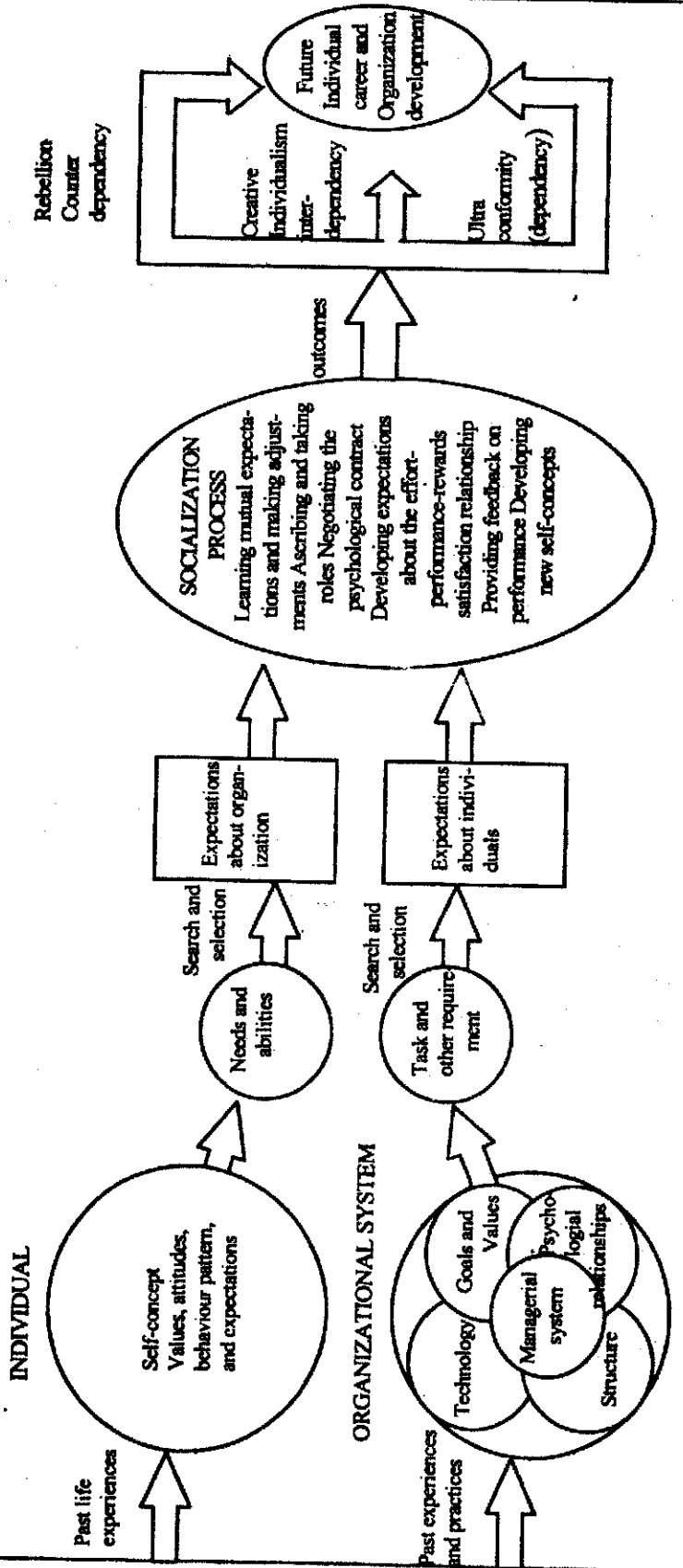
Organisational culture basically consists of established rules to be followed in daily work. This includes a special type of language for communication, an ideology which gives direction to a member's everyday experience. Organisational culture also includes the shared standards of performance to important aspects of work that has to be done, the biases towards other organisations and model of appropriate social behaviour.

Organisational culture also includes certain rituals and customs which indicate how members are to relate to colleagues, subordinates, superiors, and outsiders, as well as awareness of what is "good" behaviour in the organisation and what is not. All of these ways of thinking, feeling and doing make up the organisational culture.

The term socialisation refers to the learning of the cultural perspective that has to be involved in the routine and unusual matters going on in the work place. To come to know an organisational situation and act within it implies that a person has developed some common sensical beliefs, principles, and understandings, in other words a perspective for interpreting one's experience in a given sphere of the work world.

In general use, the socialisation refers to the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that help them in becoming useful members of their society. We have all gone through this process many times. Significant socialisation occurs during infancy and early childhood. We are born into this world with potential for a very wide range of behaviour, but we learn from our parents and other people close to us to behave within a narrow range that is considered acceptable by society.

When people marry, they have to live life in a totally different way from what they have been used. When they have children again their life and routine changes. In old age when their children have independent lives, again they have to adjust to life in a different way. In a similar way, when people join a new organisation for work, they have to develop new values, attitudes, and behaviours which are considered appropriate in the organisation.



The problems related to entrance into and adaptation to work organisations are important aspects of adult socialisation. In modern societies with rapid technological and sociological changes, it is impossible to socialize the young child to all future roles. Every person must face continuous socialisation to new situations throughout his or her life.

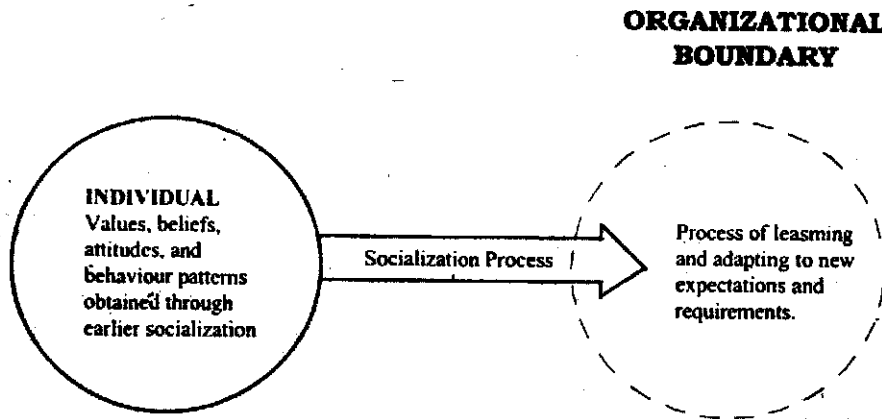


Fig 29.3. The Socialization Process (French et al., 1985)

Organisational socialisation—the process of becoming an accepted member—is a twoway process. The individual changes to adapt to the organisation, but the organisation is also changed in some way by the individual. Everytime an organisation takes in a new member, it is also influenced. For example, the entry of women into business and other organisations has resulted in the need to socialise this new group, but this requires changes in the organisation itself.

Individuals have a fixed image of themselves when entering a new organisation. This image changes as they interact with the organisation and learn new tasks and roles. Joining any organisation means developing new involvements and relationships with other people. The person meets new people, takes part in new groups and is exposed to many new influences from other people.

Membership to new organisations requires the development of new values appropriate to the position. To become a successful member, the individual must adjust to the goals, values, and practices of the organisation. Socialisation into any organisation involves at least the following :

1. Achieving organizational goals that are different from the personal goals of individuals members.
2. Having sufficient involvement, commitment, and initiative from organizational members.
3. Requiring individuals to take certain organizational roles.
4. Having people perform certain tasks effectively and efficiently.
5. Requiring participants to accept authority and to assume responsibilities.
6. Achieving the integration and coordination of activities.
7. Requiring adherence to policies, rules, and procedures.
8. Attaining responsiveness to leadership and influence.

9. Developing sufficient loyalty to maintain the organization as a social system.

One of the most important aspects of the socialisation process is the learning of a new role for the individual. In a general sense every society have different roles for its members. Roles are the expected behaviour patterns for a specific position in a society or organisation. We ascribe roles to children, students, workers, managers and professionals such as doctors and lawyers. All social actions may be thought of as making role behaviour which allows individual actors to respond to expectations of others regarding their performance.

Figure provides a summary diagram of the organisational socialisation process. It starts with the past life experiences of the individual and the past experiences and practices of the organisation. The diagram suggests that both the individual and the organisation bring a number of requirements, constraints, and expectations into the process.

The socialisation process requires significant adjustments both from the individual and the organisation which results in the negotiation of the psychological contract. The psychological contract is not a written legal document. It results from the process of fulfilling mutual expectations and satisfying mutual needs in the relationship between a person and the work organisation.

### **What you have learnt**

We started with why people work— in order to reach a common goal which satisfies their need. We noted that when people work together to reach a common goal, they have to co-ordinate their work and do it in a systematic manner. Any such group of people form what is called an organisation. You also learnt that organisations have a number of subparts, namely the goal, technical, structural, psychosocial and the managerial subsystems.

For organisations to work smoothly and efficiently, good communication is necessary. You must have realized the importance of different aspects of communication—intrapersonal, interpersonal as well as organisational communication process. It was emphasised in the lesson that organisations have many expectations from workers which are expressed through norms, rules, values, daily practices, etc. You may remember that these expectations and pressures form what is called organisational culture. Finally, it was explained to you that when individuals join a new organisation, they have to learn to behave in acceptable ways which result both in individual growth as well as organisational development. This is called the process of socialisation.

### **Terminal Exercise**

1. What is an organisation. Give examples
2. Explain the subsystems of organisation.
3. Explain the terms interpersonal and intrapersonal communication.

---

## Key to Intext Questions

### 29.1

1. Organisation is a place where people work together to reach certain goals.
2. The values beliefs, assumptions, expectations and norms important for an organisation is called as the culture of the organisation.
3. Bank school and colleges

### 29.2

1. The different subject of an organisation are
  - (i) goal subsystem
  - (ii) technical subsystem
  - (iii) structural subsystem
  - (iv) psychological subsystem
  - (v) Managerial subsystem
2. Yes, as the organisation is the subsystem of goals has to be accepted by the society.

### 29.3

1. Communication means transfer of meaning or information between sender and receiver.
2. The two types are Interpersonal and Intrapersonal communication.
3. The three basic elements are the source, the message and the destination/receiver.

### Hints to Terminal Exercise

1. Refer section 29.3
  2. Refer section 29.4
-