

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR (OB)

UNIT – IV

SHORT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS : [02 Marks Each]

1. What is organisational culture? ----2012

Ans: Organizational culture can be defined as the group norms, values, beliefs and assumptions practiced in an organization. It brings stability and control within the firm. The organization is more stable and its objective can be understood more clearly.

Organizational culture helps the group members to resolve their differences, overcome the barriers and also helps them in tackling risks.

2. What is organisational Culture? How it affects individual behavior. -----2013 & 2015

Ans: Organizational culture can be defined as the group norms, values, beliefs and assumptions practiced in an organization.

Organizational culture is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which governs how people behave in organizations. These shared values have a strong influence on the people in the organization and dictate how they dress, act, and perform their jobs. Every organization develops and maintains a unique culture, which provides guidelines and boundaries for the behavior of the members of the organization.

3. Point out the various characteristics of organisational culture?

Ans: The various characteristics of organisational culture are :

- a) Innovation and risk taking
- b) Attention to detail
- c) Outcome orientation
- d) People orientation
- e) Team orientation
- f) Aggressiveness

4. Define Dominant Culture?

Ans: Dominant Culture may be defined as the type of culture which expresses the core values that are shared by a majority of organisation's members. The success of dominant culture is dependent on the homogeneity of the subculture, that is, the mixture of different cultures.

5. What do you mean by Strong Culture?

Ans: Strong culture may be defined as the culture in which the core values are intensely held and widely shared. In a strong culture, the employees are loyal and have a feeling of belongingness towards the organization.

6. What do you mean by socialization?

Ans: Socialisation is a continuous process of transmitting key elements of an organisation's culture to its employees. It consists of both formal methods and informal means for shaping the attitudes, thoughts and behavior of employees.

7. What are the various stages of socialization process?

Ans: The various stages of socialization process are:

- Pre-arrival Stage:- It occurs before a new employee joins the organizations.
- Encounter Stage:- Here a new employee sees that the organization is really like and confronts the possibility that expectations and reality may diverge.
- Metamorphosis Stage:- Here a new employee changes and adjusts to the job, work group and organization.

8. What are various applications of culture?

Ans: The various applications of culture in the organizations are:

- Selection
- Training
- Structural Design
- Empowerment
- Leadership
- Performance evaluation
- Reward System

9. Define Workplace spirituality?

Ans: It is defined as the recognition that people have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community. The concept of spirituality draws on the ethics, values, motivation, work /life balance, and leadership elements of an organization.

10. What is the effect of positive work culture?

Ans: A positive workplace culture leads to:

- Increased productivity,
- Better employee morale and
- The ability to keep skilled workers.

LONG QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

1. What do you mean by Organisational Culture? State its elements. Also discuss how organisational culture can be created and sustained. [10 Marks]

Ans: Organizational culture can be defined as the group norms, values, beliefs and assumptions practiced in an organization. It brings stability and control within the firm. The organization is more stable and its objective can be understood more clearly.

Organizational culture helps the group members to resolve their differences, overcome the barriers and also helps them in tackling risks.

ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The two key elements seen in organizational culture are –

- Visible elements – These elements are seen by the outer world. Example, dress code, activities, setup, etc.
- Invisible elements – These inner elements of the group cannot be seen by people outside the group or firm. Example, values, norms, assumptions, etc. Now let us discuss some other elements of organizational culture. They are –
 - Stories – Stories regarding the history of the firm, or founder.
 - Rituals – Precise practices an organization follows as a habit.
 - Symbol – The logo or signature or the style statement of a company.
 - Language – A common language that can be followed by all, like English.
 - Practice – Discipline, daily routine or say the tight schedule everyone follows without any failure.
 - Values and Norms – The idea over which a company is based or the thought of the firm is considered as its value and the condition to adopt them are called norms.
 - Assumptions – It means we consider something to be true without any facts. Assumptions can be used as the standard of working, means the employees prepare themselves to remain above standard.

CREATING AND SUSTAINING ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

The following discussion focus on how an organisation is able to create and sustain its culture.

Creating organisational culture

The main source of organisational culture is the organisation's leadership. Leadership in this context refers to the influential individuals, often the founders who have a major impact on the creation of the organisation's early culture . According to Brown “in building their organisations founders tend to impose their beliefs and values about the nature of the world, organisations and human nature on other organisational participants”. This suggests that the founders of the organisation, created the organisational culture.

Martins and Martins indicate that the founders of an organisation follow the following ways in their process of culture-creation:

- ❖ Firstly, founders only appoint and keep employees who think and feel the way they do.
- ❖ Secondly, they indoctrinate and socialise these individuals to their way of thinking.
- ❖ Finally, the founders' own behaviour act as role model that encourages employees to identify with them, thereby internalising their beliefs, values and assumptions.

Organisational culture is therefore, not created accidentally or spontaneously but through founders who have specific values and beliefs in their endeavour to realise their vision and goals.

Sustaining organisational culture

In order to keep the organisational culture alive, the organisation has to ensure that its culture is transmitted to organisational members . The following three basic stages in which organisational culture can be sustained in the organisation:

Pre-selection:- The first stage of sustaining organisational culture is the pre-selection stage. The pre-selection stage is characterised by potential recruits who aspire to become members of an organisation, who may make great efforts to learn about its history and culture. The selection process is also used by the organisation to appoint individuals who will fit into the organisation's culture; the values of such individuals should be consistent with those of the organisation .

Socialisation:- The socialisation stage follows the pre-selection stage of sustaining organisational culture. This stage can be described as the “enculturation process by which participants learn the culturally accepted beliefs, values and behaviours, so that they are able to act as effective members of the group”. This suggests that during the socialization stage, the organisation helps new organisational members to adapt to its culture .

Incorporation/Rejection:- The incorporation or rejection stage is the final stage of sustaining organisational culture. It is through the socialisation process that organisational members may be incorporated or rejected. Indicators that the individual member has reached full incorporation includes acceptance by the work group, understanding and acceptance of the organisation's culture. On the other hand rejection may lead to loss of key goals, values and assumptions; which ultimately create a crisis of identity for organisational members.

2. Explain in details the various types of culture? [10 Marks]

Ans: The culture a firm follows can be further classified into different types. They are –

- Mechanistic and Organic culture
- Authoritarian and Participative culture
- Subculture and Dominant culture
- Strong and Weak culture
- Entrepreneurial and Market culture

Mechanistic and Organic Culture

Mechanistic culture is formed by formal rule and standard operating procedures. Everything needs to be defined clearly to the employees like their task, responsibility and concerned authorities. Communication process is carried according to the direction given by the organization. Accountability is one of the key factors of mechanistic culture.

Organic culture is defined as the essence of social values in an organization. Thus there exists a high degree of sociability with very few formal rules and regulations in the company. It has a systematic hierarchy of authority that leads towards free flow of communication. Some key elements of organic culture include authority, responsibility, accountability and direct flow towards the employee.

Authoritarian and Participative Culture

Authoritarian culture means power of one. In this culture, power remains with the top level management. All the decisions are made by the top management with no employee involvement in the decision making as well as goal shaping process. The authority demands obedience from the employee and warns them for punishment in case of mistake or irregularity. This type of culture is followed by military organization.

In participative culture, employees actively participate in the decision making and goal shaping process. As the name suggests, it believes in collaborative decision making. In this type of culture, employees are perfectionist, active and professional. Along with group decision making, group problem solving process is also seen here.

Subculture and Dominant Culture

In subculture, some members of the organization make and follow a culture but not all members. It is a part of organizational culture, thus we can see many subcultures in an organization. Every department in a company have their own culture that gets converted to a subculture. So, the strength and adaptability of an organizational culture is dependent on the success of subculture.

In dominant culture, majority of subculture combine to become a dominant culture. The success of dominant culture is dependent on the homogeneity of the subculture, that is, the mixture of different cultures. At the same point of time, some cold war between a dominant culture and a minor culture can also be seen.

Strong and Weak Culture

In a strong culture, the employees are loyal and have a feeling of belongingness towards the organization. They are proud of their company as well as of the work they do and they strive towards their goal with proper coordination and control. Perception and commitment are two aspects that are seen within the employees. In this culture, there is less employee turnover and high productivity.

In a weak culture, the employees hardly praise their organization. There is no loyalty towards the company. Thus, employee dissatisfaction and high labor turnover are two aspects of this culture.

Entrepreneurial and Market Culture

Entrepreneurial culture is a flexible and risk-taking culture. Here the employees show their innovativeness in thinking and are experimental in practice. Individual initiatives make the goal easy to achieve. Employees are given freedom in their activity. The organization rewards the employees for better performance.

Market culture is based on achievement of goal. It is a highly target-oriented and completely profit-oriented culture. Here the relationship between the employees and the organization is to achieve the goal. The social relation among the workers is not motivating.

3. How to create a positive organizational culture? [10 Marks]

Ans: An organizational culture is created with the combination of certain criteria that are mentioned below –

- The founder of the organization may partly set a culture.
- The environment within which the organization standards may influence its activities to set a culture.
- Sometimes interchange of culture in between different organizations create different new cultures.
- The members of the organization may set a culture that is flexible to adapt.
- New cultures are also created in an organization due to demand of time and situation.

The culture of an organization can change due to composition of workforce, merger and acquisition, planned organizational change, and influence of other organizational culture.

A positive workplace culture is one that leads to increased productivity, better employee morale and the ability to keep skilled workers. Negative attitudes in the workplace, particularly when they are displayed by management or the small business owner, can have a dramatic impact on the entire workforce. Taking the steps to ensure that a positive culture is present in the workplace will go a long way towards keeping your organization running smoothly and keeping your employees happy.

Step 1: Creating a clear vision statement for your company. Employees like to know that the job they are doing is making a difference. By creating a vision statement about where we want our company to be in the future and how we want it to make the world a better place creates an air of striving for betterment in the workplace. This lays the foundation for a positive work culture.

Step 2: Looking for positive attitudes while hiring. Negative people can quickly sour an entire workplace. When hiring employees, look for a friendly smile and an upbeat disposition. Asking

questions of new hires to determine how they handle conflict and interactions with others. If we already have negative employees on staff, take them aside to discuss their attitudes and make it clear that we are creating a positive work culture and negativity will not be tolerated.

Step 3: Making an open-door policy. When the boss is inaccessible and distant to employees, they may not feel as though their opinions matter. Establish an open-door policy and encourage interaction with employees. Asking their opinions, listening to what they have to say and remembering to be positive in our dealings with them.

Step 4: Engage our employees in daily operations of the company. Employees may not realize the good that the company is doing behind closed doors. Keeping them informed about exciting new changes or new horizons will help them stay engaged in the company and feel more positive about the future. Be honest and open with our employees.

Step 5: Let our employees know they are appreciated. Employees who are not recognized for the work they do can feel as though their work is unappreciated. Establish reward systems for excellent performance and never forget to thank an employee for a job well done.

4. Write short notes on: [05 Marks Each]

- I. Strong Vs. Weak Culture**
- II. Soft Vs. Hard Culture**
- III. Formal Vs Informal Culture**
- IV. Concept of Workplace Spirituality**

Ans:

- I. Strong Vs Weak Culture: Organisational culture can be labelled as strong or weak based on sharedness of the core values among organisational members and the degree of commitment the members have to these core values. The higher the sharedness and commitment, the stronger the culture increases the possibility of behavior consistency amongst its members, while a weak culture opens avenues for each one of the members showing concerns unique to themselves.
- II. Soft Vs Hard Culture: Soft work culture can emerge in an organisation where the organisation pursues multiple and conflicting goals. In a soft culture the employees choose to pursue a few objectives which serve personal or sectional interests. A typical example of soft culture can be found in a number of public sector organisations in India where the management feels constrained to take action against employees to maintain high productivity. The culture is welfare oriented; people are held accountable for their mistakes but are not rewarded for good performance. Consequently, the employees consider work to be less important than personal and social obligations. Sinha (1990) has presented a case study of a public sector fertilizer company which was established in an industrially backward rural area to promote employment generation and industrial activity. Under pressure from local communities and the government, the company succumbed to overstaffing, converting mechanised operations into manual operations, payment of overtime, and poor discipline. This resulted in huge financial losses (up to 60 percent of the capital) to the company.
- III. Formal vs informal culture: The work culture of an organisation, to a large extent, is influenced by the formal components of organisational culture. Roles, responsibilities, accountability, rules and regulations are components of formal culture. They set the expectations that the organisation has from every member and indicates the consequences if these expectations are not fulfilled.

Informal culture on the other hand has tangible and intangible, specific and non – specific manifestations of shared values, beliefs, and assumptions. This part of organisational culture comprising of artifacts, symbols, ceremonies, rites, and stories is highlighted in almost all the definitions of organisational culture.

- IV. Concept of Workplace Spirituality: A spiritual culture that recognizes that employees have both a mind and a spirit seek to find meaning and purposes in their work, and desire to connect with other employees and be part of a community.

Workplace spirituality is not about organized practices. It's not about theology or about one's spiritual leader. Rather, workplace spirituality is about recognizing that takes place in the context of an organizational community. Organizations that promote a spiritual culture recognize that employees have both a mind and a spirit, seek to find meaning and purpose in their work, and desire to connect with other employees and be part of a community.

The concept of spirituality draws on the ethics, values, motivation, work/life balance, and leadership elements of an organization. Spiritual organizations are concerned with helping employees develop and reach their potentials. They are also concerned with addressing problems created by work life conflicts.

Characteristics :

Strong sense of purpose: Organizational members know why the organization exists and what it values.

Focus on individual development: Employees are valuable and need to be nurtured to help them grow. These characteristics also include a sense of job security.

Trust and openness: Organizational member relationships are characterized by mutual trust, honesty and openness.

Employee empowerment: Employees are allowed to make work related decisions that affect them, highlighting a strong sense of delegation of authority.

Tolerance of employee expression: The organization culture encourages employees to be themselves and to express their moods and feelings without guilt or fear of reprimand.