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# A Framework To Map A Practice As Organization Development

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#### **Abstract**

**Purpose** –Characteristics, values and principles of OD make it a distinct and extremely valuable practice for the development of organizations, people and society at large. However, OD has also traditionally remained a hazy field of practice. This paper explores existing ambiguities about OD in practice in Indian organizations, and proposes a framework of guidelines that Indian organization and professionals could use to map and distinguish OD practices.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Exploratory research based on quantitative primary data collection and secondary data collection from literature review.

**Findings** – This research paper identified existing ambiguities in distinguishing OD from other business practices such as HR. It helped in developing clarity about distinguishing OD from other consulting practices and HR through a proposed framework of reference for mapping.

**Research limitations/implications** – The paper is an exploratory study based on Indian OD, HR Training and Talent Management professionals.

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**Practical implications** – The paper provides insights into the perceptions, theories and practices of organization development; explores existing ambiguities in practice in India and provides a framework that consultants, practitioners and academia could use to map and distinguish a practice as OD. Organizations and practitioners could now leverage the true benefits of OD as a distinct practice having specific values and principles which have ever-increasing significance for wholesome development of organizations, their eco-systems, and people in particular.

**Originality/value** – The paper is probably the first exploratory research that attempts at providing a comprehensive framework of guidelines that could be used to map a practice as OD.

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#### 1. Introduction

Apart from broad agreements on values and principles, OD has remained a hazy field of practice owing to multiple definitions, approaches, processes, interventions and role overlap with HR. The authors believe that blurred lines between HR, OD, Training and Talent Management, have prevented the significant contribution of OD practices, principles and values from being leveraged by the practitioners in India, to the wholesome development of organizations and society at large. Therefore, this article explores multiple approaches, frameworks, roles and interventions of OD and proposes a framework of broad guidelines that could be used for mapping a practice to qualify it as OD.

The first part of the article is based on the exploratory research that prompted the need for a framework that practitioners could use to qualify a practice as OD. It comprises of literature review that delineates an array of definitions, approaches and overlapping roles of OD with HR; and outcome of the secondary data collected from the practitioners based in India. The first part outlines the hazy nature of OD as a practice that the authors believe to be the reason for OD not being leveraged to its full potential by the practitioners for the inclusive development of people, organizations and society at large. The second part of the article filters diverse OD practices and proposes a framework of guidelines that could be used to qualify a practice as OD.

In this part, the researchers explore multiple definitions and practices of OD that lead to the hazy nature of OD; and then further explore whether the same uncertainty about how OD practice is different from other business consulting practices, HR, Training and Talent Management; prevails in India.

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