CHAPTER - 1

Introduction
1.1 Concept of Excellence

Management orientation has been changing with time. During the classical management era, the emphasis was on “efficiency”. During 1885-1930 efficiency orientation prevailed in management. Efficiency refers to doing things rightly, reducing waste of resources. From early 1930s to mid-1980s, the management orientation shifted to “effectiveness”. This period consisted of the neo-classical and modern schools of management. Effectiveness is doing right things, desisting activities that do not contribute to social good. Since mid-1980s a shift in emphasis occurred in favor of “excellence”. Thomas J. Peters, Robert H. Waterman Jr., and Nancy Austin are considered to be the pioneers of the excellence movement in management.

“Excellence” refers to the quality of being excellent. “To excel” means to be exceptionally good at an activity or subject (Great Dictionary of the English Language, 2001). The word gets its origin from the Latin word ‘excellere’, from ex- ‘out, beyond’ + celsus- ‘lofty’. One of the dictionary meanings of ‘excel’ is ‘to do better than’ or ‘to surpass’. Normally, it implies comparison with another person. Excellence means to be distinct, to be superior and to outperform others. It means to be creative and innovative. “Excellence happens when high purpose and intense pragmatism meet. It’s not a job. It’s a personal, group and organizational commitment. It is a burning desire to be the best and being the best. It is doing things in a systematic fashion that sets one apart from others” (Peters & Austin, quoted from Ravi, 1996).

Excellence means surpassing or outstanding achievement. It implies the ability to perform at a consistently high level, which in turn depends on the mastery of the fundamentals in whatever is being done. Excellence does not mean a fixed goal, a static destination. It is a
dynamic concept ever growing in innumerable dimensions. There is no end point in the pursuit of excellence and the "target" is often moving (Khandwalla, 1992). Excellence is a feature of an organizational entity that manifests how incomparably excellent it is when assessed adhering to success criteria. Excellence refers always to excellent performance concerning something, e.g. in relation to one's own goals or competitor's performance (www.finnevo.fi/eng/contents/iso9000_terms.htm)

The passion for excellence is a drive for self-actualization. It means thinking big and starting small. "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man". (Shaw, quoted from Balasubramanium, 2004). Excellence is important to society because it sets an example and a standard of behavior that is socially useful. A search for excellence and perfection is deeply embedded in the human psyche. Excellence can be achieved; it is not an absolute goal but a progressive philosophy guiding the steps on the road to discovery. Excellence is the combination of the inherent properties of truth, beauty, order and efficiency (Ganesh, 2000).

The subject of excellence and its pursuit have been perceived in different angles and through different glasses. Still, no single proposition defines what excellence is. The parameters of excellence, as perceived by different strategists in different walks of life, however, have something in common. The least common denominator of all the calculations indicates that it is 'individual specific' and it is the passion one holds for attainment of excellence in whatever field one pursues. It is a fire that is latent in the individual to add a value, to scale newer heights and to envision the beyond. Excellence is not a concept in isolation. It comprises distinct dimensions and forms that make its understanding more elaborate and clear.

1.2 Dimensions of Excellence

People want to excel as individuals and sometimes as members of a team. When excellence is achieved under the umbrella of an organizational vision, it achieves a synergistic effect and results in organizational excellence. The three interrelated aspects or
dimensions of excellence—individual, team and organizational—have equal and complementary significance in achieving excellence.

1.2.1 Individual Excellence

Individual excellence aims at achievement of excellence by individuals. Individual excellence in support of team and organizational goals is desirable. The pursuit of individual excellence without regard for its impact on team performance and other parts of the system is discouraged.

1.2.2 Team Excellence

Team excellence is an absolute prerequisite to organizational excellence. In an organization, most of the work is accomplished by teams. Each team needs to have its own vision that reflects its particular mission and its unique character in alignment with the organizational vision. Understanding the value and importance of both cooperation and interdependent work relationships should be the goal within teams and between teams throughout the organization.

1.2.3 Organizational Excellence

Organizations are the nurseries of human excellence. The more an organization promotes individual or team excellence, the more the organization itself is likely to excel. Organization design for excellence is therefore a matter of promoting individual and group level excellence and synchronizing it to facilitate excellence in achieving organizational level goals.

Organizational excellence is the most challenging of the three aspects of excellence because of the consistent level of commitment, cooperation, and alignment required of so many people. A shared vision provides the focus that is required to "make it happen". A rapidly changing business environment means individuals must often deal with new situations. Without a strong commitment to a shared vision, sustaining an "organizational
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"consciousness" to powerfully align individuals in the business becomes difficult (www.centerforexcellence.net). Since this research deals with organizations (schools), the focus is drawn on organizational excellence. For a better understanding of the subject, it is essential to discuss the forms of organizational excellence.

1.3 Forms of Organizational Excellence

There are six different forms of organizational excellence each characterized by particular type of commitment and perfection (Khandwalla, 1992).

- Competitive Excellence
- Rejuvenatory Excellence
- Institutionalized Excellence
- Creative Excellence
- Missionary Excellence
- Versatile Excellence

1.3.1 Competitive Excellence

Competitive excellence is characterized by being outstanding within a field of competitors vis-à-vis a clear-cut criterion of performance. For example—the school within a city with the highest number of first divisions at senior secondary level, the bank with the best loan recovery performance, etc. For competitive excellence, the champion organization ought to have a clear-cut goal and strong management commitment, apart from other factors.

1.3.2 Rejuvenatory Excellence

The chief characteristic of this form of excellence is vast improvement over previous performance. This form of excellence is exhibited through organizational turnarounds from sickness or decline (Khandwalla, 1990). This type of excellence needs a strong, high energy packed leadership, great internal communication network, a culture of getting
things done, extensive participation of lower level staff in evolving and implementing a turnaround strategy.

1.3.3 Institutionalized Excellence

It is characterized by sustained high achievement over a long period of time on important performance parameters. Such a type of excellence requires institutionalization of good management practices and a high order of professional management. Widespread commitment of staff to the vision of excellence and to core values is also desirable.

1.3.4 Creative Excellence

The chief trait of this type of excellence is the commitment to pioneering, innovation, experimentation, discovery and dynamic change (Khandwalla, 1992). A creatively excellent organization is in a constant state of flux, modifying activities, practices and products and adopting new ones. A culture of creativity and innovation is likely to prevail there.

1.3.5 Missionary Excellence

The chief feature of missionary organizational excellence is the dedication to some social mission or cause and the ability to outstand in achieving this mission or cause. To achieve this form of excellence, the organization needs dedicated, self-motivated professionals who do not mind meager salaries and poor perks. In case of missionary excellence, decision-making process needs to be decentralized and participative. (Khandwalla, 1992).

1.3.6 Versatile Excellence

In this type of excellence, the company desires to meet the expectations of all the significant stakeholders of the organization- owners, staff, suppliers, customers, government, unions, etc. The organization, thus, has multiple goals. Special efforts for
creating high levels of integration are required. A good deal of participatory and professional management is needed to cope with the complexity.

This study explores the model for creating and sustaining excellence in schools. It deals with schools that provide education and related services, so it becomes pertinent to understand the concept of school and its related aspects.

1.4 School

A school is most commonly a place designated for learning. It refers to “an institution for educating children” (Great Dictionary of Indian Language, 2001). In the United Kingdom, the term school refers primarily to pre-university institutions, which can be divided into primary schools (sometimes further divided into infant school and junior school) and secondary schools. In North America, the term school can refer to any institute of education, at any level, and covers all of the following: preschool, kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, college, university and graduate school. In parts of Europe, a Gymnasium is a school of secondary education. In Germany, after thirteen (in some states twelve) grades, the Gymnasium finishes with the Abitur (Matura in Austria and Switzerland). (www.answers.com/topic/school). In the present study, school refers to an institution for the instruction of children or people under college age.

The word ‘school’ conjures up different images. It is widely believed that schooling does make a significant difference in the life of the individual. For some it is an exhilarating experience with huge repercussions on making their lives, while for many others, not so encouraging or remarkable, leave apart occasional episodes. The school is an important agent of social engineering. All societies whether western democracies or socialist societies of the East Europe, believe that school is a significant agency for change (Johnson, 2000). All social aspirations find their reflection in the school setup they created. In open societies where tempo of change is fast, the challenges are too many and come in quick succession. In static societies, structures once built or models evolved continue to perpetrate themselves for longer periods, though their perfection may take time. Whatever the setup may be, school as a concept, presents the picture of a specified structure, a
dynamic organization and an institution (Sharma, 1994). In the traditional concept, the school is a community with the associated emphasis on ideas like ethos, spirit and individual commitment. There is concern with the process as well as with the content of the work that is done.

To an outsider, a school gives the look of a ‘factory’ with a place to work in, fixed schedules and rigorous modes of working. In contrast to a factory, school represents uniqueness of processes and a great variation in the quality of product since each product is dynamic, interactive and capable of selective reception or resistance (Sharma, 1994). The school as a community gives the impression of ‘interacting wholeness’ as reflected through its ethos and culture. ‘Ethos’ indicates the deeper value system, which propels the organization as a motivational force. It is more intimately associated with educational endeavors. Organizational ‘culture’ is the characteristic spirit and belief of an institution demonstrated in the norms and values that are generally held about how people should treat each other, the nature of working relationships and attitudes to change.

1.4.1 School System

One of the important components of the school system is the ‘human resource’ who vary in quality and quantity of education, sex, age, work experience, work expectations, temperaments, attitudes, skills and values. In addition to human elements, there are other system components. These elements, when viewed as a configuration, constitute the ‘school system’. A school system is made up of a number of sub-systems, i.e., administration, leadership, supervision and instruction (Johnson, 2000). These sub-systems are again composed of a number of facilitating processes. These components are inter-related within the sub-systems, whereas the sub-systems are woven into the systems. A perfect coordination of one component of a school system with the other becomes pertinent.
1.4.2 Schooling

Schooling is an act of consciously imparting values, knowledge and skills in accordance with the requirements in a formal situation (IGNOU School of Education, 2000). Schools also impart deliberate and systematic training in specialized subject areas that may not be otherwise gained through the process of living and experiencing by individuals. In its essence schooling is a limited educational exercise in terms of range of experiences provided. It is also limited to a specific period of human life, i.e., from childhood till one leaves school, while the process of education continues throughout the life. Thus, schooling is only a part of education.

1.4.3 School- A Formal Organization

School is a formal organization. A school is primarily a formal or structural education system. It is an arrangement or structure within which its various participants cooperate to carry out various activities of the school so as to achieve the organizational goals of educating the young ones. The features that make it a formal system are as following. (IGNOU School of Education, 2000)

1.4.3.1 Official Sanction

Establishment of a school needs official sanction that is obtained after meeting the prescribed conditions. A school is primarily under the control of the state. The state decides the broad aims of schooling through educational policies, keeping in focus the national goals. In India, state education boards, CBSE, CISCE, etc. are official bodies that sanction schools.

1.4.3.2 Permanent Nature

Like other formal organizations, school is a permanent body as its membership persists beyond the immediate membership. The school never runs out of its membership.
1.4.3.3 Rational Goal Setting

The objectives and tasks of a school, as in case of any other formal organization, are perceived not only by the members of the organization, but also by everyone in the society. Primarily, the schools have social orientation while setting goals. Schools set rational goals like proliferation of education, providing moral education apart from academics and sports, etc.

1.4.3.4 Hierarchy of Offices

Like organizations, schools too have a hierarchy of offices, i.e. there is upward and downward flow of authority and responsibility. Every position in the hierarchy has definite roles and responsibilities. There is a hierarchy among personnel, viz., a principal as the administrator, with senior teachers, junior teachers, non-teaching staff, helpers, etc. These personnel have to work in a coordinated fashion to achieve common goals of school.

1.4.3.5 Division of Labor

Division of labor means that work is divided into smaller jobs that are assigned to different people. This leads to specialization of work and maximum productivity.

1.4.3.6 Proliferation of Rules

Rules and regulations govern the functioning of schools. As in organizations, schools have prescribed rules originated by the management authorities and the administering bodies. The age at which a child can be initiated into school is often fixed and the criteria of education and promotion to each higher class are fixed.
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1.4.3.7 Elaborate Record-Keeping Systems

Schools have to maintain their books of accounts and prepare balance sheet, profit & loss statement, etc. Elaborate record of employees, teaching and non-teaching staff is also maintained.

1.4.3.8 Structured assessment procedures

Assessment of students as well as teachers is done in schools by the relevant bodies thereby leaving scope for future progress and appraisal.

Schools are not only complex organizations, but are professional agencies as their teaching and administrative staff shares certain attributes with occupation known as professions. They are related to a number of other formal organizations like colleges and universities and state and other educational agencies. The formal character of the school is well exemplified in the extent to which rights and duties are distributed according to age. While the family, peer group, and other social groups are also age-graded systems (in which younger and older members enjoy different privileges and obligations), it is the school that is the most age-graded of all social institutions.

1.4.4 Functions of School

The school represents a little society by itself. The school has its own mores, its own social setting and its own culture. In a way, it represents a “total institution” in the sense that any student coming from any social culture has to abide by the rules and regulations of the school and adjust to the distinct social milieu of the school for the period of stay at school. The school fulfills a specific range of purposes. To the outside world, school is known through the functions it discharges and services it offers. While the ‘services’ indicate its working relationship with the target population, parents, sister agencies in the field and general public, ‘functions’ relate to the way it organizes itself and acts to provide the intended services. Functions are a direct corollary of the role model the school has opted for itself and the professional demands made on it.
The school, as an agency of the society and also as a miniature society, is supposed to perform the following main functions:

- To generate commitment and capacities in pupils for future adult roles.
- To allocate human resources within the role structure of the adult society.

In addition to general functions like socialization and acculturation, the school has to perform specific educational functions. These functions can be grouped into two categories:

- **Manifest Functions**: The manifest functions are:
  - Transmitting traditional culture.
  - Teaching basic skills & vocational education.
  - Character education.

- **Emerging Functions**: The emerging functions are:
  - Personal and social problem solving.
  - Social competence.
  - Diffusion of new knowledge.
  - Providing equality of opportunity.
  - Sex and family education.
  - Increased functional literacy.
  - Development of cosmopolitan outlook.
  - Learning to live together.

### 1.4.5 Social Structure of School

The school is a social structure in which various groups are related according to a system of rank and prestige. In broad terms, the school as a social system has four main levels of rank within it. At the top of the structure is the school board making school policy, selecting the manager and deciding on school expenditures. The school board acts as the
agent of wider community. The second main level is that of school administrator/superintendents/principals/supervisors. The third level in the structure is composed of teachers: some occupying higher ranks than others. The fourth level of the structure is composed of students, clients whom the school serves.

**Fig. 1.1 Social Structure of School**

In general, authority flows only in one direction within the school structure downward from school board to student, although the lower levels might affect the exercise of authority and also the nature of educational decisions. While authority flows downward, interaction of varying types occurs within the school structure in both horizontal and vertical directions, and the quality of interaction affects the school functioning as a whole. Thus, the school is a complex web of social interactions, with various types of interaction taking place simultaneously, each affecting the whole, and each having at least an indirect influence upon the child.
1.4.6 Need for Management of Schools

The school as an institution is a cosmos in itself. A school, in its ultimate analysis, represents an ‘enterprise’ with its mottos, share-holders and dividends. The lower the dividends, the greater are the chances of its rejection. As long as schooling retains its characteristics, there is a need for ‘School Management’; an effective way of organizing itself. Since education/schooling seeks desired results, it has to be a planned effort. The element of planning calls for clearly conceived ‘management strategy’. Incorporation of management philosophy in the planning and working of the school system is necessary to:

- put goals in sharper focus
- bridge gaps between expectations and fulfillment
- maximize output or potential in the face of limited resources
- arrange priorities—first thing first
- bring orderliness in working
- generate a sense of accountability and fulfillment
- cultivate a culture of change and improvement
- apportion resources in accordance with priorities or contingencies

(Sharma, 1994)

After this discussion on schools, it becomes pertinent to understand the different management processes in the school.

1.5 Management Processes in the School

Management processes are those processes that are performed by managers. These processes are also called “organizational processes” because they go beyond an individual manager and affect the entire organization. The basic management processes are planning, organizing, directing and monitoring (controlling). These are the various management processes that are undertaken in school and in the absence of which no school can function effectively.
1.5.1 Planning

Planning is an essential component of any kind of meaningful activity to take place in a classroom or outside. Planning means that there has to be a systematic, organized and an articulated scheme of working. Some of the planning activities, which are carried out in school, include setting up of:

1.5.1.1 Goals: Goals are collective ends towards which organizations direct their energies and activities. For example- improving the academic standards, developing positive attitude among students, etc.

1.5.1.2 Objectives: Objectives are goals established to guide the efforts of the organization and each of its components. For example- developing the innovation wing in the school, developing healthy employer-employee relationships, etc. Objectives may be both long term and short term.

1.5.1.3 Policies: Policy is a statement of an organization and intention to act in certain ways, when specified types of circumstances arise. For example- policy of hiring only trained teachers, policy of encouraging admissions to students good in sports, etc.

1.5.1.4 Rules: Rules are the decisions made by the management regarding what is to be done and what is not to be done in a given situation. Rules do not leave any scope for decision-making. For example- Rule of granting admission at certain cut-off percentage, rule of conducting internal assessment tests, etc.

1.5.1.5 Programs: Programs are concrete plans prepared with definite objectives to accomplish certain specific activity. Programs are generally short-range action based plans. For example- organizing seminars on specific topics, outlining the various activities to be organized during a session, etc.

1.5.1.6 Budget: Budget is an estimate of future needs, arranged in an orderly basis, covering some or all the activities of the organization for a definite period of time. In
financial terms, it is a periodic statement of future revenue and their expenditure. For example—preparation of financial budget for the ensuing year.

1.5.2 Organizing

Schools have to develop as an organization where work gets done effectively and efficiently. This means responsibilities have to be defined and relationships have to be developed. The essential element is people. The primary concern is what they do and how they work together. The process of organizing involves combining and coordinating individual as well as group activities to achieve the goal of the institution in an efficient and effective manner. School management takes four fundamental steps when beginning to make decisions about organizing:

1.5.2.1 Division of work: Divide the total workload into tasks that can logically and comfortably be performed by individuals or groups. This is done so that individuals or groups are responsible for a limited set of activities instead of the task as a whole. Division of work fosters specialization, as each person becomes expert in a certain job.

1.5.2.2 Departmentalization: Combine tasks in a logical and efficient manner. This refers to grouping of employees and tasks. For example, formation of departments of English, Chemistry, Social Sciences, etc.

1.5.2.3 Hierarchy: Specify who reports to whom in the organization. It refers to the linking of departments through hierarchical positions. At the top is the senior-ranking manager(s) responsible for the operations of the entire organization. At the other levels come the lower-ranking managers/staff.

1.5.2.4 Coordination: Set up mechanisms for integrating departmental activities into a coherent whole and monitoring the effectiveness of that integration. A high degree of coordination is likely to be beneficial for work organizations.
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There are two important concepts of organizing, viz. organizational structure and organizational culture. Organizational Structure refers to the way in which an organization’s activities are divided, grouped and coordinated into relationships between managers and employees, managers and managers, and employees and employees. An organization can be formally structured in three major ways:

- By function (functional organization),
- By product/market (divisional organization) or
- In matrix form (matrix organization).

Organizational Culture is the personality of the organization. Culture is comprised of the assumptions, values, norms and tangible signs of the organizational members and their behaviors. Organizational culture can be looked at as a system. In a school, inputs include society, rules, leader, traditions, etc. The process is based on assumptions, values and norms, e.g. school’s values on money, time, facilities, space and people. Outputs of school culture are organizational behaviors, methodologies of teaching, image, students and their personality, services, etc. There are different types of culture just like there are different types of personality. Some schools have authoritarian culture, while others have democratic culture. Some have adaptive and others have unadaptive culture and so on.

1.5.3 Direction

Direction involves getting the work done through instructions and orders. For getting work done, individuals have to be supervised, motivated and communicated with. For example, if a group of students is going on a botanical study tour, the objectives will not be met unless the teacher gives proper direction. Direction includes ways to direct and guide people. This is done by the four elements- motivation, leadership, teamwork and communication.
1.5.3.1 Motivation

Motivation refers to the factors that cause, channel and sustain an individual’s behavior. A manager/teacher has not only to motivate employees/students who have a low level of interest, but also has to nurture the interest of the already motivated employees/students. This is done by:

- Adopting a positive attitude.
- Giving positive reinforcement, i.e., appreciation and encouragement.
- Involving them in discussion and in such activities that call for collaboration, co-operation and communication.
- Providing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

1.5.3.2 Leadership

Leadership is the process of directing and influencing the task related activities of group members. The Trait approach to leadership assumed that leaders share inborn personality traits. This approach believes that “leaders are born, not made”. On the other hand, the Behavioral approach lays emphasis on the behavior of effective leaders in certain situations, i.e., how they delegate tasks, how they communicate with and try to motivate their subordinates and so on. Behaviors, unlike traits, can be learned. The theories of Contingency approach to leadership focus on the following factors:

- Task requirements.
- Peers’ expectations and behavior.
- Employees’ characteristics, expectations and behavior.
- Organizational culture and policies.

Managers have different leadership styles. Some have a task-oriented style and they closely supervise employees to be sure the task is performed satisfactorily. Others have an employee-oriented style and they put more emphasis on motivating rather than controlling subordinates. Leaders are also categorized as autocratic, democratic or free-rein-on the
basis of how they use their authority. Leadership requires specific characteristics, which an
effective leadership must possess. Sociability, intelligence, self-confidence, initiative,
creativity and responsibility are some of the characteristics. In schools, two types of
leaderships are essential:

Fig.1.2 Kinds of School Leadership

School Leadership

- Administrative Leadership
- Instructional Leadership

Administrative leadership requires the utilization of available human and material
resources through the adoption of sound management techniques for the progress of the
school. Instructional leadership is providing assistance to staff members of a school in
identifying and formulating learning objectives and for planning strategies to attain the
goals.

1.5.3.3 Teamwork

Traditionally, there have been two types of teams in organizations: formal and informal.
Nowadays, teams exist that have the characteristics of both. Formal teams include
command teams, committees, quality circles, etc. Discipline Committee, Assembly Team,
etc. are examples of formal teams in a school. Some formal teams are temporary, like task
forces created to deal with a specific problem. For example, team formed to spread
awareness regarding Pulse Polio drive, Annual Day Celebrations Committee, etc. Informal
teams emerge when people come together and interact regularly. These groups develop
within the formal organizational structure.
1.5.3.4 Communication

Communication is the lifeblood of an organization. It is important for three primary reasons.

- Communication provides a common thread for the management processes of planning, organizing, leading and controlling.
- Effective communication skills help management to draw on the vast array of talents available in the multicultural world of organizations.
- Management and administration spend a great deal of their time communicating in different forms: face-to-face, electronic or telephonic.

Communication may be vertical (top to bottom or bottom to top), horizontal or diagonal. The organization’s authority structure has an influence on communication effectiveness. Job Specialization facilitates communication within differentiated groups. For example, a group of P.G.Ts is likely to share the same jargon, tasks, goals, etc. Communication is further classified as formal or informal (grapevine).

1.5.4 Controlling

Controlling indicates how far the goals have been achieved and to what extent there is deviation from the plans. In other words, controlling helps monitor the effectiveness of planning, organizing and leading and take corrective actions as needed. Control is needed for the following reasons:

- To create better quality.
- To cope with change.
- To create faster cycles involved in creation.
- To add value.
- To facilitate delegation and teamwork.
Organizations face a number of challenges in designing control systems that provide accurate feedback in a timely, economical fashion. Trying to control too many elements too strictly can annoy and demoralize employees and waste valuable time, energy and money. So, management tries to identify key performance areas. For example, key performance areas of schools could be academics or sports or co-curricular activities. Financial controls include financial statements like balance sheet, income and expenditure statement, profit and loss account, etc. that provide a means to gauge the state of liquidity, general financial condition and profitability of an organization.

After having an understanding of the concept of schools and management processes in schools, it becomes pertinent to understand the concept of excellence in education in general and excellence in the context of schools in particular.

### 1.6 Excellence in Education

Education is a process that helps in the achievement of purposeful living for every individual in society. It is an important social system with a well-defined structure and set of roles. Education is an agent for transference and advancement of knowledge as well as socialization of individuals (IGNOU, School of Education, 2000). The field of education has developed tremendously over the years, both in terms of theory and practice. Education these days is not confined to just providing knowledge to the learners, but it is much beyond that. Education has achieved wide and varied horizons. As in all other fields, education is also under tremendous pressure to adopt the changes that are the chief characteristic of the global world (Ganguly, 2004).

Excellence in education may be defined by the two terms, ‘Education’ and ‘Excellence’. While ‘education’ is the manifestation of the perfection already existing in man, ‘excellence’ instills a longing for perfection in all spheres of activity, whether individual or collective. It infuses mastery and love for quality work in its patrons and evaluates its performance from time to time. It also devises means of improving its end product. Excellence develops a spirit of enquiry, research, perseverance and constancy. Education to be complete needs to have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal
activities of the human being- the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. All must continue to complement one another until the end of one’s life.

The cardinal need of excellence in education is not only that of raising the quality of education to levels comparable with those of other advanced nations of the world, but also to provide excellence in education for the masses. The other equally important need is related to the ‘Value added approach’ to education. This approach demands that education should make a difference to the learner. It should make a perceptible change in his life. Education should matter to him in one manner or the other and should add value to his dreams. This value addition may be in the shape of knowledge, skill, attitude, behavior, wealth, character or learning. It could be in any degree but it ought to be imparted to a person through education. Since this study is primarily concerned with schools, the next discussion is related to concept of excellence in the context of schools.

1.7 Excellence in the Context of Schools

Schools are an important center for propagation of education. As the main social institution responsible for human resource development, schools have to take on the task of preparing the children for the emerging opportunities (Ganguly, 2004). The primary purpose of school education is to lay the intellectual foundation in children to develop their following capabilities:

- Perception, understanding and learning.
- Visualization, imagination and modeling.
- Communication through language, symbol, visual arts and performing arts.
- Specification of their desires, beliefs, values and plans.
In the context of schools, excellence can be understood on the basis of the two components of school education that are briefly described below.

- The Academic component, and
- The Managerial component.

1.7.1 The Academic Component

It refers to that educational output for which all the administrative policies are woven. It consists of many aspects viz.:

- Raising intellectual level of students,
- Preparing them to compete in the educational world,
- Providing them guidance for their aspired career, and finally
- Achieving desired results.

Academic component of excellence is related to teaching, learning and supervising which take place in an educational institution. Excellence in managerial component has an effect on the academic aspect. As the seeds are sown, so the crop gets ready.

1.7.2 The Managerial Component

Action and result derive from policies and their administration. To achieve institutional excellence, management and administration formulates conducive policies. Effective implementation of policies, rules and procedures are decisive elements of an excellent school. This involves pro-active role of the top management, who are the planners and the middle and lower levels of management, who are the executioners. It needs to acknowledge and promote the need for variety in terms of institutional forms and educational processes in the system. A truly excellent school possesses certain characteristics. Its members share a commitment to making the unit extraordinarily successful in accomplishing agreed-on organizational objectives. The focus is on quality through genuinely collaborative team effort. The concern for excellence in such an
organization is not the exclusive property of the leader. Instead, all members share this concern and are prepared to do what is necessary in order to help the unit exceed expectations. In an excellent unit, everyone worries about the whole and takes initiative to see that problems are dealt with and objectives met (Bradford & Cohen, 1987). In such an organization, the concern for task accomplishment includes a strong emphasis on quality of products, services and members themselves. Dedication to quality work means that careful attention is paid to the quality of people and to personnel decisions. Members are recruited for their qualifications, not for similarity of social class, race, sex or religion. Managers make tough decisions about promotion, with seniority and loyalty given lower priority than competence. Thus, an excellent department has a minimum of deadwood.

It can be observed here that excellence in the context of schools can be understood through academic and managerial components. A number of factors are essential for achieving organizational excellence and the importance of each factor is relative to the type of the unit.

1.8 Attributes of Excellence

After going through the researches undertaken in the field of excellence, various attributes of excellence—academic as well as managerial—were studied and analyzed. The various attributes of excellence have their own significance and play a decisive role in achieving organizational excellence. Since the present study aims at understanding excellence from a management perspective, eight different attributes have been selected to generalize the study and discuss the factors that lead to creating and sustaining excellence in schools. These attributes have emerged to characterize the excellent schools. The intensity of these factors may differ in different schools, but they can be generalized for all excellent, innovative schools.
1.8.1 Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision and mission are the two important anchors of an organization as they give a focus and sense of direction. In academic institutions of excellence, professional autonomy, faculty governance and excelling in teaching depend on the core values, which shape the mission, goals, vision of excellence and policies. Mission, when effectively articulated and internalized by the leadership and staff, can have enormous impact on the performance of the schools.

Why don’t organizations achieve excellence? The big reason is the lack of vision or limited vision (Khera, 1998). An organizational vision of excellence incorporates the traits the organization would like to display or be known for. This vision has to be clear and noble, and ought to be shared by all the participants (Ninan, 2002). A noble vision finds expression in the various processes and projects undertaken by those imbued with the vision. A good vision is one where there is a difficult milestone, but one which is possible if you put the right teams in place, the right leadership in place and the right management in place (Piramal & Netarwala, 2005). Absolute integrity, probity and prudence are the very bedrock of an enlightened management. When an organization has internalized a mission, vision of excellence and/or core values, it is charged with a passion for excellence.

1.8.2 Entrepreneurship and Inspiring Leadership

Humans lead organizations and the quality of their leadership can make or mar organizational excellence. Leadership and the quality of leader play a decisive role in the level of excellence and strategy building of organizations. Leaders exhibit a unique blend of charisma, vision and character traits that attract people to follow them. Individual styles may differ but there are some core leadership behaviors that transcend personal styles (Piramal & Netarwala, 2005). Leadership styles, leadership tasks and related activities including building trust, making tactical decisions, broadening support, overcoming opposition, inducing flexibility and so
on are the main elements of leadership which differentiate an excellent organization from other organizations.

To manage excellence, a ‘charismatic leader’ is required who is a visionary as well as a realist in his outlook, sensitive as well as demanding, innovative yet practical in his thoughts, actions and deeds. A leader must have three qualities: innovation in the brain, compassion in the heart and passion in the belly (Mashelkar, quoted from Piramal & Netrawala, 2005). The excellent schools foster many leaders and innovators throughout the organization. They encourage practical risk taking and support good tries through their People Involvement Programs (Peters & Waterman, 1982). ‘Inspiring Leadership’ is one of the clusters of organizational attributes that distinguish outstanding organizations. (Ahmad & Chopra, 2004)

1.8.3 Organizational Culture

The dominance and coherence of culture proves to be an essential quality of excellent organizations (Peters & Waterman, 1982). The same applies for schools. The stronger the culture of the school and the more it is directed toward the marketplace, the less need is there for detailed rules and procedures. Every school has its own character and a distinct identity of its own. This is the sum total of the values and norms and the adherence to it, which have been internalized by all or most of the persons associated with the school. The ‘school climate’ describes the traditions and the deeply embedded characteristics of the school. The members of the school feel a sense of belongingness, pride in the identity, culture and purpose of their organization. This climate and ethos have a pervasive, deep and marked impact on the way students live their future lives (Ninan, 2002).

1.8.4 Innovation and Organizational Creativity

Though excellent performing organizations stay reasonably close to the basics they are aware of and they don’t wander into areas unknown to them (Peters & Waterman, 1982), yet innovation, change and creativity are attributes that shape the
future of such organizations. Innovation is not only about doing different things, but also about doing things differently and doing well (Piramal & Netrawala, 2005)

Creativity is evenly spread and widely present in schools. It cannot be taught but can be learnt under conducive learning conditions. Each innovation and act of organizational creativity opens up fresh new vistas, perspectives and possibilities and strengthens the culture of improvisation, experimentation, innovation and constructive questioning. Thus, innovation is a constant endeavor in organizations that are excelling. Children need to learn “how to think” rather than to learn the products of other people’s thinking, be able to change and better their environment and live in friendly co-operation with their fellowmen. Pin-drop silence in a classroom is no more the sign of a ‘competent teacher’. It is a considered as an inhibition to search of excellence in children. “For the first time in the history of mankind, we possess both the technology and the psychological knowledge to change entirely for the better the social make-up of mankind.”- Sri Aurobindo.

1.8.5 Social Orientation

Since schools are service organizations, there is direct interaction between the service providers and the service seekers. An intense need is, therefore, generated for developing a cordial interpersonal relationship. The excellent schools learn from the people they serve. They consider the time spent with their clients as precious and worth as it helps build up goodwill. They provide unparalleled quality, service and reliability and earn loyalty of the members of the society as well as long-term revenue. These schools measure internal and external customer satisfaction on a regular basis. Effective service orientation is ensured by-

- Intensive, active involvement of senior management.
- A remarkable people orientation.
- A high intensity of measurement and feedback.

(Peters and Waterman, 1982)
Chapter I

Introduction

Excellent schools also consider ‘quality management’ and ‘reliability of performance’ as essential elements in maintaining and preserving their reputation.

1.8.6 Motivation and Reinforcement

There is a direct correlation between motivation and productivity. Motivation is like fire-unless you keep adding fuel to it, it dies (Khera, 1998). Excellent schools tap the inherent worth of the task as a source of intrinsic motivation for their employees. These organizations give lots of space to their employees to take initiatives. They emphasize more on the quality of motivation rather than the quantity. Through effective motivational methods the best talents and hidden capabilities can be nurtured and canalized to attain the right objectives and goals of the educational institution (Joseph, 2000). Regular reinforcement loses impact, so, unpredictable and intermittent reinforcements work better.

The management of excellent schools has a developmental, collaborative, galvanizing, but subordinate-centered image (Bradford & Cohen, 1987). The managers and administrators provide monetary as well as non-monetary incentives to the staff, which encourages the latter to work wholeheartedly. They create a positive environment in the organization that attracts, recognizes and retains the best people.

1.8.7 Communication Network

The excellent companies have a network of informal, open communication. The intensity and patterns cultivate the right people’s getting into contact with each other, regularly, and the chaotic properties of the system are kept well under control simply because of the regularity of contact and its nature (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Also, communication in excellent schools starts with an insistence on informality and open door policies.
A key feature of excellent schools is the presence of well-established communication network—internal as well as external. Ashok Ganguly, Chairman, CBSE outlines “communication and presentation” as an important feature of good schools. There are well-defined channels of communication within the school, for example, between management and principal, principal and teachers and teachers and students. Also, the government, society, parents and well-wishers are communicated through published material and public relations departments.

1.8.8 Simultaneous Loose- Tight Properties

This attribute of excellent schools refers to the co-existence of firm central direction (centralization) and maximum individual autonomy (decentralization)—which can be called as “having one’s cake and eating it too” (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Centralization refers to the type of administration in which authority and control are centered in, and exercised by a central power of agency. Decentralization refers to the type of administration in which control is vested in local authorities. The central authority is there but it exercises minimum interference and delegates to its constituent areas the responsibility for administering their own affairs. The best thing to do is to have a balance of both centralization and decentralization.

The top management should both enjoy a good measure of autonomy and delegate routine authorities to the lower levels. Both centralization and decentralization should work together with planned understanding and cooperation. Excellent organizations balance themselves as both rigidly controlled as well as allowing autonomy, entrepreneurship and innovation. They are simultaneously externally focused and internally focused. For example, externally in that they provide service and quality to the parents of children; internally, in that each staff member has to perform his/her maximum efforts.

Summing up the discussion, it may be noted that the eight attributes of excellence—vision, mission and core values; entrepreneurship and inspiring leadership; organizational culture;
innovation and organizational creativity; social orientation; motivation and reinforcement; communication network and simultaneous loose-tight properties- have been generated after considering a number of factors common to excellent schools. Since schools are unlike profit making business organizations, the concept of excellence in schools has been accordingly discussed.

In the present chapter, the researcher has discussed the concept of excellence as presented by a number of thinkers and experts. Also the various dimensions of excellence, individual, team and organizational, and the six different forms of organizational excellence are discussed. In the later half of the chapter, the various facets of schools, need for management of schools and management processes in the schools are mentioned. Finally, the concept of excellence in schools and the eight attributes of creating and sustaining excellence are highlighted. The next chapter is a review of the studies and researches conducted in relation to the present study.