

MES: 103 HIGHER EDUCATION: THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL CONTEXT

Assignment: 01

- a) Describe systems approach to understand institutions in the context of a higher education organisation.
(500 Words)
- b) Describe principles of developing professional relationships.
(500 Words)
- c) What are the common familial concerns of college goers? Interview any five college goers on the checklist of psychological problems faced by them (Unit-13, p.15) and prepare a report.
(500 Words)

ASSIGNMENT SOLUTIONS GUIDE (2023)

MES-103

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1. Describe systems approach to understand institutions in the context of a higher education organisation.

Ans. The Systems approach is the study of inter-related variables forming one system, a unit, a whole which is composed of many facts, a set of elements standing in interaction. This approach assumes that the system consists of discernible, regular and internally consistent patterns, each interacting with another, and giving, on the whole, the picture of a self-regulating order. It is, thus, the study of a set of interactions occurring within, and yet analytically distinct from, the larger system. What the systems theory presumes include :

- The existence of a whole on its own merit;
- The whole consisting of parts;
- The whole existing apart from the other wholes;
- each whole influencing the other and in turn, being influenced itself;
- The parts of the whole are not only inter-related, but they interact with one another and in the process creating a self-evolving work;
- The parts relate themselves into a patterned relationship, while the whole exists, and keeps existing.

The emphasis of the systems theory is on the articulation of the system and of its I components and the behaviors by means of which it is able to maintain itself I over time.

A systems approach to understanding institutions : Systems are used throughout the physical, behavioural and information sciences to help in defining and understanding

phenomena. They refer to a set of components surrounded by a boundary which accept inputs from other systems and discharge outputs into others as well. An institutional system is typically concerned with problems of relationships, of structure and of interdependence. In a college system these take the form of classrooms, equipment, teachers, students, staff and the concomitant human elements like feelings, jealousies, prejudices, stereotypes, ambitions, rivalries, beliefs, wants, needs and politics.

The constituents of a system thus include:

- The idea of a system-environment;
- A definable boundary;
- System inputs;
- System outputs;
- System functions and processes;
- The state of the system;
- System hierarchies;
- Goal-directed behaviour;
- Information and information flows.

There are two types of systems, the closed system and the open system. Let us try to understand them with the help of an activity

Certain sciences deal with closed systems but in the social world, such a closed framework carries inherent problems. Without adaptation to external influences, a closed community reaches a point where self-containment becomes stifling and unhealthy. Colleges, not heeding changes in market forces, national curriculum, students' preferences, government policies and international trends will fall into the category of closed systems. They have been known to show a steady decline.

A college must strive to be an open system. It cannot shut itself off from its students, government, faculty, or competitors. An open system needs to be able to cope with controllable and unexpected inputs and deal with. These in predictable and 'contingent' ways. Research has shown that institutions which fail to respond to current trends and other changes and fail to at least maintain their resource-base are liable to suffer from problems of entropy - losses of energy and a tendency to becoming disorganized.

Interaction with the environment is essential for the open, self-adaptive organization to renew itself. This environment has both internal and external components.

The internal components include:

- Faculty and staff;
- Classrooms, laboratories and facilities (the learning environment);
- Current students;
- Operating budget;
- Various committees;
- Research programs.

The external environment of the institution comprises of:

- Prospective employers of graduates;
- Parents and families of students;
- Competing colleges;
- Preparatory high schools;
- Population demographics;
- Funding agencies.

2. Describe principles of developing professional relationships

Ans. Principles of developing professional relationship: Let us now try to contemplate on how we can develop facilitative professional relationships.

- a) **Equity and excellence for all students:** Professional development is based on a fundamental commitment to equitable outcomes and high achievement for all students and the overarching purpose to foster, sustain, and perpetuate a democratic and just society.
- b) **A common, clear vision of good teaching and learning:** Learning is viewed as a meaning centered, developmental process and teachers are supposed to apply theories of learning to develop and teach appropriate lessons and units in and across the subject areas, in motivating and involving all students, in diagnosing student needs and achievements, in delineating cognitive outcomes of teaching for all learners, and in enhancing students' abilities to independently evaluate information, think critically, and reach sound conclusions. There should be a common, clear vision of teaching and learning, informed by and adapted from established standards.
- c) **Subject competence:** The teacher is responsible for maintaining (or acquiring) subject competence not only in areas of personal interest but in all areas relevant to course goals or objectives. This implies that what is actually taught is consistent with stated objectives. For this the teacher needs to take active steps to be up-to-date in content areas relevant to his or her courses and to provide adequate representation of important topic areas and points of view. Failure to fulfill this occurs when a lecturer teaches subjects, for which she or he has an insufficient knowledge base, when he/she teaches only those topics in which he/she has a personal interest, or misinterprets research evidence to support a theory or social policy favored him/her.
- d) **Pedagogical knowledge:** A teacher should have adequate pedagogical knowledge and skills, including communication of objectives, selection of effective instructional methods, providing opportunity for practice and feedback, and dealing with student diversity. If mastery of a certain skill (e.g., critical analysis, design of experiments) is part of the course objectives and thus will be considered in evaluation and grading of students, the teacher must provide students with adequate opportunity to practice and receive feedback on that skill during the course. If learning styles differ significantly for different students or groups of students, the teacher should be aware of these differences and, if feasible, vary her / his style of teaching accordingly.
- e) **Relationships with colleagues:** Disagreements between colleagues relating to teaching or institutional life should be settled privately, with no harm to student development. Failure to show respect for colleagues occurs when a teacher makes unwarranted derogatory comments in the classroom about the competence of another teacher. For example, Professor A tells students that information provided to them last year by Professor B is of no use and will be replaced by information from Professor A in the course at hand.
- f) **Problem/inquiry-based methods/strategies:** Teachers should use inquiry-based methods for examining these practices as they provide multiple and sustained opportunities to engage in self directed inquiry about their own practices, needs,

development and the practice of others through cases, portfolios, narratives and other reflective tools.

- g) **Well-defined standards of practice and performance:** This helps define what educators should know, be able to do, to meet the needs of diverse students, to teach subject (s) in powerful ways, provide teachers with many examples of the kind of practice they are trying to develop, in setting their own professional development goals, and with frequent, substantive feedback about their progress toward the standards, guide teacher self assessment.
- h) **Reflective practitioner:** Reflection is an excellent tool to keep oneself in tune with what one is doing and where one is going, when the end is often unclear. A reflective stance helps identify and understand teachers' feelings surrounding the profession. It also helps her determine her attitudes towards her students and prompt her to continue to question everything. It will enhance his /her ability to form positive relationships with students. To accomplish this goal a teacher can .keep a daily diary and review her diary weekly.

3. What are the common familial concerns of college goers? Interview any five college goers on the checklist of psychological problems faced by them (Unit-13, p.15) and prepare a report.

Ans.