

A study of Expected Organizational Values and Beliefs among Generation Y as potential employees



Management

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ABSTRACT

This paper empirically examined the expectations of Generation Y as potential young employees in terms of their values and beliefs in the future work environment. A total of 207 undergraduates comprising of 85 B.Com students and 122 BBA students from Pune, completed the OCTAPACE questionnaire developed by Pareek Udai. The results indicated that B.Com and BBA students did not vary significantly with respect to the preferred values and beliefs in workplace on eight dimensions of OCTAPACE profile except for the authenticity element. The mean scores indicated that the preferred expected organizational values were proaction, openness, confrontation and experimentation Collaboration, Trust, Authenticity and Autonomy for both the groups.

Introduction

Organizational culture comprises of shared meanings - patterns of beliefs, rituals, symbols, and myths that evolve over time, serving to reduce human variability and control and shape employee behavior in organizations. Schein (1985) analyzed organizational culture as the "essential assumptions and beliefs that are commonly shared by employees of the organization." A strong culture is the driving force of every organization; it helps organizations develop a unique identity; thus culture building must be given utmost priority.

Past research studies have focused attention on the differences between the values and beliefs of different generations. The primary view is that organizations are faced with managing different generations that often have conflicting work values (Filipczak, 1994; Kopperschmidt, 2000). A generation is defined as a cohort born within a specific set of years that shares common experiences and characteristics (Tolbize, 2008). The experiences are said to create core values that influence a generations' work values. (Twenge 2010). Each generation has its own identity that includes values, maturation cycles and birth years that translate into differing workplace behaviors. It is argued that these differences may result in significant conflict (Karp & Sirias, 2001) and that the differences influence things like training & development, career development, rewards, working conditions, and management style needed to retain these employees (Chester, 2002; Losyk, 1997; McDonald & Hite, 2008).

Empirical evidences of studies using the concept of OCTAPACE culture profile developed by Pareek Udai are few and far between. A study by Rafai S N and Mufeed S A (2008) is an endeavor to identify the major factors responsible for non-promoting organizational effectiveness in the Tourism sector. The paper evaluates the perceptions of the employees with regard to OCTAPACE culture and suggests guidelines for promoting organizational effectiveness. According to Agarwal and Chandak (2007) organizational performance can be improved by implementing Total Productivity Maintenance (TPM) under OCTAPACE culture. Dash & Mohapatra (2012) have opined that given the right opportunities and climate employees can contribute their fullest potential for optimization of human resources and achievement of goals of the organization. The findings of the study helped to identify the weaker aspects of culture in terms of values and beliefs that prevail in the organization. This in turn will help the management to develop an employee conducive work culture.

However one does not come across any studies on the expected work culture by potential employees. The present study is an attempt to understand the expected values and beliefs of Gen Y as potential young employees. Generation Y are those who are born in the years of 1981 to 2000 (Twenge, 2010). This will help organizations build a conducive work culture for its future employees. The OCTAPACE culture study was always carried out to study the prevailing work culture/s. The present research study aims at implementing the OCTAPACE culture profile to understand the expectations of work culture among potential young employees. The findings of this study can be used as prevention rather than cure approach by the HR department.

OCTAPACE culture profile

The eight dimensions of OCTAPACE culture are Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Pro - action, Autonomy, Collaboration, and Experimentation

Openness: is where people feel free to express their ideas, views, opinions and feelings to each other, irrespective of their level, designations etc.

Confrontation: is the culture of facing issues squarely. People can be relied upon to treat issues as issues and not take them as personal assault.

Trust/Trustworthiness: deals with a culture of people believing each other and acting on the basis of verbal messages and instructions, without having to wait for written instructions or explanations. When people say that they will do something or promise to do something, it is simply relied upon.

Authenticity: is speaking the truth fearlessly and keeping promises once made. It is indicated by the extent to which people say what they mean and do what they say.

Proaction: is a culture that promotes initiative and explorations and new activities and new ways of doing things are encouraged.

Autonomy: is present if every role holder in the organization, irrespective of the level has some scope in his or her job to use some discretion.

Collaboration: is a culture where people are eager to help each other. There is a spirit of sacrifice for each other's sake and for the larger goals.

Experimentation: is the orientation on the part of employees to try out new ways of doing things and experiment with new decisions. It characterizes a risk-taking culture in the organization.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the elements of the expected organizational culture in the work environment by potential young employees.
2. To make a comparative study of the expected norms of potential young employees and the tentative norms of work culture as given by Udai Pareek.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the preferences of B.Com students and BBA students in terms of elements of culture.
2. There is a no significant difference between the expected work culture of Gen Y as potential young employees and tentative norms of work culture as laid down by Dr.Udai Pareek.

Research Methodology

The 4-point scale developed by Dr. Udai Pareek (2003) has been used for the present study. As many as 8 dimensions were taken to judge the organizational culture. The OCTAPACE profile is a 40 items instrument that maps the profile of the organization's ethos in eight values. The first 24 questions measure the individual perspective of how much a particular item is valued in an organization. The remaining 16 questions pertain to group be-

liefs widely shared in the organization. These values are openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, pro-action, autonomy, collaboration and experimentation. The scale was slightly modified for suitability of research objective.

Sample Size-

A sample was selected of students in their final year of graduation. The scale was administered on a total of 207 students out of which 85 are B.Com students and 122 are BBA students. Data was collected from various colleges in the city of Pune.

Secondary data were collected from different publications, reports, websites, magazines, journals, working papers, books and newspapers.

Reliability

Sample Size-207	Cronbach's Alpha Score
B.Com Students-85	0.70
BBA Students-122	0.728

0.7 is the acceptable score of Cronbach's Alpha. It is observed that the reliability score is 0.7 in case of B.Com students and 0.728 in case of BBA students which is above the acceptable norm.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Comparison of Mean, Standard Deviation, t- test, F-Value and Significance Level of elements of culture between B.Com and BBA students.

	category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	F	Sig.
Openness	b.com	85	16.11	1.81	1.493	.515	.474
	bba	122	15.71	1.98			
Confrontation	b.com	85	15.63	2.04	.044	.235	.628
	bba	122	15.62	1.91			
Trust	b.com	85	14.34	1.79	-.326	.068	.794
	bba	122	14.42	1.88			
Authenticity	b.com	85	12.75	2.50	-1.008	11.673**	.001
	bba	122	13.05	1.83			
Proaction	b.com	85	16.61	2.36	-.397	.053	.818
	bba	122	16.74	2.40			
Autonomy	b.com	85	11.98	2.15	-1.586	.036	.849
	bba	122	12.45	2.06			
Collaboration	b.com	85	14.92	2.09	-.414	.872	.351
	bba	122	15.04	1.76			
Experiment	b.com	85	15.35	2.22	.572	.309	.579
	bba	122	15.18	2.07			

*p <0.05, **p<0.01

Analysis:

The above table shows that the mean score of Authenticity showed 12.75 for B.Com students and 13.05 for BBA students with a .001 level of significance. The mean scores for all the other elements of the OCTAPACE do not vary significantly.

Interpretations The above data indicates that there is no significant difference between the various elements of culture between B.Com and BBA students except in the element of Authenticity. This further indicates that the preferred elements of culture do not vary with change in the type of education. B.Com and BBA students both have same preferred value expectations.

Validation of the hypothesis

Thus, the above finding supports our hypothesis that B.Com and BBA students do not vary significantly with respect to the preferred values and beliefs in workplace.

Table2: Tentative Low and High Norms Applied to the OCTAPACE Profile and actual mean scores of B.Com and BBA graduates

OCTAPACE	LOW*	B.Com	BBA	HIGH*
OPENNESS	13	16.12	15.71	17
CONFRONTATION	13	15.64	15.62	17
TRUST	13	14.34	14.43	17
AUTHENTICITY	10	12.75	13.06	14
PROACTION	13	16.61	16.75	17
AUTONOMY	11	11.99	12.46	16
COLLABORATION	13	14.93	15.04	17
EXPERIMENTATION	11	15.35	15.18	16

Source: Primary data of Author's study

Based on the mean and SD value of more than 500 responses from 10 organizations tentative norms are given by Udai Pareek *

Analysis:

The scores for all the elements are within the tentative low and high norms applied to OCTAPACE culture. The mean score of the elements of Openness, Confrontation and Experimentation are high for B.Com students and the mean score of the elements of Trust, Authenticity, Proaction, Autonomy and Collaboration are high for B.Com students.

Interpretation of Data: The scores in the above table for B.Com and BBA students indicate that their expectations are reasonable and acceptable. They are well within the required norms of culture. However; it should be noted that the potential young employees are well aware of the minimum acceptable norms/ tentative norms of culture. They will not be ready to compromise on any of the elements of culture if they do not fit into their minimum expectations. An organization's culture which is not within the prescribed tentative/ minimum expected norms may face higher rate of attrition. If organizations wish to keep their attrition rate at its minimum; then they will have to work towards building an employee specific/conducive/congenial work culture/environment.

Graphical Representation

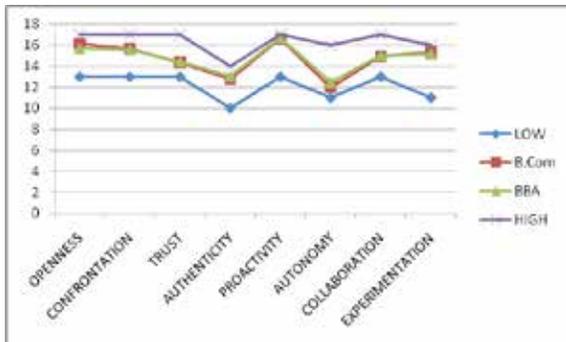


Fig 1: Applied Norms to the OCTAPACE Profile and actual mean scores

Table 3: Comparison of Means in order of preferred elements of culture of B.Com and BBA graduates

Comparison of Means		
Elements of culture	B.Com	BBA
Proaction	16.61	16.75
Openness	16.12	15.71
Confrontation	15.64	15.62
Experiment	15.35	15.18
Collaboration	14.93	15.04
Trust	14.34	14.43
Authenticity	12.75	13.06
Autonomy	11.99	12.46

Analysis: There is slight difference in the mean scores of the B.Com students and BBA students, but the order of preference of the elements is the same.

Interpretations:

Though there is slight difference between the mean scores of B.Com and BBA students for various elements. It is interesting to note that the order of preference seen is the same. This may be due to the generation and age they belong to. Proaction, Openness, Confrontation and Experiment show priority over Collaboration, Trust, Authenticity and Autonomy.

This indicates that Gen Y will appreciate the culture where new

activities and innovative ways of doing things are encouraged. Such pro-action may be in any area, including role-making (giving new interpretations to one's role in order to achieve organizational or team goals), role-taking (taking new initiative, initiating new activities, changing old methods of work), cost reduction, quality improvement, culture building etc.

A progressive and open Gen Y will prefer a culture of Openness where there are no communication gaps and there is free interaction, irrespective of their level, designation etc. Such a free expression of views and opinions provides an opportunity for individuals to explore their own talents. The organization handles these expressions for discovering new ways of doing things, for discovering new potential and for taking actions that are based on the best talent of the organization.

The element of Confrontation follows Openness, where issues are talked about and discussed. There is very little or no fear of hurting one another. This culture enhances the problem-solving ability.

Gen Y has also given a good score for the element of Experimentation which characterizes a risk-taking culture in the organization. Without risks, there is no growth. This indicates that Gen Y is ready to face the challenges of the highly competitive and dynamic corporate world.

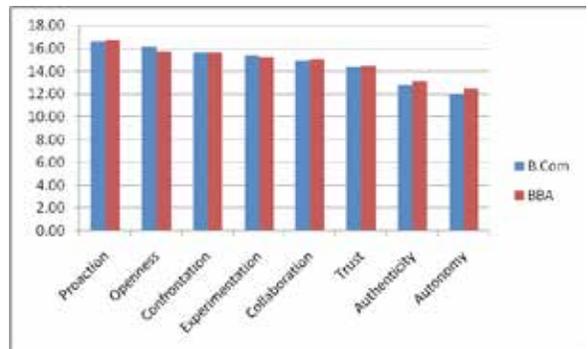


Figure 2 Comparison of Means in order of preferred elements of culture

Though elements of Collaboration, Trust, Authenticity and Autonomy are lower in the list of priority, it should not be perceived as negative. The element of Collaboration includes an attitude where organizational goals have a priority over individual goals. We cannot expect the Gen Y to give it priority as they would be very new to the work environment and would need some time to mould themselves into the working of the corporate.

Gen Y give less priority to trust which indicates that they will prefer following instructions which are given on paper and not verbally put across. Gen Y is seen to be the one which will first test people rather than believe them blindly. This may be perceived positively as it is quite rational for individuals to become comfortable with the work environment before relying on something or someone.

Authenticity following Trust is also natural in the Gen Y as it is higher order than Trust.

Autonomy; as the last item is a little bit of a surprise factor. It indicates that Gen Y realize that they are not matured enough to do things on their own especially with respect to responsible jobs/tasks. It is to be appreciated that they are open to taking instructions and following it for successful completion of tasks.

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, it is seen that there is no significant difference found with regards to the Expected Organizational Values and Beliefs of B.Com and BBA students as potential employees. The reason could be the age of the respondents who are mostly in

the age group of 18 yrs of age to 21 years. They have no previous work experience and have not yet been exposed to the corporate world and its work culture. The respondents have given only their expectations on the elements of organizational culture.

Though there is a slight difference between the mean scores of B.Com and BBA students for various elements, it is interesting to note that the order of preference seen for the various elements does not differ.

Scope for Further Research

The study can be carried out for Post Graduate students i.e. those in the final year of MBA,MCA,M.Com who will be entering into the corporate world for employment and find out their expectations on organizational culture. The study will help in understanding whether the additional two years of education with more specialized course content has an influence on their expectations of values and beliefs. This will help management and leaders develop an employee specific/conducive work environment to suit the needs of the Gen Y.

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