A Study on Organizational Culture at Rane Brake Lining Ltd. (RBL), Tiruchirappalli

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Abstract

Organization Culture is a custom or ethnicity that is invariably followed in each organization. Culture cannot be altered or changed as it is broad and wide, spread and adopted across the establishment. It does not have particular strategic focus and varies from one organization to another and depends upon the way things are done around. It is deemed to be a course that is learned through socialization process and metamorphosis according to the standards of the concern. This study focuses on various determinants that influence culture within an organization. The objective of this study is to scrutinize the attributes that influence culture in an organization, how they develop shared meanings and norms within the organization and to instigate a conducive and congenial working environment. A range of characteristics of culture were considered, making use of the questionnaire. Relevant data were collected from shop floor employees applying lottery method in simple random sampling making a sample size of 40. Each variant was measured using a five-point Likert scale. The number of points awarded to a particular cultural type determines the strength of the culture and higher the score, the more dominant is the culture type. It was found through this study that RBL had management support, direction from top management, workers enjoyed self-identity within the organization, rapid and consistent communication flow. Thus, these taps on as the dominant cultures while an individual's initiative and the significance between their accomplishments and reward were seen to be inadequate.

Keywords

Organizational Culture, characteristics, dominant culture

Introduction

Every organization's work environment is built upon the unique organization's culture which arises out from a varied cause by means of interaction, experience, family backgrounds, education and so on. It is a set of values, behaviors, beliefs,

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morals, law, custom and other capabilities that vary from each and every organization. Each organization adopts its own set of habits for carrying out a specific set of task. A robust organization culture gives direction to the employees and the management to understand the ways things is being done around. Strong cultures are usually characterized by dedication and co-operation in the service of common good and values. Therefore, the involvement of an employee in an organization must be clearly recognized. This also provides stability to an organization. It is widely accepted that organizational culture is defined as the deeply rooted values and beliefs that are shared by members in an organization (Sun, 2008). An organization to be lucrative must be embedded with strong and resilient cultures that are attractive, holding and rewarding in accomplishing results.

Organizational culture has its ability to execute and to work in accordance to its vision and mission statements so as to achieve its objective which becomes its standard. Sometimes, culture tends to be unfavorable and unhealthy. In such a case, it faces certain difficulties like –

- Inability to attract and retain quality people
- People not working together
- Apathy and lack of enthusiasm for the business
- Quality and service challenges
- Lack of initiative and responsibility (Leadership + Teams + Culture, n.d.)
- Culture as a concept has had a long and checkered history. It has been used by the layman as a word to indicate sophistication, as when we say that someone is very "cultured". It has been used by anthropologists to refer to the customs and rituals that societies develop over the course of their history (Novac & Iulia., 2014). Adopted values and principles of an organization has its impact on the working conditions and behaviours of people therein. In the managerial literature, there is often the implication that having a culture is necessary for effective performance, and that stronger the culture, the more effective the organization (Schein, 2004).

The prevailing culture in a company also fosters growth and development of an organization. It instigates to the augmentation of internal integration, to facilitate staying together with unique identity, management support and encouraging individual responsibility. The external adaptation is another feature that defines a culture by means of dealing with its customers and suppliers in a way to accomplish their goals and objectives minimizing failures.

Literature Review

Jarad *et al.* (2010) identified the relationship link between the organization culture and performance with four different dimensions of Hofstede, that determines the organizational culture:

- **Power distance** - People with less power accepts that the power is not equally distributed

- **Uncertainty avoidance** - Employee being threatened in the work environment due to certain beliefs.
- **Individualism/ collectivism** - Involvement of individuals or collectively as a group with the organization.
- **Masculinity/Feminity** – Defining the roles of both the sex, so that gender discrimination can be avoided.

Ismat *et al.* (2011) in their study investigated that the basic determinants of culture that contribute to differentiate culture of export based textile organizations from one another. Different factors like degree of frankness, language, attire, working hours, work experience, activities, infrastructure, procrastination, group orientation and organizational behavior were identified and their degree of contribution to culture has been examined. Mean, bi-variate, multi-variate and Pearson correlation were used to evaluate the intensity of cultural determinants. The researchers in their study had set the hypotheses as less significant for attire and language and have also found that open communication and management style has affected the intensity of cultural determinants. Thus, it can be inferred that factors like performance and work behavior have been influencing various culture in the organization. Similarly, there has been certain elements that also investigated the culture in an organization.

Olu Ojo (2012) has made through a study on the 'Influence of Organizational Culture on employee work behavior'. The objective of the study was to ascertain the influence that organizational culture had on employee work behavior and to formulate recommendations regarding organizational culture and employee work behavior. The researcher has advanced three hypotheses:

- Organizational culture has a significant influence on employee work behavior.
- Organizational culture has a significant influence on organizational productivity.
- A change in organizational culture will cause a change in employee work behavior. The survey research method was done using stratified and simple random method of sampling technique.

The study arrived at a conclusion where it has shown that norms, values, traditions, assumptions and belief influences employee work behavior.

Organizational Culture – A conceptual overview

Culture of an organization is actually learnt through a few mediators who mentor and give shape to the systems of values, beliefs and assumptions and those moderators become the seniors or the leaders of that organization. It has been found (Robbins, 2013) that culture can be transmitted in four different ways such as Stories- ethical stories that inspire and helps to understand how things are to be done in an organization, rituals- activities that are done on frequent basis and that which becomes one of the values, material symbols – a measured scale of importance giving on things like attire worn, size of offices, elegance of furnishing that expresses its importance to the employee, language - plays a

dominant role in differentiating the members of culture or subculture and also a specialized language builds unity among its members.

Schein (2006) identifies three levels of culture, artifacts -visible elements in a culture (eg. furniture, dress code, logos, slogans), espoused beliefs and values. It is how the members represent the organization both to themselves and to others and basic underlying assumptions- granted behaviors which are usually unconscious, but constitute the essence of culture.

Uncovering the Levels of Culture
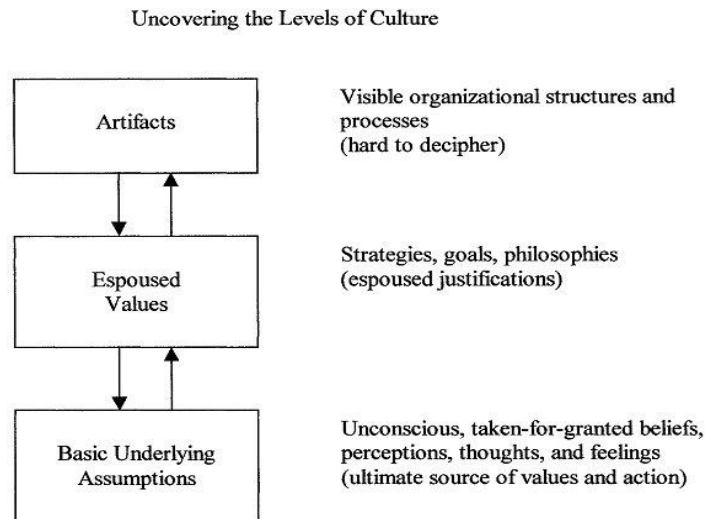
Source: (*Organizational Culture*, Edgar H. Schein, 2006)

A strong and a weak culture can be differentiated conveniently and this has become quite popular in the latest scenario. A strong culture prevails in an organization where the core values are extremely adhered to and are diversely adopted. While it is not felt so in a weak culture and have a very little impact on the members' behaviours.

For an organization to show its epic value, it needs to concentrate on building a culture that gives it recognition of goodwill and fame. They are to be created with vision that matches with the ideology and customs of that organization. According to Robbins (2013), founders create culture in three ways; through employee selection, socialization- enable them for parallel thinking and feeling and modeling – acts as a role model to its employees.

Once the culture is formed in an organization and has been made firm, it needs to be prolonged for reaching its accomplishments that were desired by the founders. This is one of the most crucial tasks that an organization undertakes so as to give its employees a set of experience. These practices start up with the selection process, performance evaluation criteria, training and developmental activities and promotional procedures.

Research Methodology

The major objectives of the study are:

- To analyze the management's support in risk taking of employees,
- To study the self-directed behaviours of the workers,
- To understand the employee's feeling of their importance at workplace, and
- To know the employee's awareness of communication in a working environment.

Sampling

The Rane Brake Lining Ltd. (RBL), Tiruchirappalli has a total population of 69 permanent workers at lower level. As the company permitted to use only sample survey method, the researcher has identified the respondents through simple random procedure using lottery method. Sample size was 40. Data was collected using self-prepared questionnaire in English and translated in Tamil for the convenience of the respondents. A pre-test was conducted for 10 respondents and removed due to incomplete answers to the queries. The researcher then arrived at a final sample size of 40.

Results and Discussions

Management Support

The survey has found that the management has revealed good faith to its workers as nearly two third of workers (70%) have expressed that managers give support for extra efforts and activities they put in. Being so, the management has assured them about its support and endurance thereby encouraging the workers towards the personal upliftment and growth of the organization at large. An average of 11.47 (55% approx.) deem it that, superiors communicate a clear picture of the task they are to perform. Employees (42.5%) suppose that management understand the problems that are faced by the workers in their jobs and this makes them to take up challenging jobs as shown in Table-1.

Table 1: Management Support

Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Superiors communicate the task	0	0	7.5	55.0	37.5
Managers give support for extra efforts and activities	0	0	12.5	70.0	17.5
I can count on my management during problem	0	0	22.5	62.5	15.0
Management understands the problem	2.5	12.5	27.5	42.5	15.0
Supervisor supports the subordinates	0	12.5	32.5	40.0	15.0

Direction

The researcher has come across a scenario where 77.5% of employees are self-empowered, believing in honesty and doing the right things for their customers and thus requires less of mentoring by their supervisors. Respondents (50%) have showed that the vision, mission and objective statements of the organization are vividly upheld. An average of 11.93 of employees do not have the necessity to be tracked on since they suppose that their performance is in accordance with the expected standard of the company. It is proved that 55% of respondents had strongly agreed that they abide by the ethical standards of the organization and community. Furthermore, it has also been found that 32.5% of the workers are not aware of their objectives which exhibit their irresponsibility and lethargy which counts on their culture and attitude in the work spot as shown in Table-2.

Table 2: Direction

Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Vision, mission & objectives are communicated	0	0	32.5	50.0	17.5
Aware of the customers	0	0	2.5	32.5	65.0
Aware of the customers tend to be	0	0	0	40.0	60.0
Keeps ethical standards	0	5.0	2.5	37.5	55.0
Supervisor has rapport with subordinates	0	7.5	20.0	47.5	25.0
Honour our commitments	0	7.5	27.5	42.5	22.5
Believe in honesty	0	0	2.5	20.0	77.5
Performance is according to the standard expectation	0	0	2.5	47.5	50.0

Identity

Identity is another factor that determines the culture in an organization which has enabled to get a stint on the attitude of top management whereby 50% of employees feel that management treats them with respect. The study also reveals that 60% of respondents had felt the recognition for outperforming works they accomplish thus establishing a sense of belonging towards work goals. When the views of workers are taken into consideration they feel restored, respected and recognized. Analyzing the constituents, the survey found 52% of employees feel that their opinions are taken into account at work (Table-3).

Table 3: Identity

Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Outperforming works are recognized	0	0	25.0	60.0	15.0
Management treats with respect	2.5	5	12.5	50.0	30.0
Accomplishments are identified	5.0	0	27.5	40.0	27.5
Opportunities are provided	0	5	17.5	55.0	22.5
Employee opinions are considered	0	5	22.5	52.5	20.0

Communication Flow

As shown in Table 4, the researcher has found that more than half of the employees (65%) get most of the information from co-workers and also information is received from the managers simultaneously, which shows that the flow of communication is concurrent. Therefore, this avoids supervision from top management and thus reducing the traditional flow in communication. The researcher has also inferred that more than one third of the workers feel comfortable in sharing their ideas with their immediate supervisors and that they are frequently communicated to the top management.

Table 4: Communication Flow

Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Most information comes from manager	0	5	17.5	65.0	12.5
Most information comes from co-workers	0	5	15.0	65.0	15.0
Feel comfortable in sharing ideas	2.5	0	30.0	47.5	20.0
Ideas are frequently passed to top management	0	5	42.5	42.5	10.0

Suggestions

From the study, the researcher has found that there are certain dominant cultures, sub-cultures, strong and weak culture that decide upon the culture that is predominantly prevailing in the organization. There are certain cultures which, according to the researcher, if inculcated by the organization, would support its growth and development bringing about a positive change within and outside the organization. The following are few suggestions that could be considered:

1. Subordinates feel encouraged and determined towards achieving the goals of their organization when they are confident that their supervisor supports them from around the corner. As it is well known that, the culture is influenced by top management; it is always wanted of it to understand the difficulties encountered by the workers and hold them by a means, to support them. One of the principles of organization is scalar chain principle, that is, the flow of authority should be from top to bottom. The direction for doing a task has to come from the immediate supervisors to avoid confusion and chaos.

2. Keeping up a promise is an obligated task to do. But, to honour those will light up on the values not only on an individual but also to the organization. Supervisor and subordinates will have to ensure an intended rapport between them for a smooth and unbiased work environment. Any achievement has a motivating factor behind it. Similarly, in an organization; a hard and effective worker needs to be identified for their triumph in the organization. A worker has to be recognized regardless of his work position and give him the chance of putting forth his ideas and suggestions at ease. It is also to be remembered that these workers have better ideas that is worth from any other consultant.

Conclusion

The study on organizational culture has indeed made it possible for the researcher to understand and get to know about the factors that are determining the culture in Rane Brake Lining Ltd. in a way; it will enable the company also to get familiar with its prevailing dominant cultures.

The inference of this study indicates that, on an average the employees have a better individual responsibility, effectively solve problems, managers coordinate and integrate in the process of leading and decision making, adequate knowledge is offered to the employees about the organization, the top management is trustworthy, that the reliable information and directives sent to the lower level. The study also construes that the employees require management support, a proper channel of communication while passing information, a strong and consistent bond between the superiors and the subordinates as well as the monetary benefits are also to be improved.

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