

# Whenever we think of indian culture commerce essay

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Introduction Throughout the decades of management history, it appears that each year culture plays a more important role inside companies for both employers and employees, as it provides a general background for organisational identity rules and mission. This essay evaluates the effect of organisational culture based on the theoretical research, dynamic model of Mary Jo Hatch (1993), as well as observation of the company's climate and interview with one of the employees of the company. It will consist of the general information about culture and features of Indian national identity, theoretical background of Cultural Dynamic Model, explanation of its main processes. Limitation of this analysis will also be mentioned at the end of the report. Moreover, each part of the report will include an application of the processes of the model to the Indian IT company Infosys Ltd, which specialises in offshoring technology services and has more than 100, 000 employees worldwide. Considering the culture within the organisation, it is essential to emphasise that culture is an extremely difficult topic, and it can be defined in many ways[1]. According to Lundberg (1990) culture as a day-to-day sense may be understood intuitively, and includes a variety of aspects, such as being a broad and shared by group members psychological phenomenon within any stable organisation with a history. It has invisible symbolic and deeply buried values and assumptions in its core, which can be gained and modified in some rare cases[2]. Indian Culture Whenever we think of Indian Culture, the next word that comes to our mind is ' diversity'. There are more number of cultures in india as there are states. So we can state that Culture of any company in India is solely a function of the culture of the originator of that company. So in respect to Infosys, its culture started from

its founder Narayan Murthy, who impulsed cultural attributes of southern india into its organization like punctuality, honesty, fairness and with a sense of giving its clients the best services possible. But as the company evolved through ages and it started to recruit people from throughout India, cultural diversity of India started to play its role. Infosys then needed to cater to the cultural needs of every part of India. So it became more relaxed towards its policies. It started to care about their employees (a typical thing which northern Indian employees want of their company) by providing them nice accommodation, great set of recreational facilities and a feeling that they are not just the employees but the biggest asset of the company. Infosys started to consider the importance of cultural differences of their employees for enhanced productivity and motivation and this continuously evolving process led to the development of the biggest IT company in India. An example of two different culture theories will help clarify the matter. For instance, Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) propose two main concepts of approaching it, organisations as sociocultural systems and organisations as systems of ideas. In the former, social and cultural components are integrated and synchronized in the organisation, where the focus lies with values, norms, and beliefs and with the interaction of individuals who "constitute concrete collectivities". Four schools of thoughts can be distinguished within this concept - the functionalist, the structural-functionalist, ecological-adaptionist and the historical-diffusionist. In system of ideas, culture is located in the minds of culture-bearers or viewed as systems of knowledge "of learned standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting". Four schools of thoughts are also distinguished: the

cognitive, the structuralist, the mutual-equivalence and the symbolic schools. Here individuals " theories of the world" form the organisational culture as opposed to sociocultural systems where culture is formed by the social and cultural environment the organisation is in. Furthermore, Schein (1990) proposes an alternative approach to organisational culture. In his research he identifies three levels, observable artifacts, values and basic assumptions. The observable artifacts are the visible manifestations of an organisation's culture such as the physical and material objects and the level of technology. Schein suggest that it " includes everything from the physical layout, the dress code, the manner in which people address each other, the smell and feel of the place, its emotional intensity". The values, which are located between the artifacts and the basic assumptions, determine the behavioral norms. At this level the focus is on " how people feel and think". The Basic assumptions are difficult to detect and change. They determine the unconscious " perceptions, thought processes, feelings, and behavior" of individuals. The model below displays Schein's model of organisational culture. Whenever we think of Indian Culture, the next word that comes to our mind is ' diversity'. There are more number of cultures in india as there are states. So we can state that Culture of any company in India is solely a function of the culture of the originator of that company. So in respect to Infosys, its culture started from its founder Narayan Murthy, who impulsed cultural attributes of southern india into its organization like punctuality, honesty, fairness and with a sense of giving its clients the best services possible. But as the company evolved through ages and it started to recruit people from throughout India, cultural diversity of India started to play its

role. Infosys then needed to cater to the cultural needs of every part of India. So it became more relaxed towards its policies. It started to care about their employees (a typical thing which northern Indian employees want of their company) by providing them nice accommodation, great set of recreational facilities and a feeling that they are not just the employees but the biggest asset of the company. Infosys started to consider the importance of cultural differences of their employees for enhanced productivity and motivation and this continuously evolving process led to the development of the biggest IT company in India. The chosen model

The model we will be using to apply to Infosys is The dynamic model of Mary Jo Hatch (1993). It is an enhanced model based on Schein's (1985) model by putting greater importance on the emphasis of symbolic and process factors. The " Symbols" aspect was introduced as a new addition to the elements of Schein's model (assumptions, values, and artifacts). Connecting these elements together made a spinning wheel model structure, which was interpreted as being able to operate both forward (proactive/prospective) and backward (retrospective/retroactive). This in turn has created a more dynamic relationship between the elements as opposed to a static relationship between the elements. The Mary Jo Hatch model we will use is displayed below.

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Assumptions

The point of entry to using the model is variable, as this will be influenced by the research topic. For this particular study, we will use " assumptions" as the starting point for our analysis. The process between assumptions and values is called manifestation, which can be further sub-categorised into proactive (assumptions to values) and retroactive (values to assumptions)

manifestations. Infosys's vision is to be a globally respected corporation. The underlying assumptions consist of having high standards and an enthusiastic approach to learn, as well as being hard working, competitive and honest.

The processes of proactive manifestation shapes these intangible assumptions into distinct values of the company, such as impressing the client, being the market leader, being fair and ethical as well as constantly striving for perfection. Retrospective manifestation occurs when there is a change in values, which can lead to possibly maintaining or transforming existing assumptions. The CEO of Infosys and managing director, Kris Gopalakrishnan, included employees as intangible assets in their balance sheet in 2011 and stated that their employees are their value. Numerous employees assume that the company they work for, in this case Infosys, disregards their hardworking efforts, therefore this new value contradicts existing assumptions. Ultimately it could possibly have enough influence to change current assumptions and create a new set of assumptions.

Realisation According to Mary Jo Hatch's dynamic model (1993), an organisation's artifacts are the most realisable aspects of its culture. In terms of the cultural dynamics model, realisation transforms values into artifacts (proactive realisation) and, accordingly, keeps or changes the existing values through the production of new artifacts (retroactive realisation). As it was emphasized by one of the ex-employees of Infosys[3], the company has built an environmentally friendly strategy. This can be made clear from Infosys operating using a clean power source of windmills which are attached to each building and it using solar powered mini-vans that handicapped and pregnant women use for transportation within the

company. Furthermore they give large amounts of money to charities, focusing on poor people and childrens education. In addition to this each time there is a natural disaster in any part of the world, an online portal is opened for simple donation transactions to occur. If an employee wishes to donate money it will simply come out of their salary. Infosys believes that everything should be provided for the people it employs. Most of the buildings in use are like architectural wonders and usually include food courts, many sport facilities and employee care centers. In some cases a 4-star hotel is included, as well as gardens and other leisure facilities. Infosys wants to encourage communication between project members and employees to create a good work ethic, for example various activities are organised after each project completion to help employees get a better understanding of each other, which ultimately should promote efficient work processes and good outputs. Awards for the most effective people are presented each year. In addition to this everyone has the chance to meet and talk to the top management team. Moreover, there are daily quiz competitions and music meetings for the employees. From Monday to Tuesday everyone is required to be in formal dressing. There is a flexible approach to communication in Infosys, employees are allowed to talk informally to each other and fun and jokes are allowed as far as they do not cross certain boundaries. The methods above increase employees effectiveness and creativity. People are generally self-motivated inside the company as they are continuously monitored by their supervisors and managers who use a check list of attributes. The monitored period is discussed on a 6 month basis as a part of the appraisal cycle. Regular

efficiency reports are also distributed which clearly state the department with the best performance. Moreover, there are weekly internal newsletters informing the employees of the company's news and other relevant subjects. All these cultural artifacts have been incorporated in the organisational culture through a long process of experimenting and assessment in order to reflect the company's values. Since they are absorbed in the culture, they "work retroactively to realign values as culture adjusts to their presence" (Hatch 1993, p. 667). Symbolisation In organisations, symbols are referred to as visible, physical manifestations and indicators of organisational life. Symbols are experienced as tangible and can be noticed through sound, touch, sight and smell. . ( <http://iew3.technion.ac.il/Home/Users/anatr/symbol.html> )." Symbols and artefacts are indistinguishable and a list of organisational symbols consists of the corporate logos, slogans, stories, visual images and metaphors" while corporate behaviour consists of values and norms and corporate communication consists of public relations and advertising (Hatch, 1993). In Infosys a particular dress code is followed which is considered as a part of company's corporate design where men are supposed to wear full sleeve shirt and tie and women are meant to wear full formal wear like salwar kamij. The process of symbolisation is described as a correlation of two-way prospective and retrospective processes (Hatch, 1993) ." Prospective symbolisation suggests that an artefact is an objective form in a literal meaning. Firstly they arise as just artefacts and by adding cultural processing they get recognised as symbolic forms by the organisation"(Hatch, 1993). Retrospective symbolisation enhances



prospective symbolisation which furthers the meaning of the aspect regarded to Infosys. Infosys logo is just a logo until retrospective symbolisation takes place which results in the logo meaning much more such as an image for purpose and vision corresponding to its slogan " Powered by Intellect, driven by values" (reference). Corporate behaviour is the behaviour of an organisation when considered as a single body. Values define customer satisfaction and its leadership. Norms are for the long term development of Infosys and the best standards of corporate governance should be applied for greater prosperity such as an increased customer base and profits. The company applied a good level of external communication and it never compromised on its profit margin. External clients are aware of the Infosys's service quality and they are never bothered about bargaining the terms and conditions and always wants to give their business to the company. Also the company keeps its client well communicated in the terms of the current position of their project, through the weekly meetings. Infosys is a knowledge intensive company which recognises the value of its human assets in maintaining enhanced culture. The business activities of the company are anchored into the pillars of corporate behaviour which are business ethics and corporate social responsibility. According to the interview with an ex-employee, we found out that Infosys main ethics is based around the fact that " Client is the Boss" and tend to prioritise client requirements over its own as long as their margin standards are met. Also, we were educated of the fact that Infosys adopted schools in villages and took full responsibility of education of children; ex CEO runs his own non-governmental organisation in which they use to raise funds for the poor.

Corporate communication is the message issued by the organisation to its public which can be both internal and external. Corporate communication includes advertising, public relations and information. In 2011, Infosys was considered in the All Asia Executive Team Rankings and was nominated by the Sell-side as the Best Investor Relations Professional. Professional.

([http://www.infosys.com/search/pages/index.aspx?sp\\_q=public%20relations&source=](http://www.infosys.com/search/pages/index.aspx?sp_q=public%20relations&source=http://www.infosys.com/pages/index.aspx)<http://www.infosys.com/pages/index.aspx>)

Interpretation In terms of cultural assumptions, it can be useful to refer to not only the Dynamic Model, but also the original model of Schein, where the assumptions are viewed as the core content of the organisational culture. Since basic assumptions consist of unconscious and strong granted beliefs within the company (Schein, 2004), in Infosys it can be seen as a less hierarchical and friendly atmosphere between employees as a part of the culture of the organisation. However, from a cultural dynamic perspective, interpretation is considered as a bidirectional process that contains an interaction between current symbols and basic assumptions. Schutz (1970, cited by Hatch, 1993) claimed that interpretation was a significant medium for establishing the meaning of an experience and involved the retrospective and prospective interpretations simultaneously. The former is a move from basic assumptions ("already known") to current symbols, which can be seen in relation to Infosys as the activities for a successful completion of the work. Emotional satisfaction from the rewards can be related to the competitions and games organised by the company. Prospective path introduces an influence on basic assumptions from symbols, such as newly created activities and rewards systems, which may influence on creation of new

assumptions and opinion within the company. Hatch (1993: 674) cited the viewpoint of Ricoeur (1976) and evaluated that the meaning established by interpretation should be viewed as " a second-order experience of symbolisation" which was distinguished with the direct experience. Hatch (1993) summarised interpretation as two points: Firstly, current symbolisation experience was interpreted in an existing cultural frame and revised assumptions by constructing some new meaning. The prospective interpretation focuses more on the move from external symbols to company assumptions and also involves a reciprocal effect. Infosys describes itself as multi-cultural because of its global and diverse recruitment base. It may be a significant reason and stimulus for the free, active, inclusive and innovative work atmosphere inside the company. Employees from different nations and regions bring various and contrasting opinions and work styles to the workplace, which promote the development of innovative and specific ideas, methods and perspectives. Multi-cultural employees supply a special cultural content for Infosys and the organisation gives a symbolic significance to it. Secondly, cultural assumptions had effects on symbols and supplied opportunities for culture to re-establish existing symbolised content and engage new symbols. Infosys emphasised its innovation and freedom, for example it organises events at least twice a year where lower level employees get to meet top management. Sports, culture and art are supported and several fun clubs and activities are provided. It also has a rich internal communications to supply opportunities for employees to know how their organisation works, how decisions are made, and what drives the company to develop. Limitations of report - interview

limitations to the report. Firstly, the fact that only one person was interviewed limits the report because the perception of an individual does not reflect those of a whole group of employees. For instance, the perception and experience Harsh Vardhan Mittal has with Infosys is different than another individual's. As the fastest and most convenient information collection method in contemporary society, web research is one of the significant methods for our research. However, most of our information comes from the Infosys official site and reviews of its employees so that more positive information is received. It is not only because of the inevitable emotional tendency, but also a common sense that there is a strict policy about what information is available on their website. Besides, limits of information source often only can reflect perceptions of some individuals or groups. Both of them may cause some bias impressions for us. In regards to the Cultural Dynamic Model used in this research, there are a few underlying limitations. Hatch tried to fill the gaps in Schein's model by adding ' symbols' as a new category and used the interpretation process to explain the relationship between symbols and assumptions. However, the explanation for this process was relatively short in comparison to other processes within the model. Another problem is that the processes of the model concentrate on cognitive and social behaviours, but not on the relationship between the members of the organization (Hatch 1993). Future researches should work on expanding the interpretation processes of the model to make it clearer, as well as including the interrelationship factors into the model.

**Conclusion** Infosys emphasises the importance of culture and this can be displayed throughout this report. It uses a hierarchical structure however this

does not imply it uses a rigid chain of command, and a strict set of rules. Infosys values its employees, diversity and the different skills and working practices employees bring to Infosys. Furthermore it treats them fairly and this can be shown by employees being classed as assets on their balance sheet. It provides a relaxing environment for employees to work in and gives them all they need including architectural wonders, food courts, many sport facilities, employee care centers and in some cases a 4\* hotel. This will increase productivity, efficiency and innovation. This can be seen in assumptions and realisation. In addition to this, it allows low level employees a chance to meet and communicate with top management by organising at least two events every year. However, even though Infosys encourages innovation and a relaxing environment, certain rules and regulations still must exist to ensure efficient working practices. For example uniform must still be worn and employees are still monitored using an appraisal system to see how they are performing. This can be seen in realisation. Infosys has found the right proportion of rules and regulations with freedom and relaxation, and this is what gives it such an impressive company culture.