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## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS-INDIAN CULTURE

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### Introduction:

World is having different cultures such as African culture, European Culture, Arab culture and Indian culture. Each culture has special characteristics, which distinguishes it from other. These characteristic have been established during their existence for a long time and effect the working and behaviour and individual, groups and organizations. Indian culture is more than 5000 years in existence. *Thus, managers of the varied groups and organization need to know special characteristics of these i.e. culture in order to achieve desired objectives from individual or groups.* It has become al the more important for MNC and global technical education institutions to know the culture diversity of the countries to become successful in a global economic scenario and managing multinational human resources teams.

Studies of the success stories of South Korea, and Taiwan as well as USA, show the rule of culture in their success in global markets. *A harmonious alignment of management policies and practices with societal culture is an essential ingredient to bring out the best from people and provide them opportunity of leading happy and satisfying life.*

In this paper, attempt has been made to understand the concept of culture, its component, dimensions and relevance of Indian culture to health and productivity of educational institution and individual's fulfillment in life.

### Concept of Culture:

Culture is a basic attribute of society, a familiar concept, yet different to define. Some of the definitions used by sociologist and behaviour scientist are :

The sociologist define culture as the social heritage, all the knowledge, beliefs, customs and skills that are available to member of a society (3).

The grand total of all the objects, ideas, knowledge, ways of doing things habits, values and attitudes which each generation in a society passes on the next is what the anthropologist refers to as the culture of a group"(7).

The famous Dutch behavioural scientist, Geert Hofstede define culture" as the Collective mental programming of a people in a environment". His latter definition was "that culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group form another"(6).

According to Sir Edward Burnett Tylor culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society.

T. S. Eliot in his "Observation of Culture" argues that the basis of culture is religious beliefs. It is undeniably true that it is Christianity that forms the basis of European culture; in the

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same way that it is pre-eminence of Hindu is in India that gives to Indian culture its special characteristic.

### Key elements of Culture:

The components of the culture are :

- Value
- Beliefs
- Norms
- Symbols
- Languages

### Indian Culture:

The two most commonly accepted characteristic of Indian culture are continuity of Hindu religious beliefs and the hierarchical nature of social structure. Sardar Panikkar identifies what he calls; Outstanding facts of Indian culture. These are :

- Tradition of tolerance, adding to the richness and variety of human life.
- Sense of synthesis reflected in racial harmony, the primary institutions of the village and the family, sculpture, architecture, music and painting.
- Mode of worship, faith in democratic institution etc.
- Universal outlook as reflected in views such as 'The World is one family, the World is one nest'
- Philosophical outlook with its basis in the beliefs in unity of creation.
- Respect for the individual based on the philosophical equation of Atman and Brahman, the soul and the Oversoul.

India has old culture, which have functional (pro-democratic or pro-equity or positive aspects) as well as dysfunctional (non-work, non-equity)

characteristics. Uday Pareek stressed that culture of an organization can give it competitive advantage, provided it is rooted in the functional aspects of the country culture. This should be accompanied by the development of new functional values to keep the organization proactive, as well as to empower individual and team to achieve results.

Based on studies from historical, sociological and psychological perspectives, it is concluded that the following three cultural characteristics are widely shared by people in India:

- Personalized Relationships
- Familial Orientation
- Religious Orientation
- Love traditional method of learning and native language of communication.

### Organizational Culture:

Culture is a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization's members. These beliefs and expectations produce norms that shape the behaviour of both individuals and groups within an organization. Culture is usually long term-strategic, and difficult to change. It is rooted in beliefs and value. An organizational culture also represents the shared sense of the way we do things around here, a critical factor in guiding day-to-day behaviour and shaping a future course of action (2).

### Dimensions of Culture:

Robbins lists the following seven primary characteristics that capture the essence of an organization's culture (12).

- Innovation and risk taking
- Attention to detail
- Outcome orientation

- People orientation
- Aggressiveness
- Stability

Robbins identifies seven areas where culture impacts on the other factors as follows (12).

- Personality and national culture – For example the culture of a country affects the percent of citizens who believe life is preordained versus those who believe they can dominate their environment. (locus of control)
- Decision-making and culture-All kinds of culture difference affect they way people and organizations make decisions. Or example, autocratic versus collective decision-making.
- Values and culture – American children value individualism while Japanese children are indoctrinated to be team players.
- Motivation and culture – What a culture value will influence what is motivating.
- Cross-cultural communication – Cross-cultural factors clearly can create potential problems in communication.
- Leadership and Culture-Effective leaders adjust their style to the situation. Cultural differences are key factors in any situation.
- Negotiation and culture-Negotiating styles clearly vary across national cultures.

### **Culture in Educational Institution:**

The Culture in any organization revolves around the stakeholders namely its customers; employees; shareholder; suppliers and society as a whole. The entire organization gears for to fulfill the needs of all the stakeholders. The Vedic philosophy emphasized the same goal i.e. prosperity for all. The three key areas of culture

are : Shared Values; Beliefs; Behavioral Norms. The work culture is amalgamation of all factors due to which individuals project themselves to act and think in certain unique manner that is distinct from other organization.

Unfortunately in India, while building educational institution and programmes, the designers failed to take into accounts the cultural aspects, which are deep, rooted in country. If these are carefully understood and used, then it will lead to improve the employee health, well being, job satisfaction, efficiency and productivity, in turn influencing organizational climate; absenteeism and financial performance.

Management whose decisions on policy usually set up the culture of the organization usually sets it. The organizational culture usually has values and beliefs that support the organizational goals.

### **Some of the glaring omissions are:**

- Absence of role model ethics by the Chief Executive;
- Absence of role by 'Dharma' or righteous governance;
- Resistance to change the mind set for excellence;
- No value to take care of all stake holders
- Lack of team spurts
- Lack of awareness and emphasis on Indian culture & ethos and get influenced by Western culture.

### **Suggestion for Managing Culture Diversity:**

In India overwhelming pattern of allegiance is due to families, clan and ethnic groups. Within organization therefore, the Western assumption of purposive rationality, leading to commitment to organizational goals does not exist. Against this he extended family system is a wonderful

social security system in very uncertain environment. An individual in difficult situation can depend on the security system. Further, Muriethi recommends, use of family and community networks for improving conduct, compliance and performance on the job.

Indians prefer personalized relationship (while respecting hierarchy) over purely legal or contractual relationship. Hence a mere legal contract of working as an employee has little meaning for an Indian in terms of motivating him to work.

An average Indian harbors a strong belief in God. Fear of God is a part of the belief system.

While managing group of individual, the above cultural aspects need to be taken care. The parent like attitude in organization is preferred compared to task accomplishment. In good organization, family of employee also becomes a part of organization, whose need to also take care to have high EQ of the individual. This helps in making individual regular and fruitful to organization.

Higher level of religiosity is manifested in form of Yoga and meditation and achieving higher consciousness through Transcendental Meditation. These techniques are likely to unlock flow of cultural energy in Indians and keep them to lead a tension free life and do dharma without any desire of result.

In order to understand the local culture values, beliefs and norms, one should read literature; interact with people in society and to try to identify the values, beliefs and norms. While dealing with different culture groups one should try to accommodate to them at the same time remain aware of the culture he wants to bring from his own society.

The culture does change over time. Robbins suggests eight approaches to changing organizational cultures:

- Top management becomes role models for new cultures.

- Create new stones, symbols and rituals
- Select, promote, and support employees who espouse the new values.
- Redesign socialization process to align with new values.
- Change the reward system to support new values.
- Replace unwritten norms with formal rules and regulations strongly enforced.
- Work to get heap group consensus through employee participation.
- Shake up current subcultures by transfer and terminations.

In a present day global influence of media and working in MNC propagate instinct of aggression to ambition and advancement. Individualization takes over within families leading to selfishness. Those who outsmart other become heroes rather than those who share to heap build community spirit. Efforts should be made to continue with culture, which promote human values of the country.

It is therefore essential that educational institutions/industry/organization should identify their cleared culture values and make sustain efforts to preserve these. The head of the institution should become the role model for others and adopt strategic leadership in inculcating desired values in teachers and students for achieving goals.

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(Reference cont. from page No. 60)

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