

Essence & Significance of Work Culture for Organisations in Indian Context – A Case Approach

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ABSTRACT

Culture signifies the way that a domain is managed. Be it an Organisation or be it personal character, all need to manage their respective Culture. The Work Culture at Organisations need to be managed essentially to get better productivity. Workplace culture is the collective personality of an organization, shaping the work environment and influencing employee interactions with tasks, colleagues, and clients. A positive culture fosters employee engagement, boosting productivity and creativity. This attempt in the form of a case approach is an exploratory study conducted with the help of massively secondary data and Primary Data in the form of Interview Method. The Authors have Interviewed Industry Representatives to collect the view points on the theme of the study and cited a Case of E Sreedharan as Insight from the Study. The Authors aim to study the Essence & Significance of Work Culture at Organizations. The Authors further aim to interpret the professional life experiences of E. Sreedharan, the Metro Man of India through selected projects undertaken by him that depicts the work culture across organisations. The study further aims to contribute a recommendatory Model for Development of Work Culture at Organisations. Also the study has the potential to be a literature for further studies in this regard. The Authors have considered the Work Culture at Organisations at large rather any specific sector or any specific region for study. The Theme of the study may have various other elements associated. Hence this may be a limitation of the study as the inferences are indicative in nature rather exhaustive.

Keywords-- Work Culture, Organisation, E Sreedharan - The Metro Man, Work Environment

I. INTRODUCTION

Workplace culture is the collective observation at an organization, shaping the work environment and influencing employee interactions with tasks, colleagues, and clients. A positive culture enables the Organisation to enhance employee engagement, boosts the Employee productivity and creativity. Such environments retain top

talent and attract new candidates seeking fulfilling work experiences aligned with their values. Collaboration and open communication enhance innovation and creativity, encouraging employees to take risks and experiment. Supporting well-being through work-life balance and mental health resources reduces stress and burnout, positively impacting customer satisfaction. A strong culture bolsters an organization's reputation, attracting partnerships and investments. Healthy cultures also facilitate conflict resolution and prevent disputes. Additionally, they promote adaptability and resilience, helping the organization navigates change and challenges. A positive culture encourages ethical behavior and adherence to regulations, upholding integrity across the Company.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the Essence & Significance of Work Culture at Organizations.
2. To interpret the professional life experiences through selected projects undertaken by E. Sreedharan, the Metro Man of India depicting the work culture across organisations.
3. To contribute a recommendatory Model for Development of Work Culture at Organisations.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & PROCESS

Essence & Significance of Work Culture for Organisations in Indian context – A Case Approach is an exploratory study conducted with the help of massively secondary data and Primary Data in the form of Interview Method. The Authors have Interviewed Industry Representatives to collect the view points on the theme of the study and cited a Case of E Sreedharan as Insight from the Study. The Authors aim to study the Essence & Significance of Work Culture at Organizations. The

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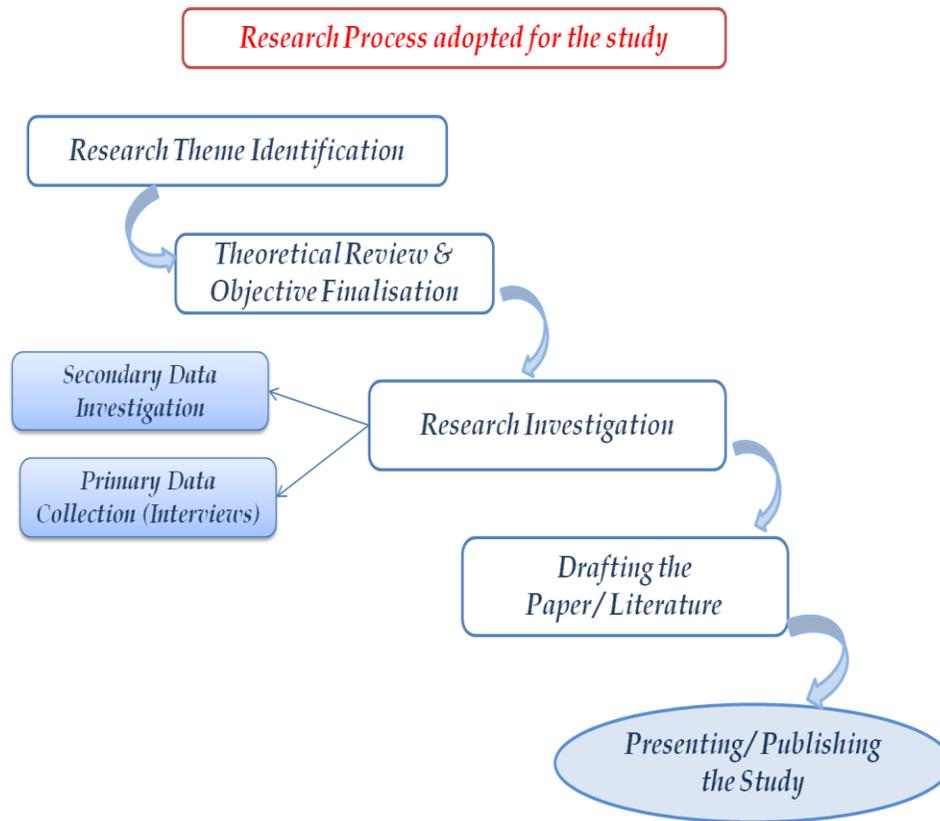


Chart No.1: Research Process
Source: Authors Study

IV. ESSENCE & SIGNIFICANCE OF WORK CULTURE

The significance of a healthy workplace culture in terms of employee wellbeing, productivity, communication, transparency, recruitment, engagement and retention, teamwork, quality of services, reputation, and morale.

- **Employee Wellbeing:** Emphasizing both physical and mental health is critical. Organizations that prioritize mental health alongside physical health see benefits in employee productivity, satisfaction, and overall morale. Flexible work options, wellness programs, and access to mental health resources can contribute positively to employee wellbeing.

- **Performance and Productivity:** Happy employees tend to be more productive, and a supportive workplace culture can improve focus and efficiency. Establishing an environment where employees feel valued and motivated can lead to increased productivity.
- **Communication and Transparency:** Open, honest, and clear communication builds trust among employees and leadership. Transparency promotes accountability and a sense of inclusion, encouraging employees to share their thoughts and ideas, which can lead to innovation and improvement.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Organizations with strong culture and positive reputations attract top talent and retain employees. An environment

where employees feel part of a community and experience career development opportunities contributes to long-term loyalty.

- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** A culture that encourages teamwork and values diverse perspectives fosters creativity and problem-solving. Promoting inclusion and teamwork helps break down silos and enhances organizational performance.
- **Quality of Services and Reputation:** When employees feel valued and motivated, they are

more likely to deliver high-quality work, resulting in superior products and services. A positive reputation can attract customers and potential employees, further reinforcing the organization's success.

- **Boosting Morale:** A culture that promotes inclusivity, well-being, and open dialogue can significantly enhance employee morale. High morale leads to better teamwork, collaboration, and job satisfaction.

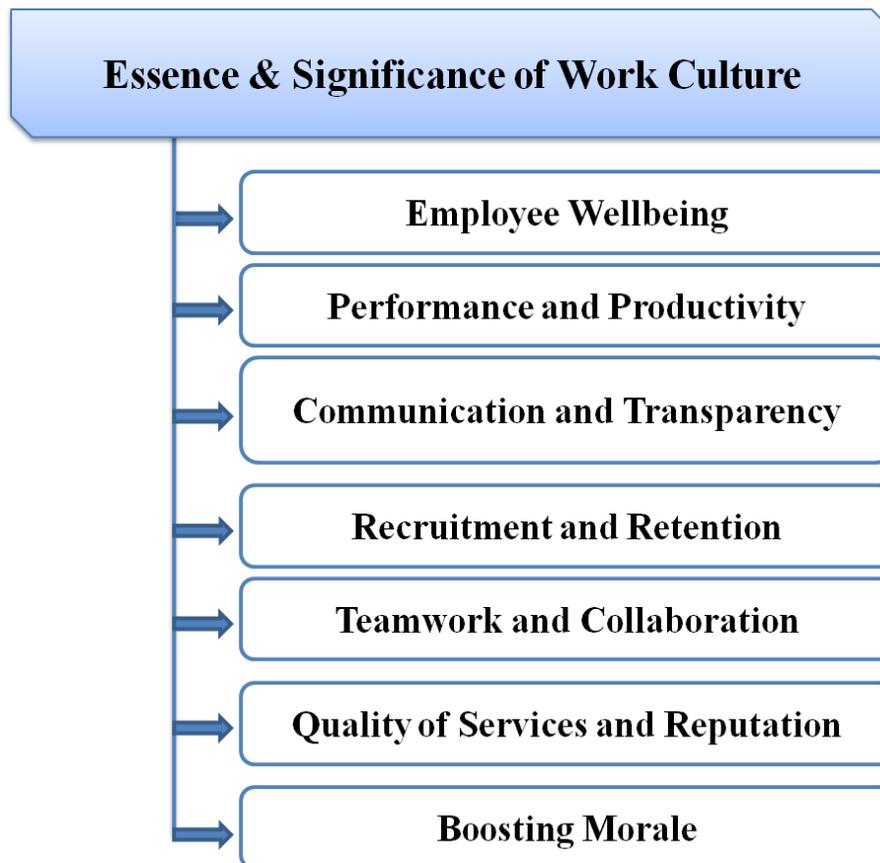


Chart No.2: Essence & Significance of Work Culture
Source: Authors Understanding

V. CASE STUDY

Professional Life Experiences through Selected Projects Undertaken by E. Sreedharan, The Metro Man of India Depicting the Work Culture Across Organisations:
E Sreedharan: Introduction

E. Sreedharan, known as the "Metro Man of India," is an engineer whose significant contributions to India's urban transport systems have earned him widespread recognition. He started his career with Indian

Railways and later played a key role in the successful completion of the challenging Konkan Railway project. His leadership of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) from 1995 onwards transformed the Delhi Metro into a model of efficiency, completed ahead of schedule and under budget. Sreedharan's expertise extended to other metro projects in cities such as Jaipur, Lucknow, and Kochi, shaping India's urban transportation landscape. His achievements have been honored with prestigious awards such as the Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan. Even after retiring, Sreedharan remains an advocate for sustainable

and efficient transportation systems in India, continuing to guide the development of critical infrastructure projects across the country.

Pamban Bridge Project

The Pamban Bridge, a vital link spanning 2 kilometers in length Rameshwaram Island to mainland of India, stands as a testament to the nation's engineering prowess. Built in the 19th century, it has long served as a lifeline connecting the mainland to the island. However, its resilience was put to the ultimate test during the catastrophic tsunami of 1964. With waves reaching an astonishing height of 15 meters, the bridge faced the fury of nature's wrath. In a single night, the monstrous waves washed away a large portion of the bridge, including 146 of its 300-foot-long spans, among them the iconic span. Undeterred by the monumental challenge ahead, General Manager Ganguli took charge of the daunting task of reconstruction. With the Rameshwaram temple accessible only via this bridge, the urgency was palpable. Initially given a seemingly impossible 6-month deadline, Ganguli and his team rallied together. Through a combination of innovative engineering solutions and unparalleled teamwork, they embarked on the monumental task of rebuilding.

Remarkably, in just 46 days, the bridge was resurrected—a feat deemed impossible by many. This astonishing achievement not only restored crucial transportation links but also symbolized the indomitable spirit of human resilience and ingenuity. The rapid reconstruction of the Pamban Bridge stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through determination, collaboration, and innovative engineering solutions, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Konkan Railway Project

E. Sreedharan's leadership was instrumental in the successful implementation of the Konkan Railway project, which spans 60 kilometers and connects Mumbai to Mangalore, making it one of the most challenging and significant railway constructions in India's history. Under Sreedharan's guidance, the Konkan Railway Corporation overcame numerous obstacles, including the construction of 93 tunnels totaling 83.5 kilometers and the erection of 149 major and 6060 minor bridges. Notably, the project featured the longest tunnel in Ratnagiri and nine tunnels each spanning 3 kilometers. The acquisition of land, which presented both technical and social challenges. Sreedharan's strategic approach addressed these issues, facilitating the acquisition of over 40,000 acres despite the complexities involved. Financing the project was another formidable challenge, with a total cost of 2400 crore rupees. Sreedharan's adept management ensured financial stability through a joint partnership between Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, and Kerala, with the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited established to oversee operations.

Kerala's support, despite not being directly served by the line, underscored the significance of the project for regional connectivity and economic development. Today, the Konkan Railway stands as a testament to Sreedharan's vision, engineering prowess, and dedication to overcoming obstacles. Its ability to accommodate trains at speeds of up to 160 kilometers per hour demonstrates the enduring legacy of Sreedharan's leadership in transforming India's transportation infrastructure.

Delhi Metro Project

The Calcutta Metro, India's first metro system, faced numerous challenges during its development. Work began in the 1960s and was completed in 1994, encompassing 11 km underground and 2 km on the ground. Construction faced delays and significant cost overruns, taking 22 years to complete the line. This led the Indian government to initially back out of future metro projects.

However, with Delhi rapidly growing, the government sanctioned the Delhi Metro in 1996. A special purpose vehicle, a joint venture company, was established with 50% equity from the Government of India and 50% from the Government of Delhi. The Japanese government pledged funds for the project, conditional on the appointment of a capable Chief Executive Director. Sreedharan, with his extensive experience, was selected for the role. The initial phase of the Delhi Metro covered 65 km, including 16 km underground, with a budget of ₹10,500 crore. Sreedharan's leadership and efficient planning enabled the completion of the phase in 7 years and 3 months, staying within the estimated cost.

The second phase, covering 124 km with a budget of ₹24,000 crore, was completed in just 4.5 years, ahead of the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi. The Delhi Metro played a key role in evacuating 75,000 people from the Games' opening ceremony in an hour. The Delhi Metro's completion was hailed as one of the fastest metro projects worldwide. The successful construction of the second phase led to the immediate sanction of the third phase, covering 145 Kms.

Source: Inspiring Speech by Dr. E. Sreedharan at NTPC Limited, 2017 (Youtube Video Review)

Exhibit 1: Mr. Ashish Singh, VP Operations, Artech Info Systems, Noida, India

Work Culture drives employees to "Win Every Day" by putting in exceptional effort and delivering quality work.

• **Ashish Singh**

Mr. Ashish states that over the past two decades of his experience in the corporate world, he had the privilege of witnessing the remarkable growth of his organization. He believes that the growth is due to the

culture that drives performance, based on the principles of mutual respect, trust, and accountability. Employees are motivated by a shared goal that reflects in their clear thinking, empowerment of the people, and platform for learning and growth. The culture of empowerment allows innovative thinking, creating a high sense of ownership and belongingness. The Organisation consistently strive to differentiate itself from other companies in the industry. This approach transforms ordinary efforts and persistence into extraordinary ones, resulting in exceptional results in the current market conditions. Secondly, as an organization, they recognize the significance of focusing on what truly matters. The company emphasizes the systematic pursuit of delivering quality work, which enables them to improve every day. Through these efforts, the organization has been able to achieve great success, inspiring them to "Win Every Day" by putting in exceptional effort and delivering quality work.

Source: Personal Interview with Mr. Ashish Singh, VP Operations, Artech Info Systems, Noida, India
Exhibit 2: Mrs. Pragnya Acharya, National Head - Liability Practice, UNISON Insurance Broking Services Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India

Work Culture & Organisational environment must not just nurture talent but also foster a sense of community spirit and shared mission.

- **Pragnya Acharya**

Mrs. Pragnya who had joined at Unison Insurance Broking in 2023 believes that the work environment at the company reflects its dedication to excellence and innovation. She has been part of a very supportive team where everyone is encouraged to share ideas and work together towards the common goal. The company emphasizes learning and professional development offering opportunities for honing skills and advancing careers. At Unison work ethics revolve around integrity, transparency and respect. The leadership team leads by example by promoting communication and making decisions setting a positive standard for all employees. There is a focus on accountability to ensure that each person takes ownership of their actions and contributes positively to team accomplishments. Furthermore, the company values a work-life balance and personal well-being, recognizing the significance of wellness alongside professional success. This comprehensive approach not only boosts job satisfaction but also enhances productivity and fosters innovation. In essence the work culture and ethics at Unison cultivates a motivating workplace where employees are appreciated and empowered to perform at their best. It's an environment that not nurtures talent but also fosters a sense of community spirit and shared mission.

Source: Personal Interview with Mrs. Pragnya Acharya, National Head - Liability Practice, UNISON Insurance Broking Services Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India
Exhibit 3: Mr. Bhanu Bisht, Senior Executives Finance & Accounts, Huber Group India Private Limited, Vapi, India

At Organisation, strong work ethics and a healthy work culture are more than just policies.

- **Bhanu Bisht**

Mr. Bhanu, who is associated with the Organisation for last 10 Years, states that at Hubergroup India Private Limited, work ethics and culture are fundamental components that drive their success and expansion. They take pleasure in creating a professional environment in which ethics, accountability, and respect are key. Their commitment to ethical procedures guarantees that all personnel adhere to the highest standards in their everyday activities, encouraging transparency and honesty in all business interactions. Their workplace culture is based on collaboration and creativity. They promote free communication and the exchange of ideas, believing that various perspectives lead to better solutions. Employees are encouraged to take initiative and are given ongoing learning opportunities to improve their abilities and grow their careers. This emphasis on professional development while promoting an environment of excellence and personal progress.

Furthermore, he states that the Organisation prioritize work-life balance, recognizing that the employees' well-being is critical to their productivity and overall satisfaction. Their friendly and supportive work environment encourages mutual respect and teamwork, making everyone feel appreciated and motivated. At Hubergroup India, strong work ethics and a healthy work culture are more than just policies; they are firmly ingrained in our corporate DNA, guiding us to long-term success and creating an environment in which all employees may thrive.

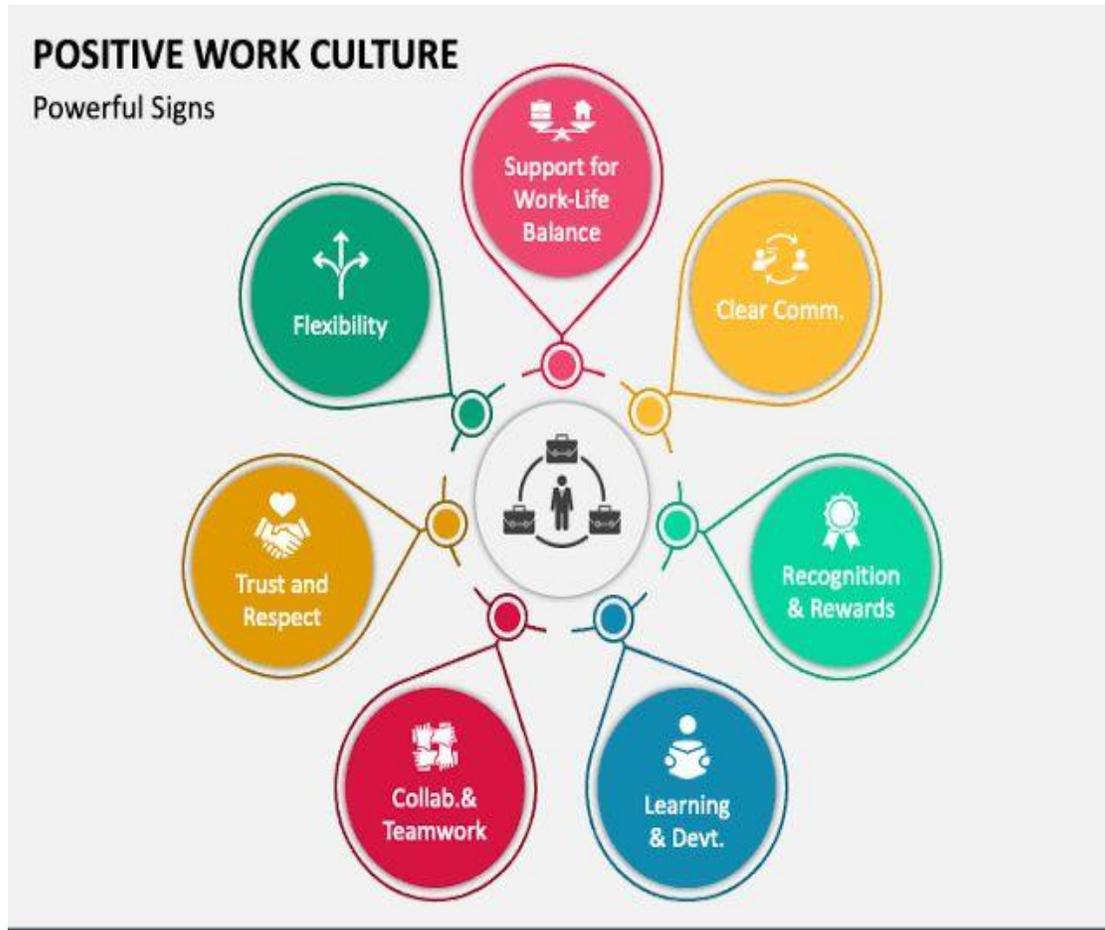
Source: Personal Interview with Mr. Bhanu Bisht, Senior Executives Finance & Accounts, Huber Group India Private Limited, Vapi, India

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Authors have recommended the positive work model as stated by Shafaq Rahid. The Model advocates that:

- It is imperative to build and nurture the workforce to cope with the digital age challenges.
- Recognizing the pivotal role of skilled and motivated employees in driving the strategy's

- success is essential to align growth and performance.
- Foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous learning within the organization.
- Invest in talent development initiatives and leadership programs to nurture a high-performing workforce.



Source: Positive Work Culture by Shafaq Rahid, Head Strategic Programs at HBL | Driving growth, innovation, and impact since 20 years | Head of Customer Services | NLP Master Practitioner

VII. CONCLUSION

Cultural balance is essential for any set of Organisation. The Industries too need to focus on the Work Culture. The essence & significance of a healthy workplace culture lies in the employee wellbeing, productivity, communication, transparency, recruitment, engagement and retention, teamwork, quality of services, reputation, and morale. The Authors through the paper have attempted to recommend the positive work model as stated by Shafaq Rahid. The Model advocates that it is imperative to build and nurture the workforce to cope with the digital age challenges. The Model emphasizes that recognizing the pivotal role of skilled and motivated employees in driving the strategy's success is essential to

align growth and performance. The Model states to foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous learning within the organization. The Recommended model advocates that investing in talent development initiatives and leadership programs to nurture a high-performing workforce is essential for organisation. The Authors through the Case of E Sreedharan and Interviews of Industry representatives emphasize on the concept of Work Culture and its significance to the Organisation.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The current study is the exploratory study with conceptual base and case approach. The Authors have attempted the primary data in the form interviews of work

professionals. Such Studies have a definite future scope in the form of:

- Primary Data – Survey approach by collecting data from the Employees at Organisations and hence contributing the inferences.
- Also the studies can be conducted across the region and a comparative study can be highlighted.
- Comparative study on work culture can also be attempted across sectors and inferences can be drawn.

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Summary of Interviews

Sr. No.	Name of the Interviewee	Position, Company
1	Mr. Ashish Singh	VP Operations, Artech Info Systems, Noida, India
2	Mrs. Pragnya Acharya	National Head - Liability Practice, UNISON Insurance Broking Services Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India
3	Mr. Bhanu Bisht	Senior Executives Finance & Accounts, Huber Group India Private Limited, Vapi, India

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