



*International Journal Of*  
**Recent Scientific  
Research**

ISSN: 0976-3031

Volume: 7(1) January -2016

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN TODAY'S SCENARIO

Ghori A S K



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (IJRSR)  
<http://www.recentscientific.com/> [recentscientific@gmail.com](mailto:recentscientific@gmail.com)



ISSN: 0976-3031

Available Online at <http://www.recentscientific.com>

*International Journal of Recent Scientific Research*  
Vol. 7, Issue, 1, pp. 8139-8141, January, 2016

**International Journal  
of Recent Scientific  
Research**

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN TODAY'S SCENARIO

**Ghori A S K**

General Manager- HR with GMR Group, Bangalore

### ARTICLE INFO

#### *Article History:*

Received 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2015  
Received in revised form 21<sup>st</sup>  
November, 2015  
Accepted 06<sup>th</sup> December, 2015  
Published online 28<sup>st</sup>  
January, 2016

#### *Key words:*

Organisational culture, Power, Role,  
Task, Constructive, Passive,  
Aggressive

### ABSTRACT

This article discusses what the concept of Organizational culture is. How this can take shape in different forms revolving around Power, Role, Task and Person Culture. The aspect of Constructive, Passive and Aggressive Culture have been discussed. The concept of Bullying culture and fear has also been explored.

**Copyright © Ghori A S K., 2015**, this is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

## INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is a fantastic concept worth investing, one's time in studying and understanding it. Different organisations have different cultures.

According to Needle (2004) ,”Organisational culture represents the collective values, beliefs and principles of organizational members’ and is a product of such factors as History, Product, Market, Technology, Strategy, Type of employees, Management Style and National Culture”<sup>1</sup>.

Understanding the concept of culture involves also studying some models or types of culture to make it more practical and applicable.

Let us look at a basic concept given by Handy<sup>2</sup> and Harrison<sup>3</sup> which are hinting at four types of cultures which are explained below

### *Power Culture*

This culture concentrates at an individual or a small group with control radiating, from the centre like a web. This type of culture needs few rules and little bureaucracy. This is more of a concentrated form of culture which revolves around a person

or group of persons, who run the system and the culture that flows is dominated by the individual's behaviour, beliefs and values. This is quite prevalent in dictatorial set ups and businesses which are controlled by Monopoly or Oligopoly. Many Cartels and Mafia are known to run in this way.

### *Role culture*

This culture is more like the Roman building having pillars. The pillars represent the functional departments. The Procedures are respected and strict role descriptions and authority definitions are clear. The control is from the person occupying a particular role and not due to the person or his/her charisma. The scope for expert power does not exist.

The organisations which demonstrate this model are typical hierarchical bureaucracies and the authority is delegated within a definite structure. This culture is seen in governmental agencies, Public Sectors, Armed forces and some private organisations run by strong policies, procedures, rules, policies which are very well defined and implemented in day to day functioning.

### *Task culture*

Here the organisation believes in having specialised teams which have the acumen and experience to take the best decision

\*Corresponding author: **Ghori A S K**  
General Manager- HR with GMR Group, Bangalore

as they have specialists, who can form a small team which can help in executing the task. These may also have reporting lines that are multiple, as seen in the matrix structure.

This culture is basically a culture, where there is a decentralisation and authority and decisions lie with a group of specialists, constituted to perform tasks and ensure closure of activities. This culture is where the leadership believes in relying on specialism and go by the philosophy that a specialist knows more about this job and a team of specialists would also give different perspectives and makes the decision more democratic.

Organisations that gain success due to team work and specialist knowledge of tasks or organisations that need to collaborate rely on this. They are organisations who rely on synergy among specialist. This can happen in a few high-end research and defence projects. Also special projects and new lines of ideas when explored commercially would rely on this culture.

### **Person Culture**

This culture comes in when individuals start behaving in a manner where they start believing, themselves to be superior to the organisation. In some organisations, where the charisma of the leader and his specialisation plays a great deal and brand selling works, these kinds of organisations prosper. This is also very common in family owned business and some start-up companies. Though this culture may be against the concept of organisations, where like-minded people get together to achieve the organisational goals and objectives.

It may be difficult for organisations to continue to operate this way, where the culture is more conservative and formal but does go on in smart new set ups and some research concerns also.

The above four ways of cultures focus at how the organisation is run, how the leadership behaves and the way the culture is shaped around them.

There are also a different way of viewing the organisational culture and making an inventory of it in twelve different behavioural norms into three types of culture given by Robert A. Cooke<sup>4</sup>.

### **The three types of cultures are**

1. Constructive Cultures in which members are encouraged to interact with people and approach tasks in ways, that help them meet their higher -order satisfaction needs.
2. Passive/Defensive cultures in which members believe they must interact with people in ways that will not threatened their own security.
3. Aggressive/defensive cultures in which members are expected to approach tasks in forceful ways to protect their status and security.

#### **1. Constructive Culture**

This is one of the most sort after cultures in today's organisational world. A culture which believes in healthy

interaction among individuals and freedom to share ideas, discuss issues, exchange information and come to innovative solutions. The liberty to do things is encouraged and if this is not done, then employees feel stifled and not allowed to speak their minds, added to the fact that they feel neglected. Employees may not directly complain to their superiors but definitely tend to crib, with peers on the treatment being meted to them and the organisational environment. Lack of a constructive culture can also lead to demotivation. The key features of a constructive culture are

**Achievement:** Employees working in a constructive environment tend to achieve more and are able to complete the targets and achieve, the goals for which they were hired thereby contributing to organisational goals and vision.

**Self- Actualizing:** Though this concept is also close to the Maslow's need hierarchy level and is a state where the employee seems to have achieved the lower needs and wants and is quite motivated and is able to realise his full potential. Work and more importantly, the environment helps and aides he/she in achieving this, without complaining and cribbing because he/she crossed these hurdles, as a result of organisational culture built around him which is very constructive.

**Encouragement:** The environment that is constructive provides natural encouragement to deliver the best and strive hard for furthering the image of the organisation. Employees are naturally motivated to achieve more as they are constantly acknowledged and good work recognised.

**Affiliative:** An affiliative culture is always more as a family. Unnecessary conflicts and disputes are avoided and the work ambience is more towards, promoting a positive environment. Everybody feels affiliated to the work environment and in everything together and have a strong belongingness to the organisation.

#### **2. Passive Culture**

This culture as the name suggests is quite passive, with the employee though in the heart of heart, does not accept the way the organisation is expecting them to do things which may not necessarily be right. But they tend to do it the way to please the superiors and make his/her place safe and superior. The employees also, tend to the follow the rules and regulations just to save their jobs. The main characteristics are

**Approval:** There is an excessive importance of taking approval at every stage. Employees hardly have an opportunity to do anything on their own and need the superiors' approval on any new idea or even on routine things.

**Conventional:** The behaviour of employees is quite conventional and in line with the prescribed norm, behaviour expected and the rules and regulations of the organisation

**Dependent:** The employees are heavily dependent on the superior's instruction, approval and instructions. There is hardly any scope for freedom of expression or experimentation of anything different. Subordinates are

hardly toe the line that has been set by the superiors for anything better and different.

**Avoidance:** Employees tend to ignore their own interests, motivation elements, satisfaction parameters and are only in the process of acting according to organisational policies and procedures.

**Aggressive Culture:** This is an environment that is characteristic of employees, continuously in competition with each other. The organisation promotes this culture, so that each, out-performs the other. Employees seeking the assistance of colleagues is considered to be incompetent and lacking the required competencies or performance standards. Each is in the struggle to win appreciation, attention and snatch power.

The key features of aggressive culture are

### **Opposition**

This system tends to make colleagues cynical and critical at times, as each one is competing with the other and wants, his/her need of security to be made. Colleagues are found to question each other's work and are more interested in pointing flaws, to indirectly show their work in good light. Healthy competition and challenge tends to give better products and services, but in this case this could be more counter-productive and demonstrates an aggressive culture.

### **Power**

This is a norm based on the need to influence and control others, added to the need of prestige that goes along with it. There is also a dictatorial tendency also seen and the individuals perceive their importance based on controlling others.

### **Competitive**

This is another norm based on an individual, seeking appraisal and recognition from others. The need for status is derived from out-performing others. This is quite a common style seen in employees, where the culture is tilted towards an aggressive one.

### **Perfectionistic**

This norm is based on doing things, without any scope for finding fault and employees, who practise perfectionism, are always focussed on details and are quick to find flaws and expect them and those who work with them to be the same. These employees equate their self-worth in attaining, high standards of work and being the best. Moving from Roberts work let us look at another interesting culture called as Bullying culture<sup>5</sup> and Culture of Fear<sup>6</sup>

### **Bullying culture**

This is an interesting culture in which bullying may be prevalent in organisations, where managers tend to use abusive and bullying behaviour to their juniors. The bullying can take a top to bottom approach and is considered to be quite normal

and acceptable. Though when this happens at the top, it is little weird to watch, especially in the board room and may threaten the productivity of the organisation<sup>7</sup>. This may happen irrespective of the status or rank and is an organisation culture, which flows from seniors to juniors and the targeted supervisors may off load, their own aggression on their subordinates. This type of culture is very common in Line functions and where command and control<sup>8</sup> is the way things operate.

### **Culture of Fear**

This is a culture that develops when bullying is rampant and managers involving in this get away with it. The other reason this normally happens is when autocratic leadership exists and complete authoritarian way of administration, discussions and conflict resolution is resorted to. The psychological reason could be with respect to the partial or intermittent negative reinforcement that creates this<sup>9</sup>. The tyrannical style of leadership also is a reason to cause work place fear<sup>10</sup>.

The Bullying and culture of fear is another facet of modern day cultures which are an extreme by themselves. But being aware of this and the reason behind this, helps a great deal in understanding the psyche behind this and the apparent loss to organisational stability and wellbeing. Not to mention the HR issues that it could create and a negative picture, the prevalent organisational culture portrays to the world outside. Though the aspects of Culture mentioned here are just some prominent things, that come out in a review of the organisation culture and not definitely exhaustive. The purpose is just to trigger some concepts, which are very realistic in today's world and yesterday's experience would hopefully help in creating a wiser tomorrow.

## **References**

- Needle, David (2004). *Business in Context: An Introduction to Business and Its Environment*
- Handy, Charles B. (1976) *Understanding Organizations*, Oxford University Press
- Harrison, Roger (1972) *Understanding your organization's character*, Harvard Business Review
- Robert A Cooke, *Handbook of Organisational Culture and Climate*, 2013
- Salin D, Helge H "Organizational Causes of Workplace Bullying" in *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory, Research, and Practice* (2010)
- Kogan Page *The Psychology of Fear in Organizations: How to Transform Anxiety into Well-being, Productivity and Innovation* Paperback – February 28, 2015
- Dr. Lindle Hatton, *Elements of an Entrepreneurial Culture*, College Of Business Administration, California State University, Sacramento
- Richard E. Hayes *Power to the Edge: Command and Control in the Information Age* (Information Age Transformation Series) Kindle Edition
- Braiker, Harriet B. (2004). Who's Pulling Your Strings ? How to Break The Cycle of Manipulation*
- Petty tyranny in organizations, Ashforth, Blake, *Human Relations*, Vol. 47 (1994)

T.SSN 0976-3031



9 770976 303009 >