# Societal Beliefs, Organizational Climate, and Managers' Self-Perceptions

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This study examines how traditional societal beliefs affect organizational climate, and how the two, independently or jointly, shape managers' self-perceptions. It also investigates the impact of the levels of development on societal beliefs, organizational climate, and managers' self-perceptions. Results confirmed that the traditional societal beliefs affect organizational climate; but it is the organizational climate that has a deeper impact on managers' self-perceptions. The article highlights the importance of creating work-centric and caring organizations.

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The paper aims to examine how traditional societal beliefs affect organizational climate, and how the two, independently or jointly, shape managers' self-perceptions. Taking a lead from Hofstede (1980), Kanungo and Jaeger (1990) formulated a *Culture Fit Model* that was further elaborated by Mendonca and Kanungo (1994). According to the model, societal culture influences organizational culture that in turn shapes managerial beliefs and human resource management practices. Although societal culture consists of ecological, legal, political, social, historical, and economic forces, it is the salient societal values which have so far been examined for their influence on the beliefs and practices of managers (Bond, 1988; Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Triandis, 1994; Schwartz, 1990). Kanungo and his associates (Mathur; Aycan and Kanungo, 1996; Aycan; Sinha and Kanungo, 1999; Aycan *et al.,* 2000) tested the model by examining the impact of societal values on organizational culture and human resource management practices in a number of countries including India. They conceptualized societal culture as the perception of "shared values among the people with respect to how a society is structured and how it functions." Organizational culture was defined as "shared managerial beliefs and assumptions about employee nature and behaviour" (Aycan *et al.,* 2000, p 196). Societal values in their studies consisted of Hofstede's three dimensions, namely, power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance, besides two other dimensions — paternalism and self-reliance. Paternalism appears as a dominant value orientation in many oriental cultures (Hsu, 1994; Hwang, 1995; Kim *et al.,* 1994; Sinha, 1995; Virmani and Guptan, 1991). Self-reliance was considered as a crucial component of western

individualism and somewhat missing in collectivist cultures (Triandis, 1994).

Kanungo and his associates identified organizational culture in terms of employees' internal locus of control, malleability, futuristic orientation, proactivity, responsibility seeking, participation, and obligation. Managerial beliefs and human resource management practices were related to task and employees. The task characteristics were feedback, autonomy, and task significance (Hackman and Oldham, 1980) while employee related practices were goal setting, empowerment, self-control, and reward-performance contingency (See Box 1 for definitions of these terms).

Although cultural dimensions in the *Culture Fit Model* were established through a number of independent studies referred above, only two of them, power distance (which is conceptually close to hierarchy) and paternalism, were substantiated in a literature review of indigenously identifiable cultural values (Sinha, 1990a). The other traditional Indian values reported by Sinha were the preference for remaining embedded in ingroups, personalized relationships, moralistic orientation, and harmony and tolerance. A survey indicated that a blend of the three values, preference for remaining embedded in ingroups, hierarchy, and personalized relationships, was perceived to be shared by people at seven

## Box 1: Key Words and their Definitions

| | |
|---|---|
| *Power distance:* | Willing acceptance of unequal power. |
| *Masculinity: Uncertainty* | Preference for assertiveness and acquisition of money and material things. |
| *avoidance:* | Feeling of being threatened by ambiguous situations and a resultant tendency to avoid such situations. |
| *Paternalism:* | Superior assuming the role of a parent for guiding, directing, supporting, and caring for his or her subordinates. |
| *Self-reliance:* | Belief that the person is independent and responsible for his or her actions and their consequences. |
| *Internal locus of control-* | A sense of control over one's actions and their outcomes. |
| *Malleability:* | Belief that the person's nature and habits can be changed through training inputs. |
| *Futuristic orientation:* | Tendency to foresee future requirements and plan actions accordingly. |
| *Proactivity:* | Orientation to take initiative, expand one's role, and reach out to realize job-related objectives. |
| *Responsibility seeking:* | Readiness to reach out to accept additional task and responsibilities. |
| *Participation:* | Willingness to delegate authority and engage actively as participants in decision-making. |
| *Obligation:* | Tendency to meet social and personal obligations. |
| *Feedback:* | Knowledge about how one is performing his or her job. |
| *Autonomy:* | Scope to plan and perform one's job as he or she thinks appropriate. |
| *Task significance:* | Importance of a job in contributing to the work of the organization. |
| *Goal setting:* | Allowing employees to set their target of work. |
| *Empowerment:* | Employees' sense of self-efficacy that they can perform effectively on their own. |
| *Self-control: Reward-performance* | Employees' sense of control over their own activities. |
| *contingency:* | Employees' belief that their rewards are directly based on their performance. |

locations in India (Sinha *et al.,* 1994). However, there were significant regional variations highlighting a contrast between Patna and Varanasi in the North on the one hand, and Bangalore and Chennai in the South on the other. The regional variations in people's preferences seemed to be nested in the socio-economic conditions of the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu in which Patna, Varanasi, Bangalore, and Chennai are respectively located. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu stand at higher levels of socio-economic and human development than Bihar and Uttar Pradesh *(Economic Survey,* 1995-1996; *Statistical Outline of India, 1998-1999,* 1998). Probably, socio-economic development induces an adaptive shift in traditional values. If that is so, it is hazardous to generalize about Indian cultural values without looking carefully into other regional variations in people's preferences.

The choice of organizational and individual level variables in the *Culture Fit Model* seems to suffer from three serious constraints. First, most of the variables comprising organizational culture and managerial practices were drawn from the western literature and may not be appropriate for understanding the adequacy of the *Culture Fit Model* in a non-western society. Secondly, the organizational variables were measured through individual managers' perceptions of employees' nature and beliefs that may be conceptually different than employees' perception of organizational values. Response contamination is likely to be high because the respondents might not have made a clear distinction between their perception of human resource management practices adopted by an organization and its employees' nature and beliefs. Thirdly, managers' perceptions of employees' beliefs and assumptions are more appropriate reflections of organizational climate rather than its culture, which is a more generic construct.

Similar to the *Culture Fit Model,* Sinha (1990b, p 44) suggested a framework in which managerial practices were influenced by, among other factors, organizational climate and societal values. Managerial practices consisted of hours

spent at work, the extent of hard work, role clarity, job affect, and job satisfaction. Organizational climate was measured in terms of managers' perception of working conditions, superior-subordinate relationships, work pressure, work norms, reward for hard work, and upkeep of technology. Societal values were taken as mediating variables in the relationships between socio-economic and political context and work behaviour, but were not included in the empirical investigation (Sinha, 1990b).

The present study aimed to make up the deficiencies in Kanungo and Jaeger's (1990) and Sinha's (1990b) approaches by retaining the broad framework of the *Culture Fit Model,* but incorporating more precisely defined and culturally specific variables. The constructs of societal beliefs rather than values, organizational climate rather than culture, and managers' self-perceptions rather than human resource management practices were investigated in the present study. The rationale for doing so was the following.

Values are conceptualized as importance attached to or preference for things, persons, or ideas (Bond, 1988; Schwartz, 1990; Super, 1982). People's ratings of their preferences or importance are invariably susceptible to social desirability effects, and thereby lose part of their potency to predict practices that are determined by many other situational factors. On the other hand, beliefs are one's understanding of how things are or happen or get done as well as what people like, prefer, and are concerned with. Hence, beliefs cover much more ground and seem to hold greater potential to relate preferences to practices. Similarly, perception of how an organization functions, what it rewards and punishes, and so on constitutes the climate of the organization (Schneider, 1975) rather than its culture, because culture also includes physical artifacts, philosophy, history, mission and vision, and so on (Sinha, 1990b). Furthermore, managers' feelings, thoughts, and work-related behaviour seem to be more relevant outcome variables for assessing the impact of societal beliefs and organizational climate than the task characteristics or human resource management

systems and procedures that are generally management's prerogatives.

In sum, the objectives of the study are the following:

- To examine how the traditional societal beliefs affect organizational climate and how the two, independently or jointly, shape managers' self-perceptions.

- To assess whether the varying levels of socio-economic and human development at different locations in the country induce corresponding shifts in societal beliefs, climate of the organizations located in the area, and managers' self-perceptions.

## Method

### Locations and Sample

Eight work organizations were approached in three states, Bihar in the North, Karnataka in the South, and Gujarat in the West for participating in the study. Bihar stands at a lower position than Karnataka and Gujarat on socio-economic and human development indices. Their respective statistics *(Economic Survey,* 1995-1996; *Statistical Outline of India, 1998-1999,* 1998) are as follows: Per capita income (Rs 4,097; 11,036; and 9,004), percentage of workers in population (29.7%; 34.1%; and 38.5%), gross industrial output (Rs 2,052; 12,822; and 5,113), factory employment (336; 956; and 512 per thousand), population below poverty line (55%; 24.2%; and 33.2%), life expectancy (57.5; 59.5; and 62.2 years), literacy rates (38.48%; 61.29%; and 56.04%), birth rates (32.5; 27.1; and 24.9 per thousand) and infant mortality rates (66; 64; and 61 per thousand). A similar picture emerges in a recent report in *Business Today (* Parthasarathy, 1999-2000) on the business environment of 27 states of India based on their physical and social infrastructure, quality of governance, and size and richness of market. Gujarat was ranked second best in the country. Karnataka was ranked sixth, and Bihar twenty-seventh. Gujarat is characterized by business-friendly state policies, responsive local administration, and well-developed financial and physical infrastructure

(p 89). Karnataka has adequate telecom infrastructure, healthy state of finance, and highly skilled labour (p 99) while Bihar, despite its mineral resources and railway network, is business unfriendly because of ineffective and corrupt administration, poor quality of work force, low level of human development, and so on (p 153).

It was argued that, within the states, there are places that may not reflect state level characteristics to the same extent. For example, while Patna may reflect typical features of Bihar, another city in Bihar, Jamshedpur, could be different. Jamshedpur is called the Steel City and is developed and administered by Tata Steel. Its consumer price index (Rs 244) approximates that of Ahmedabad (Rs 257) *(Statistical Outline of India, 1998-1999,* 1998, p 222). Similarly, Harihar, a small town in Karnataka, is different from Bangalore, and yet has sufficient industrial •activities to somewhat resemble Jamshedpur. Ahmedabad and Harihar have the advantage of being located in more developed states as well as having industrial activities; although the latter's smaller size and fewer industries make it less adequate in infrastructural facilities than Ahmedabad. Thus, Patna and Ahmedabad present a contrast while Jamshedpur and Harihar seem to fall in-between the two extremes on a broad continuum of development. Jamshedpur is highly industrialized but located in a less developed state while Harihar is less industrialized but located in a more developed state.

Two hundred and fifty-two managers from two organizations in Jamshedpur, 87 from two organizations in Patna, 102 from three organizations in Ahmedabad, and 81 from one organization in Harihar participated in the study. The total sample consisted of 522 middle level managers drawn from the organizations manufacturing iron and steel, engineering goods, shoes, pharmaceuticals, and textiles as well as generating, transmitting, and distributing electricity.

Table 1 shows variations in the demographic characteristics of the managers at four locations resulting into significant coefficients contingency

(p <.0001), except in the case of their gender. An overwhelming majority of the managers was male. A majority of them at all four locations grew up in a town, held bachelor of engineering degree, and was living with their wife and children. Locations differed more markedly in their managers' age composition. Fifty per cent of managers at Jamshedpur were below 30 years of age, while the majority of those at Ahmedabad belonged to the age range of 31 to 40 years, and at Patna and Harihar between 41 and 50 years.

## Measures

A 4-page booklet entitled, "Manager's Perception" contained the items measuring societal beliefs, organizational climate, managers' self-perceptions, and their demographic characteris-

tics. A few items tapping the background of the managers were also included at the end of the booklet. The study was introduced as follows:

We want to understand how managers perceive their society, organization, and themselves. There are three parts of the questionnaire. The first contains statements about people's beliefs and practices. The second is about how your organization functions. The third part inquires about your work and family-related matters. Please read each of the statements and judge the extent to which they are true or false on a 5-point scale. Please choose the appropriate number for each statement and write it on the space in front of the statements.

### Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

| Variables | Jamshedpur | Patna | Ahmedabad | Harihar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age (Coefficient of Contingency = .46, df = 9, *p* <.0001)** | | | | | |
| <30 yrs | 50.00 | 3.40 | 29.40 | **35.60** | |
| 31 to 40 yrs | 29.00 | 19.50 | 43.10 | **29.30** | |
| 41 to 50 yrs | 13.90 | 44.80 | 24.50 | **24.70** | |
| > 50 yrs | 6.70 | 31.00 | 2.90 | **10.00** | |
| **Gender (Coefficient of Contingency = .12, df = 3, *p* >.05)** | | | | | |
| Male | 93.30 | 98.90 | 96.10 | **95.60** | |
| **Rural-urban Exposure (Coefficient of Contingency = .39, df = 9, *p* <.0001)** | | | | | |
| Spent Mostly in a Village | 4.80 | 35.60 | 7.80 | 11.10 | 11.50 |
| Spent Both in Town and Village | 15.50 | 18.40 | 8.80 | 18.50 | 15.10 |
| Spent Mostly in a Town, not a Metro | 64.70 | 42.50 | 49.00 | 49.40 | 55.60 |
| Spent Mostly in a Metro | 14.30 | 3.40 | 33.30 | 21.00 | 17.20 |
| **Education (Coefficient of Contingency .25, df = 9, *p* <0001)** | | | | | |
| BA/MA | 28.60 | 19.50 | 6.90 | - | 18.40 |
| B. Engineering | 32.90 | 69.00 | 56.90 | 80.20 | 51.00 |
| B. Engineering and MBA | 35.30 | 11.50 | 33.30 | 19.80 | 28.50 |
| **Size of the Family (Coefficient of Contingency = .46, df = 9, *p* <.0001)** | | | | | |
| Alone | 18.70 | 1.10 | 13.70 | 7.40 | 13.00 |
| Spouse and Children | 46.40 | 62.20 | 52.90 | 51.50 | 51.30 |
| Spouse, Children and Parents | 22.60 | 18.40 | 14.70 | 30.90 | 21.60 |
| **Percentage** | **48.30** | **16.70** | **19.50** | **15.50** | **100** |

Note: Information about age, gender, rural-urban exposure, education, and size of the family was missing from .20, .20, .60, 2.10, and 1.50 per cent of the respondents respectively.

There is no right or wrong answer. Your frank responses are the best answers. Please do not write your name or designation in order to ensure anonymity.

1. ***Societal Beliefs:*** Twenty statements were prepared to examine how managers perceive the *people in their society (not the managers of their organization), their beliefs, practices, and preferences.* Managers rated the statements for the extent to which they were perceived to be true or false scoring 5 for Quite True, 4 for True, 3 for Undecided, 2 for False, and 1 for Quite False.

2. ***Organizational Climate:*** Twenty statements about the functioning of their organization appeared on the second page of the booklet. The instructions were the same, except that the respondents were reminded that they were now reporting their perception of *how their organization functions as a whole.* The same 5-point scale was used.

3. ***Managers' Self-perceptions:*** This part of the questionnaire also had 20 statements — all starting with "I" or "My." The respondents were reminded that now the statements are related to their work and the way they feel and think about it. Again, the same 5-point scale was used.

4. ***Background Variables:*** Questions were asked about managers' age (below 30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years, and above 50 years), gender, education, the place where they spent most of their childhood (village, town, both village and town, or a metro city), and the family members residing with him/her (none, spouse and children, or spouse, children, and parents).

## Procedure

Data were collected individually or in small groups according to the availability and convenience of the managers. Some managers completed the questionnaire during their in-plant training. It took, on an average, about 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The data were collected from January to March, 1998.

# Results

## Factor Structure

The items of the three measures, societal, organizational, and managerial, were factor analysed (Box 2) separately using the Principal Axis method on the criterion that the eigen values should not be less than one. The factors were rotated to the varimax solution. Six factors emerged for each of the three measures. Because their alpha-coefficients (.61, .60, .41, .47, .26, .29 for the societal measure; .81, .61, .59, .38, .22, and .40 for the organizational measure; and .75, .53, .55, .46, .48, and .39 for the self-ratings), except a few, were low, a Scree test was performed to delineate viable factors. The Scree test suggested only two viable factors for each of the three measures. Hence, the items were again factor analysed extracting only two factors for each of the three measures. The factors with items loading .30 or higher are described in Tables 2 to 4. The factors were the following:

***Societal Beliefs: Factor 1 — Power and Status that Discriminate.*** The factor manifested a configuration of the beliefs that people obey persons in power because of their position. They consider power and prestige more important than anything else. People remain conscious of their own power and status in the society and what others think of them. They care more for material possessions than warm relationships probably in order to enhance their power and position. In fact, they try to get ahead at the expense of others. Furthermore, they use their

### Box 2: Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a statistical method to identify underlying dimensions or factors of a complex phenomenon. It clusters the items that tap the phenomenon in such a way that the common theme within each of the clusters is meaningfully configurated. The common themes are given names in order to identify them as variables. The items of a cluster exhibit greater homogeneity and reliability. The loading of an item on a factor reflects the extent to which the content of an item contains the common theme.

power and position for showing undue favours to their family and friends as well as exploiting the weak ones and misappropriating credits due to others.

***Societal Beliefs: Factor 2 — Family and Social Obligations.*** The high loading items indicated a pattern of beliefs that people attach greater priority to meeting family and social obligations than their work requirements. Work is considered to be less important than family. People take time off their work hours to meet social obligations. Such people prefer to take an inferior job nearer home than a better one at a distant place that can deter them from meeting social and family obligations. As a part of this package of these considerations, they believe in caste hierarchy, in religion than science, and in neglecting public property (Table 2).

***Organizational Climate: Factor 1 — Work-centric and Caring.*** A crucial facet of organizational climate was perceived to be work-centrality accompanied by a caring orientation of the organization. In such a climate, hard and sincere work is adequately rewarded, and ability and expertise are duly recognized and fairly appraised. The organization maintains a strong R&D department and vigorously engages in activities conducive to human resource development. It arranges regular training programmes for managers, provides safe and healthy place with adequate facilities to work, and promotes team spirit among managers.

The organization grants liberal welfare to its employees. The superiors are caring and affectionate. They watch their subordinates carefully and groom them for inculcating organizational rather than personal loyalty. Instead

## Table 2: Factor Structure of Societal Beliefs

### Factor 1: Power and Status that Discriminate (17.90% Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient =.71)

| Items | Loading |
|---|---|
| 7. People obey persons in power because of their position. | .64 |
| 4. Power and prestige are considered to be more important than the qualities of a person. | .59 |
| 3. People in our society are highly conscious of their status and position. | .56 |
| 8. People show undue favours to their family and friends. | .53 |
| 10. People care more for money and material possessions than for warm relationships. | .53 |
| 11. The strong exploits the weak ones. | .53 |
| 18. People try to get ahead at the expense of others. | .50 |
| 19. Credit is taken away by superiors while blame is shifted to subordinates. | .47 |
| 2. People are more concerned about "what others" think than what they want. | .30 |

### Factor 2: Family and Social Obligations (7.30 % Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient = .58)

| Items | Loading |
|---|---|
| 14. People value family than work requirements. | .63 |
| 1. People take time off to meet social obligations. | .54 |
| 20. Work is considered more important than family. | -.54 |
| 16. People believe in caste hierarchy. | .48 |
| 13. People do not care for public property. | .47 |
| 17. People believe in science more than religion. | -.42 |
| 12. People prefer an inferior job nearer home than a better one at a distant place. | .38 |

of politics and personal connection, it is hard work that matters in the organization.

***Organizational, Climate: Factor 2 — Boss-oriented and Personalized.*** Opposite to the previous factor, there emerged a configuration suggesting that an organizational climate may be boss-oriented and personalized in decision-making. In such a climate, managers at the top make all major decisions. Subordinates have to check with their superiors before taking any decision. Naturally, seniors patronize subordinates who indeed look for patrons and remain loyal, not to the organization, but to them. In such a climate, ability and expertise are ignored

in favour of politics and personal connection, team spirit and coordination suffer, work gets low priority, and managers work leisurely. Those who try to get work from their subordinates have a hard time because personalized, non-work-oriented relationships are cultivated and rewarded. Although the organization provides somewhat liberal welfare, probably in order to appease the employees, there exists a tendency towards unhelpful trade unionism. (Table 3).

***Managers' Self-Perceptions: Factor 1 — Task-and Relationship-oriented.*** Managers' self-perceptions were organized into two configurations.

### Table 3: Factor Structure of Organizational Climate

**Factor 1: Work-centric and Caring (24.60% Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient = .83)**

| Items | Loadin |
|---|---|
| 14. Hard and sincere work is adequately rewarded. | .73 |
| 7. Ability and expertise are duly recognized in this organization. | .63 |
| 15. Appraisal system is fair. | .63 |
| 13. The organization is engaged in strong HRD activities. | .61 |
| 1. The organization provides all necessary facilities for work. | .57 |
| 9. Superiors are caring and affectionate. | .55 |
| 11. The organization has strong R&D division/department. | .54 |
| 5. The organization has regular training programme for managers. | .50 |
| 17. The organization has liberal welfare schemes. | .49* |
| 6. Politics and personal connections, not hard work, pay here. | -.47 |
| 19. Superiors watch their subordinates very carefully. | .43 |
| 16. Seniors prefer personal rather than organizational loyalty. | -.40 |
| 12. Safety and health measures are not satisfactory. | -.37 |
| 10. Team spirit and coordination are lacking among managers. | -.36 |
| **Factor 2: Boss-oriented and Personalized (9.20% Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient = .68)** | |
| 8. Only top people make major decisions. | .56 |
| 18. Subordinates check with the boss before making any decisions. | .56 |
| 3. One can work at a leisurely pace in this organization. | .54 |
| 16. Seniors prefer personal rather than organizational loyalty. | .53 |
| 10. Team spirit and coordination are lacking among managers. | .52 |
| 6. Politics and personal connections, not hard work, pay here. | .49 |
| 4. Subordinates look for patrons. | .45 |
| 2. It is not easy to take work from subordinates. | .36 |
| 17. The organization has liberal welfare schemes . | .34* |
| 7. Ability and expertise are duly recognized in this organization. | -.34 |
| 20. There is too much of trade unionism in the organization. | .31 |

*Positive loading on both factors.

The first of them reflected a high task and relationship orientation. Managers having such an orientation love their job, are very meticulous about quality of products and services, work discipline, and rules and regulations that facilitate effective performance. They come to work before others and leave after many others, often neglecting their family. They have clear idea of their roles. They know what their superiors and subordinates expect from them and what their rights and obligations are. They remain close to their boss and help them even in personal matters. Because of their hard work, they perceive themselves as effective and satisfied with opportunities for personal growth.

*Managers' Self-Perceptions: Factor 2 — Insecure.* The second configuration reflected managers' sense of insecurity. Managers high on this dimension perceive that if they are not careful, there are people around them who will ditch them. Therefore, they consider it wise to cul-tivate good relationship with powerful persons in the organization. At the same time, they should keep looking for an opportunity to jump the organization. They feel that their generosi'ty renders them gullible and is exploited by others. They neither see any opportunity for growth in the present organization nor are they satisfied. (Table 4).

## Inter-relationships among Factors and Regression Analyses

The two factors each of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and managers' self-perceptions were correlated. Further, the mean differences between two factors within each of the three were checked for their significance. The findings are given in Appendix 1. Briefly, they revealed that status and power that exploit was highly and positively correlated with the belief that people meet family and social obligations even at the cost of their work. The mean difference was highly significant. On the other hand, the

### Table 4: Factor Structure of Managers' Self-Perceptions

**Factor 1: Task-and Relationship-oriented** (19.20% **Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient = .76**)

| Items | Loading |
|---|---|
| 14. I love my job. | .68 |
| 12. I am very strict about quality. | .64 |
| 11. I strictly follow rules and regulations. | .59 |
| 13. I know what my superiors and subordinates expect from me. | .59 |
| 4. I believe in strict discipline at work place. | .55 |
| 18. I am a very satisfied manager. | 55 |
| 7. I think I am quite effective as a manager. | .52 |
| 5. I have opportunities for personal growth. | .50 |
| 19. I come to work well before others and leave after many others. | .50 |
| 1. My rights and obligations are quite clear to me. | .47 |
| 10. I am close to my boss. | .45 |
| 17. I help my superiors even in personal matters. | .33 |
| 20. My job is such that my family is somewhat neglected. | .30 |

**Factor 2: Insecure** (10.30% **Variance Explained; Alpha Coefficient = .65**)

| | |
|---|---|
| 15. If I am not careful, there are people around me who will ditch me. | .64 |
| 8. Here it is wise to cultivate good relationships with those who matter. | .62 |
| 2. If I get a chance I would like to change my organization. | .56 |
| 9. I am so generous that people here take advantage" of me. | .55 |
| 5. I have opportunities for personal growth. | -.41 |
| 18. I am a very satisfied manager. | -.30 |

climate of work-centric and caring organization was inversely related to the climate of boss-oriented and personalized organization. The mean difference was not significant *(p >.05)*. Managers' self-perception of being task- and relationship-oriented was again inversely related to their feeling of being insecure. The mean difference was highly significant.

The societal belief of status and power that exploit was related inversely to the work- centric and caring climate of organizations and positively to the boss-oriented and personalized climate, and managers' perception of being insecure. The societal belief of meeting family and social obligations at the cost of work was also positively correlated to the boss-oriented and personalized climate, and managers' perception of being insecure. On the other hand, the work-centric and caring climate was positively related to managers' task and relationship orientation and negatively to managers' perception of being insecure.

The contributions of societal belief factors to organizational climate factors and their joint contributions to managers' self perception factors were examined by computing multiple regression analyses. The findings are reported in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that all multiple $R^s$ were highly significant (p<.0001). The standardized beta weights indicated that the societal belief of meeting family and social obligations had only marginal influence limited to the boss-oriented and personalized organizational climate. On the other hand, the societal belief in status and power that favour own and exploit others had pervasive influences on climatic as well as managers' self-perception. It fostered a boss-oriented and personalized climate, and rendered managers insecure. It was detrimental to work-centric and caring climate, but had a small positive impact on managers' work commitment. Societal beliefs seemed to have smaller impact on managers' feelings and thoughts than the climate of their organizations.

## Location Differences

It was of interest to examine whether managers located in four distant cities had differential perception of societal beliefs, organizational

## Figure 1: Contributions of Societal Beliefs and Organizational Climate to Managers' Self-Perceptions
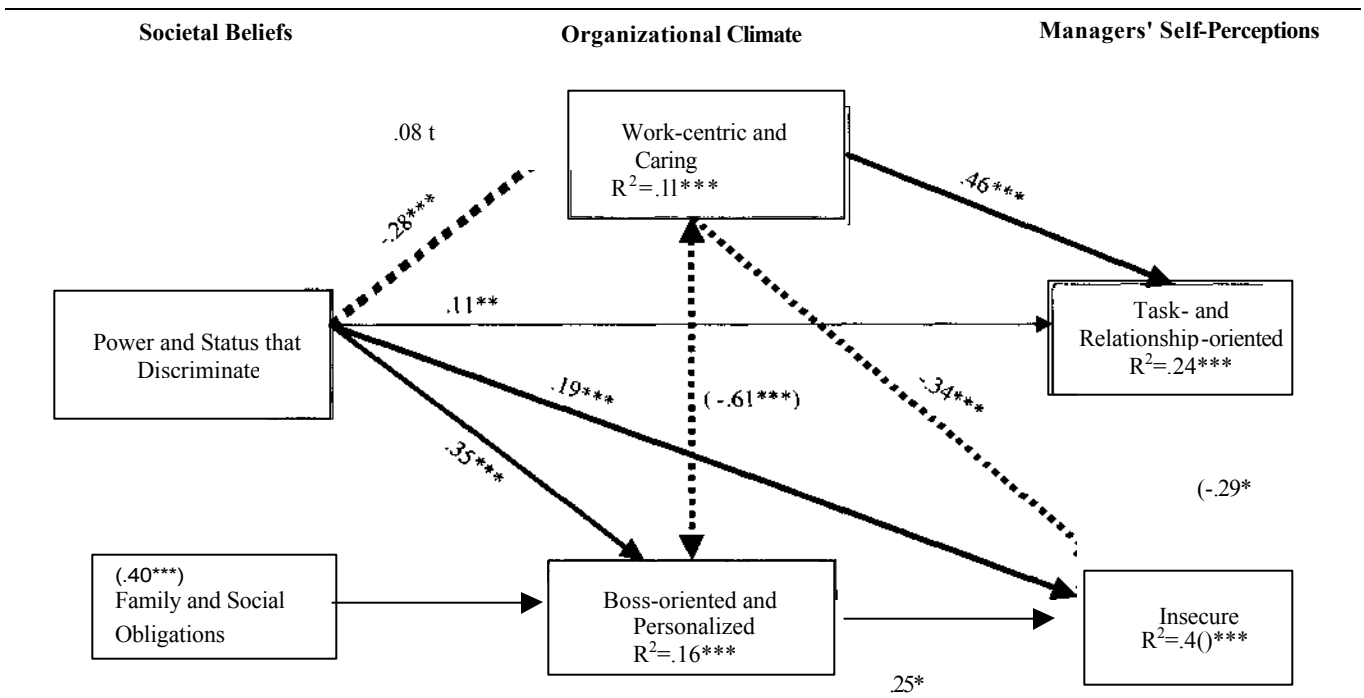


Note: Beta weights outside and correlations inside parenthesis; *** p<.0001; ** p<.001; * p < .05; t p = .07.

climate, and their work-related self-perceptions. As stated earlier, managers were drawn from eight organizations. Hence, organizational effects were nested in the locations. Further, managers showed variations in age, gender, rural-urban exposure, education, and family size (Table 1). Hence, a covariance analysis adjusted for the nested effects (Winer, 1962, PP 184-191) was computed for each of the six factors (i.e., two each of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and managers' self-perceptions). Mean scores, *SDs,* and ^-ratios for four locations, Jamshedpur, Patna, Ahmedabad, and Harihar, are reported in Table 5. Student-Newman-Keuls test of significance *(p =.*05) of the differences between the mean scores are reported in Table 6.

Taken together, Tables 5 and 6 indicated that Patna managers had the highest while Ahmedabad managers had the lowest mean score on both factors of societal beliefs, boss-oriented and personalized organizational climate, and managers' self-perception of feeling insecure. The opposite was true in case of work-centric and caring organizational climate: Ahmedabad had the highest and Patna had the lowest mean score. Only in one respect, being task- and relationship-oriented, Patna managers had the highest and Ahmedabad managers had the second highest mean score, and the differ-

ence was insignificant *(p >.*05). In sum, Patna and Ahmedabad managers had, by and large, contrasting perception of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and their sense of insecurity.

Jamshedpur and Harihar fell between two extremes on their managers' perception of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and their work-related feelings and thoughts. Jamshedpur managers, compared to Ahmedabad managers, perceived that people tend to believe more strongly in power and status that favour own people and discriminate against others. Harihar managers did not differ from those in Ahmedabad. However, both Harihar and Jamshedpur managers, more than Ahmedabad managers, perceived that people tend to meet their family and social obligations even at the cost of their work requirements. Similarly, both Harihar and Jamshedpur managers, more than Patna managers, perceived the climate of their organizations to be work-centric and caring. In this respect, they did not differ from Ahmedabad managers. However, the managers at both Harihar and Jamshedpur perceived their organization as more boss-oriented and personalized than those in Ahmedabad. Jamshedpur managers, surprisingly, had the lowest mean score on their self-perception of being task- and relationship-oriented which was significantly lower than the mean scores of managers at all the other

## Table 5: Mean Scores, <u>SDs</u> (in Parenthesis), and Significance of Differences of Societal Beliefs, Organizational Climate, and Managers' Self-Perceptions at Four Locations

| Dimensions | Jamshedpur | Patna | Ahmedabad | Harihar | F- ratio (8/506) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Societal Beliefs** | | | | | |
| Power and Status that Discriminate | 3.94 (.56) | 4.19 (.50) | <u>3.73</u> (.50) | 3.87 (.55) | 5.52 |
| Family and Social Obligations | 3.34 (.60) | 3.56 (.58) | <u>3.12</u> (.60) | 3.36 (.55) | 5.61 |
| **Organizational Climate** | | | | | |
| Work-centric and Caring | 3.17 (.61) | <u>2.84 (.83)</u> | 3.54 (.55) | 3.15 (.60) | 11.77 |
| Boss-oriented and Personalized | 3.30 (.51) | 3.46 (.49) | <u>2.67</u> (.50) | 3.03 (.49) | 36.53 |
| **Managers' Self-Perceptions** | | | | | |
| Task- and Relationship-oriented | <u>3.40</u> (.55) | 3.71 (.48) | 3.69 (.55) | 3.67 (.45) | 9.78 |
| Insecure | 3.33 (.61) | 3.45 (.52) | <u>2.80</u> (.71) | 3.15 (.56) | 11.77 |

Note: All /-ratios are significant at p < .007. Highest mean scores are bold-faced and the lowest ones are underlined.

**Table 6: Student-Newman-Keuls Test of Significance *(p = .05)* of Differences Between Locations on Dimensions of Societal Beliefs, Organizational Climate, and Managers' Self-Perceptions**

1.  **Societal Belief: People Value Power and Status that Favour Own and Exploit Others**
    *   Patna had higher score than Jamshedpur, Harihar, and Ahmedabad.
    *   Jamshedpur had higher score than Ahmedabad.

2.  **Societal Belief: People Value Meeting Family and Social Obligations**
    *   Patna had higher score than Harihar, Jamshedpur, and Ahmedabad.
    *   Harihar had higher score than Ahmedabad.
    *   Jamshedpur had higher score than Ahmedabad.

3.  **Organizational Climate: Work-centric and Caring**
    *   Ahmedabad had higher score than Jamshedpur, Harihar, and Patna.
    *   Jamshedpur had higher score than Patna.
    *   Harihar had higher score than Patna.

4.  **Organizational Climate: Boss-oriented and Personalized**
    *   Patna had higher score than Jamshedpur, Harihar, and Ahmedabad.
        Jamshedpur had higher score than Harihar, and Ahmedabad.
    *   Harihar had higher score than Ahmedabad.

5.  **Managers Perceived Themselves as Task and Relationship-oriented**
    *   Patna had higher score than Jamshedpur.
        Ahmedabad had higher score than Jamshedpur.
    *   Harihar had higher score than Jamshedpur.

6.  **Managers Perceived Themselves as Insecure**
    *   Patna had higher score than Harihar and Ahmedabad.
    *   Jamshedpur had higher score than Harihar and Ahmedabad.
    *   Harihar had higher score than Ahmedabad.

three places. Patna and Jamshedpur managers felt more insecure than the managers at Harihar, and, as stated earlier, Ahmedabad. The latter two did not differ significantly *(p >.05)* in their sense of feeling insecure.

In sum, Patna and Ahmedabad managers had extreme perception of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and their feeling of being insecure. Harihar managers were close to those of Ahmedabad in perceiving the organization to be work-centric and caring, and rating themselves as task- and relationship-oriented. However, they were close to those at Jamshedpur in perceiving that people meet family and social obligations at the cost of their work requirements. Jamshedpur managers felt nearly as insecure as those at Patna.

## Discussion

The structure of factors that emerged in the study is noteworthy. When we used a standard procedure of extracting factors on the criterion that eigen value should not be less than one, societal beliefs, organizational climate, and managers' self-perceptions got fragmented into six factors each with unacceptably low alpha reliability scores. However, when only two factors for each of the three sets of items were extracted, meaningful configurations with acceptable levels of alpha reliability could be established. Interestingly, this was similar to what happened in a previous study (Sinha *et al.,* 1994), when the perception of 753 students at seven locations in the country regarding peo-

pie's preferences, beliefs, and practices was factor analysed. The standard procedure yielded eight orthogonal factors with alpha scores ranging from .34 to .54, all unacceptably low. This led the investigators to use an unrotated oblique factor solution having acceptable alpha level (i.e., .76) and a meaningful configuration characterized by three themes: (a) familism which reflected embeddedness in the most salient ingroup, (b) preference for hierarchy, particularly based on class and caste, and (c) maintenance of personalized relationships (Sinha *et al,* 1994, p 142).

Although the variables in the present study were more precisely defined and the samples and the locations were different, the factors that emerged contained, like in the previous study, more than one theme. For example, people believe in the salience of status and power and use them to favour own and discriminate against others. People believe in meeting social and family obligations even at the cost of the work requirements. This belief is also tied up with the belief in caste hierarchy, religion rather than science, and caring for private rather than public property. The two factors are themselves correlated reflecting a broad profile of traditional societal beliefs.

Similarly, work-centrism of an organization is also blended with liberal welfare, caring and being affectionate to subordinates, and watching them carefully in order to inculcate in them loyalty for the organization. Boss-oriented climate is not only characterized by the top people making major decisions and subordinates checking with them before making any decisions but is also personalized in terms of seeking patrons and providing patronage, cultivating personal loyalty, and other practices which are not work conducive. Furthermore, task orientation of managers is combined with being close to one's boss, knowing and meeting his or her expectations, and so on. It seems that Indian managers do not compartmentalize those beliefs, thoughts, and feelings that are integrated in their mind.

The relationships between societal beliefs, organizational climate, and managers' self-per-

ceptions present a meaningful pattern. Traditional societal beliefs in status and power that discriminate are not conducive to work-centric and caring organizational climate. Rather, they facilitate a boss-oriented and personalized climate, and, directly as well as in combination with the latter, induce insecurity in the minds of managers. In a small way, the personalized power and status also contribute to managers' task and relationship orientation. The managers who perceive people believing in the personalized nature of power and status probably seem to realize the importance of being close to boss, sensing and meeting their expectations, and helping them even in their personal matters. However, it is the work-centric and caring climate that has the strongest impact on managers' task and relationship orientation. Furthermore, such a climate is incongruent with boss-oriented and personalized climate and deters the rise of any sense of insecurity in the minds of managers. In sum, the traditional societal belief in personalized status and power is detrimental to work-centric and caring organizational climate that plays the most critical role in managers' effective task performance and positive relationship with their superiors.

The findings further indicated that the level of development of the state and the city in which organizations are located have an impact on managers' perception of societal beliefs, organizational climate, and the ratings of their own task and relationship orientation as well as their feelings of insecurity. Patna was ranked twenty-sixth while Ahmedabad was ranked the eighth best cities in the country (Parthasarathy, 1999-2000, pp 153 and 89 respectively). Patna managers perceive more strongly that people around them believe in status and power that discriminate as well as in meeting social and family obligations. This then leads to the perception that their organizations are weak in work-centrism and caring, but strong in boss-oriented and personalized climate which then cause a sense of insecurity in their mind. In this context, their highest self-rating of task- and relationship-orientation seems an artifact due to a social desirability effect.

A higher level of development in Gujarat in general and Ahmedabad in particular has probably eroded people's beliefs in personalized status and power as well as in family and social obligations. It has stimulated the organizations in this area to cultivate a work-centric and caring rather than boss-oriented and personalized climate, which then has induced Ahmedabad managers to maintain a high level of task- and relationship-orientation and feel secured.

Both Harihar and Ahmedabad managers perceived that people tend to believe relatively less strongly in power and status that discriminate. Further, Harihar managers are similar to Ahmedabad managers in perceiving the organization to be work-centric and caring, and rating themselves as task- and relationship-oriented. However, Harihar was similar to Jamshedpur in perceiving that people meet their family and social obligations at the cost of their work requirements. Jamshedpur managers did not differ from those of Patna in feeling insecure in their organizations.

In sum, it seems that a relatively higher level of development of a state induces a shift in people's traditional beliefs, enables the organizations in the area to cultivate work-centric and caring climate, and renders managers in these organizations more task- and relationship-oriented. On the contrary, a less developed place perpetuates traditional beliefs leading to boss-oriented and personalized climate, and the two, taken together, cause insecurity in the minds of managers. There seems to exist an adaptive tendency in managers to respond to organizational requirements.

Among the three factors, societal, organizational, and managerial, probably organizational factors are more amenable to planned change for creating a positive spiral of adaptive development in societal beliefs and managers' work- and self-related perceptions. The objective of such a change programme is to create a work-centric caring organization by establishing systems and procedures that reward hard work and sincerity, recognize ability and expertise, and promote human resource development by regular training to managers. Such a climate must have strong R&D, adequate facilities for work, emphasis on team work, and liberal welfare. Superiors should watch their subordinates, care for them, and cultivate in them loyalty to the organization. In sum, both the management and the managers of an organization have a joint role to create work-centric and caring organizational culture that can induce employees to perform their task well, and relate with each other meaningfully as well to cause a dent in the societal beliefs of the people at the place where the organization is located.

**Appendix 1: Means, Standard Deviations (in Parenthesis), t-ratios, Coefficients of Correlation, and Significance Levels of the Factors of Societal Beliefs, Organizational Climate, and Managers' Self-Perceptions**

| Factors | Mean (SD) | Coefficients of Correlation | | | | | t-ratio[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| **Factors of Societal Beliefs** | | | | | | | |
| 1. Power and Status that Discriminate | 3.93(.56) | .40*** | -.31*** | .38*** | .01 | .39*** | 21.38*** |
| 2. Family and Social Obligations | 3.34(.60) | - | -.19*** | .22*** | .22*** | -.02 | .21*** |
| **Factors of Organizational Climate** | | | | | | | |
| 3. Work-centric and Caring | 3.18 (.67) | | - | -.61*** | -38*** | -.56*** | |
| 4. Boss-oriented and Personalized | 3.16 (.57) | | - | | -.18** | .53*** | .40 |
| **Factors of Managers' Self-Perceptions** | | | | | | | |
| 5. Task- and Relationship-oriented | 3.55 (.54) | | | | | -.29*** | 7.93*** |
| 6. Insecure | 3.22 (.65) | | | | | | |

Note. N = 522. *** $p < .0001$. [a] Paired t-test.

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