CHAPTER - 5

FINDINGS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

The educational institutions and industrial organisations have major roles to play in the progress of any nation. Education is an infrastructure for nation building. It plays a fundamental role in determining the productive potential of organisations at the local, regional and national levels. Today's developed countries have invested heavily on education on a long-term basis. Much of their industrial and economical advancement owe to this investment.

The findings of the study are put in perspective for explaining its educational implication. This chapter analyses appropriate case studies and presents research questions relevant for different parties connected with education and Industry sectors of the society, who are responsible for developmental and reform activities in Education, such as Policy makers, Education Leaders and Industry Leaders.

The Education and Industry, as stated earlier, have direct impact on the life and living of citizens. While Education aims generally at improving 'Standard of life', Industrial development result in improving the 'Standard of living'. Findings of the study further highlights the need for better industry-institution interface for the betterment of economy. Though the organisations in Education and Industry sectors have certain aspects in common as far as Communication and Decision making practices are concerned, the findings of this study advise caution for blanket application of practices from one sector to another.

5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

5.2.1. 100% of the respondents perceive effective Communication and Decision making processes as extremely important for development of organisation.

5.2.2. The respondents in Education and Industry recognise the information flow as the main objective of communication system in an organisation.

5.2.3. In both, educational institution and industry, communication process happens upward, downward and criss-cross. Respondents in education point out that communication in education most of the time, is characterized by sharing of information among people at different levels. While in industry, this sharing rarely happens. Most of the time, it is upward (reporting) or downward (instructions).

5.2.4. The channels/media used for communication in Educational institutions and industry are more or less the same such as memo, circular, bulletins (written), meetings, telephone (oral), etc. Utilisation of computers also recognised as a major medium for communication in education and industry.

5.2.5. The respondents perceive that the present system of Communication and decision making Practices are inadequate for the development of the organisation. Absence of adequate resources is seen as major cause.

5.2.6. The respondents in Education feel free to discuss or share problems with their colleagues or senior faculty members while the respondents in industry feel that the present communication and decision making practices in their organisation do not encourage them for free discussions with their superiors.

5.2.7. The respondents in education perceive that the suggestion/ information given by junior colleagues are given due importance in meetings and discussions, but the respondents in industry perceive that the information given by subordinates are many a time cross-checked by the superiors before giving due importance.

5.2.8. The respondents in Education and Industry feel that their respective organisations provide them enough freedom to work on their own within certain set parameters/standards

5.2.9. About the trust and confidence the respondents are not very clear or unsure. Majority of the respondents perceive this aspect as situational and vary from person to person.

5.2.10. The respondents in Education and Industry opined that they get useful and relevant information that enhances their effectiveness in the organisation.

5.2.11. The respondents perceive that the quality and quantity of work related information is not adequate and many a times they have to wait for more authentic information.

5.2.12. The respondents in education as well as in industry opined that the written directions and reports in their respective organisations are clear and to the point.

5.2.13. The respondents in Education spend most of their working time interacting with their students and colleagues. Majority of the respondents in industry spend most of their working time with their superiors and subordinates.

5.2.14. The respondents in education estimate the information received by them from their senior colleagues as 'accurate' and the information received by them from their colleagues as 'somewhat accurate'. The respondents in industry estimate information from 'other seniors' as accurate and that from immediate superiors as 'somewhat accurate'.

5.2.15. Educational managers look forward for feedback in all communication situations, especially with the students. Similarly, industry managers also look forward for feedback in all communication situations in organisations.

5.2.16. Educational and Industry managers mostly organise the information they have to share with / communicate to others.

5.2.17. Almost all-educational managers and the industry managers in the study are 'fully comfortable' with various methods of communication such as verbal, written, addressing a meeting, etc some of them however, are not much familiar with non-verbal communication methods.

5.2.18. The educational managers perceive that they have considerable say in the admission procedures, scheduling of examinations and curriculum content, selecting teaching materials, etc. 'Joint decision making' practice involving all faculty members is widely applied.

As far as industry managers are concerned they perceive that they have 'complete control' over arranging the layout of the work place, plan the work, shift scheduling, etc. but some of them feel that they have only an advisory role in these aspects and the actual decisions come from their superiors.

5.2.19. The educational managers feel that they have 'complete control' over the research projects they or their students undertake. The industry managers feel that 'joint decision-making' practice is widely prevalent in subjects such as purchasing of equipment, transferring someone to another job, safety procedures, etc.

5.2.20. The educational managers perceive that in the matters such as recruitment of new faculty, preparation of budget, resource mobilisation, etc., they have the 'opportunity to give advice' and at times, their advice is taken into consideration.

The industry managers perceive that they have a kind advisory roles in matters such as nominating employees for training course, improving working conditions, designing cost saving proposals, etc.,

5.2.21. The educational managers perceive that their colleagues and senior faculty members ask their opinion on improvement issues related to their subject of those affecting the institution as a whole. The industry managers also perceive that they are being given due importance for their creative suggestions related to their own work or pertaining to the development of the organisation.

5.2.22. The educational managers perceive that they get opportunity to take responsibility for their work and the interference from different quarters of the institution is very less. The industry managers perceive that though their superiors give attention to their ideas and suggestions, they are all restricted to certain operational areas only and decision-making which involves higher cost input, strategies, etc. are exclusively participated in by top management.

5.2.23. The consultative and participative approach to decision making is more prevalent in Education than in industry. Industry managers perceive that many a time, the consultations and discussions are not genuine and certain pre-planned ideas are implemented through persuasion.

5.3. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY:

The findings of the study clearly establish the need for better co-operation and co-ordination between Educational Institutions and Industrial Organisations. A commercial organisation in the service sector, after realising the need for the continuous input of education and training, floated a University of its own advantage. A case study of this University analysed below puts this aspect in perspective.

Another implication of this study is for Policy Makers, Education and Industry Leaders. This is also explained at length, in this chapter.

5.3.1 Service Delivery University - A case study

In 1994, Fidelity Institutional Retirement Services company (FIRSCo) needed to ensure that its rapidly expanding staff maintained the company's high levels of customer satisfaction. The solution, according to Ellyn McColgan, formerly an executive vice president of FIRSCo and now the president of Fidelity Investments Tax Exempt Services Company, was to reach out to its service associates with a powerful new model for training and development called Service Delivery University (SDU).

SDU is a virtual university with a content-based core curriculum and five colleges that focus on business concepts and skills. It is driven by three principles. First, all training must be directly aligned with the company's strategic and financial objectives and

focused on customer needs. Second, service delivery is a profession and should be taught as such. And finally, professional development should be the primary responsibility of line managers rather than the human resources department.

McColgan explains how FIRSCo overcame resistance to this sweeping change in employee education. (Time was one obstacle: each associate receives 80 hours of training per year.) in addition, the author discusses the fine art of measuring the success of a programme like SDU. She finds that the company's investment has paid dividends to the staff, to the organisation as a whole, and to FIRSCo's customers.

Service delivery university - Now get to work

A student's enrollment at Service Delivery University begins with a critical meeting. Its purpose: for the employee and his or her manager to create a development plan that identifies the knowledge and skills the employee already has and those he or she needs to acquire. Then they can select the appropriate SDU activities together and create a schedule for their completion. During an employee's career with FIRSCo, the process of drawing a road map for development will occur more than once - and it will continue all the way up to the highest ranks of a management.

SDU is composed of a foundation - a core curriculum - and five colleges that offer courses requiring a higher level of cognitive thinking. The goal of the foundation is to provide technical regulatory and industry information to associates so they can perform competently. Foundation courses are generally short, content-based classroom sessions. They are not usually conceptual. Teaching concepts, as well as business analysis skills and problem solving skills, is the responsibility of the colleges.

The primary goal of the Customer Service College is to create a companywide dialogue about service excellence and how it is best delivered. Although each of the five colleges is integral to SDU, associates most immediately grasp the relevance of this one. Its classes include Delivering Service Excellence and Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations.

The Operations Management College relates the practices, procedures and principles of running a big business - such as strategic design, capacity management and process mapping - to service delivery. It is critical that the service people understand that the company processes millions of transactions per day. The aspect of FIRSCo cannot be a black box to them.

Every transaction in the business exposes the company to risk in the financial markets. The Risk Management College is designed to create a companywide awareness of risk, to

develop and ability to identify analyse and manage risk; and to determine how to build internal controls at all levels of the organisation.

The Sales and Marketing College teaches associates how FIRSCo positions itself in the marketplace, how we can improve relationships with clients, and how we can stay marketfocused, flexible and responsive.

Fifth and final is the Leadership and Management Development College. Fidelity's size is an advantage in the marketplace. But in large companies, employees sometimes lose their sense of accountability; they can hide behind layers of people and procedures. The goal of this college is to reinforce a leadership culture built on management's belief that everyone in the company needs to embrace responsibility for the business. As a part of that culture, the college promotes the importance of professional development and provides supporting analytical and assessment tools.

By the time they have participated in all five colleges, the associates share a common language of service delivery and see broad opportunities for their own career development. But such progress begins with that first conversation between a manager and an associate.

Principles and Practice

Over the years, they have sent hundreds of employees to training classes, expecting to see some improvement in their performance. Were those classes a good use of their time? In

designing SDU, they never lost sight of this question. And although SDU is tailored at FIRSCo's specific needs, its three underlying principles can be applied more broadly to Educational and Industrial Organisations in the service sector.

- Not all training is good training
- Service delivery is a profession and should be taught as such
- The primary responsibility for professional development should rest with the line managers.

In some ways, each of these principles runs counter to common practice in present day organisations. Let us examine them briefly.

Not all training is good training. Put more positively, good training is directly connected to the business. First, training must be aligned with an organisation's strategic and financial objectives. Second, and equally important for a service company, training must be focussed on what it takes to meet a customer's needs.

Service delivery is a profession and should be taught as such. If this statement sounds straightforward, it is deceiving. Most people, even in the service industry, do not regard service delivery as an expertise. But service is a discipline with its own skills, competencies, and vocabulary. Service is not only a matter of being pleasant to

customers - just as being a doctor is not only a matter of having a comforting bedside manner - but also of understanding the system that makes customer satisfaction possible.

This system begins and ends with the customer; that is, it moves from understanding the customer's needs and setting the customer's expectations to identifying alternatives, meeting expectations, measuring results, and finally, closing the loop with the customer by asking, "Did we do what we set out to do? Were you pleased by our service?" Not every member of the organisation is involved with every step of this loop-in fact, most are involved with just one or two. But understanding how and why the whole system works is the fundamental expertise of service professionals.

The classes in SDU's college, by contrast, require a higher order of cognitive thinking. They seek to develop business-analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving skills, as well as competencies in five areas essential to service-delivery system: customer service, sales and marketing, operations management, risk management and leadership. The college courses ask students to do something with the knowledge they already have.

The primary responsibility for professional development should rest with the line managers. Like all involved in leading this initiative, Mc Colgan serves as the chancellor of SDU alongside other responsibilities. The deans of the five colleges are also line managers, as are the faculty who teach the courses and the members of the advisory boards who help shape the curriculum and course content. And all of FIRSCo's

managers are responsible for working with the people who report to them to design personalised development plans and to make sure the plans are fulfilled.

Why involve managers to intensively? Two reasons. The first is that management's role in SDU demonstrates their commitment. To their associates it sends two messages: the Management cares so much, about their development that they are taking on the job themselves and want them to make a long-term career in Fidelity. The message to managers is: the leaders of FIRSCo consider the development of people a top priority. You should, too. To turn up the volume of that message, they link a percentage of every manager's bonus directly to his or her performance in completing development plans and making sure they are carried out.

The second reason they built SDU on the principle of managers-as-teachers is that managers are the people who know the business best - its processes, functions, challenges, concepts and objectives. They are connected to it. That connectedness is exactly what they want for their service people, too. Who better, then, to lead the way?

Roadblocks and Resistance

SDU brought about important changes in the role of Learning & Development Department and of line managers, and there is bound to be some resistance whenever that

happens. The L&D group understandably wondered, at first, why SDU had wandered into its domain. Was the creation of SDU an implicit criticism of L&D training? Wasn't it good enough? Would the creation of SDU mean the department's eventual demise?

As SDU drives a shift in accountability at FIRSCo, it forces all the employees to redefine and clarify roles. L&D's expertise is critical to how the faculty teach in SDU, whereas line management takes the lead in what the university teaches. As SDU matures, in fact, L&D's mandate at FIRSCo was getting stronger, a benefit for the group and the organisation.

As for line managers, some welcomed SDU - but others did not. The newer managers - those with limited managerial experience who directly supervised groups of eight to ten people - were hungry for education and training. They often felt an immediate need: people were looking to them for help, and they did not know exactly how to help them. SDU filled that need and continues to do so.

Given the organisation culture, SDU could not work without the support of the senior managers. SDU obtained that support in two ways. First, SDU called on them to serve as deans, faculty and advisory board members of the colleges.
Their visible commitment to SDU made them into apostles and that was very effective in bringing other high-level managers into the fold.

Measuring Success

Before the launch of SDU, they knew it would be difficult to measure its success. They have an achievement-oriented culture with a bias toward short-term results and quantitative performance measures. So what was the university's payback going to be? Certainly they hoped SDU would improve customer satisfaction levels. But could they claim a direct link between the two when there are so many other variables affecting quality? They also hoped SDU would reduce operating losses by improving the systems and operations. And operation losses have decreased since the inception of SDU. But was the programme the reason? There was no definite way of knowing.

The fact that they cannot measure the performance impact of SDU precisely did not mean they could not see tangible results. They were monitoring associates' perception of their effect on customer satisfaction. Not only do we ask them to do self-assessments before and after training, but they also look at less subjective measures such as the turnaround time for problem resolution and how often a supervisor had to be consulted in the process. Those numbers have improved markedly, and the associates themselves say that SDU is the primary reason.

The Power of Trust

Change is a constant in any business and rapid growth speeds the cycle of change. At FIRSCo, they reorganized in 1993 along functional lines to serve their customers better. In 1996, they transformed themselves again - this time organizing around market segments.

So often in reorganizations, training and development lag behind. But because SDU was so closely linked to the business, it not only has kept pace with the company's change but also has been useful tool in promoting it. Line managers leading the reorganization are able to recast courses to reflect the shift, leaving no gap between what the faculty are doing and teaching

As they change, they believe their investment in service professionals will make them an organisation in which every individual can and should make decisions that deliver solutions to customers. Many managers say they want that to happen, but one has to trust one's people a lot before one really practice it. Building trust is hard work. At FIRSCo, SDU is the forum for that hard work. It gives associates the knowledge and skills they need to make decisions. Best of all, the investment pays high dividends to their staff, the organisation and ultimately to the people who start and end it all - our customers.

5.3.2 Perspectives for Policy-makers, Education and Industry Leaders

The nations world over, are in the midst of a dynamic period of industry and economic reform. Policymakers and leaders are facing complicated questions about educational governance, finance, policymaking, and industry-institution management. Research-based information can help policymakers reach well-informed decisions on these critical questions.

Before identifying specific research issues in these four areas, policymakers have three general observations that can help researchers frame their agenda. First, it is useful to recognise that governance, finance, policymaking and management are not ends in themselves. Rather they are means for accomplishing the primary goal of education-improving student achievement. Second, these four areas of research are closely intertwined and often benefit from systemic rather than separate strategies. Third, although traditional models still dominate educational and industry governance, finance, and management, many policymakers hunger for fresh ideas and are looking to research to provide examples of intelligent innovation. Policymakers today are saying, "help us invent what we need, not fix what we've got."

Research can help policymakers invent what they need-but only if their research is focussed on the right questions and conducted in a useful way. Based on their own experience with pressing or unresolved issues, policymakers and leaders have identified several high priority research issues and questions in the areas of finance, governance, policymaking and management. These issues can be grouped into four broad themes; inputs and outcomes, structure and process, core teaching and learning, and the context of education.

5.3.2.1 Inputs and Outcomes of Education

All decisionmakers (including industrialists) share concerns about financing education and the use of education resources (inputs) and justifying these expenditures with

demonstrated returns on investments (outcomes). In keeping with a shifting emphasis from the input side of the ledger to the outcome side, policymakers are attempting to design meaningful accountability systems that encourage positive changes in education and provide useful, credible information about student learning.

Financing Education

Education finance is the foundation that enables schools to exist and teaching and learning to occur. Although governments provide a major share of education funding, some states still lack a coherent direction or philosophy in their education finance systems. Other states are looking to replace outmoded finance systems with alternatives that reward performance, improve equalisation, or tap nontraditional sources of funding.

As they redesign their finance systems, policymakers and leaders would like answers to the following questions :

- What are useful innovative models for financing public education? How can states and local districts provide adequate, stable funding? Are there good finance models that would lessen local dependence?

- How can school finance systems be linked to performance?
- How can government finance the costs of designing and implementing new assessment systems?

- How can government agencies keep us with the demands for facilities created by rising enrollments? How can they finance repairs and renovations of aging infrastructure?
- How can they finance equitable access to technology?
- What is the impact of special education costs on general education budgets?

Getting the Best Return on Educational Investments

In an era of limited resources and wavering citizen confidence in education, policymakers and taxpayers are asking to see demonstrable returns on their education investments. They want assurances that educational institutions are using resources efficiently to increase student achievement.

Consequently, both policymakers and education leaders want sound information that will help them "budget for results." They want data that they can use to compare the quality and cost effectiveness of various programs and expenditures. A related need is for research that synthesises knowledge about "what works" in different kinds of institutions and classrooms in different regions. Teachers and administrators, as well as policymakers, can benefit from this type of information.

Industrialists who are concerned about acountability would like to learn more about the following questions :

- What is the relationship between education funding and student performance? Which investments and reform strategies have the greatest impact on learning, and what are their comparative costs? How can institutions get the best results with limited funding?
- How do investments in technology affect students learning? Which technology investments are most cost effective?
- Which governance, management, and instructional strategies work best in various circumstances? In urban and rural institutions ? In the lowest performing institutions?

Meaningful Accountability

Greater attention to outcomes and higher standards for student learning require new ways of holding institutions accountable for results. Industrialists and Educators are grappling with how to design and implement accountability systems that are meaningful, fair and cost effective. They face complex, politically charged decisions about how to measure and report the progress of institutions with widely varying demographic profiles. They are also looking for accountability approaches that effectively motivate students and staff.

Education and Industry leaders would like answers to following questions :

- What does research say about designing and implementing new assessment systems tied to standards? How can they ensure that their assessment systems are reliable and fair?

- What are some good ways to measure student performance? How can student assessment results be reported accurately and fairly? How can government agencies ensure that test data are used only in appropriate ways?
- Which kinds of indicators of institutional performance are most appropriate, fair and understandable? How can accurate data on institution progress be reported in ways that discourage unfair or misleading comparisons? To what extent should socioeconomic factors be considered and reported?
- Which kinds of incentives, sanctions, or other consequences are most effective in motivating students, teachers and administrators to perform at their best?
- What are some appropriate forms of government intervention or takeovers of local institutional systems that fail to make progress? When should interventions take place? What are their effects? When are institutions ready to resume control for themselves?

5.3.2.2 Structure and Process of Education

Many current educational reform initiatives involve new ways of structuring and organising education. Some reforms seek to revise the relationships among the various

levels of government or between the public and private sectors. Many reforms also aim to restructure classroom processes or the roles of teachers and students.

Revising Governance Arrangements

With the movement toward standards-based reform, governance relationships are changing at the local, regional and national levels. In adopting standards, many states have assumed more activist roles in curriculum content assessment.

At the same time, however, the states and the national government are decentralising, deregulating, and giving institutions greater flexibility, often in exchange for the promise of improved student outcomes. But despite some increased flexibility, education leaders still express frustration with the cumulative effect of certain state or national mandates.

Industrialists and educators are also seriously debating more profound governance changes, including public or private choice options. Legislators and school leaders on different sides of these issues have a common interest in research about the impact of alternative governance structures, and policy options for designing, monitoring, and evaluating them.

As they debate management changes, industry leaders are asking for more information about the following questions :

- What are the consequences of changing responsibilities among local, state and national government? How can states increase local flexibility while continuing to exercise meaningful oversight over educational quality and equity? Which state and

National requirements can be relaxed or waived, and which should be continued? Does more autonomy for institutions produce better results?

- How can industry leaders more effectively co-ordinate local, state and national funding streams?
- How can states bring greater coherence to state-level management systems?
- How can states monitor the operations and measure the quality of management of institutions? How cost effective are various choice models? How do choice programs affect the quality, management demographics and funding of educational institutions?
- Which other nontraditional management and institutional organisation models hold promise for improving education?

Connecting governance and policy with classroom change

Increasing student achievement ultimately depends on changing classroom processes. Legislators wonder whether their policy decisions are really changing teaching and learning or whether their influence stops at the classroom door.

The issue of bridging the gap between policy and practice has taken on greater importance. The adoption of reforms often creates expectations that changes will occur

in teaching and learning, and many industrialists are closely watching what happens in classrooms. They want feedback on the impact of newly implemented reform initiatives.

At the same time, as educators are well aware, policy directives that are too prescriptive about instructional practices can be counterproductive.

The following questions are on the minds of industry and education leaders as they try to connect policy with practice :

- How can institutions translate the rhetoric of standards into policies that lead to genuine changes in teaching and learning? How can reforms be designed to have the maximum impact on learning outcomes?
- How can the government and institutional decisionmakers use research findings about standards based teaching and learning to design better policies? Which kinds of funding, governance, and management policies encourage effective classroom practices and higher student and teacher performance?
- How can policies be instructive to the individuals who must carry them out? How specific should policies be to signal their intentions without squelching motivation? How can examples of good practice be infused into state and regional policies? How much time should be built in for adults to learn how to implement new policies?
- Which policies are best carried out in combination with each other? Which types of policy alignment are most critical?
- How can reforms be designed so they endure through leadership changes and other shifting circumstances?

5.3.3 The Core of Teaching and Learning

Improving instruction is the ultimate purpose of educational reform. Teachers remain central to improving instruction. Therefore, ambitious reform agendas are unlikely to succeed unless they include strategies for providing professional development to current teachers and improving the preparation of prospective teachers.

Preparing Teachers to Implement Reform

Industry and education leaders are looking for effective ways to attract and retain the best professional teachers, to help them implement reform, and to make coherent reforms in the whole enterprise of teacher preparation and professional development.

They would like to know which policies can help provide positive answers to the following questions :

- How can industry and education leaders evaluate teacher quality? What can they do to better prepare and maintain a high quality teaching force?
- Which kinds of professional development do teachers need to implement reform, teach diverse students to high standards, and apply new technology in their classrooms?
- Which factors are most essential to effective teacher preparation and professional development?

5.3.2.4 The Broader Context of Education

Industry and education leaders realise that they cannot make major changes in finance, management, teacher preparation or other vital areas without strong support from the citizenry. There is an emerging consensus that 'institution reform must be a community-wide enterprise, carried out through partnerships with parents, business, social service agencies, and other community institutions.' These relationships with broader

community context are particularly important at a time when the demographics of the student populations are changing and myriad social factors are affecting the well being of families.

Building Public Support for Education

Restoring public confidence in public education is a major challenge in an era when a minority of the voting public has children in school and more parents are looking to private schools and choice alternatives for quality education. Industry leaders and educators realise that to restore citizen confidence, they must make significant improvements in public education.

Improving education presents its own set of public challenges. Although many citizens support education reform in general, they may disagree on the specifics or may be unprepared to accept the costs, discomfort, and timelines required to make significant changes. Yet ambitious reforms cannot succeed without adequate funding and public support.

Industry and education leaders want information to help them answer the following questions :

- How can they develop reform agendas that are acceptable to a majority of citizens (and to a majority of their colleagues) without reducing their proposals to the lowest common denominator? How can they build public consensus for long term, reforms that may entail difficult or uncomfortable changes?
- Which specific policies can they adopt that can help build public confidence in public education? How can educators and industry leaders use reform policies to generate stronger support for education funding among the electorate?
- Which policies are most effective in strengthening relationships between institutions and parents and showing more responsiveness to parent concerns?

Addressing Demographic and Social Factors

Demographic and social changes are creating new finance and management challenges for education and industry. First, institutions are serving more diverse students than ever before, including students with limited English proficiency and from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Different kinds of students may require different methods of instruction to achieve at high levels.

Second, social problems, such as poverty, drugs, and crime are affecting students' health, safety and readiness to learn and are creating new demands for human services demands that could increase with implementation of welfare reform. Already institutions are

asked to do many things that divert energy and funding away from their main mission of teaching. Legislators and education leaders would like ideas about how to handle the array of social problems that affect education.

Finally, industry leaders and educators would like information about how to link education with learning before kindergarten and after high school. The increasing

numbers of children with working parents as well as the growing body of research about the importance of child development have heightened demands for quality early childhood services. And concerns among the business community about inadequately prepared high school graduates are causing educators and industry leaders to rethink their school-to-work transition strategies.

Several questions about social and demographic issues are percolating in the minds of industry and education leaders :

- What are the governance, finance and management implications of the demographic changes shaping education? Which strategies are most effective in helping students from diverse backgrounds achieve at high levels?
- How can education agencies develop more effective partnerships with public, private and community entities to address the range of human service needs? Which are the best strategies for improving school safety and discipline?

- What is the impact of welfare reform on educational institutions? On demands for social services? On funding for education? Does education have a role in implementing welfare reform?

- How can government agencies and educational institutions meet rising demands for quality early childhood programs? Which approaches are most effective in improving the cognitive development of young students?
- What are some strategies for improving transitions from educational institutions to work? What can educational institutions learn from the private sector about effective workforce preparation?

5.4 COMMUNICATION AND DECISION-MAKING MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS :

The activities and processes of any educational institution are centered around the student community (Figure 5.1). Thus, this model of Communication and Decision-making for Educational Institution is focussed on Students.

Though communication and Decision-making practices in organisation have innumerable aspects and variables, this model highlights only six aspects, viz. *Quality Leadership, State-of-the-art IT, Role Model Faculty, Accurate Information, Design Standards and Goal in Perspective.* All these six aspects' synergistic interactions give the educational institution the much-needed reputation.

Quality leadership

Leadership of an organisation is extremely important for its development. The heads of Educational institutions should have demonstrative leadership abilities to influence the Communication and Decision making process in the institution. One of the main qualities an educational leader should have is 'sound common sense'. The leader's commitment to the institutional goals clearly reflects its management processes.

State of-the-art Information technology

In an era of Internet and similar faster telecommunication and networking tools and systems, an educational institution which does not welcome and utilise these IT tools will definitely lag behind. The educational institution, therefore, should have internal communication systems and external networking strengths based on e-mail systems, its presence in internet sites, video conferencing facilities etc.

Role Model Faculty

An educational institution gains high reputation in the education community over a period of time based on the quality and texture of its teaching staff. From this perspective, this model of Communication and Decision making practices is highly concerned about the individual personality of the faculty. In short, the faculty should preach and practice as a 'role model' for the students to follow.

A Model of Communication and Decision making practices for Educational Institution

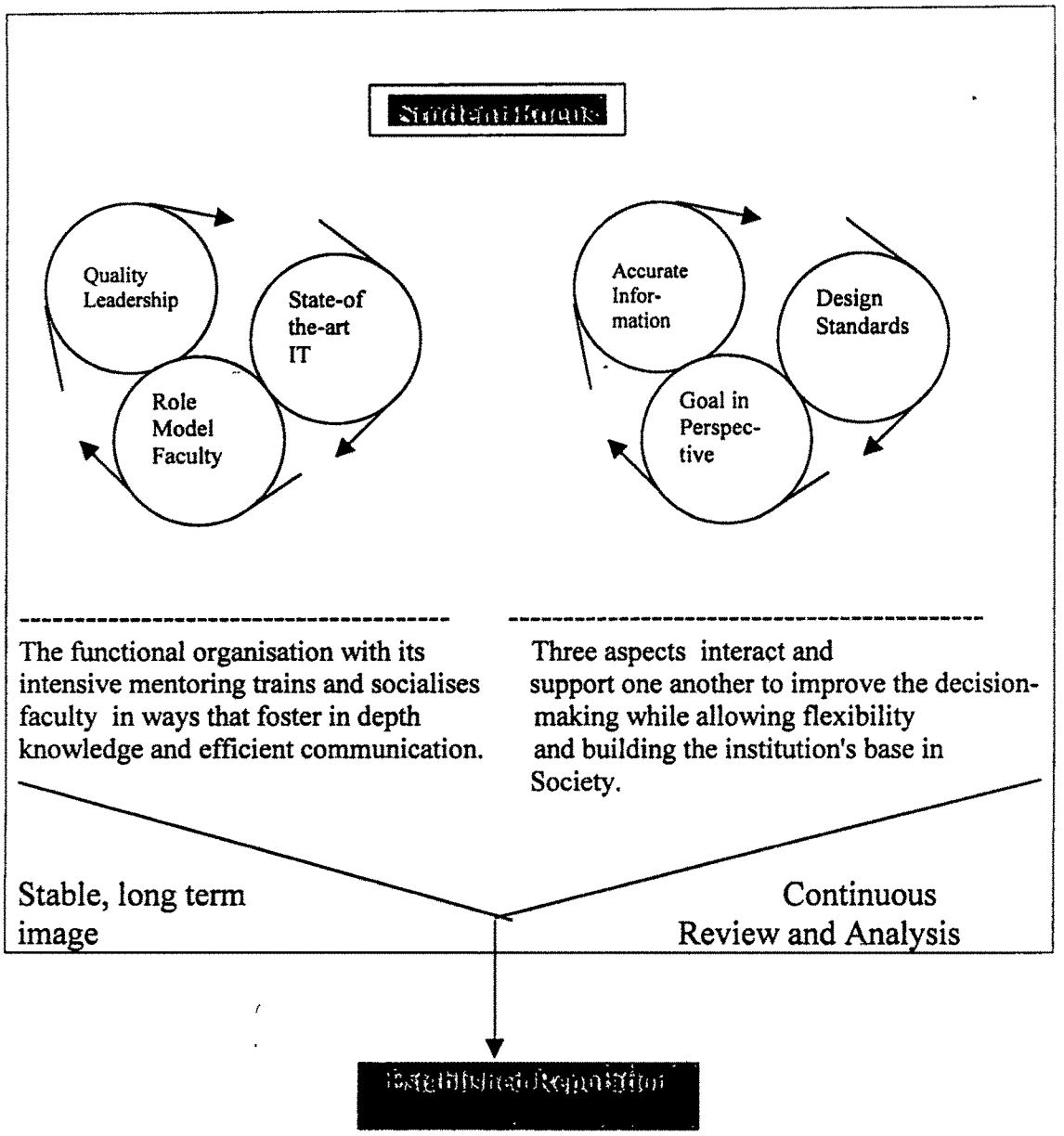

Figure 5.1

Accurate Information

The major input for any Decision making situation is the available data and information relevant to the situation or issue. The parties to decision making in educational

institution should be well-informed individuals who are capable of analysing the accuracy of the facts and figures at hand and able to visualise the long term impact of the decisions on survival and growth of the institution.

Design Standards

Standard operating policies and procedures which should be subject to continuous review, will help in establishing an ideal direction for Decision making process in the institution. These policies and procedures should be designed based on effective benchmarking efforts on practices in successful institutions around the world.

Goal in Perspective

In the present day highly competitive world, progress-oriented individuals and institutions can not afford to have any excuses for anything. Gone are the days of trial and error method. As anything and everything for effective Communication and Decision making practices are readily available by a *'click of mouse'* to Educational managers, they have to be very precise and should not lose sight of the institutional commitment and goals, when called upon to take decisions.

Thus, this model of Communication and Decision making practices for Educational institution adopts a ***down-to-earth but dynamic*** approach. This model, though takes into consideration the various aspects of changes in the environment in which the institutions function, *its strong focus is on the people* who constitute the institution.