
UNIT 10 THE PROCESS OF EMPOWERMENT

Objectives

After going through the Unit you should be able to:

- Understand the concept of empowerment
- have insight into the process of empowerment
- appreciate the need of self empowerment
- develop ideas empowering different organizational units

Structure

- 10.1 The concept of Empowerment
- 10.2 Empowerment at the Societal Level
- 10.3 Empowerment in Organizations
- 10.4 Empowerment of Different Organizational Units
- 10.5 Empowerment Audit
- 10.6 Power Enhancers of Leaders
- 10.7 Self Empowerment
- 10.8 Summary
- 10.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 10.10 Further Readings

10.1 THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT

We can define empowerment as the process of multiplying power, or creating autonomy in a social system, to help people take charge of their efforts, promoting the ability to act collectively to solve problems, influence important issues and contribute to the achievement of the main, objectives.

Empowerment has been conceived in a variety of ways. The major difference has been between community related thinkers interventionists on the one hand, and the organization related scholars and practitioners on the other. While the latter emphasize competency building and involvement through delegation, the former emphasize collective power as the central theme.

Power can never be given. Empowerment helps people to recognize their internal power and exercise it for the benefit of themselves and others.

10.2 EMPOWERMENT AT THE SOCIETAL LEVEL

Social action thinkers and interventionists have emphasized equity, participation, access to opportunities, sharing of resources and influencing decisions as the elements of empowerment, Kari and Michels (1991) definition of empowerment as "the ability to act collectively to solve problems and influence important issues" seems to aptly summarise these views. Rappaport et al. (1984) defined empowerment as "a process through which people become strong enough to participate within, share in the control of and influence events and' institutions affecting their lives." Distinction has been made between 'psychological empowerment (raised consciousness and subjective experience of efficacy) and community empowerment (modified structural conditions for the purpose of reallocating resources) (Swift and Levin, 1987).

Empowerment in society includes psychological empowerment, a political action component and the achievement of redistribution of resources or decision making (Rissel, 1994, p.41).



Borrowing the concept of Rissel (1994), empowerment can be seen as having passed through 5 main phases: critical consciousness of lopsided distribution of power or conscientisation in the 50's; social action ideology of 60's; self-help orientation of 70's; centrality of the individual as a citizen in community psychology in 80's, and citizens' control of most matters in the 90's. The new decade of the next century will probably be the decade, connecting integrating and widening network for collective thinking and action.

UNDP has been doing great service in focussing on human development defined as "enlarging peoples choices", which includes three elements "equality of opportunity for all people in society, sustainability of such opportunities from one generation to the next, and empowerment of people so that they participate - and benefit from - development". Let us look at the situation in today's world. As the Chapter heading of the UNDP report says it is "Still an unequal world" (UNDP, 1995).

Let us look at some figures. The richest top fifth almost have 85% of GNP, world trade domestic saving and domestic investment, contrasted with the poorest bottom fifth who have only about 1 percent or below. The trend shows that this gap is widening. The tragedy is that in spite of the affluence the rich countries are increasingly facing social and human problems because of overemphasis on economic growth: ozone depletion, disintegration of the social fabric, divorce, broken homes, drug addiction, HIV, Cancer, violence. Within the poor or developing countries also, power is unequally distributed and we have our own problems.

Another aspect of social empowerment relates to gender equality. UNDP has given two indices, GDI or Gender-related Development Index and GEM or Gender Empowerment Index. "GEM examines whether women and are able to actively participate in economic and political life and take part in decision making. While GDI focusses on expansion of capabilities in economic and political life and take part in decision making. While GDI focusses on expansion of capabilities the GEM is concerned with the use of those capabilities to take advantage of the opportunities of life" (UNDP, '1995). GEM concentrates on participation: economic, political and professional. The conclusion of UNDP is that gender equality does not depend on the income level of a society, that a lot needs to be done, although significant progress has been made. The four Scandinavian countries have the highest four ranks in GDI as well as GEM. While USA ranks no.2 in Human Development Index, its ranks on GDI and GEM respectively are 5 and 8. China and Cuba made remarkable progress in gender empowerment. They have demonstrated that strong policy and political commitment can manage to achieve empowerment similar to that of countries with much higher per capita incomes.

The main tools of empowerment in societies are of two types: structural and process interventions. In the former are political and policy commitment, legislation and effective implementation. In India a new policy decision backed by legislation will help in having one third women legislators at all levels. India since its independence has been implementing the policy of reservation in employment and seats in professional schools for minorities according to their proportion in the society. But these are not enough. Gandhiji taught us that process interventions are very important and more difficult. These include conscientization through dialogue, mass movement and mobilisation of people through agitation on issues. Today in India we have a large number of mobilisation interventions, from environment and ecology-related "Hug the Trees" or "Save Narmada" movement to "Science for People and Adult Literacy mobilisation. This is the result of the great impact of Gandhiji. Organization Development practitioners working in social development are helping in sharpening community mobilisation process interventions.

Participatory research is an important tool of empowerment (Tandon, 1981). It has three major components: research (people collectively analysing the problems they face), education (creation of common knowledge by people, development of critical awareness, including "disindoctrination, i.e. unmasking the myth of personal deficit as the cause of misery and transfer of knowledge to participants), and social 'action (see Yiech, 1996 for a recent application in creation of a homeless persons union).

To summarise, empowerment in society is concerned with equality, participation, access to opportunity and influencing decisions, especially by minorities, weaker or marginalised groups, and women. Both structural and process interventions are necessary for effective empowerment in societies. A society needs to connect with other societies dealing with similar issues.



10.3 EMPOWERMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS

A-pragmatic concept of empowerment has been suggested as "recognizing and releasing into the organization the power that people already have in their wealth of useful knowledge and internal motivation". (Randolph, 1995).

In OD literature it has been suggested that empowerment is "giving people the skills and the information they need to make good decisions and take informed deliberate actions so organizational members can solve problems and manage change on their own." (Smith and Tesmer, 1995) . Empowerment has been defined in a simple equation of Direction x Support x Autonomy (Koestenbahm, 1991), where all the three elements are equally important in enhancing or reducing empowerment.

In order to assess empowerment level in an organization. We need to examine empowerment not only of individual employees, but also of other organizational units: roles, including leaders, teams and the total organisation. It is necessary to assess the level of empowerment as perceived and experience by individual members of the organization, role occupants, those in leadership roles (senior managers), teams permanent, semi-permanent and temporary teams), and the total organization.

10.4 EMPOWERMENT OF DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS

Individual members feel empowered if they are listened to their ideas are valued, they are recognized for their contribution, encouraged, projected as important members, consulted, etc. Empowerment or roles is also important. In fact, motivation can be increased in employees by motivating and empowering the roles (see Pareek, 1993 for detailed discussion). If different roles have scope for initiative, creativity, discretion, growth, linkages, etc., they are empowered. One role deserves special attention, that of the leaders (senior managers). Even while they can continue to control by using their leadership role), unless they attend to important functions like visioning, strategic thinking and planning, searching and nurturing talent, etc. Teams have their own dynamics, and need to be empowered by clearer goals and freedom to work, with enough support by, the management. Finally, the organization must also be an empowered organization, inspiring and supporting other units in this process. In Exhibit 1 the indicators of empowerment are mentioned for each of the five organizational units. In the next column are mentioned the instruments which can and have been used to assess the empowerment level.

Empowerment is both the process and the outcome. So it is difficult to separate the indicators from the enablers of empowerment; indicators mentioned also contribute and enhance empowerment in an organization. Indicators-enablers in a way define empowerment. Empowerment is facilitated by some other factors which also be seen" as its consequences; these are called enablers/first-level outcomes. These are mentioned below, and in Column 4 of Exhibit 1. In the next column 5 are mentioned the relevant instruments to assess these. Finally, empowerment results in some consequences for making different organizational units more effective; these, are called second level outcomes.

1. Individual. A feeling of empowerment is generated by recognition, autonomy and support to work on their tasks and develop strategies to achieve the goals to which they are committed.
2. Role. For the roles, two aspects are important. The first one is role efficacy or potential of the role to be effective (perceive scope for using one's assets, take initiative, try out new ways, solve problems; have a sense of being valued; opportunities of growth; and working for a large cause). The second aspect is to have optimum role stress and capability of effectively coping with stress.
3. Leadership. Leadership role requires special attention. Some functions are more important for an effective leader (called transformational ,functions, like visioning, the boundary management, searching and developing talents etc.) compared with what are called "transactional" functions (eg. planning, coordinating, rewarding competence, etc.)



**Exhibit-1
Indicators, Enablers-outcomes and
Assessment Instruments of Empowerment**

1	2	3	4	5
Organisa- tional Unit	Indicators (Empowerment	Assessment Instruments T Level)	Enablers/Out comes	Assessment Instruments
Individual	Feeling of Empowerment	Empowerment Scale	Persuasive Power Managerial Style Managerial Behaviour	CPP Scale SPIRO-M SPIRO-B
Role	Role Efficacy	REC	Role Efficacy	REC
Leaders	Leadership Functions	SMF Schedule PE Scale	Transforma- tional Leadership	VEM Scale, SMF Schedule
Team	Team Functioning	TES		
Organiza tion	Structural	DAQ .. Aspects	Ethos Climate Culture	Octapace Profile MAO-C OCP

4. **Teams.** Teams need to have a clear sense of direction, enough autonomy to work on their tasks, and enough support to do their work.

5. **Organization.** The organization needs to have structural mechanisms of empowerment. One such mechanism is delegation. Three aspects are important for delegation: amount of delegation by the role occupant (8 areas), the process of delegation- (6 aspects) and facilitating factors for delegation (7 aspects). The other aspects of structural empowering are: (a) Dehierarchisation, usually called delayering - i.e., reducing the levels in an organization in making decisions; (b) decentralization, i.e., decision making to levels where action is involved; (c) debureaucratisation, i.e., reducing paper work and red tape in decision making and simplifying rules and procedures resulting in faster sharing sensitive and strategic information at various levels, and facilitating horizontal, top-down and bottom-up communication; (e) decontrol i.e., reducing outer control to increase others' autonomy and to free oneself for more strategic influence.

Activity 10.1

Make an Assessment of your Organisation and prepare a small report as to whether any of the above mentioned empowerment activities have been undertaken or not.

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Enablers/First-Level Outcomes

The following are both enablers (those which facilitate empowerment) and the first level outcome of empowerment The first 2 are individual - related, No.3 role - related, 4 and 5



are leadership – related, and 6 to 8 organization – related aspects.

1. **Persuasive power bases.** Bases of power have been classified into two categories: coercive, which control and reduce the autonomy of others, over or in relation to whom power is being used (e.g. authority, punishment, emotional relationship, reflected power, etc.), and persuasive which empower others and increase their autonomy by widening their choices (e.g. expertise, competence, role modelling, helping; etc.) Greater use of persuasive bases compared with coercive bases is both an indicator and consequence of empowering.
2. **Enabling managerial styles.** These are those which encourage and nurture subordinates, reflect problem- solving behaviour, and indicate creativity, resilience and ability to explore, contrasted with similar but dysfunctional styles.
3. **Role Efficacy.** As already commented, role efficacy has 10 aspects, under three categories: role making (self-role integration, proactivity, creativity, confrontation), role-centring (centrality, personal growth), role linking (inter-role linkages, helping relationship, and confrontation).
4. **Transformational Leadership.** Transformational functions (visioning, boundary management, role modelling, setting standards, culture building, synergising, searching and nurturing talent) need to be given more importance than transaction functions (policy making, planning, coordinating, monitoring performance, rewarding, developing systems, coaching).
5. **Decontrol and Dispossession.** Developing mechanisms which will reduce outer control by the leader, releasing his/her energy for more strategic roles (see Pareek, 1994, Chapter for discussion of the concept).
6. **Octapace Ethos.** Like climate, the organizational ethos (the main values reflected in the working of the organization and thinking of significant members) is important for empowerment. Octapace ethos is characterized by eight values of openness confrontation trust, authenticity, proaction, autonomy collaboration and experimentation.
7. **APE Climate.** Organizational climate promotes motivation amongst some individuals more than in others. APE climate is one which promotes concern for excellence (achievement), develops expertise (expert power), and concern for people in the organization and society at large (extension). Such a climate is contrasted with CAD climate, which promotes need to control, for example, through rules and regulations, concern for developing close personal relationships (affiliation) and need for getting approval and conformity (dependency). Use of APE climate is both an indicator and an outcome of empowerment.
8. **Entrepreneurial culture.** Promotes concern for an pursuit of excellence. Such a culture is differentiated from autocratic, bureaucratic and technological cultures.

Second Level Outcomes

Empowering results in the following outcomes in the organization, amongst its individual members and teams:

1. Pride and joy in work.
2. Sense of ownership (i.e. taking responsibility for action).
3. Higher sense of controlling what happens to oneself rather than a sense of helplessness.
4. Moderate risk taking, contrasted with playing safe or gambling.
5. Taking initiative, rather than waiting to be told what to do, or only carrying out tasks given.
6. Creativity (trying out new ways of solving problems, experimenting).
7. encouraging subordinates to use autonomy.

10.5 EMPOWERMENT AUDIT



The term 'audit' has been used in accounting. It has been defined by the New Encyclopaedia Britannica 91990, Vol.1, p. 695) as "examination of the records and reports of an enterprise by accounting specialists other than responsible for their preparation". The spirit- of audit is objective analysis of available data by independent examiners. The term is used more widely now, including internal audit, and audit of functions other than accounting. This term means- examining the process and outcome of empowerment in an organization by independent evaluator (s). There can also be internal audit of empowerment, undertaken by people belonging to the organization.

The methodology of empowerment audit includes ways of collecting data, its analysis, interpretation, and developing action ideas for promoting empowerment. Four main methods can and have been used for data collection in empowerment audit; instruments; individual interviews; group discussions; and observation of various departments, important places like canteens, common facilities, work place, etc.

The following instruments are used for the various indicators/enablers and enablers/first level outcomes. MAO-B (Pareek, 1986) had also been used in early work on empowerment audit. The second level outcomes have not been measured. All the instruments listed below, except No.1 are contained in Pareek (1996). The instruments 1 to 3 are for individuals, 4 for role, 5 to 7 for leadership role, 8 for teams, and 9 to 12 for organizational climate and culture.

Activity 10.2

Have you ever come across any such activity being undertaken by any organisation, in your knowledge, try and find out and study one where such an activity has been undertaken. Prepare a brief write-up.

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1. **Empowerment Scale** (Das, 1992) is a 26- item questionnaire which measures the perceived empowerment at the individual level in terms of support, recognition and encouragement received from senior people.
2. **CPP Scale** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 18) measures the value given to and need for coercive power bases and persuasive power bases.
3. **SPIRO-M** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 23) measures operating effectiveness of a manager in nurturing and regulating subordinates, problem solving, creativity, resilience and confronting problems and issues.
4. **Role Efficacy Scale** (Pareek, 1997 Chapters 35, 36) is a 20-item scale, in measuring 10 aspects of role efficacy.
5. **SMF Schedule** (Pareek, 1997 Chapter 49) gives assessment of the time and energy given by senior managers to the seven transactional functions and seven transformational functions.
6. **PE Scale** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 52) assesses the mechanisms of reducing the amount of outer-control, and thereby helping senior people to use their energy on more important matters.
7. **VBM** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 50, 51) Survey measures the amount of visioning, sharing of vision and getting employees' commitment to the vision by top management, and boundary management (protecting the organization, getting resources, lobbying for the organization, etc.).
8. **Team Empowerment Scale** assesses the level of clarify about the team's task



and related issues, among autonomy and support experienced by the team.

9. **Delegation Assessment Questionnaire** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 53) has three parts. It contains items on the amount of delegation in various areas, process of delegation and facilitating factors of delegation.
10. **OCTAPACE Profile** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 57) measures the level of eight values of openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, proaction, autonomy, collaboration and experimenting.
11. **MAO-C** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 55) measures six types of motivational climate (achievement, expert power, extension, control affiliation, dependency) for 12 organizational processes orientation interpersonal relationships, supervision, problem management, management of mistakes, conflict management, communication, decision making, trust, management of rewards, risk taking, and innovation and change).
12. **Organizational Culture Profile** (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 58) gives an organization's profile on four types of cultures: autocratic, bureaucratic, technocratic and entrepreneurial. Interviews/ Group Discussions: Individual interviews and group discussions are done in a non-structured way (Pareek and Rao, 1980). However the focus of the interviews usually is on the respondents' concept of empowerment, strengths and weaknesses of the organization in the empowerment context, hierarchical structure, bureaucratic practices (rules and regulations, paper work, etc.), communication, functional autonomy (interference, dysfunctional use of discretion), involvement and participation, accountability (taking responsibility), initiative, creativity, coordination, collaboration and team work, functioning of HRD sub-systems.

Activity 10.3

Identify five large organisations and interview at least five top and middle level managers and find out their response about the empowerment audit and specifically the indicators/ enablers explained above. Whether they have used it/intend to use it/don't know about them? Prepare a brief report,

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Observation: Observations are made more in what Nevis (1987) calls undirected awareness or Columbo Style, contrasted with directed awareness of Sherlock Holmes Style. Instead of "well organised, precise, knowing and deductively oriented" as Sherlock Holesmes did. "Colombo may be said to act like a sponge immersing himself in a milieu and waiting for important clues to be drawn to him" (Nevis, 1980. p.110), being here-and now and noticing whatever seems to be significant. In one unit, a common canteen' (common for the CE to workers), or different toilets for different levels of employees in another office were significant indicators. Observations also include experiences of the auditors.

The Audit: Responses to the instruments are scored and analysed. Responses during the interviews and group discussions are also analysed. Notes are made on observations. All these are analysed and integrated to get a profile of the organization. The audit report on various aspects can then be prepared. In one group of companies (A) working inn information technology, with young highly skilled employees, only data collected with the help of the instruments were analysed and reports were prepared. In the second group of companies, (B) data from all the sources were analysed and the report was based on the integrated analysis.

The final reports are presented group-wise (company or zone or division or Head/Corporate Office, etc.) and level wise.



Post-Audit Action: Action recommendations are made on the basis of the analysis. These are discussed by the groups/levels concerned for implementation. In company A, action ideas were discussed with each individual top manager for his/her own improvement in style, etc. and for implementing suggestions in their concerned groups. In the second group of companies (B), the reports have been prepared for each company, level-wise, with suggestions for improvement.

13.6 POWER ENHANCERS OF LEADERS

Leadership is increasingly seen as catalyst for empowerment, and the influence or power of a leader may be in proportion to his or her ability to "dispossess" the organization, or become "dispensable". Withdrawing from controlling functions are then the power enhancers for the leadership: They enhance the leader's real power, not the coercive power, but his/her indirect influence. This is possible only when the leader is released from attending to routine tasks and from the use of his/her discretion in most routine matters. Let us take the example of house or vehicle allotment. A leader has directive influence if he/she uses his/her discretion to allot vehicles or houses to people. In that case he/she will not have enough time to plan for a new vision. However, if clear rules are made, so that the leader does not play any role, and has no discretion, his real power and influence will increase, as he/she will be able to perform more important tasks of visioning, boundary management, lobbying for the organization etc. In this sense these can be seen as power enhancers rather than as leadership substitutes.

What are these power enhancers? Based on the research literature, and interviews with some senior Indian managers, a list of power enhancers was prepared, and then edited. Finally, the following 14 power enhancers were selected.

Professionalisation

Four enhancers fall within this category.

1. **Competence Building:** Professionalisation is attained through competent people in the organization. Competence development through various programmes and HRD practices contributes to this the more competent people there are in an organization, the greater the opportunity the leader will have to exercise higher leadership functions.
2. **Rewards System:** Rewards play an important role in building a culture and multiplying power. If creativity, innovation and initiatives are rewarded, people will develop power relating to these, The leaders then have great resources available to them, adding to their overall power. In this way, rewards are very effective power enhancers.
3. **Feedback System:** A well- developed system of giving to the employees feedback on their performance develops professionalism and reduces the subjective element in decision making by the leader. In fact, the feedback system in a releases time to leaders to perform this function.
4. **Professionalism:** A professional orientation in the organization develops several "substitutes" or enhancers of power. Professionalisation will include recruiting trained and competent persons with expertise in their fields, use of appropriate technology, and periodical competence building of personnel at various levels. Leadership in a professional organization deals with functions at higher levels.

Team work: Team work is an effective power enhancer, as it relieves the leader of attending to many routine matters, and multiplies power in the organization by increasing the effectiveness of teams. This factor has five enhancers, out of which professionalism is one, (already discussed). Two enhancers are given below; two others are common with the next factor and will be discussed later.

5. **Strong Teams:** "Strong and cohesive teams" are a major power enhancer. The more cohesive the teams are, the more the leader is able to exercise high- level power, leaving most of the internal matters to the teams.
6. **Self-Governing Teams:** When teams can function on their own, with minimum direction from the top, leadership can be qualitatively different. Such teams help in the



7. process of decentralization. For example, autonomous work groups seems to reduce the role of supervisors (because the teams themselves make most of the decisions) on the one hand, and on the other they add value to the supervisor's role in helping them to become real leaders in attending to resource mobilisation, boundary management, competence building and consultation when needed by the group. Branches of organizations with enough autonomy have the same effect.

Formalization

Informality in organizations functions as a lubricant. But too much of it may create messiness and slipperiness. Some formalization is needed to increase the effectiveness of leaders and others, in terms of better use of discretion by them. Four enhancers are in this group. Two enhancers are common with the previous factor (tasks and roles) and are discussed first, followed by two others.

7. **Satisfying Tasks:** intrinsically satisfying tasks are likely to promote both formalization and team building. Well - designed tasks which are seen as worth while by employees will build employ motivation and involvement, and the leader need not have to spend energy on this aspect. These will also contribute to the effective use of discretion by the concerned employees, and thereby enhance power in the system.
8. **Rules and Procedures:** Clear rules and procedures for most routine matters, an important element in formalization, reduces the need for attention and. time to be given by the leaders to such matters. Moreover, they minimize the anxiety level of employees about these matters, again helping in increasing their own sense of power . For example, most organizations have clear cut rules and procedures for compensation, perks, facilities, amenities etc. Although not directly related to team building, such rules reduce bickerings and help in building of teams.
9. **Organizational Structure:** A clear well-defined structure helps in formalization. The structure reduces the leader's discretion in many matters, and "forces" the leader to pay attention to other important functions, and use the power available to increase expertise in the organization.
10. **Management Systems:** In effective organizations well designed systems replace leaders' roles in most matters. For example, good planning, budgetary, and information systems generate most processes of decision making. Recruitment and other human resource systems ensure that these functions are performed well, without any need for the leaders to attend to them.

Expert Power

Development of expert power in an organization multiplies power within the organization, and relieves leaders of the necessity of paying attention to most matters which can now be shared by experts. There are three enhancers in this category, one (staff functions) being common with the previous factor of formalization,

11. **Staff functions:** Advisory and staff functions on the one hand develop formalization by introducing structured and formalised special functions, on the other hand these help to develop expertise. Power is then distributed and gets multiplied, and strengthens the leader's ability to lead the organization.
12. **Objective Rewards:** when rewards are decided on the basis of clear criteria, are developed by a team, and are also managed by a group of persons (teams), they become more objective. Experts are involved in such decision making. The leader gives up his role of deciding about rewards and passes this responsibility to a team. This will release the leader's time and energy for higher level tasks.
13. **Spatial Distance:** Divisionalisation and decentralization contribute to the development of expert power. When functionaries are removed from the central or head office, and located away from it, they have to use more autonomy, thereby enhancing power in the system, and sharing power (and responsibility) with the leader whose power is also enhanced.

Task Clarity and Autonomy

There is only one enhancer in this group, although self-governing teams can also be included here.



14. **Task Clarity:** Well defined tasks are important for autonomous functioning of individuals.. This increases their power, as also the power of the leader who need not be bothered with these matters.

In brief, leaders can empower people and teams at various level, thereby multiplying power in an organization. Based on work with 10 companies Randolph (1985) has suggested a 3 pronged approach to empowerment.

1. Share information
 - a. Share company performance information.
 - b. Help people understand the business.
 - c. Build trust though sharing sensitive information
 - d. Create self-monitoring possibilities
2. Create autonomy thought structure
 - a. Create a clear vision and clarify the little pictures
 - b. Clarify goals and roles collectively
 - c. Create new decision making rules that support empowerment
 - d. Establish new empowering performance management processes
 - e. Use heavy doses of training
3. Let teams become the hierarchy
 - a. Provide direction and training for new skills
 - b. Provide encouragement and support for change
 - c. Gradually have managers let go of control
 - d. Work through the leadership vacuum stage
 - e. Acknowledge the fear factor.

Activity 10.4

Identify five organisations of large size and prepare a comparative statement about all the five points given above, based on the response of their HRT) department. Prepare your report on status of empowerment, discuss this among your peers.

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10.7 SELF EMPOWERMENT

The core of the empowerment process is the individual. While the century of great leaders is coming to a close. We already have enough signs that the next century will be the century of great leadership. Individuals will matter, not a few of them, but a large number. We shall continue to derive inspiration from great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi who demonstrated the highest degree of authenticity. He practiced what he preached.

Each individual needs to take charge of himself/herself, and take steps for self-empowerment, Five lessons can be learned from Mahatma Gandhi about self-empowerment.



1. Develop a strong identity, mainly in relation to the race, class, country or vocation. This identity should give a sense of pride to oneself. Distinguish this identity from pseudo or narrow identities.
2. Break out of the narrow or pseudo identities, eg. of sex, language, caste, religion etc. In other words, empowerment means emancipation from narrow identities. This thought is at the core of the Indian culture. For example, connecting the male with the female part of the self is reflected in one of the highest forms of God called ardhhanarisvra, which translated means the "half man and half woman god", also depicted so in the statue, half being a man and the other half a woman. Although this thought was in the Indian traditional concept of androgyny, male domination for centuries clouded this. Gandhiji brought it out, and emphasized that the complete self would require an integration of the two. He used to say that he was first a mother and then a man. His emphasis on values of non-violence, caring, compassion, empathy etc. was to balance the tilt which was more on male values of confrontation, competition, aggression etc.
3. Expand your identity to larger identities - or connect with others. But before connecting with others, connect with yourself. After integration of the self, by connecting within with several aspects of the self, connecting with others add a qualitatively different dimension to empowerment. Individuals and groups are no more in isolation. Connecting is empowerment. With his deep identity of religion-spirituality of Hinduism, Gandhiji was able to connect with other religions like Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism etc. He used to say that he was a true Muslim, a true Christian, India, with deep spiritual tradition, with its later connection with Islam, learnt new lesson of serving the needy and the community. The Indian identity or psyche is an integration of these. And Gandhiji, through his life, taught millions of young Indians this basic lessons of empowerment. Connecting with larger groups and significant individuals in other parts of world, gave a higher degree of empowerment. The youth during the freedom struggle used to participate in meeting to listen to Paul Robenson's inspiriting music, or Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's poems of the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet. And much later young people were inspired by Martin Luther King, Fiedel Castro, etc. This gave a sense of empowerment with these connections - a sense of vibrating support coming from dozens of irresponsible individuals and groups from all over the world.
4. Gandhiji emphasized the need of going back to self whenever in doubt. Whenever his action resulted in unintended violence, he used to discontinue his programme, and go on fast, introspecting and reflecting, and then he discussed his analysis with his colleagues. Gandhi's lesson was that the core of all empowerment is self, a liberated self strengthened with introspection and reflection.
5. And finally, he emphasized the need to go beyond the self and served other individuals, groups and the society. This was the link between individual empowerment and empowerment in the society. Gandhiji gave up his busy schedule, he used to find time to serve needy (eg. taking care of a friend who had leprosy). Even in USA, based on a longitudinal research it has been reported that "the more individuals and blocks get involved in helping their neighbours, informally or through religion and other service organizations, the more they also get involved in grassroots community action...." (Perkins, Brown & Taylor, 1996, p.106) Such concern for others (called extension motivation (Pareek, 1997, Chapter 50 or what Mehta (1994) calls social achievement), along with internal locus of control is the basis of individual empowerment, and a building block of social empowerment.

Activity 10.5

Make an honest assessment of yourself and a few close friends of yours and see how do you fare on self empowerment count.

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10.8 SUMMARY

The primary objective of this unit is to let you understand the concept of empowerment. The ultimate goal of empowerment is to help achieve the organisational goals and objectives basically by making people realise the internal power and help them use it for the benefit of themselves and others.

For achieving the above goals, empowerment at various levels becomes imperative viz.; Empowerment at societal level, organisation level and at various units level in the organisation. Having done so it should be checked whether this has adequately been done or not, we need to audit the whole process and identify the lacunae, if any at these levels and then chalk out the strategy to bridge the gap. Towards the end this unit talks about the power enhancers of leaders. Further such power enhancers have been identified and may be clubbed under five sub-heads. Finally the unit also explains how to empower one's ownself.

10.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What do you understand by the term Empowerment? Explain why is empowerment needed at various levels. What is empowerment audit? Why should it be undertaken at all? What are the advantages, explain with examples?
- What are power enhancers for leaders, explain each one of them with examples?

10.10 FURTHER READINGS

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