

Organizational Culture and HRM Implication on Organizational Performance: A Conceptual Analysis with Empirical Cases

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***Abstract:** Organisational culture reflects the characteristics of an organisation and an employee as an individual. Both organisation and individual have a positive role on organisational performance. This study has identified the linkage between organisational culture and Human Resource Management (HRM). Various forms of HRM practices such as knowledge-sharing, trust, common rule, team-building, coordination and communication, equal treatment, mission and vision are part of organisation culture; and through better understanding of HRM and its practices one may easily understand the culture that prevails over an organisation.*

Introduction:

Organisational culture has received much attention in the last two decades due to its potential impact on organisational success. Many research works have been conducted on it and consultants have cited the concept of organisational culture, and how values, beliefs and philosophy guide employees' behaviour within the organisation towards better performance for the organisation (Rashid A., et al. 2003). However, the term 'culture' and 'organisation' were used in combination; the term 'culture' had been defined in various ways, particularly by the anthropologists. But the culture of an organisation or a firm is a customary and traditional way of thinking that could be shared among its members. The culture of an organisation refers to the norms, values, beliefs, and way of behaving that combine a group and individuals to make the organisation successful (Brown A., 1998).

Effective HRM practices are the prerequisites to make an organisation successful. HRM functions are concerned with organizational profit and overall effectiveness. In brief, HRM practices play a major role in ensuring organisational survival and prosperity. Pfeffer (1998, Delaney and Huselid, 1996) identified a bundle of HRM practices that have a link

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with performance or outcome. In fact, the role of HRM is to make an organisation effective by some means that include helping organisation towards achieving its goal and enhancing ability of the workforce. It opens avenues to motivate employees through training and fulfilling employees satisfaction by means of self actualization, maintaining quality of work life, communicating HRM policy to all employees and so on (Ivancevich, 2001).

Jackson and Schuler (1995) reviewed that HRM and organizational culture are not separate; they are integrated with internal (technology, size, structure, and strategy) and external (labor market, unionization, national culture) factors. Both internal and external factors have to be considered in order to understand HRM in a better way.

2.0 Objectives

The objective of this study is to identify the theoretical issues surrounding organisational culture and human resource management. The specific objective of this study is to identify the positive linkage between organisational culture and HRM implications on organisational performance.

3.0 Conceptual Framework

3.1 Definition of Organisational Culture

In the above description, an overview has been provided about culture and organisational culture. It has been widely agreed that organisational culture refers to a system of shared meanings held by the members and differs from organisation to organisation. According to Stephen Robbins (2003), organisational culture has seven characteristics that, in aggregate, capture the essence of an organisation.

- i) Innovation and risk taking: The degree to which employees are encouraged to be innovative and risk driven.
- ii) Attention to detail: The degree to which employees are expected to exhibit precision, analysis, and attention to details.
- iii) Outcome orientation: The degree to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and processes used to achieve outcomes.
- iv) People orientation: The degree to which management decisions are

taken into consideration of the effect of outcomes on people within the organisation.

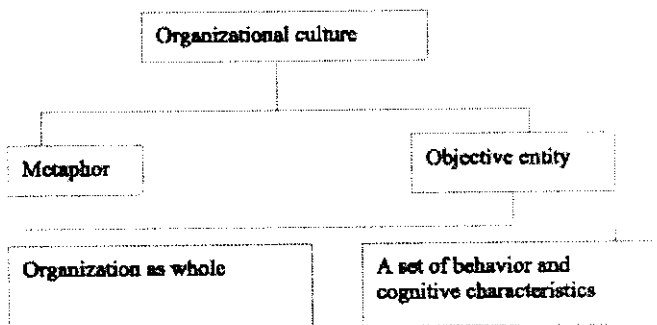
- v) Team orientation: The degree to which work activities are organised around teams rather than individuals.
- vi) Aggressiveness: The degree to which people are aggressive and competitive rather than easygoing.
- vii) Stability: The degree to which organisational activities emphasise on maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth.

By evaluating the above seven characteristics a composite picture of organisational culture is noticed . However, this picture also shows of the shared understanding among members of the organisation.

According to Scholz, "corporate culture is the implicit, invisible, intrinsic and informal consciousness of the organisation which guides the behavior of the individuals and shapes their behavior as well (Rashid A.. et al.. 2003)." According to Schein, culture is a pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered or developed by a given group. It guides the group how to cope with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration.. Therefore, it is to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel (Siengthai S., 2007)."

Analyzing the above definitions of culture, it is, therefore, understood that there is a fundamental distinction among the definitions. However, to have a clear understanding about what culture is, the following figure is of great importance.

Figure-1: Classifying Definitions of Organisational Culture



Source: Andrew Brown (1998), 'Organisational Culture'

3.2 Types of Organisational Culture

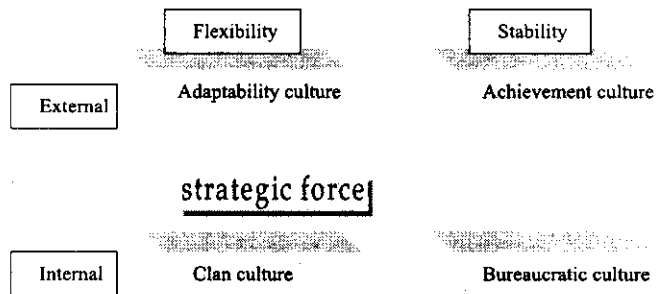
Cultural values are of great importance for an organisation. Executives or top managers consider values as company's external environment as well as the company's strategies, goals and objectives. According to research studies there are four categories of culture. These categories may be illustrated in the following manner;

Adaptability culture: It requires quick response and high-risk decision making. Here, managers encourage those values that support company's ability to detect new behavioural responses. Nevertheless, employees have autonomy to take decisions and act freely to meet new needs. According to this pattern, customer's demand is highly valued. The best example is a fashion firm, cosmetic company and also electronic company.

Achievement culture: This culture is concerned for serving specific customers in the external environment that needs flexibility and change in particular.

Clan culture: This type of culture has an internal focus on the involvement and participation of employees to rapidly meet changing needs of the environment. This culture places high value to the employees. According to this culture, an organisation is characterized as a caring, family-like institute. Managers emphasise on values like cooperation as highly important for both employees and customers, and try to avoid status differences.

Figure-2: Types of Organisational Culture



Source: Richard L. Daft (2003), Management

Bureaucratic culture: This is the final category of organisational culture. The bureaucratic culture is found in public sector organisations. But this culture is more or less nurtured in every public or private organisation. The organisation which practices bureaucratic culture is very much rule oriented and rigid in nature.

As a matter of fact, organisational performance depends on its culture. It has been agreed by the researchers that clan organization is the best to bringing success for an organisation as well as meeting employees' satisfaction. But still today, public sector organisations continue to emphasise more on bureaucratic or hierarchical organisational culture.

3.3 Environment and Culture

Over the years, business has undergone tremendous changes. These changes could be understood by external and internal factors. External and internal factors can be described as follows:

External organisational environment: External factors include elements that exist outside the boundary of the organisation and have the potential to affect the organisation. The external environment includes competitors, resources, technology, and economic conditions that influence greatly on the effectiveness of an organisation. External environment can be conceptualised as both general and task environments. General environment includes social, demographic, and economic factors that influence every organisation. On the other hand, task environment includes those elements required to conduct day-to-day transactions within the organisation and directly influences its operations and performance as well. It considers competitors, suppliers and customers (Draft L., 2003).

Internal environment: Organisation has also an internal environment. It includes all the elements within the organisation's boundaries.

In fact, organisational performance is influenced by both internal and external factors. In the competitive world these factors need to be considered by the employers to bring organisation's success.

Assumptions, values, and beliefs are also elements of organisational culture. Assumptions represent the deepest part of organisational culture because they are invisible and often taken for granted. These elements, whether visible or invisible, are essential for better performance of an organisation.

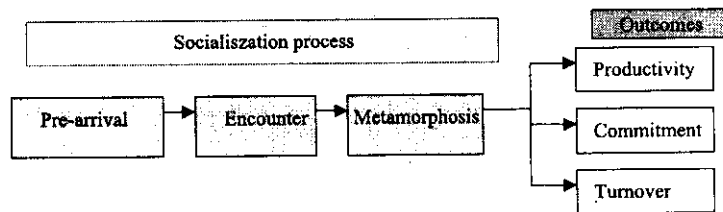
3.5 Functions of culture

Within the organization, culture plays significant functions. Firstly, it has a boundary defining role that creates distinctions between one organisation to the other. Secondly, it conveys a sense of identity for members of an organisation. Thirdly, culture facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than self interest. Fourthly, it enhances the stability of the social system. This social system provides appropriate standard for the employees. Finally, culture serves as a sense making and control mechanism and guides and shapes the attitudes and behavior of the employees (Robbins S., 2003). Culture is a supportive element for the employees to associate with organisational commitment. Organisation culture can make the employees efficient and increase their work life (Sue B., 2004).

3.6 Forms of organisational culture

Culture is derived from the philosophy of organisation's founder. The sustainability of culture is depended on how employees are socialised. Nevertheless, culture within the organisation also depends on top management and selection criteria for new employees. From the given figure it would be easily understood how culture is formed within the organisation.

Figure-3: Socialisation Model

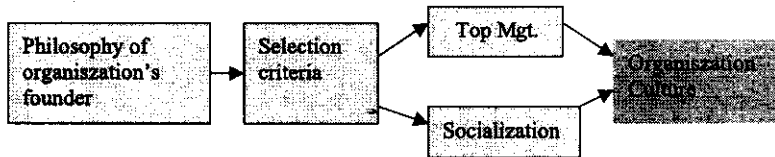


Source: Robbins P. Stephen, (2003), organizational Behavior, pp 533-675.

Figure-3 shows that successful metamorphosis has a positive impact on a new employee's productivity and his/her commitment towards organisation reduces the possibility to leave the organisation. It has a long term impact on organisational sustainability. On the other hand, figure 5 shows how employees are to be socialised. It depends on the tasks of top management. It is the duty and role of top manager to socialise new employees. This process encompasses recruitment, selection and

orientation with the organisation to familiarise the new employees with organisation culture.

Figure-4: Formation of Culture



Source: Robbins P. Stephen, (2003), organizational Behavior, pp 535-675.

4.0 Methodology

This study is based on secondary source of data, and has considered some cases to understand the organisation culture and human resource management implications on organisational performance. Besides, this study has consulted various books, journals and websites. Three empirical cases have critically been analysed on the basis of conceptual orientation to find out the impacts of organisational culture and human resource management on organisational performance.

5.0 Theoretical cases analysis: Some good practices on organisational culture and organisational performance

5.1 Case A: Motorola Case: Seeking Direction

[Until the mid 1990s, Motorola Inc., world famous for its six Sigma quality control program (Schemerhorn et al., 2005), was an early success story in the computer/electronics age. Motorola was known in Wall Street as American Icon. Motorola had moved from being a decentralised but integrated, narrowly focused electronics firm at \$3 billion sales in 1980 to being a decentralised and disintegrated broad portfolio firm at \$30 billion in sales in 2001. Motorola had been one of the world's leading providers of wireless communications, semiconductors, electronic systems, components, and services. Its cellular phone, analog equipment and pager products were identified among the very best in the mid 1990s. However, increased competition, the Asian economic crisis and its short-sighted failure to quickly and fully embrace the digital revolution tarnished its operating results and image. In the April 2004, Business week reported that Motorola ranked 308 of the top 500 companies of the S&P 500, with 3 F grades and 3 D grades out of 8 categories. The question arises: what can Motorola do to return to its former high-performance ways and what can new CEO Ed Zander do to change in the recent record of failures, intra company turf battles and over sights?]

Motorola Case synthesis

In this case, cultural changes did not appear in the organisation. Why was the Motorola not performing better after the 90s? In fact, the consequences were not evaluated by the top management and external factors were not taken into consideration for better organisational performance. In the faster world business is changing on a day to day basis. Innovation creates a high demand for customers. Customers always look for quality goods. Motorola had overlooked the benchmarking and failed to measure customers' satisfaction. CEO was failed to evaluate both the markets and the customers.

5.2 Case B

A is an independent international group which specialises in processing of metals from ingot to foil and associated products. At the time of the study, A employed approximately 420 people. The introduction of a performance measurement system was part of a larger programme to improve the capability of the company to continually meet the economic value add (EVA) targets required by the group. The general manager (GM1), who initiated the programme, had an autocratic management style and saw performance measurement as a means of measuring and monitoring the contribution of his managers in achieving their objectives i.e., command and control. The two area managers (AM1 and AM2) had provided monthly reports with means of performance measurement to discuss at monthly management team meetings. It took a great deal of staff time to compile these reports and the provided information were inaccurate and out of date. Meetings would degenerate into discussing the data accuracy and relevance rather than focusing on improvement activity. Consequently, this initial attempt to instill a process of CI, based on performance measurement, was deemed to be a failure.

The general manager was promoted to a group role and replaced by a new general manager (GM2). The new general manager was very IT-literate and numerate and had a democratic management style. He had come from a part of the group in which monthly reports were based on graphs and charts illustrating the process capability of the operations. He requested that all information be presented in the same format on an intranet-based PMS that could be accessed at management team meetings. This was done and the information was used at meetings to identify processes that needed resources and focused on CI team activity to improve process capability. The new general manager insisted (authoritative) that all

critical performance information should be on the system and nobody should be attending management meetings with other performance information. His view was that, it is so important and they should all see it on the shared system.

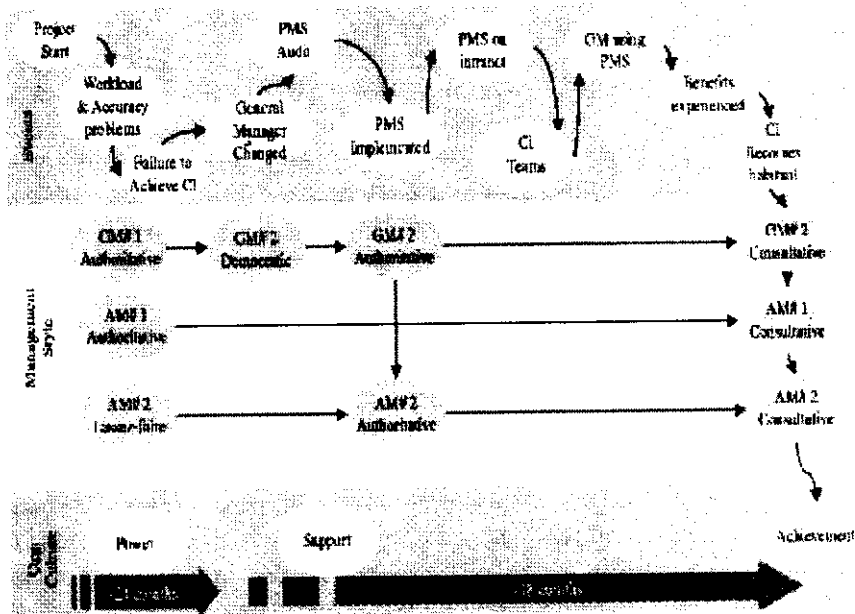
The area managers had to change their individual management styles to accommodate this new open, visual and consultative style adopted by the new general manager. They needed to direct and encourage the CI teams in their own areas in a similar manner and participate in structured and systematic process improvements. Over an 18 month period, this fact-based consultative management, focused on CI, changed the culture of the whole organisation from a support culture to an achievement culture. The net effect of this was that A became one of the best performing units within the group.

Case B: synthesis

The command and control oriented management style of the first general manager created a power culture and his autocratic management style created a degree of fear and resentment within the organisation. In contrast, the democratic style of the second general manager came across as a shock to the organisation. For a while, the organisation did not know how to cope with this new management style. However, through support and, where necessary, adoption of an authoritative management style, the second general manager and his managers were successful in implementing an integrated PMS that was used at all levels of the organisation and in its daily business (figure 6).

The PMS, once in place and in use, was supported by a consultative management style at all levels. Its use to drive CI led to significant performance improvements. Elated with these levels of success, people wanted more of the same and gradually moved towards an achievement culture.

Figure-5: The interplay between performance measurement, organisational culture and management style in case B

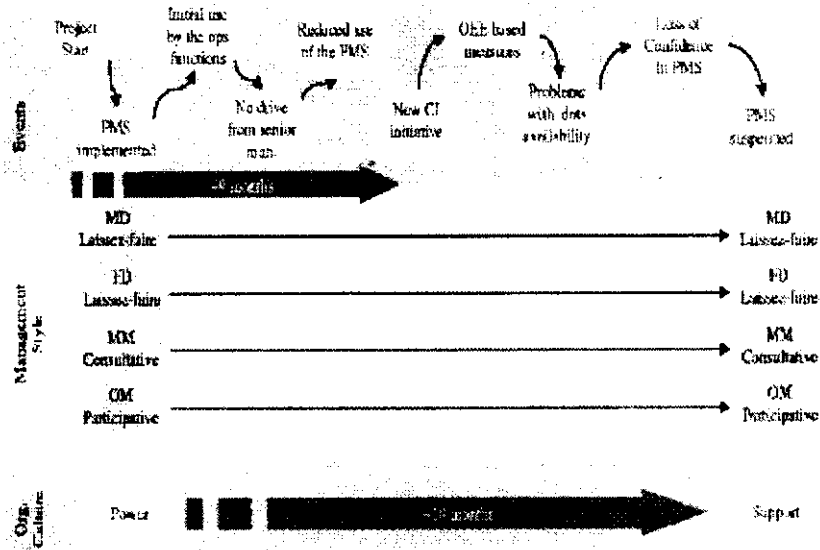


Source: *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, Vol. 26 Number, 2006. pp 1325-1350.

5.3 Case C

The company manufactures and provides self-adhesive labels and flexible packaging solutions to a wide range of market sectors throughout the UK and Europe. The company had an intranet-based information system that provided some data to managers and team leaders but was not available on the shop-floor. The information provided was in its raw form. Generally, users had spent a lot of time in getting the data and analysing it as best as they could. But they had a very little direction from the management team (Figure-6).

Figure-6: The interplay between performance measurement, organizational culture and management style in Case C



Source: *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, Vol. 26 Number, 2006. pp 1325-1350

Case C: Synthesis

It is evident that in this case support culture together with a laissez-faire management styles did not create the right environment to stimulate constructive use of PMS systems. There were no external stimuli to force the MD or FD to adopt a more authoritative management style. Lack of drive or commitment, compounded by some technical problems, led to loss of confidence and resulted in suspension of the PMS.

The company had a new management team. The MD and the FD both expected people to get on with their jobs (laissez-faire). In contrast, the OM had a participative style with his subordinates but expected to be told what to be done by his superiors. The marketing manager (MM) had a consultative style but also expected to be told what to be done by his superiors. As a matter of fact, power culture was dominant across the organisation.

The management team wanted to gain greater control over the operations of the company in order to drive CIs. Consequently, they decided to implement a PMS system across operational functions. One of the

researchers acted as a facilitator to assist with the design, implementation and use of the PMS system.

The PMS was designed, implemented and used by the OM, team-leaders and other operational staff members. The system relied on data from the existing systems of the company. The MD did not show much interest in using the system, he expected people to just get on with it. Here, it is evident the prevalence of support culture.. For a while, the PMS system was used but, without strong direction from the MD, the information generated in the system was not acted upon properly. Within a few months people started to asking questions about the such a system that was not being used for any reason. Consequently, the usage of the system reduced to a great extent.

Just after six months, a new CI initiative was launched, which led to the introduction of overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) based performance measures. However, the data captured in the existing systems of the company was not able to support the new measures, therefore, led to inconsistencies and arguments over OEE measures. This failure was resulted in loss of confidence in the PMS. The project was suspended until the company updated its information system.

There are some similarities and dissimilarities among the cases. A comparative summary has been placed in the following tabulate format.

6.0 Result and Findings

Case analysis results

Case	Similarity	Dissimilarity	Remarks
Case A	Innovative, performance measurement	Power distance, support culture, role culture, participative culture	Employee participative culture and team culture to be introduced, management layer to be reduced.
Case B	Management command, control, democratic leader, role culture, support culture	Innovative culture, change culture	Besides, innovation culture and change culture to be introduced, participative leadership to be introduced
Case C	Team culture, role culture, leadership culture, laissez fair	Command and control, laissez fair	Training, employee relation.

By analysing cases B and C it is found that both the cases have successfully implemented a performance measurement system and used it with a view to improving their businesses activities. On the other hand, Case A was failed to measure the market situation and suffered from innovative ideas and less participation from the top management.

(I) Cultural Implications

Culture and Employee Satisfaction

"I feel good here, I want to stay" (HILTI Annual report, 2006). Around 87 per cent of all HILTI staff worldwide is proud to work for HILTI. High level job satisfaction leads to better performance by the employees. Working together as team and leading from the front by the supervisor, makes a high positive impact in the organisation. For example, case B and case C have the team and participative culture, but management style in case A is not at all democratic.

Team culture

Teams in organization are solving problems through collective efforts. Whenever a problem arises they discuss ways to enhance quality, satisfy customers, increase productivity and improve quality of work life. Organisations which practice team culture find out creative ways by using teams to solve problems and make changes to improve performance (Hunt et al., 2005). In Motorola case, team cohesiveness could have played an important role to attain high profile of organisational outcomes which the company failed to produce.

Power distance and culture

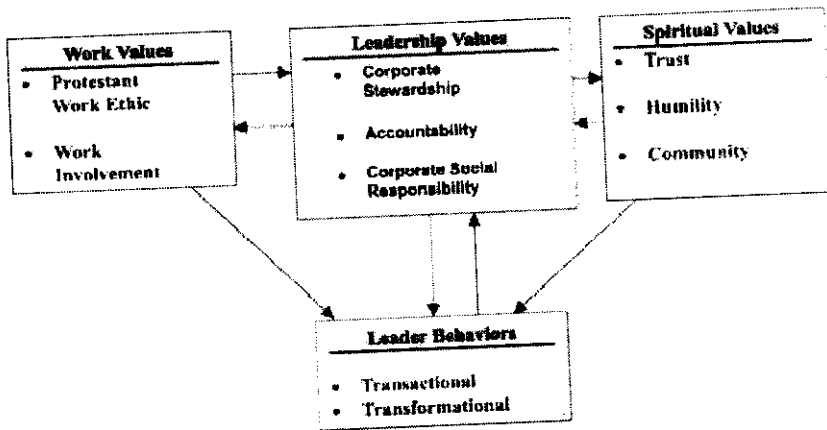
In the power culture, work is performed out of reward, fear of punishment or personal loyalty towards a powerful individual. In such a culture leader forces a degree of fear, and he/she follows leadership style which is either authoritative or autocratic. Leader motivates employees by "the carrot and the stick" approach (Hunt et al., 2005). But to maintain an acceptable culture within the organisation, authority and autonomy should be given to the employees. Reporting system should be very specific to all, who is doing what, whom to report should be specifically mentioned. In case of Motorola CEO did not audit his HR, which finally resulted in less performance of product quality.

Leadership and Culture

A leader is required to coordinate both inside and outside the team. Team leader can play a crucial role in coordinating the employees for achieving organisational goal. A leader should be able to influence the employees to acquire knowledge, skills, abilities to maintain corporate culture and organisational performance. However, the very style of leadership is also an important cultural factor of culture of an organisation. Participative leadership is well accepted in organisation rather than autocratic leadership. As found in case analysis, case B followed the culture that is authoritative.

Effective leaders have a sound understanding including values, degree of resilience, harmony of values, achievement of values and the role of values in the day-to-day decisions. Accordingly, the CEOs and executive leaders must find ways of achieving corporate values which not only are consistent with the business aims, but also enable employees to feel that their own and the company's values are in the same line with one another (Karin K., 2005). The causes of failure of Motorola were due to the fact of centralised leadership style. The power distance was further added as a cause of failure because it is one of the important drawbacks for organisational performance so far noticed.

Figure-7: A conceptual model of leadership behaviour in organisation



Source: "Corporate values as multi-level, multi-domain antecedents of leader behaviors"
International Journal of Manpower, Vol. 26 No. 1, 2005.

Research and Development (R&D)

An organisation is no longer part of national or domestic culture; now-a-days it is a part of global culture. For example, AT&T, Hewlett-Packard, Motorola are part of global culture. AT&T has invested in millions for widespread advertisement. Nevertheless, AT&T has also adopted club culture management system, and tried to change and strengthen corporate culture by using slogans, ceremonies, symbols, public statement and stories (Draft, R.L., 1997). Therefore, to enhance the organisation performance, it is required continuous research and development in terms of product, market, customer and goodwill of business. Motorola as a company lost its market share to a great share since it was very much reluctant in R&D and benchmarking. It is to note that Research and Development is required to cope with the competitive market environment.

(II) Human Resource Management (HRM) implications

There is a positive relationship between organisational culture and human resource management. Human resource professionals are able to play a crucial role in managing key elements of culture including symbols, rites and rituals, norms of behaviour, beliefs and values and also assumptions. Human Resource Management approaches are detailed with specifics in regard to recruitment and selection procedures, induction, socialisation, training program, performance appraisal systems, and reward systems (Brown A., 1989).

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection mechanisms are extremely powerful for maintaining organisational culture. Organisations need to recruit and select new personnel to fill-up the vacancies. Organisational growth depends on the employees, so employees have to be accustomed to organisational culture. So, the aim of recruitment should be to generate a pool of people who have some degree of prior enculturation or familiarity with the organisation and its culture. Generally, in the process of procuring new personnel for the organisation; some definite steps have to be carried out. For example, new employees must have to be tested with certain psychological aptitude tests so that the employer may come to know about their belief, attitude and moral strength.

Induction, Socialisation and Training

It is a process through which new employees come to know about the culture of the organisation. Top management arranges an orientation program for the new employees to make them understood about the organisation and its culture. New employees are appraised about their job, their responsibilities, organisational structure and management style and to whom they need to report etc. Chief of the organisation needs to conduct a session before the new employees to pass the message about the culture of the organisation.

Performance Appraisal System

The introduction of performance appraisal system into an organisation can generally be expected to have a profound effect on employees. Performance appraisal is a formal, structured system of measuring, evaluating and influencing employees as a workforce.

Reward System

A reward system represents powerful means of influencing its culture. A good reward system indicates the sustainability of the organisation as well as helps to retain employees in the organisation for a long term. So reward system is the key to understanding of organisational culture. But the system should be fair; so that no employee is penalised without any justified reason..

A few elements of Human Resource Management (HRM) have so far been discussed. Organisational sustainability is mostly depended on how HRM is practiced in the organisation. Apart from these elements, there are other factors that also influence organisational culture. For example, promotion, bonus, salary, fringe benefit, accidental benefit, retirement benefit, timing of office, organisational rites, ritual, peer relation, level of boss-subordinate relation etc. have had profound influence on organisational sustainability. Moreover, same rule for all must be introduced if an organisation wants to sustain in the competitive market.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

As cited earlier, organisation culture is a means of shared understanding of employees' behaviour. Organisational culture has a direct impact on organisational performance. There are many factors that may influence both organisational culture and organisational performance. Culture is very much important at the workplace. Managing culture within the organisation is an art; a manager has to be able to reinforce and support strong culture. In this way, he or she may help to sustain and maintain organisational culture. Besides, a manager must emphasise on constant learning and individual development processes by arranging orientation and training programme at various levels.

A healthy relation among the employees is a prerequisite to strengthen an organisation. Moreover, participatory organisational culture is more effective than bureaucratic culture. Also, flatten organisational structure is more acceptable than the hierarchical organisational structure.

In the changing business era, organisational design also needs to be changed to cope with changing environment. And to meet the changes, employees should have to be equipped with state of the art techniques as imparted by training programmes. In this way, organisational development can play a crucial role in making employees' satisfied. Besides, employees need to be committed to maintain organisational culture since employees' commitment has a positive impact on organisational performance.

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