

Octapace Culture Profiling - A Study among Employees Working in a Legal Compliance Firm in Madurai

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Abstract

Every human being has certain personality traits which help them stand apart from the crowd. No two individuals behave in a similar way. In the same way organizations have certain values, policies, rules and guidelines which help them create an image of their own. An individual working for any organization with a firmly established culture will be trained on values, beliefs, and expected behaviors of that organization. Employees are affected by culture in which they live. Employees working in organizations may be from different cultures which may be a big obstacle in their working environment. There is some evidence that variations in cultural values may have a significant impact on employee turnover and possibly employees' job performance.

This study is an attempt to understand the cultural ethos using OCTAPACE (openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, pro-action, autonomy, collaboration and experimentation) profile (studies how much each ethos is valued and believed by the individuals) in a legal compliance firm in Madurai. This is a descriptive research and a census study drawing all employees working in EC and accounts department of the firm. From the study it was observed that irrespective of qualification of respondents confrontation is high whereas trust and autonomy are low.

Keywords: Organizational culture, OCTAPACE profile

1. Introduction

Organizational culture is the collective behavior of people that are a part of an organization. Organizational culture is defined as a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with the problems of external adaption and internal investigation that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore is to be taught to the new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. It is a set of shared understandings, norms, values, attitudes and beliefs of an organization which can foster or impede change.

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Every organization develops and maintains a unique culture, which provides guidelines and boundaries for the behavior of the members of the organization. The eight important values relevant to organizations are Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proaction, Autonomy Collaboration, and Experimentation. In addition to being an acronym for these values, OCTAPACE is a term indicating the eight (octa) steps (pace) needed to create a functional ethos. Openness is a spontaneous expression of feelings and thoughts and the sharing of these without defensiveness. Confrontation is facing rather than shying away from problems. Trust is maintaining the confidentiality of information shared by others and in not misusing it. Authenticity is the congruence between what one feels, says and does. Proaction means taking initiative, pre-planning, taking preventive action, and calculating the pay-offs of an alternative course before taking action. Autonomy is using and giving freedom to plan and act in one's own sphere. Collaboration is giving help to, and asking for help from, others. Experimentation means using and encouraging innovative approaches to solve problems, using feedback for improvement, taking a fresh look at things, and encouraging creativity.

While reviewing various studies, it was found that there is a positive correlation between organizational culture, organizational performance, individual effectiveness and success (Wallach, 1983). In 12 Indian organizations covering financial services, consumer products, electronics, cement, tyres and automobile shows that value of autonomy was favourable (Rao, Raju and Yadav, 2001). In IT sector mean score on openness, proaction and experimentation (Pareek, 1997) is high. In financial and banking sector it is found that employees have a strong feeling of belongingness and there is sense of equality with common facilities provided to the employees (Priyadarshini and Venkatapathy, 2004). Openness (Rohmetra, 1998; Raval 2014), proactive, experimentation (Raval, 2014) and trust (Famina, 2009) is found low. Proactive (Mishra, Dhar & Dhar, 1999 and Azmi & Sharma, 2007) confrontation, trust, authenticity, autonomy and collaboration (Rohmetra, 1998 and Famina, 2009) experimentation and proactive (Famina, 2009) is found high. In manufacturing sector proactive (Mishra, Dhar and Dhar, 1999) is high and autonomy (Krishna and Rao, 1997) is low. In hospital openness (Alphonsa, 2000) is high and experimentation (Mufeed, 2006) is low. In a public sector there is positive intra-correlation among eight ethos (Solkhe, 2013).

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Objectives of study

To understand the level of the OCTAPACE culture viewed and shared by the respondents in the organization.

2.2. Hypothesis

Ho - There is no significant difference between qualification and ethos of organizational culture.

The study follows descriptive research design with census study drawing units from ECS-MIS (Establishment Compliance Services- Management Information System) and Accounts Department of a Legal Compliance firm in Madurai. The OCTAPACE (Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proaction, Autonomy, Collaboration and Experimentation) profile is a 40-item instrument developed by Uday Pareek on continuum of 4-point scale. The instrument is divided into two sections. In section 1, measures the extent to which these ethos are valued in the organization by their employees. In section 2, measures the extent to which these eight beliefs are shared among employees in the organization. Simple and Multi variant tabulation is used to analyze the collected data. T test is used to test the hypothesis.

Table 1: Distribution of population

Demographic Variable		No of Respondents	Total
Qualification	Undergraduate	34	60
	Postgraduate	26	

Table 2: Table showing the OCTAPACE profile viewed and shared by the respondent

VALUES		QUALIFICATION		TOTAL
		UG	PG	
Openness	High	14	11	25
	Low	20	15	35
Confrontation	High	17	12	29
	Low	17	14	31
Trust	High	12	8	20
	Low	22	18	40
Authenticity	High	15	8	23
	Low	19	18	37
Pro action	High	15	10	25
	Low	19	16	35
Autonomy	High	13	7	20
	Low	21	19	40
Collaboration	High	12	11	23
	Low	22	15	37
Experimenting	High	16	8	24
	Low	18	18	36

Based on the modal observation we find irrespective of qualification of the respondents the Trust and Autonomy culture is not shared as much as other culture profile. Some of the earlier study conducted found trust low in finance enterprise by Famina (2009) and

confrontation is found high, it also found high in one of the earlier study in banking and IT sector conducted by Azim and Sharma (2007).

Table 3: Showing Mean, Standard Deviation and t Values with regards to Qualification

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	t VALUES
Openness Undergraduate	34	15.18	1.850	.615
Postgraduate	26	14.92	2.018	
Confrontation Undergraduate	34	14.29	2.125	.926
Postgraduate	26	14.35	2.153	
Trust Undergraduate	34	13.71	1.993	.376
Postgraduate	26	14.12	1.395	
Authenticity Undergraduate	34	13.44	1.829	.110
Postgraduate	26	12.69	1.692	
Proaction Undergraduate	34	15.53	2.936	.682
Postgraduate	26	15.81	2.059	
Autonomy Undergraduate	34	13.03	2.623	.268
Postgraduate	26	13.65	1.263	
Collaboration Undergraduate	34	14.50	1.813	.060
Postgraduate	26	15.35	1.522	
Experimenting Undergraduate	34	14.44	2.232	.355
Postgraduate	26	13.92	1.998	

From the above table it is observed that Proactive culture profile is perceived high and Authenticity culture profile is perceived low among the respondents base on the mean value. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to profile the OCTAPACE culture perceived in the organization based on their qualifications. While analyzing statistically it is found that there is no significant difference in Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proaction, Autonomy, Collaboration and Experimentation culture profile based on qualification. The significant value is >0.05 hence H_0 is rejected.

3. Findings

- Irrespective of qualification of respondents it is observed that Confrontation culture is shared more whereas Trust and Autonomy is shared less among the respondents.
- Hypothesis is rejected for OCTAPACE culture profile based qualification.

4. Suggestions

It is deduced from the analysis that Trust and Autonomy are the two organizational ethos where the scores are falling towards the lower side, analyzing it following suggestions are given.

- Organization should consider about introducing QWL programs and Quality Circles to develop the sense of belongingness and responsibilities amongst employees.

- Organization should promote more of Informal Communication structure to improve the inter-personal relations amongst employees.
- Employees should be encouraged to innovate within the system processes so as to try and find out new ways of doing the same work.
- Organization should conduct sensitivity and diversity training programs at regular intervals so that it can facilitate more interaction amongst employees.

5. Conclusion

Organizational culture is the basic pattern of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that govern behavior within a particular organization. Since many employees spend more hours at their workplace, their organization's culture obviously affects both their work lives as well as their personal lives. It is found that the culture profile is based on 8 ethos, Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proaction, Autonomy, Collaboration and Experimenting of which Confrontation culture profile was found to be perceived high and Trust and Autonomy were perceived to be the lowest. From the study it shows that there is no significant differences in the OCTAPACE culture profile on qualification with the organization.

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