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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	AN ANALYSIS ON THE PERCEPTIONS AND INITIATIVES OF CSR IN IT INDUSTRIES OF SOUTHERN INDIA <i>A. K. NEERAJA RANI & DR. G. SUNITHA</i>	1
2.	TRENDS AND INNOVATION IN MALE GROOMING INDUSTRY <i>DR. SANGEETA KOHLI & NIGAAR PATEL</i>	3
3.	METRICS & ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYER BRANDING <i>VENKATESH NAGA DEVAGUPTAPU</i>	5
4.	TEENAGER'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS: AN AREA CENTRIC ANALYSIS <i>ABHISHEK PANDEY & B.P. SINGHAL</i>	9
5.	THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE <i>T PRAVEEN KUMAR & DR. R. S. MANI</i>	13
6.	MANAGING HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE – VICIOUSLY WORRISOME FOR HUMAN CAPITAL SPECIALISTS IN VARIOUS RESORTS OF UTTARAKHAND <i>SHIKHA CHANDNA & DR. J. K. TANDON</i>	18
7.	LEADER SETS OFF THE CULTURE <i>DR. S. KRISHNAMURTHY NAIDU, D. SATYANARAYANA & E. SURESH</i>	21
8.	TRAINING OF YOUTH FOOTBALL PROJECTS AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAIN CLUB REFERS TO KEMBATA TEMBARO ZONE TOWNS PARTICIPANT CLUBS <i>DR. MILKYAS BASSA MUKULO</i>	23
9.	FACTORS AFFECTING THE BUYING BEHAVIOR AND BUYING PREFERENCES FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSES IN BANGALORE CITY <i>D. M. ARVIND MALLIK</i>	26
10.	JOB STRESS AND QWL OF EMPLOYEE'S IN TIRUPUR TEXTILE INDUSTRY <i>DR. R. KANAKARATHINAM</i>	33
11.	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN HUMAN RESOURCES <i>ARCHANA RAMCHANDRA PATIL</i>	37
12.	A STUDY ON STRESS LEVEL OF WORKERS IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NRI'S IN UAE) <i>AKHILA.P.S</i>	39
13.	e-PAYMENT: A SOLUTION IN POST DEMONETISATION ERA <i>MEENAKSHI MITTAL & NANCY BANSAL</i>	44
14.	ATTITUDE OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS IN SIVAKASI <i>DR. M. RIFAYA MEERA & H. SAKTHI VADIVEL PANDIAN</i>	47
15.	A STUDY ON FINANCIAL HEALTH OF BALRAMPUR CHINI MILLS LTD., UTTAR PRADESH <i>A. ROJAMMAL & DR. S. BABU</i>	60
16.	DIMENSIONS OF JOB SATISFACTION AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AT THE SRI LANKA ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION (SLIATE) <i>P.P.G.T. GURUGE</i>	66
17.	A STUDY ON 'ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT' ROLE OF TAMILNADU INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT CORPORATION IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT <i>R. MUTHUSAMY</i>	71
18.	A STUDY ON CUSTOMER PREFERENTIAL FACTORS TOWARDS LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA PRODUCTS IN MADURAI DISTRICT <i>S. KUMARESAN</i>	79
19.	MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE (MOS) OF BANKING OPERATIONS: A TECHNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE <i>Y. GEETHA DEVI</i>	85
20.	STUDY ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION <i>K.V.S. SREEDHAR</i>	87
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	92

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LEADER SETS OFF THE CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

To forge mutual benefit while running a business or organization generally depends on the interface between a leader and his followers. Most of us believe that leader is a major stake holder in the creation of organizational culture. In reality, the influence of followers on leader is also a considerable point. So, the interaction between a leader and follower will create an environment which has its impact on the overall functioning of the organization. Leaders exhibit various leadership styles to influence followers. In turn followers also demonstrate follower styles which influence the leadership style. The good fit between leadership style and follower style will make the organization more effective. The present paper evaluates the conceptual phenomenon that how mutual influence of leader and follower creates an organizational culture.

KEYWORDS

leadership and culture.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the process of influencing others towards accomplishment of goals. A manager’s leadership behavior is what makes the difference between effective and ineffective organizations. No organization is so well designed and managed that it can describe clearly what everyone must do on every occasion. All organizations rely and are clearly dependent on non-routine behavior of which only human beings are capable. No organization can be effective if it relies only on minimal levels of performance. Effectiveness results from tapping the potential of human beings in a useful way. Terry points out that “Leadership triggers a person’s will to-do and transforms lukewarm desires for achievements into burning passion for successful accomplishment”.

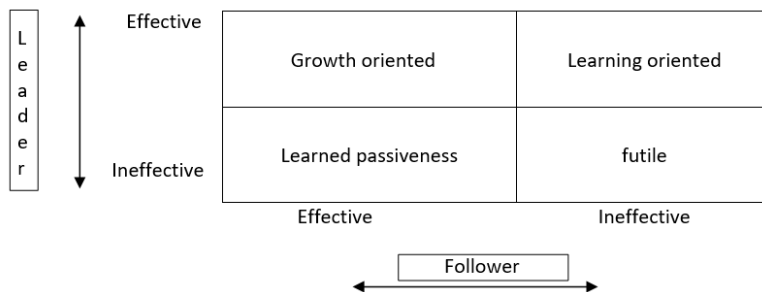
To be successful, a firm’s culture must be appropriate and supportive of the firm. The culture must invariably have certain values that can help the firm adapt to environmental changes. A value is something that has worth and importance to an individual. As such values help shape human behavior. Parents, friends, teachers, superiors and other reference group members can influence the individual values.

Organizational culture is set of values, norms and beliefs shared by members of an organization. Every member of the organization is a stake holder of organizational culture. The mere presence of a person can have influence on the culture. The influence of top level executives and department heads is relatively large on formation of culture at the department level and eventually at organizational level. As a system of shared values, the corporate culture reflects a climate within which people value the same things and apply these to benefit the organization as a whole.

Leadership involves the exercise of influence on the part of the leader over the perception, motivation, communication, personality and eventually over the behavior of the people, called followers. Leadership is, therefore, the study of leader’s influence on the thoughts, feelings, opinions and beliefs of the followers. The definition on leadership indicates that the leader influences the follower. However, it is viewed that the followers also influence leaders. Infact, leader and follower influence each other. The effectiveness of the leadership depends on their ability to influence each other. The present paper explores the outcomes of various leader-follower situations, there by the culture that results out of the leader- follower mutual influence. It can be found that there could be four kinds of situations exist at workplace.

The leader may be effective or ineffective and so follower.

FIG. 1



EFFECTIVE LEADER: Effective leader is one who is active, energetic and enthusiastic at work place. He works with vision and lead people towards the common objective. He always attempts to change the basic belief system of people. He also embraces the professional values.

INEFFECTIVE LEADER: An ineffective leader is one who maintains the status quo or even go down from the present state. They fail to produce the desired change. For reasons, that include missing traits, weak skills or he/she may be wrongly placed. As long as his survival is not at stake he never take risk. Risk aversion is his/her natural tendency. Dislikes any initiation and implicitly discourage subordinates in taking risks. They always worry to have an effective and energetic follower.

EFFECTIVE FOLLOWER: Effective follower is one who is achievement and growth oriented and thinks always to grow along with the organization. He believes that career growth is essential for survival in the corporate world. He expects guidance and mentoring from his boss.

INEFFECTIVE FOLLOWER: Ineffective followers are those who are inadequate or they don't demonstrate necessary skills and traits at the workplace and struggle for survival. They never think of growth, unless it is demanded for their survival. Very passive in nature and dislike aggressive leadership style.

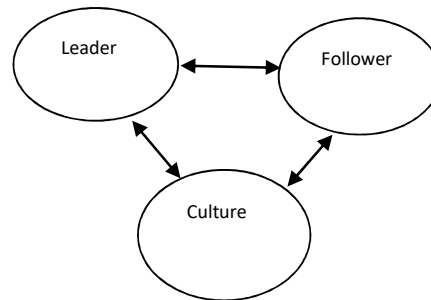
GROWTH ORIENTED CULTURE: This culture results when effective leader leading effective followers. This culture makes people active and rewards achievement. Even a passive new entrant learns to be active in this culture. Creating this kind of culture at the department level or organizational level is desirable for a growth oriented organization. This is an appropriate condition for initiation of new projects and diversifies the business. Growth strategies will be fostered in this culture. It is essential to analyze the existing culture and ensure growth oriented culture while initiating a new project. Here people are always ready to take up new responsibilities, share their ideas, will try to execute activities and promote the good will of the organization in a new perspective. The person who is a novice and is a ready learner will transform him/herself into a good and productive employee within a very short period of time.

LEARNING ORIENTED CULTURE: Effective leaders value performance or learn to perform at the workplace. Though the follower are not capable enough or doesn't demonstrate their capabilities, leader can direct them towards the common goal. With the strong leadership skills learning will take place willingly or unwillingly. Most of the times the followers learn and perform unwillingly. When followers realize their learning would help them to achieve few goals in their career they would appreciate the leader. An effective leader can transform his followers to create miracles. He is able to generate enthusiasm and interest to do potential activities and encourage people to share their ideas. This type of behavior leads to pursue or take up some unusual responsibilities which is mutually beneficial.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS: Communication, Courage and decisiveness are the most important qualities to be possessed by a leader. An ineffective leader cannot take firm decisions and cannot direct or lead his followers towards growth trajectory. He will draw his own precepts and curb himself in a safest zone from which no other person can bring him out. Major problem arises only when his followers are worthy and efficient. An effective follower who is good at his area of work can suffer due to lack of proper encouragement and motivation. He cannot perform any activity which ensures the enhancement of the reputation of the organization. Within a very short time the creativity and enthusiasm of the followers will be shattered and they get depressed due to lack of work satisfaction.

FUTILE CULTURE: Gathering likeminded people at one place will work effective and produce best results. But, if they are lethargic and lazy the output cannot be handled and the whole organization will suffer. A leader with lazy mind will encourage and promote people who involves in gossiping, freaking, sleeping and other unusual activities. One cannot ensure what is happening in the organization and the result will be a night mare to the stake holders.

FIG. 2



CONCLUSION

Though culture is influenced by leader and follower, it is leader's responsibility to transform a passive environment which down falls the organization, into an active and enthusiastic environment which generates quality output. The leaders should be ready to take decisions which will motivate employees for the benefit of the organization. In growth and learning oriented organizations the role of a leader is appreciable. However, in learned passiveness culture, leader is ineffective for several reasons such as lack of skills or coward. Here, the leader must learn at least to allow his followers to do their best to the growth of the organization as they are effective. Out of his poor qualities the leader should not become a hurdle to the development.

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