

**SOCIOLOGY OF WORK CULTURE :
A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA**

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

DALBIR SINGH

**CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
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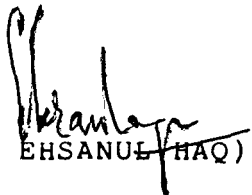
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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(DR. EHSANUL HAQ)
SUPERVISOR

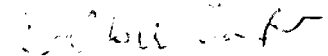

(PROF. K.L. SHARMA)
CHAIRPERSON

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(DALBIR SINGH)

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INTRODUCTION

Confederation of Indian industry organised a seminar on National work culture last year in Delhi. I perceived that work culture was discussed at a very micro level of organisational setting only leaving aside socio-cultural context. I believe that work culture is embedded in socio-cultural, economic, historical and political milieu. The fact that these factors should not be overlooked inspired me to go for a study of work culture in the overall socio-cultural context alongwith organisational setting in India. Moreover it was interesting to delve into the causes of lackadaisical work culture in India. Work culture is the totality of work related activities, affect and cognitions; norms and values regarding work in an organisational setting where technology and socio-cultural forces jointly determine managerial styles and practices, work climate etc. All major contradictions within an organisation have roots in the disjunctions within everchanging cultural forces of the surrounding milieu. So a lackadaisical work culture is one where

organisational policies, plans, technology and decisions are unreasonably compromised with economic, political and social pressures.

In the Indian context, initially work was performed as a part of social relationships and occupational differentiation along the caste lines. The British bureaucratised Indian work organisation. After 1947, work organisations were put to service of national development with the goals of growth and social justice. In the present age of rapid socio-economic change, quality and production become indispensable for entering and surviving in competitive global markets. Creation of a work culture conducive to such a business environment is sine-qua-non for economic development.

Taking into account the major objectives of studies, in the Chapter 1, I intend to explicate the conceptual frame work based on studies of the work culture. It also covers concepts of culture, work culture and commitment to work. This chapter does deal with work related variables like centrality of work in workers life, the extent to which they work hard, their rights, their responsibilities and job satisfaction. Values (e.g. achievement, ability

utilisation, leisure etc.), climate factors (e.g. work pressure and reinforcement) and the extent of pressure from friends and relatives to meet social obligations, family centrality etc. have also been looked into.

In chapter 2 it has been tried to sketch an Indian scenario of work life. Commitment and motivation to work has also been analysed in relation to immediate work environment which is inextricably embedded in the features of the organisation and socio-cultural context.

Chapter 3 discusses comparative view of work culture with special reference to India. It enquires how highly work oriented organisational system and culture is created by drawing on the cultural values of Japan and Western countries. An effort has also been made to analyse the scope of introduction of Japanese tradition of co-operation within and competition between in Indian organisations.

WORK CULTURE : A CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

The sociological meaning of the concept of culture differs sharply from its ordinary and literary uses. In conventional usage, the word culture is employed to designate only those particular traits and behaviour systems that are regarded as refinements, such as painting, music, poetry, philosophy, art galleries etc. In sociological usage culture refers to the totality of what is learned by individuals as members of society, it is a way of life, a mode of thinking, acting and feeling. Some thinkers include in culture all the major social components that bind men together in a society. Culture refers to a distinctive way of life of a group of people, their complete design for living.

The concept of culture was rigorously defined by E.B.Tylor in 1860s. According to him "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, customs and any other capability acquired by man as a member of the society."¹ Redfield speaks of

1. Taylor, E.B. Primitive Culture, Gloucester, Mass; Smith 1958, p.1

culture as an organised body of conventional understanding manifested in art and artifact which persisting through tradition characterises a human group.² Culture can be conceived continuous, cumulative reservoir containing both material and non-material elements that are socially transmitted from generation to generation. Culture is continuous because cultural patterns transcend years, reappearing in successive generations. Culture is cumulative because each generation contributes to the reservoir.

An inherent paradox exists within the social heritage, culture tends to be both static and dynamic. Human beings, once having internalised culture, attach positive value judgement to it and are more or less reluctant to change their established way of life. Though most of recorded historymen have apparently considered that change perse is undesirable and that the ideal condition is stability. The prospect of change seems threatening, yet every human culture is

2. Quoted by Ogburn, W.F. Sociology, Boston, Houghton Niffin, 1965, p.15.

subjected to and does experience change. According to H.T.Mazumdar, "culture is the sum total of human achievements, material as well as non-material. capable of transmission sociologically i.e. by tradition and communication, vertically as well as horizontally. ³ Social sciences generally agree that the essence of culture lies in what we are hence calling non-material culture, in the systems of values, norms, attitudes and beliefs and in the interrelated habit systems of the members of a society. There are all learned behaviour patterns and as such they are widely shared among members of the society. They are also taught to the young by their parents and in the process transmitted from generation to generation.

It may be said that every society is a cultural island having its own modes of social relationships which it wants to be safeguarded against intrusion by other cultures. Culture as said earlier, is an

3. Mazumdar, H.T., Grammar of Sociology, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1967, p.519.

important factor to maintain the cohesion and unity of a social group. It helps the group to survive as a unit by fostering the subordination of the individual member to the collective welfare. But which it helps the group to remain intact, it precludes adoption of elements from other cultures. However, a culture that insists on such preclusion and clings stubbornly to its old cultural practices, in course of time ceases to remain dynamic and becomes a liability rather than an asset.

What is work? We commonly use the term in two senses. The first and broader sense is that of purposive activity entailing the expenditure of energy at some sacrifice of pleasure. The second and narrower sense is that of income producing activity.

The latter is more appropriate for our discussion. A definition chosen must be arbitrary. It is however important to choose one which does not represent work simply as something people do not like doing. Work may be viewed from standpoint of the biologist as biophysiological effort, from the standpoint of management as task motivation and goal oriented behaviour, or from the newer and composite perspective of ergonomics as the physiological, psychological, anatomical and engineering features of

man in his working environment.⁴

Work can also be viewed in its social context, as one is involved in it behaviourally with others. In as much as work frequently occurs as group behaviour i.e. it is usually performed by some persons in connection or co-operation with other persons for the benefit of yet still other persons and often involves collective motivation, co-ordination and evaluation - it may be considered as a social activity. Work as social activity is pervasive phenomenon, and a significant portion of our life and group existence is labelled as O.G.Edholm has put it, "Work really includes all, or nearly all, human activity. Birth, marriage, death mean work for the midwife, priest and undertakers."⁵

4. Edholm, O.G., The biology of work York: McGraw Hill, 1967, p.16.

5. Ibid., p.7.

On the personal level, work may engender great fame or fortune. Conversely it may, by virtue of its limited rewards, bind one to a poverty level life style. It may dictate our daily routine, influence our choice of spouse, friends, shape our preference in leisure activities and colour our political and social views and behaviour. For one individual, work may be sublimely satisfying, the chief activity is his existence; for another the job may provide a singularly stultifying and frustrating experience in life. Work may even influence the likelihood and mode of our demise. Because it constitutes such a significant social factor in our lives. The field of our work seems to be worthy of attention by the researcher or the student of human social behaviour. Work is a basic human social process and is found in all societies, although social concept of work does not necessarily exist in all of them. In some simple societies, for example, work may consist of mere specialisation of function and so completely integrated into one general fabric of social life that it is part of experience of total existence and is not articulated as a separate and distant category of social behaviour. In such a society where work is not compartmentalised as a particular variety of

behaviour, values of good or bad, easy or difficult, honorific or menial can not attach themselves to it and it exist as it were a value free activity.

A man's occupation exerts a most powerful influence in assigning him and to his immediate family their place in society. The work a man does to earn his livelihood stamps him with mental and physical traits characteristic of the form and level of his labour, defines his circle of friends and acquaintances, affects the use of his leisure, limits his interest and attainment of his aspirations and tends to set the boundaries of his culture.

A historical study of meaning of work is not merely of abstract interest, because individuals in modern societies attach quite different meanings to work in general and different kinds of work in particular. Are these meanings intrinsic to the work process itself or have they merely become associated with work? Like all aspects of human activity, work behaviour is a function of how people regard the process. We are all to some degree atleast, creatures of our past. Human thoughts and feelings are not wholly determined by contemporary conditions. The ideas which surround human work are in part archaic

survivals of periods of human history when very different conditions of work prevailed.

The meanings ascribed to work cannot be derived directly from the nature of the activity, but have many complex social and cultural determinants. Some further insights into these determinants can be gained by exploring how the meanings ascribed to work have changed since the classical period of Greece and Rome.

As students of social behaviour, sociologists have long back recognised the activity of work as a significant and pivotal force in life and ethos of a society. Social philosophers and others who have addressed themselves to the behaviour of man in his social milieu have long been cognizant of the vast social implications of the characteristic pattern of work for a given society. Even if we exclude the early Greek philosophers, we find that as early as the thirteenth century, Ibn Khaldun, the Arab social historian, had recognised the influence of an individual's livelihood on his character and stressed the difference between different people arises out of

the difference in the occupations.⁶

The importance of work culture in economic development of a nation is well accepted and there are enough evidences to this effect available to us from the experiences of developed nations and those from the newly industrialised economies of Asia. Work culture means work related activities and the meanings attached to such activities in the framework of norms and values regarding work. These activities, norms and values are generally (but not always) contextualised in an organisation. An organisation has its boundaries, goals and objectives, technology, managerial practices, material and human resources as well as constraints. Its employees have skills, knowledge, needs and expectations. These two sets of factors - organisation and organismic interest and over time established roles, norms and values pertaining to work. It is this totality of the various levels of interacting factors around focal concern for work which is labelled as work culture.

6. Cited in Rollin Chambliss, Social Thought from Hammurabi to Comte, New York, 1954, p.305.

In some cases, work may be displaced from the focal position because of certain aberrations in some of the interacting factors.

A case in point is when non-work concerns come to occupy the central position. In such cases, the organisation seems to drift into non-work culture. In other words, organisational culture generally overlaps with work culture. However the two are conceptually different atleast within a short time span. For a non-work culture is likely to render an organisation non-viable and defunct over a longer period of time. Cultural forces influence a work organisation either directly by inducing the management to set up culturally required goals and objectives; by constraining and facilitating the transfer of technology; by providing a network of appropriate or inappropriate suppliers and clients, or indirectly by transmitting cultural norms and values through the employees. Therefore all major contradictions within an organisation have roots in the disjunctions within everchanging cultural forces of the surrounding milieu.⁷

7. Clegg, S. Power, Organizational theory, Marx & Critique, London, 1977, p.27.

Furthermore the work culture of a particular organisation is connected to a pan national technological advancements which tends to influence the work forms and organisational structures irrespective of the local cultural requirements.⁸ There may be another angle by which to view culture. The relevant setting for the concern for work may be a cluster of organisations located in a geographical or socio-political regions having its own features and demands on the people who live in that region. The interacting forces within the region might give rise to configuration which may be prototypical of the work culture in an organisation. This in turn is influenced by the work cultures of other organisations located in that region. The meaning of work, however was radically replaced by salvation through work.⁹ The

8. Pugh, D.S., The Aston Programme Perspective New York, 1981, pp.135-203.

9. Weber, M; The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism, London, Allen and Unwin, 1930.

Calvinist-religions demand for lifetime dedication and service was extended to the obligation for hard work which assured the nature of one's calling. Ousset and Creuzes preached; work in freedom. Man truly becomes free through his work and he is obliged to work because God has created him to be free. They added; work is the painful and glorious road that leads us to God itself and the most intimate happiness. Christ did not shrug off the burden of work, he transformed it into an instrument of virtue and a source of merit.¹⁰ Minville further elaborated the significance of work . He identified four reasons for work. People work in order to ensure subsistence, to create something useful, to improve themselves and to be in harmony with the environment with all its beauty, grandeur and truth. Work for Minville was a human act in its deepest inspiration, an act of love and an offering. Super referred to a review of literature spinning from ancient Greeks and Hebrews to the modern time by the task force of work in America in 1973. The review disclosed that people's work to sustain life to

10. Ibid., p.29.

maintain contact with reality, to be part of community to serve God to attain status, to produce goods and services, to structure time and to fulfil oneself through service to society. The view of work as a curse or a divine punishment was also revealed.

Once so realised, the work ethic functioned as an effective facilitator of rapid industrialisation and technological advancements. Together, these advancements cultivated synergetic interdependence and thereby developed the work culture of the West. Other institutions were either invented or modified to suit this work culture. The idea was to dissociate man from his social moorings and to transform him into a predictable productive unit which would draw its energy from the music of machines and would cool off during leisure to start its work afresh. Ideally, work should consist of activities through which man may realize himself. In other words work ethic, instead of being of terminal value must be subservient to a further growth of man. Work experiences must be so integrated with the totality of life experiences as to improve the quality of whole life.

Work is the single most important activity in the

life of the great majority of Australians. Bordow finds that while Australians love strong belief in the right to work, they do not necessarily subscribe to the practice of working hard. There exists a reflexive hatred of work itself and of any doctrine which preaches that work is worthy and necessary function. The old puritanic work ethic still persists among the executive classes. Elsewhere the shirk ethic marks the climate of time.¹¹ However this does not mean that Australians are lazy. Indeed they work hard but along with their leisure. Labitte is reported as stating that the Australian worker is either self centred or family centered but never work centered. Shears and others have identified a strong hedonistic orientation among Australians which co-exists with work oriented values¹². The emerging trends show ascendancy of the

11. Conway in Shears et al., Work Importance Study: Review of Literature Hawthorn Victoria, Australia, 1979, p.1.

12. Horne in Shares et.al. 1979.

former over the latter. Further more the younger age groups consider leisure to be more important than work. The leisure time activities are concentrated around home.

The British, American and other European workers are infact taking a lead in setting this trend. The Japanese worker works harder than others, but they do not start their life as workaholics. By the age of twenty, the Japanese are comparative to any American in their work commitments. However the importance of work stands increasing as the Japanese join organisation and reach the age of forty.¹³ At this stage they are much more committed to work than their American counterparts. But Americans, British and other European countries are showing less willigness to tolerate the harshness of society which coerced people to take unpleasant jobs. The enterprises are

13. Misumi, J. Meaning of work life, Osaka, Institute for Group dynamics, Osaka University, 1983, p.65.

striving to make work less pleasant by introducing automation, guest workers, schemes of job enrichment and now shifting to a four day week.

In short, the traditional concept of work seems to have lost its centrality in the life of the people of the West. Other activities which are equally useful to society or are enjoyable are performed with high motivation. The concept of work is probably undergoing radical transformation. The trend is now towards expanding the concept of work and integrating the various life roles in a more meaningful way.

The organisational structure, administrative procedures and work methods were all patterned after the British organisation. The British were the first to introduce the Western type of public administration in India. The East India company utilised the services of military and civil servants to manage the Indian organisation. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of Indian owned companies increased rapidly particularly in the cotton textiles but the management remains in the hands of the Europeans. In 1895, 42.4 % of the managers and mechanical engineers in the Bombay Cotton Mills were

Europeans. Only six out of seventy mills were controlled by the Indian agencies.¹⁴ In this way, Indian organisations were patterned on British style.

Myers considered Indian managerial style to be authoritarian. The validity of Myers' contention is yet to

be ascertained, there is some evidence to show that Indian Managers behave in a way that is midway between bureaucratism and authoritarianism.¹⁵ Despite the fact that Indian subordinates prefer their senior's nurtured style which is found to be effective in certain situations. The disparity between the two - actual and preferred is probably one reason for how work motivation is formed in work organisation. The effect is becoming increasingly more pronounced even as the industrial activities have expanded.

14. Rungta, R.S., Business Corporation in India 1851-1900. Cambridge, The University Press, 1970, p.50.

15. Ganguli, H.C. Structure and Process of Organisation, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1964.

The rapid expansion of industrial activities required large scale import of Western technology and work forms which were also expected to contain Western work values of the Protestant ethic nature. The work values, however, were not internalised by the Indians to the expected extent.¹⁶ The value of work is not intrinsic to Indian culture, there exists a culture of 'aaraam' which roughly means rest and relaxation without preceded by hard and exhausting work. Although there are large regional variations, it is not difficult to find a large number of people sitting here and there doing nothing. Even those who are employed often come late to office and leave early unless they are forced to be punctual. Once in office, They receive friends and relatives who feel free to call at any time without any prior appointments. People relish chatting and talking over a cup of tea while work suffers. Quite often, people visit ailing friends and relatives or go out of their way to help them in their personal matters even during office during office hours while working. One is struck by the slow and clumsy actions, indifferent attitudes

16. Sinha, J.B.P., The Task Leader New Delhi, Concept Publishing, 1990.

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procedure rather than outcome, orientation and lack of consideration for others.¹⁷

In sum, work forms in India remain embedded in surrounding milieu despite the import of technologically complex work organisations from the West. Indian work organisations missed the experiences of the industrial revolution. Therefore they remained alien to large and impersonal organisation. Instead the Indian organisations were shaped by colonial experiences that bureaucrised them and polarised the position of the ruled and the rulers. In the post independent period, work organisations were put to the service of national development. As a result, in some organisations social justice and welfare considerations got an edge over growth and productivity. Gradually work behaviours turn into habits and habits assume the perspectives of values. Work behaviours, work related values and work centrality support and constitute the focal variables of work culture.

17. Sinha, J.B.P., "Psychic relevance of work in Indian Culture", Dynamic Psychology, Nov.1985, p.18.

SOCIAL CONTEXT OF WORK CULTURE IN INDIA

In the context of organisations, the concept of work culture is more clearly defined and identifiable. A corporate entity is a closely-held society where certain groups of people are assembled to achieve certain specified job. The entrepreneur is a leader who has taken the initiative to such an entity formation. Given the fact that work culture in this context is an outcome of the interactive process and can be manipulated to advantage through appropriate human relations, one is tempted to conclude that establishing a productive work culture in an organisation is a relative simple task.

Yet, it is observed that it has been a major issue of concern all over the world and in every country, though there may be differences in the level and degree. It is, therefore, no wonder that this has attracted the attention of management experts, sociologists, policy makers and others for quite some time. Diagnosing human situations in the context of an organisation is a key area of management study.

Unfortunately, importance of studying human

behaviour from the point of view of organisational success has been long neglected in our country. This may be primarily due to excessive unemployment and under employment situation. But this is not important. What is important to note is that even when there is so much of unemployment and people then the risk of losing employment, there is lack of commitment and motivation on the part of the employees and the incidence of organisational failure is too high.

For long, the tendency has been to find fault with the workers, the unions etc. They were no doubt right, but only to some extent. The entrepreneurs and the managers, responsibilities were overlooked. In a way, the approach was more authoritarian and feudal, rather than professional. It is only recently that we find emergence of a more scientific approach and some concern for total quality management encompassing human resource development and employee involvement.

Here it becomes pertinent to draw a profile of Indian worker. There have been many studies in India projecting the image of the Indian worker from several angles. Some of them have emphasised the inherent weaknesses oriented authors have projected qualities into the Indian worker which were not present nor were

found necessary by later studies. This, group of studies has concluded that the worker in India is not adaptive to Industrial culture; he is either uncommitted or is semi-committed. Some of the recent studies in this field have refuted this claim. The Indian worker is projected to be committed to work in Industry.

It is said that the religions and traditional social values have so deeply influenced the attitudes of the workers that the logic of industrialism fails to find a strong foothold among the workers. Inkles (1969:21), Weber (1938:326), David McClelland (1961:357), W.S. Taylor, (1948:3-12) D. Marain (1957: 178) are of this view. In other words they believe that that there are inherent weaknesses in the basis personality structure of the Indian worker who being averse to modern attitudes and values create problems of work commitment in industry and other spheres of life. But some of the recent studies in this field have reputed this finding.

There is another group of studies which have directly dealt with the Indian industrial worker. Ornati (1955:46) Myers and Kannapan (1970:87), Moore (1951:355) all point to a single important fact that

industrial work holds no attraction for workers who are emotionally and socially attached to village and agriculture way of life. Their movement to industries was not voluntary. They would go to village at the first opportunity. They also have defined commitment in terms of severance of village ties and permanent stay in urban areas, deriving their subsistence solely from the wages provided by work in industry.

The Whitley commission report states that the link with the village is a distinct asset. It recommends that the general aim should not be to snap it but to strength it. The contention that workers had a desire to go back to village is also contested. The Rege Commission in 1946 concluded that the working class had become more stabilized and organised. Workers were prepared to stick to the town to a greater extent than before. Milton Singer finds Fallacy in Weber's contention that belief in Karma creates a man's condition and observes that it only explains and justifies it. McGregor observes that "Hindus do work hard, save invest, try to improve their position, discipline their behaviour in most exacting ways and arrive on time for appointments. These very people may also believe in karma mysticism and Fate". Another

western scholar Morris D.Morris points out actually passive sense of opportunity is a consequence not of ideological and institutional arrangement but of lack of opportunity in the society. He further pointed out that "Historically it is evident that a transformation of traditionally organised rural population into a committed labour force has not been socially difficult in India" (M.D.Morris, 1960:199).

The National Commission on labour (1969) has reported that with the changing industrial landscape of the country, growth of new industrial townships and dispersal of activity, a process of industrial civilization has set in. As a result, the new worker is emerging within the category of Industrial labour with distinct urban characteristics and social mobility. Further commission says that earlier migrants have an urge to go back to the village but the later ones show increasing commitment to urban life and factory work.

Karnik draw a profile of Indian worker general: (a) As head of Family the bread winner workmen are highly committed to social and Familial responsibility. A work satisfying his ego would hold him

(b) Worker wants to succeed without working for it - he has the ability but not the will to work hard. Workers by and large are averse to advancement by dint of hard work. The resulting dissatisfaction induces him to blame anyone, except himself

(c) The free and self respecting individual - industrial work environment calls for sacrifice on the part of the worker the who perceives a threat to his freedom and respect and so he revolts against law and authority (d) worker as a union member and agitator finds great hope in trade unionism.

In India, the Western values (e.g., autonomy, impersonality achievement, ability utilization, risk taking etc.) which seem to be directly related to individual work behaviour and centrality of work in one's life space have not been imbibed in totality, but they co-exist with traditional social and cultural values while studying bureaucratic ethos in India and other developing countries, Fred W. Riggs termed these society as Prismatic.¹ In a Prismatic society family

1. Riggs Fred W., Administration in Developing Countries, the theory of Prismatic Society, Botson,

Houghton Mifflin, 1964.

welfare, nepotism, community, caste, play a significant role in the working of appointments to various administrative positions and in the performing of certain administrative functions. On the other hand bureaucratic culture of developed countries is characterized by universality of laws, objectivity and impersonal relationship. Moreover in a prismatic society, on the other hand, the traditional behaviour pattern coexists with 'new' sets of norms. As a result of overlapping of the 'formal' and effective standard of conduct, the prismatic 'society's' social interactions are characterised by a lack of consensus on the norms of behaviour.

Now there are certain social values in India which directly affect work behavior. They are preferences for (i) hierarchical social structures and relationships (ii) social networking through me-other dictionary (ii) personalized relationships (iv) Power differentials. These social value can be dealt in some detail one by one.

By and large, the Indian social structure is based on the culture of superior-subordinate relationships with a clear allocation of rights and duties across the

boundaries which determine the legitimate social hierarchy.² Indian feel comfortable in the superior-subordinate framework. Hence peer group relationships induce anxiety till the peers are ranked on some real or imaginary dimension and thereby the relationship manifest equality is transformed into some kind of hierarchy.

The hierarchical framework is so pervasive that, according to Kakar (1978), the Indian child internalizes the process of hierarchical structuring of persons and relationships. He tends to develop a relative superiority to some and subordination to others. He must protect and take care of those who are inferior to him and maintain differences and respectful compliance with his superiors. Thus, while social comparison is the basis for hierarchical structure, effective reciprocity functions as a shock absorber and prevents the system from getting disrupted by too many social comparisons and vertical differentiations. The net result is what Srinivas called vertical solidarity.

2. Kothari, R., Politics in India, New Delhi Orient Longman, 1970, p.261.

That is, once a hierarchy is established, the members respective of their positions is that hierarchy extend support to each other. Together they form a cohesive group or team. Indian teams do not consist of equals, they consist of unequals who are inter-dependent and supportive of each other in a affection-deference framework of relationship.

The interaction patterns with the outside members are strikingly different. The ingroup members compete with the outgroup members rather than co-operate, exploit rather than accommodate, and so on. It seems, the more the ingroup members trust each other, the more they distrust the outgroup members. The positive passion for own personal people seems to be accompanied by equally strong negative relations to impersonal strangers. As a result, the more narrowly the ingroup's boundaries are drawn, the more pervasive will be the disruptive forces at the social level. Similarly, the fewer the in-groups or the sharper the demarcation between ingroups and out groups, the more will be the occurrence of conflicts in a society.

A contractual relationship is too mechanical and

lifeless for them, and therefore, it fails to get them involved in their job. These members perceive work as part of social relationships, and work place as an extension of their social setting. Hence, they extend the social relationship to the place of work and tend to personalise them. Kakar, observed that what an Indian is sensitive to are not the goals of work and productivity that are external to the relationship, but the relationship itself, the unfolding of emotional affinity.³ In order to establish a personalised relationship, a superior is expected not only to take personal interest in the job related problems of his subordinates and to guide them in their career advancement, but he should also take interest in his subordinate's personal and family problems, such as, education and marriage of children, and health of family members. The subordinates are expected to reciprocate by paying social calls to the superior and seeking his guidance and suggestions even in

3. Kakar, Authority patterns and subordinate behaviour in Indian organisations, Administrative Science Quarterly, 1971, p.125.

confidential matters.⁴

The salience of ingroups is determined situationally. People are found to shift their allegiance from one level to another or type ingroup rather easily superiors and co-workers often become more relevant in the context of once job related matters.⁵ Poverty or the perception of scarcity leads to either the shrinking of an ingroup or a shift towards the primordial ingroups such as family. In a backward society, family remains the only viable and lasting ingroup.

Indians are considered to be high on the power

4. Dayal, I. The cultural factors in designing performance appraisal system SRC Industrial Relations and Human Resources, New Delhi, 1976, p.10.

5.S.K.Singh, Social Groups within a work organisation, Dissertation. Patna Univrersity, 1986.

need (Hitchcock and Mintum). Since sources are scarce and there are number of aspirants for them, each person must struggle to acquire and monopolize the resources in order to ensure his survival and security against the engulfing poverty. So the person must have power so that he can acquire monopolise the resources. So the more power he has the better-off he would be against the odds. In a society where a large number of people live in close proximity for generations, power need is expressed the special forms of relationships.

In traditional India, according to McClelland, power need was expressed through giving i.e. helping and sacrificing for others. This is true but only within an group which is characterized by affective reciprocity. The more one gives selflessly the more one gets' is an ancient Indian saying. The superior 'gives' in terms of affection, nurturance, blessing and subordinates in terms of loyalty, submissiveness and obedience. The resulting relationship is such that power flows freely in both directions. In real life organisations these values are reflected in the form of ingratiating and flattery. J.Pandey systematically

investigated the phenomenon of ingratiation in the Indian society. The reports the existence of a ubiquitous presence of ingratiating tactics to influence and control others, irrespective of sub-cultural and cultural variations in the society. A superior who is ingratiated by his worker positively evaluate the worker in terms of his success, promotion. Superior himself feels more powerful because of the ingratiation and Flattery by his workers.

The inter-group power relationship is, of course a different matter. here the battle lines are drawn clearly and there exists sufficient legitimacy to use a win-lose strategy. Although the Indian culture still emphasizes co-operation or at least accommodation and discourages conflict, a group can always blame other groups for violating the norms and thereby exciting retaliatory measures. Allegiance to one's ingroup aggravates conflicting situations. There are, however, overriding common concerns and superordinate goals which often help the fighting groups contain their conflicts.

These values seem to reflect the Indian preference for maintaining relationship over socially neutral work in an impersonal setting work is valued if it helps

maintain the relationship. Of course, Indian's work as hard as any other nationality if they are working for themselves. They also work hard for those whom they consider their own and for superiors who maintain personalised relationships and allow the subordinates to depend on them for work as well as non work matters. Outside this relational framework, work is performed half heartedly. However the same set of values which used to interfere with work can facilitate work behaviour. This happens only if organisations create inter-dependence between employee needs and organisational goals. The employees from all levels cooperate to make the organisation productive so that all the profits may facilitate the measures of social justice and welfare.

Work culture, as we have analysed its emergence in the Indian context, is a product of a complicated socio-political-economic circumstances,, An individual's work culture reflects his/her response to the environment he/she is subjected to. Dealing with the problem of low work culture is thus not an easy task. Essentially, it is a question of motivating and involving people. For the purpose, perhaps, first of all, there will be need for improving the objective conditions as constituted by social, political and

economic interface and then motivating factors need to be encouraged. Dealing with the objective conditions first, it is a social responsibility that different power groups have to fulfill. But it may be Utopian to think that there would be a massive social awakening all of a sudden. Hence, the government, as custodian of the society will have a primary role. The government through appropriate policy choices and changes in the manner of governance, can create favourable conditions under which social, political and economic organisations and therefore individual undergo behavioural transformation.

The dedication to work has been built through the interplay of a host of historical socio-cultural, economic and organisational factors. The driving force for the economic miracle, however, originated from a sense of competition rooted in the survival need. The

Japanese not only compete in the international arena but also with each other at every junction in society. The pressure to compete started building rather early in the life of the Japanese parents strive to get a twelve year boy into a private junior high school of repute so that three years later his chances of getting into a private senior high school may improve for both

admissions the boy is required to write difficult tests.

However, the most difficult is the nationwide university entrance examination held by a commission sponsored by the ministry of education. The top scores are accepted by the Universities of repute. Many of which also hold further screening examinations and interviews of their own. Once admitted in the top universities, the job prospect in top companies or in the government is assured. But in order to score high, a Japanese boy has to work hard. The Parents rescheduled their family activities, modify their daily habits, and the mother takes time out to help the boy in his studies. He is required to learn by rote and is sent to private tuitions. Graduate students earn roughly Rs.100 an hour and school teachers earn even more in private tuitions. The competition gets ingrained in their life style.

Like individuals, the organisation itself is a social entity and has its own set of needs and behaves, more or less, the same way to satisfy its needs. The employer's primary concern, naturally, lies in fulfilling the objectives of the organisation and its interests. It is a tactical mistake to assure that the

employees are not concerned with the well being of the organisation. The national employees are, infact, very much concerned about the organisation they work for and therefore, seek to be involved in the affairs of the management. This is what highlights the importance of workers participation in management and co=partnership. This, as a concept, has not been very popular in India as yet, though some organisations have successfully experimented this approach.

Establishing harmonious industrial relations and productive work culture may remain a distant dream so long as the people are considered as external to the organisation and elements hired for the purpose of achieving management goals. This approach, which is often the case in our country, assumes people as a tradeable community to be purchased in the market place at a given price. Truly speaking, in the typical sense, it is indeed so, but even then a commodity needs to be handled, preserved and maintained to be able to derive the utilities. But the science of management has, fortunately, moved far away from the 19th century concept of labour and its price and today people have come to occupy the central place in the management thoughts.

The example to be followed, in this respect, has been set by the Japanese through their people - centric management by dint of which they are able to capture the mantle of economic power. The principles of exchange economy cannot really be extended to employee management. This is not to suggest that, as we often do in the case of technology, we transplant Japanese Management Practices into Indian soil, but to emphasise the need for people-centric management.

After having discussed the concept of industrial work and the importance of work ethos in the Indian context it is essential to discuss the meaning of commitment in order to describe the nature of the problem of work commitment in India. The meaning of the concept is discussed first as a general concept and then as a concept used in the industrial field.

In the context of industry also the term commitment has been used in several senses. Commitment involves both performance and acceptance of behaviour appropriate to an industrial way of life. The concept is thus concerned with overt actions and norms. A most commonly used definition was given by Myers. "We can say that a committed labour force has developed, when

workers no longer look on their industrial employment as temporary, when they understand and accept the requirements of working as a part of a group in a factory or other industrial enterprise, and when they find in the industrial environment a more adequate fulfillment of personal satisfaction than they enjoyed in the village or rural society.⁶

A commitment worker is one who stays on the job and who has severed his major connections with the land. He is a permanent member of the industrial working force, receiving wages and being dependent for making a living on enterprise management which offers him work and directs his activities at the work place. It is emphasised that such a worker is fully urbanised and never expects to leave industrial life.⁷

6. Myers, C.A. & Kannappan, S. Industrialization of India, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1970, p.87.

7. Kerr, C.etc. Industrialism and Industrial Man, Heinemann, 1962.

In general terms, the word commitment has been used for a variety of purposes with multiple connotations. The predominant tone of concept remains moral and emotional. In these two senses it has been widely used in the context of the community, political life and social relationships of primary nature. These qualities of this concept have made it less amenable for use in a sociological analysis. Out of several views expressed, the most neutral analysis attempted was by Becker, which is devoid of any moral, psychological or irrational elements in it. It is predominantly a descriptive term used for describing a situation of consistency in behaviour in spite of cognizable disincentives to stay in a line of activity. Instead of a search for indicators of commitment, operationally it was found convenient to investigate orientation of the workers towards the constituents of the work situations in the industry, indicating a desire among the workers to prefer and stay in industrial work, like their present jobs and the place of work and express a favourable attitude towards the management and the programme of management participation.

Thus Commitment is considered to be important for peaceful and productive work performance in an organization., it emerges much later in life when a person, after having rejected several alternatives, finally gets settled in a particular line of activity and becomes more or less consistent in his work performance. It is the consistency of behaviour which is taken to be the central ethos of the concept of commitment in industrial work for the present . It does not denote an extreme but a state of balance. It is assumed that complete undiluted loyalty to work is only an ideal. The problem of incompatibility between demands of one's job and those of other social activities within as well as outside the work place exist even in the most advanced industrial societies. It implies that an analysis of commitment will be more fruitful at the orientation level than at the level of actual behaviour of the worker which is conditioned by several factors beyond control and is difficult to operationalise at the same time.

It appears from the above discussion that the use of the term work commitment in the industrial context has been in a limited sense, unlike its use in wider terms. But the definitions are predominantly management biased. They fail to distinguish between commitment to

industrial work and commitment to management. The definitions have, by and large, been overemphatic on severance of ties with village homes, exclusive dependence on industrial wages and the security measures provided by it, acceptance of the norm framework and orientation to seek satisfaction in industrial work alone, an urban taste and pattern of living. Entry of women in industrial work is also taken to be a symbol of development of work commitment in industry. These characteristics as described in various definitions point out their lack of concern for social context. The stage or a particular region and traditional social values of society are an important variable in determining the pattern of commitment that might emerge in Indian society. It is also difficult to agree that these factors will automatically lead to emergence of commitment.

Management is the key factor in structuring the labour force. Management style is another determinant of commitment. Modern ideas and studies pointed out to the importance of democratic pattern of management but

finding like of Ganguli, 1964⁸ Sinha, 1975 have suggested the importance of authoritarian style for development of commitment. The later style is also suggested because Indian personalities have a tendency to seek nurturant behaviour⁹ hence it is personal behaviour rather than institutionalized obligations which will determine the nature of commitment.

The Workers Commitment is a consequence of managements commitment. In the modern context, the problem of lack of commitment among workers is attributed to several other factors. Regarding, the first five year plan (1973) it is pointed out that the management in public undertaking possesses the right type of orientation. It is further stated that management in most public sector undertaking is technical in outlook and reacts to organisation problems in a mechanical manner, indifferent to its human aspects.

8. Ganguly, H.C., Structure of process of organizations, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1964.

9. Sinha, D.N., Personal Factors in Absenteeism, The

This kind of approach is not conducive for inducing commitment-among workers. While the existing potentialities of workers to cooperate with the management need to be fully utilized, the workers must be properly oriented to provide the right perspective for participation.

The profile of worker as described earlier clearly points out that education and training are two strong forces that tend to alter the traditional culture and system of soles. The industry can make a production use them for improving human efficiency and organisational performance. The better educated, socially and economically, comparatively well off these workers will demand a better treatment than was meted out to their predecessors. When there is security of job, inspiration of work, facilities of welfare and opportunity of expression, a worker is more commitment oriented.

PERSPECTIVES ON WORK CULTURE : WESTERN,

JAPANESE AND INDIAN

After a discussion on work culture in Indian perspective, now we shall concentrate on Western and Japanese work ethos with special reference to Japan, which in 1968 overtook the Federal Republic of Germany to rank as number three in the world following US and USSR in GNP growth rate averaged around ten per annum. Not only Japan's industries achieved prosperity, but its foreign trade also expanded enormously. There have also been continuous changes in the structure of Japanese industry and composition of exports. In the 1950s textiles accounted for a large part of industrial output and exports. Ships, steel, machine tools and optical instruments became prominent later; and these were followed in the 1970s by consumer electronics and automotive vehicles.

Many reasons have been given from time to time to explain Japan's success such as its low labour cost, cultural and linguistic homogeneity of its people, its social system, attitude towards

technological change, work ethics of its people and its management system. No one factor, however, gives a complete explanation of the reasons underlying Japan's achievement. A combination of many factors is behind its achievement. Since the social norms, and work ethics in India are different from those in Japan the question that arises is: Whether a system which works in Japan will also work in India? Mere adoption of the Japanese system does not guarantee success therefore what is taken from Japan must be adapted to suit our requirements and conditions. Adaptation again is not an easy process. It is beset with many difficulties.

The phenomenal success of Japanese enterprises during the post-war years has attracted considerable global attention and it is generally accepted that this success has been achieved by a superior management technique. Therefore much interest has generated about Japanese work methods all over the world, and various studies have been carried out everywhere to adopt such methods. In this enthusiasm it was forgotten that the culture of the Japanese people, their values and beliefs had a major role to play in shaping this management style. It is not uncommon these days to find developed as well as

developing countries alike adopting Japanese methods, like quality circle activities, human resources managements such as continuous education, training and job rotation, enterprise trade union system, and labour management co-operation in the decision making processes. In India, too, this is being done in the wake of a large number of Indo-Japanese collaboration agreements.

On the face of introduction of Japanese work methods in the Indian social and economic milieu, there appears to be a lot of commonality between Indian and Japanese way of life; its ethics, culture and work philosophy which in the ultimate analysis forms the foundation and groundwork for all human relationships, and therefore of management philosophy.¹ For example, in both countries religion plays a very dominant role in the life of the people, and in both nations there is respect for seniority and age. This affinity is, however,

1. Brig, N.B. Grant "Japanese Management Syndrome: Its Applicability to Indian Culture. The Mangement Review, vol.10, no.2, 1983, p.17.

superficial and deep down there are differences between our value system and theirs. Notions such as loyalty to and identification with the company where one works are totally alien to us. In Japan, on the other hand, these are very basic values. We are individualistic in outlook and approach whereas Japanese are collectivists.

The concepts of class and status are found in both of the countries. But whereas its effects on industrial organisation in India have been to create a gap between the managerial cadre and workers, in Japan, on the other hand, it has tended to lend strength to loyalty, respect for authority and devotion. Indian managers remain isolated because they are recruited from educated elite class; sometimes they get into their positions because of kinship with the owners of the enterprise. A strong status and class consciousness among Indian managers also creates a seedless multiplicity of hierarchies: a mechanic needs helper and a helper needs an assistant helper to hand over tools when the job is on. Similarly managerial personnel are averse to do their own filing and look around helpers and peons

to bill papers and carry bills on their behalf.²

Such hierarchies do not exist in Japanese Companies. A Japanese manager constantly remains at the shop floor, mixed with the workers and is generally familiar with what is going on around him. The manager has a chance to talk to his subordinates on the job, know their attitudes and their problems. Indian managers in contrast have inadequate understanding of their blue collar workers and their attitudes as they never work on the shop floor. They rarely mix and exchange ideas with subordinates, remain aloof, highly class conscious and authoritative. As a result, the subordinates are passive, ignorant and unproductive and therefore, tend to be less co-operative.

Indian work ethos seem quite unresponsive to techniques based on hardwork and good results as in

2. Nakalan, 'A Japanese Perspective" Business World, Dec. 8, 1986, p.37.

the West and to method based on loyalty, trust and fulfilment as in Japan. Unfortunately, today we are at the crossroads of the two systems without a Philosophy which we can truly call our own.³ Due to a long suppression of Indian workers, and their separation from management, they lack collective spirit, feeling and belongingness and maturation to work together for the prosperity of the company, which is the essence of the success of Japanese work methods.

The system of job rotation, is based on the philosophy that the longer one stays in a job, the more specialised one becomes but the opportunities for gaining a variety of experience are lost. Although rotation or relocation of personnel brings about an initial drop in efficiency, these sections or jobs help employees, view the activities of the company in a wider perspective in the long run.⁴ With rotation of job employee's morale is

3. Grant, op.cit., p.17.

4. Tanmio Hattori, "Employees Participation: The Key to Japanese Productivity", Business India, Oct. 10-23, 1983, p.115.

improved and it gives a wider human contact in the workplace. When they become middle level managers, with all these contacts they can get required consensus for a group decision making. Infact, the competence of Japanese middle managers to be decision originators in the group decision making system owes much to the job rotation system.⁵ Management practices in Japanese companies are unique in many respects in comparison with Western or American methods of industrial management. Western management practices are authoritative and individualistic where most decisions are taken by the top authority without any reference to the floor-level employees who are actually involved in production. There is a clear division of labour and employees are appointed for some particular work as specialists. Each employee's promotion and wage increments are based on his individual performance in achieving the results, as he works independently and not in a group.

5. Navta Sasaki, Management and Industrial Structure in Japan, Oxford, 1981, p.37.

Management in a Western company focuses on short run profits, and therefore those who failed to show good results in the short run can be terminated. Thus, there is no job guarantee. Employees are, as a result, not motivated to work hard, and they have no close emotional attachment with the company. The relationships between the management and the workers are limited to the factory only. Worker's dissatisfaction is very common in a Western company.

A Japanese employee does not just consider his work place as a place where he comes to earn his bread, but is emotionally attached to his company as a member of a big family. Emphasis is placed on group activities, and each individual's performance is not analysed on individual basis but on group-based performance.

A close and intimate relationship between subordinates and superordinates helps to maintain familism in the company and it encourages employees to stay in the company for a longer period of time. Seniority based Promotion and salary reduce the possibility of conflict among the employees as all the employees joining in the same year get promoted

almost together in the early stages of their careers.

Work methods in most large Indian companies are closer to the management styles of the West. Authority in a typical Indian company is heavily concentrated at the top; the relationships between workers and managers are confined to the factory only; emphasis of the company is on short-term profits and human factors have always been given secondary importance. Indian managers treat their workers as paid servants and the class and status consciousness among them is very deep. Workers therefore, are less devoted to the work they do, which often leads to disputes between the workers and management. All this has hampered productivity and quality improvement of Indian products and as a result our products are sub-standard in the international markets. Moreover quality circles activities have brought untold blessings to Japan by expanding market for Japanese goods by removing sources of customer dissatisfaction adding competitiveness of Japanese companies and increasing

employment security.⁶

The Japanese system of work management has attracted international attention as the key factor behind the success of Japanese companies though in the course of rapid economic growth Japan often turned to the West to locate an appropriate model, and learnt work methods from Western Corporations, Japanese managers selectively picked and diligently studied what suited them most. They assimilated many Western work culture concepts in their companies according to their own needs, conditions and work ethos. One of the most characteristics of Japanese management is that it is in principle groupist and collectivist unlike the individualistic and hierarchical system of management in the west. All employees seem to possess what may be called group cohesiveness and they identify themselves with an organisation, strive to work as a part of a well knit team and promote the group welfare, because such an effort enlarges his own welfare. Since the

6. Maritani Masanori, Japanese Technology, Fontana, Collins, 1987, p.91.

firm has to business as a well knit team the values that are cherished are mutual trust, co-operation harmony and identification with the task of group. The aim is to improve group performance and to strengthen group solidarity.

The condition of co-operation is a social group as well as economic unit, and harmony exists in Japanese organisation because there is absence of conflicts and adversarial relationships among person who are vertically positioned. The complete identity of the individual with his company *ittaika* as it is called in Japan produces a long term, unlimited and flexible relationships. Japanese managers rely heavily on a kind of emotional relationship with their staff and thus are expected to possess the skill to bear and maintain such human relations.

Japanese employees too, are aware of the fact that they have to remain in the enterprise for a long period and so they tend to retain good relations with other employees for a long period. Everyone is careful to maintain good relations with others. Once established, these relations are not limited to give and take relations i.e. exchange of help and information on the job. they tend to skill

over into other spheres of life, including sharing of leisures, emotional and personal interchanges etc., Relations among members of Japanese enterprises tend to be long in duration and unrestricted in coverage. This close personal relationship between labour and management is the clue to the success of Japanese work culture. Workers are far more co-operative in Japan in their drive for higher productivity and rapid economic growth. Industrial disputes are very few and the trade unions work with management for the growth of the company.

Another important feature of Japanese work culture arises from the difference in management goals. Outside Japan the norm is rational management based on rewards for achieving the stated goal of pursuing profit; the Japanese operation seeks prosperity and fulfilment for the organisation and its personnel rather than short term profit. Japanese entrepreneurs and employees are willing to sacrifice their personal short term interests for the long term prosperity of the company. The main objective of Japanese corporations is always to improve product quality. Elsewhere managers are not to use cost cutting as the primary weapon for improving the company's financial performance,

Japanese managers tend to stress better product quality as the primary means of increasing the company's market share.

Indeed, this overwhelming emphasis on quality is accepted by everyone as a major factor in Japan's enormous success in capturing world markets. The concept of Zero defect has become at most a national movement and a way of life in Japan. Great emphasis is put on quality improvement through small group activities, described as quality circle activities. Awards are given for a successful quality improvement activity and workers are always encouraged to willingly participate in such voluntary activities.

The success of Japanese companies has attracted world wide attention and Japanese work culture is being adopted by some Indian companies. Japanese methods of distinction and discriminations are common in industrial organisations outside Japan. Such distinctions are minimal or non-existent in Japanese organisation where a high degree of homogeneity exists in terms of class, educational background, regional roots and salary differences. The distinction between office staff and workers is

also minimal. Both wear the same uniform. Managers have the same working hours as workers, use the same canteen toilet and other facilities and the senior and junior office staff members work together with same office. Hall-managers have no special cabins and do not have personal secretaries. As everyone is covered by the life time employment and seniority reward system everyone has job security and the low salary differential between the lowest and highest paid employees.

On the whole the stress in Japan is on co-operative team work and not on specialists; on collective decision making and not on decision making on the top; on life long commitment to the firm and devotion to work, not on weak loyalty and on groupism and mutual dependence not on individualism. Japanese firms do not consider individual as a piece of machinery or tool, but try to uphold the prestige and feeling of their employees. The ultimate goal is to create a sense of security and pride among workers so that they continuously improve their quality and efficiency.

One of the most important features of Japanese trade unions is that they are enterprise based

unlike the credit or industry based union of the West. The enterprise union means that on factory or company rather than associating people in different companies do in similar job. Though, in Japan too, there are a few exceptions where unions are based on craft or industry they constitute only a tiny proportion of organized labour. Since in an enterprise union members have no connection with any outside union and the union leaders are also the employees of the company, they put genuine demands to the management and try to solve their disputes within themselves.

Japanese trade unions work with management to ensure the prosperity and success of the company. The workers knows that in a life time employment system, his prosperity depends upon prosperity of the company, because he has to stray in the company for his entire life time. On the other hand management also knows that cooperation and harmony with the employees will always help in building a familial atmosphere in the corporation and can reduce the labour management disputes. Therefore they give high priority to the union demands and try to find out solutions within the enterprise, management provides information to the union about

the current condition and future prospects of the enterprises and pay the necessary expenses for supporting union activities, in order to cultivate and nurture cooperative relationship with the employee and, to secure their commitment to the firm's goals.⁷

In such a situation the need is felt for a system which can encourage good labour-management relationships within the company, develop a feeling of involvement among the employees by allowing them to participate in decision making, reduce the class and status differentiation and provide an opportunity to learn more through company training programmes. In this context it seems that the adoption of some features of Japanese work culture can be most useful for our Indian companies and improve work culture. The success of 'Maruti Udyog' tells us to what extent Japanese methods and its work culture have succeeded in Indian environment.

7. Kanaji Haitani, "Comparative Economic System", Asian Survey, vol.18, n.10, Oct.1978, p.311.

CONCLUSION

The importance of work culture in economic development of a nation is well accepted and there are enough evidences to this effect available to us from the experiences of developed nations and those of the newly industrialised economies of Asia. Conducive work culture help all work organisations which are conceived to be instrumental to national development in two ways. (a) Creation of wealth through high productivity, profit, surplus etc. and (b) social justice by promoting equitable distribution of the surplus generated by organisations.

The meanings attached to work have been changing through the developmental stages of human society. It was necessary for his survival and subsistence. Work was physical in nature, and the kind of activity one is obliged to do and not what one is likely to enjoy. Hence, one would like to avoid it if one could, and a person who is noble must not work. he should devote his time to other intellectual, spiritual or recreational pursuits. The meaning of work, however, was radically altered

under the protestant ethic where salvation by faith was replaced by salvation through work.

The work ethic functioned as an effective facilitator of rapid industrialisation and technological advancements. Together, these advancements cultivated synergetic inter-dependence and thereby developed the work culture of the west. Other institutions were either invented or modified to suit this work culture. The study brought out the differential nature of Commitment, i.e. all workers were not committed equally to all dimensions of work. Their commitment differed in terms of their own meaning and content of industrial work. The commitment was not rooted in any one factor, rather it was sustained by a set of complex interaction, and interrelationships between work situations, job aspects and personal attributes of the worker.

In India, there are some social values which strongly affect work behaviour. They are preferences of (i) hierarchical social structures and social relationships (ii) Social networking through me-other dichotomy (iii) Personalised relationships (iv) Power differentials. These values seem to reflect the Indian preferences for maintaining

relationship over socially neutral work in an important setting. Work is valued if it helps maintain the relationship. Of course, Indians work as hard as any other nationality, if they are working for themselves. They also work hard for those whom they consider own i.e. ingroup members and for superiors who maintain personalized relationships and allow the subordinates to depend on them for work as well as non-work matters. Outside this relational framework, work is shirked or performed half-heartedly.

However in some organisations the same set of values which used to interfere with work can facilitate work behaviours. This happens only if these organisations are financially viable and create interdependence between employee needs and the organisational goals. All employees in these organisations cooperate to make the organisation productive so that profits accrue to them also.

Industry draws most of its work force from local areas. Thus local conditions and local politics have considerable impact on work ethos of the people. Similarly, the industry is directly affected by the atmosphere within the state in which they

operate. Worker-Management relationship in India is, in general, uncongenial and based on mistrust and hatred. Trade unions have played considerable part in vitiating the atmosphere, but the management is no less responsible. One of the basic characteristics of the average Indian entrepreneur is that he does not appreciate the need for appropriate management-employee relationship. Working conditions within the factories, mainly basic facilities provided to workers, is often unhealthy.

Living conditions of the industrial workers in India are, by and large, poor. A substantially large number of worker and their families live in slums and or poorly constructed hutments. This is particularly true of workers employed in the small and medium scale units, many of whom do not even provide adequate social security benefits to the workers. So, it makes obvious that the general work culture in India is far from conducive and has been responsible for general inefficiency of the Indian economy. It is also obvious that a whole set of diverse and complex factors have given rise to the prevailing work culture and degraded value system in the country.

In a lackadaisical work culture, work seems to be displaced from its central place in the organisation by non-work activities and interests such as social-personal interests and obligations. Employees do not work hard do not feel positive affect for work do not derive satisfaction from their job, and do not locate work at the centre of their life space. They take work easy and try to maximize their personal gains. The opposite is true in efficient work culture where an organisation is perceived to be conducive to the extent that it seems natural that everybody should work hard and develop positive orientation for work. Here hard work is rewarded and there exists a strong normative pressure for working hard. It is found that assertive management cultivates efficient work culture and becomes more assertive and people oriented in the process.

However, despite the best that may be done on the part of the management, there will still be need for conscious move for a better work environment. Management's initiative may not be enough. The trade unions will also have an equally important role to play. Trade unions are important social and

economic forces and can play a positive role. To sum up, the imperatives for an effective work culture in an organisation, it is necessary to clearly defined objectives and interests of the organisation, shared feelings and commitment of the employers and the employees with interface based on mutual trust and confidence. The developmental role of trade unions, organisational flexibility of structure, participative management with responsibility for understanding the socio-cultural and other aspects of human relations need to be emphasized for an effective work culture.

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