ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND WORK RELATED VALUES: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention on certain aspects of organizational culture and work related values. How work values lead to organizational effectiveness and organizational competence? There is plethora of perspectives available in the area of organizational culture; however, Edgar Schein's perspective was taken into the consideration for the conceptual framework. An attempt has been made to examine organizational culture, competence and effectiveness in three organizations namely Maruti Udyog Limited, Escorts Limited and Pepsi foods Limited. The chosen organizations are highly profit making and performing extremely well in the market as well as on the other fronts of the organization. Sample consisted of 450 employees from three hierarchical levels i.e. Managers, Executives and Supervisors working with these organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between culture and the functioning of social organization has been a recurring theme in the social sciences for over a period of five decades now. Sociologists, social anthropologists, and social psychologists have often presented culture and ideology as integral features in the functioning of a society (Weber, 1930, Mead, 1934). Each of these authors focussed culture as a critical aspect of adaptation of social organizations, and viewed culture as a system of socially transmitted behavioural patterns to serve and to relate human communities to their ecological settings (Kessing, 1974). This perspective has been reflected in the work of ethnographers such as Whyte (1951, 1961) and by psychologists such as Schein (1981, 1984, 1985, and 1991) and Hofstede (1980, 1991 & 1990).

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The purpose of this paper is to draw attention on certain aspects of work culture. The period post July 1991 in India, which has witnessed economic liberalization in the country initiated tremendous changes. This metamorphosis has invited multinationals to invest in the Indian market. In a developing country, multifaceted innovations bring the native people in contact with alien culture and influence their life goals. Contemporary techniques are of technocratic planning with a purely economic approach. These approaches evolve a new style of life and a new culture, which throws a challenge of acculturation. On the other hand certain structural and functional features of organizations are intrinsic to all organizations and their operational peculiarities often reflected diverse cultural ethos and yield disparate results. Thus, the broader framework of cultural context determines the immediate work culture of a given organization, which will regulate the behavior of employees in specific ways, which in turn will influence the organizational goals. This line of reasoning creates an interesting situation when people from alien cultures are involved in running the organization as it would lead to gaps, discrepancies and intermission between the culture of the people and the culture of the organization. The accretion presence of multinationals in Indian sub continent present such opportunities to examine inter and intra-cultural similarities and differences in work culture and its consequences at the levels of individual and organization. This analogy and atypicality may be perceived as threat, harm and challenge by the people and may lead to diverse effects depending upon the type of combination of individual, organizational and contextual variables. It is assumed and expected that free market economy evolve a competitive environment, where "Quality and Efficiency" becomes the buzzword or the "Gayatri Mantra" for the way to success and growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational researches have also addressed the relationship between culture and functioning (Wilkins and Ouchi 1983; Barney 1986; Bartley et. al 1988; Saffold 1988; Ott, 1989) but have seldom developed explicit theories of organizational culture and effectiveness or presented supporting evidences (Shiel and Martin, 1990). Progress has been made in related research areas such as socialization (Van Mannen and Schein, 1979, Chatman, 1991) and change (Schein, 1985) (Kotter and Heskett, 1992) but with few exceptions (e.g. O'Reilly, 1989) little attention has been given to the issue of organization culture and effectiveness (Daniel and Mishra, 1995).

As pointed out by Pareek (1994) that culture provides a strong rim for a fast moving wheel, which keeps several factors integrated and acts as a binding force to manage the difficult terrain. Similarly organizational culture provides a context for managing and dealing with change, which is evident in

globalization of organizations. It gives the vital force, a guiding law, subjects them to some moral and rational government and leads them beyond their natural formulations, until it can find for life the clue to a spiritual freedom, perfection and greatness (Chaterjee, 1994). In the Indian context, Sinha (1994) pointed out that the move to get out the western mould and indigenous organizational behavior research in India has taken three routes. The first leads towards a religious – philosophical model of human beings who strive to relate by seeking purity and peace of mind, cultivating a sense of detachment and accenting work as a duty. The second emphasizes strategic role of organizations in nation building. The third yields to Socio-economic and political compulsions and explores how people work in the organizations. The three approaches often overlap and taken together presents a contrast to a western view of culture. However, there are instances of meaningful borrowings and blending, which help and entertain the possibility of a worthwhile program of integrative indigenization.

Barbara (1992) discussed organizational culture as an umbrella concept where almost all studies can find a place if their authors so wish. Studies in these areas seem to be connected almost naturally to anthropology, yet in many cases it is just a metaphor that has been borrowed and not the approach as such. An organization may have significant and idiosyncratic beliefs and the combination of these will contribute towards the development of an unique culture of the organization. The cursory overview of these perspectives suggested that there are serious overlapping concerns between and among these perspectives. On the basis of these understandings it may be asserted that these perspectives need to be juxtaposed in a complementary manner and the insights from all the perspectives need to be drawn and utilized for understanding, examining and managing organizational culture. These perspectives offer a reasonably meaningful way of looking at the issue of organizational culture in particular and culture in general. Apparently, it seems that they are mutually exclusive and have independent perspectives. However, there is more of complementarity. They offer a meaningful insight into the various processes and issues like a conceptual mosaic on the floor of organizational culture. An attempt has been made to examine organizational culture, competence, commitment and organizational effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Ethnography as a research method was used, because it proposes that 'Ethnography is description' and that description must closely resemble the original cultural reality. The resemblance must be good enough so that the natives are able to recognize in it familiar features of their own culture. This method suggests that ethnography is a process, a way of studying human

behavior, and that ethnographic methodologies aims to elicit phenomenological data i.e. they aim to represent the worldview of those individuals or groups under investigation. Although other methodologies in psychology seek to do this, where ethnography differs from other methodologies is that the representation of the world is structured by the participants, not by the researcher. It is the participants' structuring of the world in which the researcher is interested. The present study is a blend of phenomenological as well as logical positivist framework, i.e. open-ended interviews and questionnaires were used.

ORGANIZATIONAL SITES

The present study aimed at investigating the nature of organizational culture and its relationship with organizational effectiveness, competence and commitment in the three organizations namely Maruti Udyog Limited, Escorts Limited and Pepsi Foods Ltd. The three organizations are apparently rooted in Japanese, Indian and American managerial system. The three selected organizations are highly profit making growing industry and performing extremely well in the market as well on other fronts of organization.

SAMPLE

Sample consisted of 450 employees working with Maruti, Escorts and Pepsi included employees from three hierarchical levels i.e. Managers, Executives and Supervisors working in three organizations.

Total Sample (N~ 450)		
Maruti (N – 150)	Escorts (N – 150)	Pepsi (N – 150)
Managers (N – 50)	Managers (N – 50)	Managers (N – 50)
Executives (N – 50)	Executives (N – 50)	Executives (N – 50)
Supervisors (N – 50)	Supervisors (N – 50)	Supervisors (N – 50)

MEASURES

The present study used three sets of measures, namely:
➢ **Measures of Organizational Culture**: Super and Nevell (1986) identified and used by Sinha (1987) for Indian organization was used. The 108 items questionnaire belongs to four super ordinate factors. These are Self-Realization, Status Enhancement, Sulphitic Values and Socio Economic Support.
➢ **Measures of Organizational Effectiveness**: This scale was developed by Taylor and Bower (1972). It takes considerations of three factors namely Group functioning, Satisfaction and Goal Integration.

➢ **Measures of Job Competence**: This scale was designed and developed ʹ by Martin (1974). There are five dimensions describing four categories of job performance and employee competence.

➢ **Measure of Job Commitment**: The scale was developed by Cook and Wall (1980). This scale refers to the employee's affective reaction to their employing organization, feeling of attachment to the goals and values of the organization.

RESULTS

Data were collected from 450 employees altogether, there were 150 employees equally drawn from the three organizations, which included Maruti, Escorts, and Pepsi. From each of these three organizations fifty (managers, executives, and supervisors) were selected for this study. In order to examine the pattern of organizational culture prevailing in apparently rooted in Japanese, Indian and American organizations and the values endorsed by the employees were analyzed. The scores of employees belonging to these three types of organizations working at three hierarchical levels namely Managers, Executives and Supervisors are shown in Table 1. With a view to ascertain this effect of type of organizations and hierarchical level on the dimensions of values, the scores were subjected to separate 3*3 factorial ANOVAS. The summaries of these ANOVA'S appear in Table 2.

Table 1

Means and Standard deviations of the scores on the measures of work values by type of organization and Hierarchical Level of employees.

Organi zation	Hierarchica l Level	Self Realization		Status Enhancement		Sulphitic Value		Socio Economic Support	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A	M	82.78	7.72	80.80	7.39	78.64	10.09	81.44	7.74
	E	76.90	7.22	78.84	6.20	80.22	6.60	81.82	7.40
	S	65.54	7.20	66.90	6.80	66.90	4.84	67.38	7.37
B	M	80.30	11.10	81.24	10.67	77.96	11.08	80.18	12.06
	S	64.80	9.88	66.54	9.76	66.14	10.05	68.82	10.42
	E	60.78	7.56	62.. 10	9.11	61.14	9.54	63.38	9.63
C	M	83.92	5.65	84.66	5.02	84.52	6.20	84.98	5.03
	S	70.36	7.81	71.16	8.40	70.76	9.47	72.78	8.90
	E	65.98	9.10	66.10	7.96	67.28	7.32	68.30	8.51

Note: A = Maruti, B = Escorts, C = Pepsi
In Hierarchical level (M = Managers, E = Executives, S = Supervisors)

. **Table 2**

Summaries of 3*3 factorial ANOVA's performed on the scores of the measures of values

Source of Variation		Self realization		Status enhancement		Sulphitic value		Socio economic support	
Type of	DF	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Organization A	2	1681.72	24.52**	1232.94	18.79**	1882.88	25.46**	1504.29	19.54**
Hierarchical B	2	1278.07	186.48**	1199.60	170.7**	8740.96	118.19**	9418.81	122.37**
Level A*B	4	369.72	5.39**	625.55	9.53**	859.73	11.62**	683.74	8.88**
Within	441			65.60		73.50		76.96	

Table 3

Means scores on the measures of Work Values by type of organization and Hierarchical level

	Maruti (A)	Escorts (B)	Pepsi (C)	Manager	Executive	Supervision
	M	M	M	M	M	M
	X	Y	X	A	B	C
Self Realization	75.07	68.63	73.42	82.33	70.69	64.10
Status Enhancement	75.51	69.90	73.97	82.23	72.18	65.03
Sulphitic values	75.25	68.65	74.18	80.37	72.61	65.11
Socio Economic Support	76.88	70.79	75.35	82.20	74.47	66.35

Note: Similar subscripts do not differ significantly.

It was observed that all the main interaction effects were statistically significant. Table 3 presents the results of mean comparison of the score as a function of main effects of type of organizations and level of hierarchy. All the mean comparisons were statistically significant and yielded a strong effect of hierarchical level. The results of ANOVA's have yielded significant interaction of the type of organization and hierarchical level. On the effectiveness dimension as shown in Table 4 that all the three dimensions of effectiveness, which included Group functioning, Satisfaction and Goal integration. To visualize the effect of three types of organizations and hierarchical levels of employees the summaries of ANOVA'S are presented in Table 5.

Table 4

Means and Standard deviations of the scores on the measures of Effectiveness by type of organization and Hierarchical Level of employees.

Organization	Hierarchical Level	Group Functioning		Satisfaction		Goal Integration	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A	M	26.34	1:29	26.00	1.49	7.46	1.05
	E	22.84	1.82	22.70	2.44	7.48	1.337
	S	19.28	2.43	20.64	3.18	6.16	1.20
B	M	23.00	3.53	21.80	3.77	7.28	1.44
	S	18.80	2.91	18.46	3.53	5.64	1.43
	E	11.26	2.97	15.60	3.47	4.84	1.60
C.	M	22.02	3.05	22.70	3.34	7.10	1.72
	S	21.46	3.11	22.02	3.50	7.46	1.82
	E	21.96	3.13	23.12	3.44	7.32	1.61

Table 5

Summaries of 3*3 factorial ANOVA's performed on the scores of the measures of values.

Source of Variation		Group Functioning		Satisfaction		Goal Integration	
	DF	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Type of (I)							
Organization	2	477.06	60.89**	909.66	88.8	79.82	35.93**
Hierarchical (ii)	2	810.24	103.42**	53.09	52.09**	53.01	23.86**
Level	4	198.43	25.32**	164.14	16.02**	27.29	12.28**
(i) x (ii) Within	441	7.83		10.24		2.22	

Table 6

Mean scores on the measures of Work Values by type of organization and Hierarchical level.

	Maruti (A)	Escorts (B)	Pepsi (C)	Manager	Executive	Supervision
Effectiveness	M	M	M	M	M	M
	X	Y		A	B	C
Group Functioning	22.82	19.35	21.81 Z	23.79	21.03	19.17
Satisfaction	23.11	18.62	22.61 X	23.5	21.06	19.78
Goal Integration	7.03	5.92	7.29 X	7.28	6.86	6.11

Note: Similar subscripts do not differ significantly.

While Table 6 shows that the employees of Maruti scored higher on all the dimensions of effectiveness, from hierarchical dimension, Managers scored little higher followed by Executives and Supervisors. Table 7 depicts the competency, which included competency in communications, dependability, and positive attitude towards work, job competence, leadership and job commitment. The significant interaction between type of organization and hierarchical level yielded significant F values. To visualize the effect of three types of organizations and hierarchical levels of employees the summaries of ANOVA'S are presented in Table 8.

Table 7

Means and Standard deviations of the scores on the measures of Competency by type of organization and Hierarchical Level of employees.

Organization	Hierarchies	Communication		Dependability		Attitude to Work		Job Competence		Leadership		Job Commitment	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A	M	21.38	1.34	16.88	1.81	30.26	2.49	28.32	1.95	42.10	2.61	40.58	1.77
	E	17.10	1.60	15.86	1.34	30.16	3.14	25.66	2.69	43.22	3.99	38.32	33.16
	S	18.80	4.06	13.86	2.51	22.72	4.43	22.72	3.69	29.46	2.72	29.18	6.06
B	M	19.14	2.84	15.60	3.46	32.56	5.49	24.10	4.32	41.58	6.74	34.10	4.06
	S	14.28	3.34	10.34	2.25	23.74	5.09	17.44	4.68	31.68	6.11	30.66	5.83
	E	12.30	2.92	9.68	1.93	25.22	5.37	16.40	3.61	25.16	6.96	29.58	6.70
C	M	17.90	1.54	14.08	2.40	30.10	3.68	25.68	3.55	40.14	6.23	35.26	5.25
	S	17.18	2.27	13.26	2.60	29.42	4.25	24.38	3.12	39.64	6.05	37.62	6.66
	E	17.16	1.94	13.44	2.30	30.08	4.02	25.24	2.93	41.66	5.73	38.86	6.34

Table 8

Summaries of 3*3 factorial ANOVA's performed on the scores of the measures of Competency.

Source of Verification		Communication		Dependability		Attitude to work		Job Competence		Leadership		Job Commitment	
Type of		MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Organization (I)	2	559.84	84.10	502.94	90.56	273.89	14.69	1820.18	150.18	2338.68	78.08*	1402.62	49.14*
Hierarchical (ii)	2	557.04	83.68	412.09	74.19	929.05	49.833	864.74	71.35*	3272.21	109.25*	676.60	23.70*
(i x ii) within	4	151.74	22.79	120.74	21.74	823.02	44.14	211.08	17.41*	1560.30	52.09*	795.46	27.87*
		6.65		5.55		18.64		12.12		29.95		28.53	

Table 9

Mean scores on the measures of Competency by type of organization and Hierarchical level.

	Maruti (A) M	Escorts (B) M	Pepsi (C) M	Manager M	Executive M	Supervision M
Communication	19.09 X	15.24 X	17.41 Z	19.47 A	16.19 B	16.09 A
Dependability	15.53 X	11.87 Y	13.59 Z	15.52 A	13.15 B	12.33 C
Attitude	28.71 X	27.17 Y	29.87 X	30.97 A	28.77 B	26.01 C
Job Competence	25.57 X	19.31 Y	25.20 X	26.03 A	22.49 B	21.45 A
Leadership	38.26 X	32.81 Y	40.48 Z	41.27 A	38.18 B	32.09 C
Commitment	36.03 X	31.45 Y	37.24 X	36.65 A	35.53 A	32.54 B

Note: Similar subscripts do not differ significantly.

The significant interaction between type of organization and hierarchical level yielded significant F values as shown in table 9. Further, in order to analyze the present research work to know whether the chosen variables have the capacity to differentiate between and among the three criterion groups of organizations. The discriminant function analysis was used, which also helps in determining the variables, which contribute maximally for differences among the criterion groups.

Table 10

Wilk's Lambda, Rao's V, of the discriminant analyses among the employees of chosen organizations. (N=450).

Variables entered	Wilk's Lambda	Rao'V	Between Groups	Significance
Job Competence	.69	205.50	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Dependability	.54	373.05	2 & 3	$P< .01$
Leadership	.50	433.54	2 & 3	$P< .01$
Competency in communication	.45	479.77	2 & 3	$P< .01$
Commitment	.40	558.72	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Attitude to work	.37	605.20	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Group functioning	.35	647.71	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Self realization	.33	680.49	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Goal Integration	.32	703.83	1 & 3	$P< .01$
Satisfaction	.32	726.02	1 & 3	$P< .05$
Sulphitic values	.31	750.99	1 & 3	$P< .05$
Status enhancement	.30	769.54	1 & 3	$P< .05$

Note: Group 1= Maruti, Group 2 = Escorts, Group 3 = Pepsi

On viewing the results of ANOVA and the results as presented in table 10, it may be inferred that the ANOVA and the results of discriminant analyses together, it is interesting to note that findings are more or less similar to what ANOVA's have already depicted. Since discriminant analyses is a more sophisticated tool, which clearly demonstrates that Competency, Dependability, Leadership, Competency in communication, Commitment, and Attitude to work have emerged as first six most important dimensions for the employees chosen for the study and have capacity to differentiate between the groups.

DISCUSSION

In the present research, an attempt has been made to map the organizational culture as experienced by the employees of three organizations apparently rooted in three cultural backgrounds namely: Japanese, Indian and American Organizations. Indian employees manage the organizations by and large; however, the various aspects of universal features of organizations find expression according to the contextual as well as managerial system of particular organizational settings. Against such a backdrop of assumption the present study was conceived. The framework was partially derived from the Schein's (1984) work on organizational culture, which emphasized the role of shared values as central to any analysis on organizational culture. Furthermore, it distinguishes three fundamental levels at which culture manifests itself: (i) Observable artifacts (ii) Values and (iii) Basic underlying assumption highlight the role of values as central theme to any analysis on values.

Researches in the area of organizational culture indicate that individual values as well as organizational values play an important role in determining how well an individual fits into the organizational context (Rousseau, 1990). However, there is a considerable disagreements on the issue of the level at which cultural values are meaningful to the individuals and organizations. For example Enz (1988) conceptualized and measured values at sub unit levels, while O'Reilly et al (1991) did so at the level of the organizations. Besides, many researches have conceptualized and measured values at the individual level (Katzu 1986; Prakash, 1982; Rokeach 1973; Sinha, 1990) in his efforts to understand organizational culture and related processes. Similarly the functionality of culture and organizational effectiveness have been inculcated and shaped through organizational culture. These variables represent the two major kinds of influences operating to shape the cultural processes of any organization; it is their interactive patterns, processed outcomes shape give rise to those features, which may be called organizational culture. For example individual entering into the organization not only receive influences from the organization but also influence many of the organizational

processes. Such a bi-directional symbiotic relationship plays a crucial role in shaping organizational culture.

This research work was designed to map the organizational culture of Japanese, Indian and American Organizations by understanding commonality and the differences in individual as well as the organizational level variables and processes. To this end organizational culture was measured in terms of Self Realization, Status enhancement, Sulphitic values and Socio-economic support. It was evident from the finding of the study that socioeconomic support was consistently found to score higher in all the three organizations. This was followed by status enhancement, sulphitic values and self-realization. The reason could be that the respondents were working in a context, which is experiencing tremendous amount of change around them thereby realizing that socioeconomic well being will provide them the necessary amount of stability in continuously changing surrounding.

Furthermore, the Indian studies have provided ample evidence that organizations are the outcomes of the processes of socialization and have to be adaptive to its environment. The work boundaries of Indian organizations are much more permeable than their western counter parts. Organizational culture is a subculture of the large engulfing societal culture. Integration is therefore, crucial at three levels within the organization, between environment and between various forces of the environment. Sinha (1995) has looked for the sources of organizational culture in its socioeconomic milieu. Furthermore, the evidence from literature supports this contention that similar work related experiences result to uniformity of perception of cultural characteristics (Schein 1987; Van Mannen 1976; Prakash, 1994).

As evident from the findings of the study that the group of managers across the organization has strongly endorsed the values leading to self realization that may be due to the fact that managers perceived themselves to be valuing ability utilization, achievement, advancement, peace of mind and personal development through their work. Whereas both the groups, i.e. Executives and Supervisors scored high on socioeconomic support dimension; such findings provide support to a truism that market economics have the inevitable consequences of rendering organizations competitive. A fierce struggle for existence sets in where no one can afford to ignore an opportunity to show his best. What Newman (1972) said about Western work relationship is likely to appear to a great extent In Indian Organizations as well. The employee concern is likely to become universalistic where one moves in hierarchical ladder of organizations as the individualistic orientation becomes much stronger. Organizations would experience constant pressure to ease out misfits and to upgrade a series of conditions of better employees in order to retain them.

Now, it may however, be asserted that despite certain universal features of the organizations the cultural characteristics are different and unique in case of three organizations in the study. Though, we tend to believe that multinationals coming to India will create organizational culture having universal characteristics. The findings of the study helped us establishing clearly that such a belief cannot be granted empirical support. Multinationals coming to India may bring with them certain kind of technology, structure, philosophy and work format, which are getting processed and assimilated by the environmental and social forces of the recipient cultural context. As argued by Ganesh (1990) that such a position provides us sufficient foundation to say that organizational functioning of Indian organizations are not determined technologically but socially.

With the given understanding, companies have to learn and internalize the new rules of the game, where employees have to change from: Provider to facilitator; Size and scale to speed and responsiveness; Control by rules and hierarchy to control by vision and shared values; Information closely guarded to information sharing; Need for certainty to tolerance for ambiguity; Organizational rigidity to permanent flexibility; Corporate independence to Interdependence; Reactive to proactive; Internal focus to focus on competitive environment; Consensus to constructive contention; Entitlement culture to rewarding knowledge based performance culture; Competitive advantage to collaborative advantage and above all learning to love turbulence. In the changing perspective employees have to learn how to love turbulence and dance in concert with the change. Business all over the world especially after September 11, 2001 (WTC was rocked) is entering a period of uncertainty and seemingly permanent volatility and turbulence. The explosive and accelerating power of the information, the so called digital revolution is where the emerging technologies are shattering individual, organizational and Governmental barriers, empowering the new players and completely rewriting the rules of the game for all the stakeholders. The wireless technology has rendered all the boundaries virtually irrelevant. The fiber optic technologies are breaking the boundaries within and among the companies, allowing small companies to compete with massive ones, and dictating the capital flows beyond the reach of even the most powerful governments. What's really scary is that the experts say that it is just a small fraction of the potential communication power of the new technologies has so far been placed in the hands of customers. Now wait and watch, until they get their hands on the rest.

Henceforth, the clarion call has become the Hobson's choice, where all the Indian Organizations should put on their thinking cap and inculcate these values if they want to sustain in the competitive global village. Since organizations across the globe are experimenting with different approaches to

improve the creation, capture storage, availability and utilization of most precious resources for dealing with the challenges of the 21st century. Henceforth, the HR professionals will have to play a very important role especially in the sub-continent and they must understand what wisdom or "intellectual human capital" is required and how it can be developed and managed in different cultures and conditions.

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