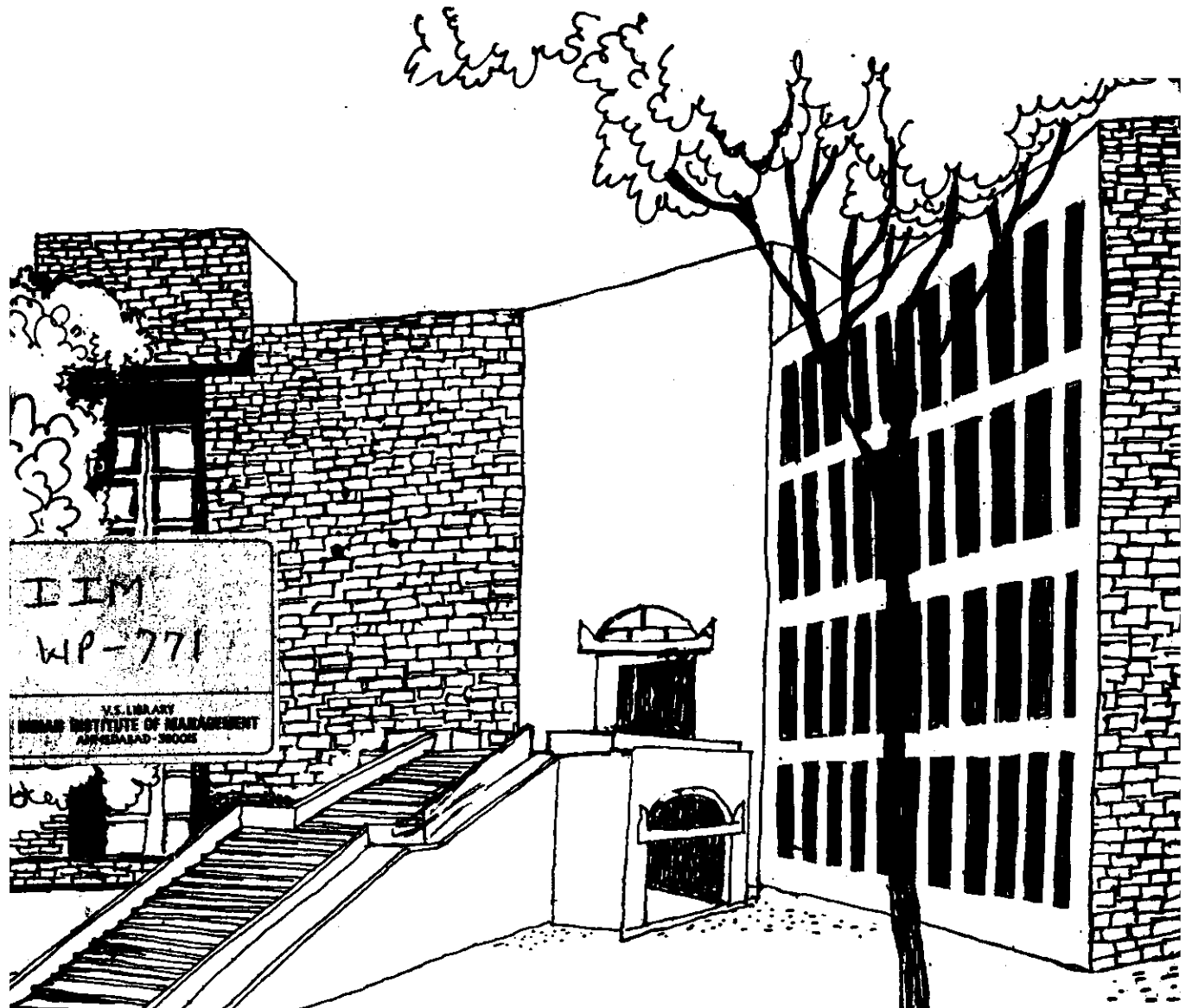




# Working Paper



STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS: THE ISSUE OF  
CULTURAL INTERFACE IN INDIAN ORGANIZATION

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## STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS: THE ISSUE OF CULTURAL INTERFACE IN INDIAN ORGANISATIONS

### Introduction

The national developmental thrust, the complexity of environment, the economy of scale, and sophisticated technology have provided a momentum to Indian organisations to grow from small, medium and large to mammoth in size. Each such growth has brought about changes in organisations. Structures have been redesigned from simple, functional, departmental and divisional. New management systems have been introduced to control, coordinate and provide information.

The study of Indian organisations and its unique characteristics is a recent phenomenon. Organisations theorists, behavioural scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and other scholars and academicians have focussed on various aspects of organisations. Since 1950 a host of studies have been done on organisation structures and their functioning. Other studies have focussed on specific dimensions of characteristics and behaviour of Indian Managers. Some other studies have focussed on motivation with the theoretical framework of Maslow. Similarly, studies on leadership qualities highlighting traditional cultural aspects and their impact on organisation growth have been carried out by a wide range of Indian writers. These studies of Indian organisations have focussed on organisation structures, behaviour of managers, quality of

leadership, issues of motivation, incentives, communication and other aspects. Many of these studies have looked at Indian organisations in the framework of Western Organisations and more recently in the framework of Japanese organisations. Cultural context of India has been experienced as a dysfunctional contribution to today's organisational growth.

### Scope of the Paper

This paper explores the concept of structures, systems, and culture. It then examines the interface between structures and systems as influenced by culture in the context of Indian organisations. The growth in Indian organisations has created changes at form levels but has created flux at behaviour and process level. Indian organisations accept the growth and its direction at cognitive level with a framework of rationality and logic but have continued to perform in their role taking, anchored in social structure and processes. These role processes are anchored in the cultural context of small organisations. This paper examines the quality of emergent interfaces between organisations and the deeply held role processes of social structures, and systems of large organisations, and their implications for modern, complex organisations of today.

### Concept of Structure

Structure basically refers to the internal characteristics and elements of an organisation. Structure defines order. This

order is made clear through charts. These charts indicate individual responsibility and reporting relationships. Structure also defines direction of communication and links the functions and role holders. Growth brings changes in organisation structure. Indian organisations which are small, traditional, and entrepreneurial in nature; often reflect simple structure, anchored in social context, promote personalised transaction, and single person authority.

These characteristics of the structure focuses on maintenance. It focuses on regularity of productivity and personalized nature of interpersonal transactions. It tolerates individual pace of role performances. The concept of the system, its links with the structure and interface are minimal. Structure of the organisation is perceived in one person authority. As such, what exists is the 'Authority - Individual' interface. This interface fosters loyalty, conformity, and obedience at one level and tolerance for occasional defiance, rebellion and withdrawals. The equilibrium of the Authority - Individual interface gets re-established once the authority and individual engage in an interpersonal interaction.

The social structure reflecting Authority - Individual interface was operative in family and social systems. The individual's interface with formal social structures emerged during rituals and ceremonies where birth order and social hierarchy defined the role taking. This was determined by social relationships, their transactions, and predetermined degree of freedom for

interactions. The Indian social structure designed for each role a space (Parikh, 1979). This space also defined the degree of freedom and movement. As such the interfaces were predictable and the coping strategies well defined by the social code of conduct. At all other times the structure remained anchored in one person. The best of the roles converged around that one person for visibility, affirmation, and bestowal.

Indian organisations which are small and entrepreneurial in nature revolve around one person structures. A large part of the time roles are performed based on instructions from one person. For example, an organisation gets started by an entrepreneur. He promotes values of integrity, dignity of labour, hard work, and honesty. He uses personal charisma and forges a culture of commitment which is cherished by the people in the organisation. AT this stage of the organisation its interface is characterised by a personal sense of belonging and partnership. Employees believe they have contributed to the growth and moulding of the organisation and in giving shape to the dreams and the visions of the organisation together with the entrepreneur. Individuals mobilize themselves for task performance at great odds. They absorb stress and build systemic infrastructures for performance. The structure-system interface remains anchored in that one individual - the entrepreneur and his leadership qualities. Over time Indian organisations get morgaged to the success and personal qualities of the leadership. It creates strong predisposition to personal processes which freezes new actions as the organsiation grows.

At this stage of inception most Indian organisations induct people from homogenous cultural groups. This has its advantages for both the individuals and organisations. It fosters an organisation culture on the foundation of socio-cultural homogenous perspective of the membership. It makes communication direct, personal, and informal.

Growth also brings separation from the charismatic leadership. Levels of management increase and the ambience of the individual-authority interface slowly gets linked to task-system interface. However, the actual transition is not easy. For within role transactions there are simultaneous experiences of discrimination, deprivation, denial, and experiences of rejection. They then get expressed in times of organisation growth, social rituals, or task crisis. These manifest as industrial relations issue, turnover among managers and technical staff, disgruntlement, resentment, and dissatisfaction. The Authority-Individual interface then expresses itself into structure-individual interface. It revolves around personal cumulative history of denials, lack of bestowals, discrimination and insensitivities of intervening in the working processes of role holders. Individuals talk of their loyalty, performance and personal sacrifices for the leadership and the organisation. The structure-individual interface prevents direct encounter confrontation with the leadership. It allocates the sources of residue feelings to growth and environmental factors. Indian social code of conduct does not permit direct encounters with authority.



Indian organisations have adopted structures, management systems and processes related to formal tasks. However, with the adoption of new structures new interfaces between structure and individuals have not emerged. The individual-structure interface has remained anchored in the earlier mode of small organisations with personalised nature of transactions. Indian organisations, in order to manage the emerging dysfunctionalities have attempted to introduce systems.

### Concept of Systems

Systems are introduced in organisations to maintain functionality between task and people processes. Essentially, systems reflect the health of the organisations. Systems deal with issues of growth versus stability, centralization versus decentralization of structures, climate of the organisation - external and internal satisfaction or dissatisfaction of people, and overall functioning of the organisation. Systems also determine the effectivity and efficiency of the organisation.

Indian organisations introduced complex systems to manage the increase in size, complexity of tasks, expansion of territory increased productivity and increasing complex linkages with the external environment. It was assumed that introduction of systems and redefinitions of structures would change the nature of interface between structure and individual, structure and systems, between structure - systems and individuals. However,

research by Kumar (1982), Maheswari & Malhotra (1973), Murdia (1978), Parikh (1979), and experiences with Indian organisations suggest that not only did the old interfaces not change but individuals role taking processes remained emotively anchored in the cultural process of authority-individual interface. Cognitively the new structures and systems were understood but in functioning authority-individual interface of small organisations were tenaciously held onto.

In the traditional Indian society structure-system interfaces were activated at the time of religious, social, or communal rituals. Systems were the links with the external environment which represented heterogeneity and diversity. As such, systems defined how of the rituals and structures defined what of the rituals. The emergent interface was time-bound, space bound and event bound. For example, a social event of birth, marriage or death which required the community and caste interdependence was defined by the social code of conduct. The emergent system-structure interface was pre-determined and so was the nature of interdependence.

The nature of current Indian Organisations takes a significant departure from the social organisations which defined the nature of tasks and transactions between people. Today's work organisations deal with diverse complex structures, have heterogenous people, authority is multi-person and multi-functional and deal with the concept of job and corporate responsibility simultaneously. The structure-system interface is

determined by the emerging nature of tasks and function rather than individual relationships. The organisation operates in an environment of ambiguity. This leaves the role holders apprehensive. They discover certainty with the structure. Structure is perceived as anchored in authority and hence they return to the authority-individual interface. Authority then defines the system and structure and as such remained anchored in one person.

### Concept of Culture

Culture is experienced in its varied multiplicity. It has many meanings. To Garg and Parikh (1986) culture has two significant anchors. The first anchor lies in the values, philosophy, and myths of any given society. These are articulated norms. They define the "dos" and "don'ts" and "Modes of Perception". Myths, folk tales, sagas and history are also part of this aspect of culture. This represents the macro-culture.

Its second anchor lies in the psychological role models of the family, its rituals, history and essentially in the micro-culture of the family. The micro-culture of the family provides the emotive maps of behaviour and presents culturally ideal role models to the individual. Individuals growing up in a family often anchor their introjections of the experienced culture in the model of significant roles in the family, caste, and community. Similarly, in quest of their own identity, they cast and recast

the heroes of myths and folklore in order to formulate their symbolic and psychological identities. Both anchors of culture put together help shape the role and identity patterns of individuals. These identity patterns are then brought to the organisation to influence organisation roles, jobs, tasks, perspectives, and policies.

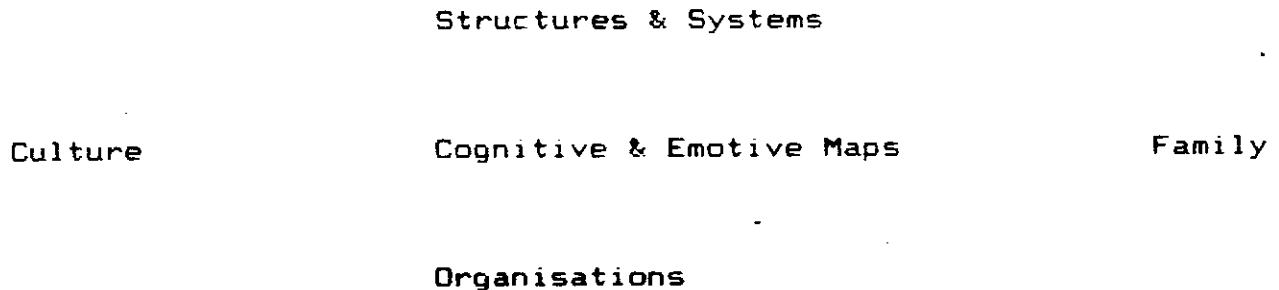
### Concept of Interface

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Interface is an enduring pattern of relatedness between people, tasks, structures, and systems. These enduring patterns may be functional or dysfunctional. The quality of interface is determined at one level by the cognitive map of roles, systems, systemic processes, ways of being and becoming and a world view of life space. Cognitive map is anchored in the experiences of the individual with the significant roles in the family. At another level the emotive map experienced in the family and the cognitive map experienced in the culture with personal meanings given to experiences becomes the determinant to transact with structures, systems, and individuals. Put together the cognitive and emotive maps serve as anchors to develop a map of the organisation. These cognitive and emotive maps from the culture and family then influence the interface of the individual with organisation and as such structures, systems, and role holders of the organisation.

## FIGURE I

### Coordinates of Emotive and Cognitive Maps



As the individual grows and encounters diverse systems his/her interface needs to be modified. Individuals over time acquire stable and enduring interfaces which are meaningful. However, over time these interfaces may get frozen and acquire dysfunctionality for both the individuals and systems. Cross-cultural studies have highlighted this phenomenon, Baumgartel & Jeanpierrs (1972), Reddy (1984) and Singh & Bhandarkar (1986).

The Indian experience suggests that as organisations introduce new structures and systems to manage growth and complexity, the cultural processes once viable for social living gets carried over to large organisation. As these cultural processes are designed for social living and not redesigned for large, mammoth and complex organisations, the organisations, over time accumulate dysfunctions.

History of the organisation growth in India suggests that the very same culture which contributes to the growth of the organisation now confronts the membership with anxiety and apprehensions. New members enter the organisation, new systems, and structures get introduced. At this stage confronted with simultaneous multiple new interfaces, individuals react with insecurity in their location, enlargement of their space, alienation from the leadership and redefinition of roles with other roles in the organisation. The question of ownership becomes paramount. The new interfaces which emerge and are encountered by the role holders reflect the following patterns.

1. Changes in structure and as such new coordinative system.
2. Increase in professionalism and as such new role taking.
3. Anticipated changes in leadership as such new working processes.
4. Introduction of heterogeneity - be that of age, socio-cultural belonging, education, training or professionalism.

All these processes demand changes in the nature of interface which have existed before. It means realignment and recalibration of organisation values, attitudes, beliefs and strategies which the organisation may link with the environment. New entrants evolve new business strategies and focus on functional and professional modes. Processes of coordination training and policies on personal acquire new dimensions.

### Definition of Structure-System Interface

The authority-individual interface exhausts itself as the organisation grows. Distance between authority is inevitable in the growth as levels of management increase. New interfaces have to be designed so that organisations can have a convergence of earlier cherished values as well as their new interpretations. New role definitions and role taking processes congruent with emerging new tasks becomes essential. As such interfaces have to be redefined based on the criterion of decision making, modes of leadership, degree of task differentiation and the mechanism of coordination dependent upon the task, technology, structure and people.

In order to develop new interface inputs need to be designed for role taking. These inputs at one level have to carry forward the strengths and positives of the history of the organisation and its culture. Similarly, at another level the design needs to identify relevant role processes for the growth, vision, mission and strategies of the organisation. The new design needs to create convergence between the old and the new and coherence amongst diverse membership. Indian organisations in their attempts to redesign often get caught with already existing structural and systematic pattern from the Western cultures. Some organisations hold on to those systems and techniques which have been proven to be successful in the past and only reproduce it in the growth phase. Both the above modalities often fail and

creates enormous invisible waste in the organisations. Some organisations borrow from others those systems which have succeeded elsewhere ignoring the elements of societal culture, specific and unique characteristics of their own, organisations history, culture, people, leadership, and the existing interfaces.

The Indian experience of direct transplants of management models have wrought disastrous results. Initially, both individuals and organisations experience enthusiasm of new inputs. But this enthusiasm is ephemeral as very soon deeply embedded cultural processes take over. Within the organisational setting the individuals' predisposition is to regress to the role models and their interface as experienced earlier including one's own perception and role taking. The individual's model of being a member is that of the family and as such he continues with familial role taking. In the absence of culturally relevant new interfaces individuals from the same cultural setting find it difficult to "rationally" design and build infrastructures that lead to a convergence and congruence between formal structures, tasks, roles and organisation processes. It is extremely difficult in such organisations to prevent "regression" to familial patterns. Individuals in organisations holding on to the cognitive maps of roles, structures and systems continue to re-enact the authority-individual interface.



Understanding the cultural relevance and emotively congruent processes could generate direction setting, policy formulation, and designing action alternatives for organisations. New design for organisation growth and development would have to identify cultural dimensions to add to the cognitive maps and as such generate new interfaces relevant to operationlizing the thrust, policies, structures and tasks of the organisation. Unless these emotive and cognitive maps are mobilised towards convergence and coherence and generation of new interfaces, the formal organisation processes remain diffused.

In India, today the assumptions about work organisations are distinct and different from social organisations. Lack of clarity and differentiaation between these assumptions determine the nature of transactions between role holders in various kinds of relationships both in social as well as work systems. Let us examine the assumptions of Western and Indian cultural dimensions of individual, collectively in the context of relationship between the two in five dimensions related to the concept of work.

#### a) Macro Theories of Organisations

Concept and theory of industrialization is dated to Adam Smith (1723-1790). He proposed that each individual is motivated by self-interest. Following Adam Smith, there are a number of theorists who have elaborated the nature of capitalist economy. These theoretical faramework of economy, conceptual frameworks of

organisation structures, systems, tasks and environment have their anchor in the Western cultural assumptions of individual, collectively, and the individual's relationships with collectivity. In the Indian context an individual is governed by social code of conduct of the family and the caste. The interface between individuals, systems and structures are mediated by the familial and coal structures. The role model for such a process is anchored in religious and symbolic role models. A study by Garg and Parikh (1976) of Indian youth suggests that Indian culture through the family continues to reinforce in the current Indian youth the emotive map of living for the family, sacrificing one's own aspirations living by the traditions, and by prescriptive social code of conduct. The encounter with the secondary systems of education and later organisation and the demand for achievement, competition, tasks and the self creates contradictory pulls and pushes in the individuals. The transferability of one interface to the other leaves individuals confronting blocks, and consequently to inability in making choices.

b) Micro Theories based on Individuals Behaviour in Organisations

In the context of behaviour Maslow's theory of need heirarchy and its assumptions has influenced Indian organisations. Over the last three decades Indian organisations have spent enormous resources of both time and money to train people and provide conceptual inputs based on the assumptions of this theory. Three decades of inputs of knowledge, attitude and behaviour skills to

generate new interfaces in organisations, relating to quality and quantity of production and quality of work life, provide only negative evidence. However, there is evidence that ownership organisations with culturally viable and relevant processes of transactions have contributed to far greater commitment, output and involvement of employees (Parikh 1979).

In the Indian context redefinition of cultural processes to define transactions in formal relationships be it superior-subordinates, collegiate or leadership can contribute to create generating new interfaces in task situations. Indians aspire for sense of belonging, affirmation, and bestowal for their fulfilment of duty in addition to striving for self-actualization (Parikh 1979). An Indian's self-actualization lies in his/her spiritual salvation and is not emotively linked to achievement and success in formal work settings all the time.

### c) Superior-Subordinate Relationship

Formal and business relationship between the employee and the employing organisation is the mode of relationship in the West. Skills and competence are for the highest bidder.

In Indian organisation personalised and close relationships with the leadership is very important. In most family organisations who have succeeded to grow from small to large, relationships and linkages with authority are quite personalised. Social heirarchy

is operative rather than superior-subordinate functional hierarchy. Organisation is made up of people with homogenous values and work like a family. Individuals put the success and growth of the organisation above themselves. Reward is not as important as support, and affirmation. There is also no fear of punishment. Mobility is non-existent and often generations are employed in the same organisations.

Family, caste, and community membership creates a right-obligation interface which cannot be ignored. As such, in formal work settings identifying familial linkages and establishing relationships however distant is of great significance. In fact, this process becomes the primary concern of people and tasks acquire secondary significance. It is only when the network of relationships are established that tasks get done.

#### d) Tasks versus Relationships

Western culture is an individualist culture. It is felt to be "right" that in business, all people should be treated alike; friendship or enmity should not affect business deals. Business considerations should have precedence over personal friendships and preferences (Hofstede 1981).

In Indian organisations task above people is cognitively understood. However, in carrying out the tasks people must first relate and establish personal and social linkages. Once that is

done follow up actions and task fulfilment are easier. In the absence of building these linkages inter-dependent tasks get bogged down into layers of rules, regulations, and precedents. For example, in family organisations with homogenous cultures follow up activities are easier and require lesser time. Equations among each other and with authority are determined. Social hierarachy is operataive and that works more effectively than functional authority. In larage organisations with heterogenous belonging, social, cultural, and educational diversity task interdependence becomes a monolithic task in itself. In Indian organisations personalized people-interfaces yield for greater task results than attempting to build task-interfaces which often may not work at all given the Indian culture's predisposition to be people oriented.

#### e) Joint Family Structure Versus Professional Structure

In Indian organisations structure is anchored in the model of the joint family. There is a patriarch who is significant. Next to the patriarach who is the patriarch's wife or one female who is critical and significant is the decision maker in the internal home setting. The rest of the roles are proxy or extensions of the significant role holders. However, resources of the systems are joint resources. The outsiders have no claim to it. No matter what the internal differences and conflict amongst the membership of the joint family resources are captive of the family. These processes are carried over not only in organisations owned by family but also in many large organisations. All significant roles, viz., those of

resource control or management of resources, viz. input and output are held by members of the family in family owned organisations. In the public sector the trusted or known people of the chief executives acquire that position. If the significant and critical positions are held by professional and/or heterogeneous group the organisations experiences conflict, invisible waste, delays in decision making, apathy, pulls and pushes of power and similar dysfunctional interface between role holders.

A study by Garg and Parikh (1981) suggests that in Indian organisations authority is centralised and the input-output activities are controlled by task leader. Management is by anxiety. There is tolerance for "invisible" waste and low efficiency. The concept of effectiveness does not exist. The emphasis and expectation from the employers is that of loyalty, obedience and conformity.

The entry of Professional managers with proven capabilities of achievement and success, equipped with competence, and technical skills have not effectively professionalised organisations. They have cognitively internalized models of task interdependence, concept of formal and functional task relationship, concept of responsibility, authority, and accountability, time management and other similar concepts of professional, managerial and technical competence. However, in their attempts to operationalize these concepts they get caught with deeply

embedded emotive maps of primary systems. They get caught with anxiety and relationships with people. They become technical giants and professional managers themselves but organisation culture as a whole remains anchored in joint family structure. These individuals end up working in isolation and with strength. They become that Atlas and Hercules of the organisation but perpetuate the social and affiliative interfaces as influenced by culture.

Organisations and managers both experientially and professionally trained cognitively accept the need to modify and change the individual-structure-system and culture interfaces. They accept the rationale of efficiency and effectivity, agree to the logic of task-interdependence, systemic processes and the legitimacy of new interfaces. The logic and rationality is acted upon to create new interfaces. However, the monolithic socio-cultural interface continues to create blocks and barriers. There is ample evidence that in formal work settings Indian managers can create and effectively relate with new interfaces. Confronted with new interfaces he can redefine his cognitive maps to formal structures. Thousands of Indians are proving their capability in formal organisations who have migrated to Western lands have not only succeeded but respond effectively to new interfaces with the environment.

Then what happens to Indian organisations and Indian employees in the cultural context of India? When an organisation transits from family owned structures to professional structures it is confronted with three critical and significant value assumption.

## 1. Organisation Values and Action Choices

Organisation value continues to be held by one or two of the top management. These significant senior people demand action conformity from their subordinates. These subordinates are part of history of growth of the organisations. These subordinates continue to operate from authority-individual interface and respond with conformity and personal loyalty in action. Over time the culture of the organisation gets anchored in avoidance of conflicts and doing the minimum which is acceptable. The dilemma is manifested when a whole set of new entrants join the organisation. The new professionals are oriented to task performance. They are attuned to the market conditions in the environment. They are equipped with knowledge and skills and are committed to their profession. The action demand of conformity by the top creates the first set of waves in the organisation. The organisation gets squarely confronted with its articulated values of integrity, tolerance for differences, and autonomy of choices for tasks. The incongruence between articulated values of belonging and action modality of conformity generates incongruence in beliefs and dampens the emerging professionalism of the organisation. It fragments the organisation into ownership of values and tasks.

Both sets of people—the owners of values and tasks—hold anxiety and apprehensions about growth, new structures and developmental thrust. One set of people want to hold on to the



past strengths while the others want to traverse the new horizon with freedom in action choice. Congruence between value and action interface remain fraught with doubts, helplessness, rebellion and defiance.

### Organisation Values and Role Performance

The transition from family to professional management demands from Indian organisations a whole new concept of role performance at all levels of the organisation. New structure and roles emerge. The interface between structures and roles based on tasks demands cooperation, collaboration, simultaneous processes of differentiation and integration and a concept of organisation anchored in professionalism and complex environment. The momentum for growth paves an opportunity for new role interfaces to emerge.

Indian organisations in their enthusiasm for growth, momentum to diversify or expand and the lure of the new techniques of management introduce highly complex structures and systems. The new structures, tasks, roles and technology demand a new leadership role focusing on corporate objectives and corporate processes. It demands reappraisal of external and internal environment, new dimensions in the cognitive maps of systems, leadership, organisation and role taking processes by both the role holders and the leadership.

This shift in the context of the environment demands a need to understand the new generation of young, technically competent professionally trained and aspiring young men and women. In effect a new cognitive map of the attitudes, values and expectations for career growth of the young entrants becomes essential. It also demands an understanding of formal structures anchored in corporate policies with the organisation functioning in an environment of flux, turbulence and uncertainty. Neither the leadership nor the role holders are prepared for this. As such organisation processes instead of development creative and innovative interface between structures and systems get relocated in the cultural processes of holding on to illegitimate power by few fragmented loyalties of people to critical role holders and personalised linkages. The organisation leadership unable to design corporate and organisation processes pushes the organisation into further fragmentation.

The corporate structure as held by leadership fragments the organisation into distinct functions or divisions. All personal and service functions got located in administrative function while all production related function got located in technical function. The top management then takes the role of distributing and allocating of resources to each one and acquires all power. The role holders both in the administrative and technical functions oscillate between getting recognition and affirmation or feeling helpless. Functions push and pull to acquire significance and power. Social skill is deployed to extract resources of the organisation. Organisation objectives and goals are managed by fear, crisis, or anxiety (Garg and Parikh 1986).

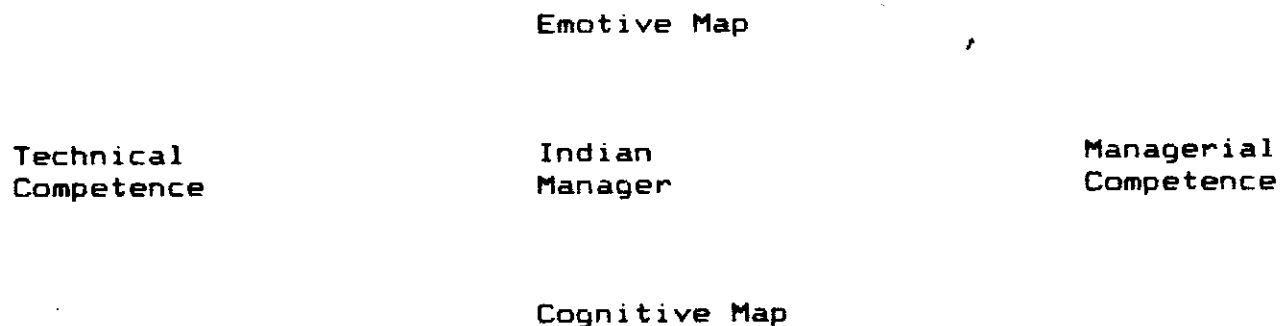
New system-structure interface of commitment, cognitive map of large and mammoth organisations, functional linkages, new mode of relatedness, sense of belonging and as such partnership in organisation and membership of organisation does not emerge. Individuals get located in their jobs and at best their departments or divisions. Links with other roles, functions, and tasks get anchored in personalized linkages or in familiarity with the leadership of other departments.

Herein lies the seeds of inefficiency of Indian organisations. Delays in routine tasks which require functional linkages, delays in decision making due to cultural interface of hierarchical and one person authority, cultural interface of being closer to the source of resource controller, and the individual largely anchored in emotive map of relationships with people rather than

.being anchored in the simultaneous cognitive maps of systems. Indian organisations are thus governed by people who at one level are technically competent but managerially mediated by the cultural interface of personalised relationships, emotive controls, concept of duty and awaiting bestowal, performance and seeking affirmation and the need for closeness with significant resource controller. Figure 2 reflects the above pattern.

FIGURE 2

Emotive Cognitive Map and Managerial Interface



What then are new directions for Indian organisations?

1. Redefinition of Cognitive and Emotive Maps

The cognitive maps of social systems as stated earlier get activated only in times of social, religious or communal tasks. These are event, time, and space bound. Indian organisations

need to introduce and foster a concept of system and systemic processes delinked with individual authority and linked with systemic authority. However, the concept of authority and hierarchy is a universal social phenomenon. It cannot be wiped out. It is deeply embedded and reinforced through cultural and family processes of socialization. It is suggested that in formal work settings concept of systemic authority anchored in institutional processes of organisation would generate attitudes congruent with the systemic processes.

Indian organisations need to identify new role processes and relevant attitudes at different level of managers. Cognitive and emotive maps need to be anchored in systems and tasks. If these cognitive and emotive maps are anchored in the individual's identity, role and concept of systems chances are Indian managers with their competence and capabilities will generate a dynamism of effectiveness and efficiency in organisations. They would generate systemic processes and structure-system interface which would focus on self and systemic authority and responses to tasks and behaviour.

## 2. Responsibility centres linked with corporate systems.

Culturally this process exists and could provide an emotive response. Indian managers relatedness with the authority and identification makes his job his personal responsibility rather than his role responsibility. Role responsibility can be denied but personal responsibility becomes a commitment made by the self. As long as training efforts or demands are made on the

Indian Manager in the name of role and duty and are denied the cultural interface of direct links with authority, roles would pursue ways and means for achieving direct links. It is suggested that input providing concepts to create personal and role links with the system would generate personal responsibility and thus create new interfaces.

### 3. Belonging tied to Career Planning

Indian managers have deep roots to their sense of belonging in their geographical locations. Around middle age many managers attempt to reengage with the primary system. At this point of time promotional opportunities are rejected. Promotion means mobility and movement away from their primary bases. Many managers do not choose promotion but choose stability in their home towns (even if transfers mean economical or professional growth). The Cultural anxiety of investing effort and energy in building and rebuilding new relationships prompts many managers to deny themselves upward mobility combined with the relocation. At one level Indians have a propensity to remain exiles for a life time but then do not invest or commit themselves to the system where they are exiled. Their interface with structures and systems as exiles is that of guest and they bide their time to return home someday.

It is suggested that Indian organisations can populate their system with dedicated and committed people by generating a sense of belonging and create an ambience of efficiency and effectiveness.

#### 4. Concept of Systemic Membership

Indian cultural has the tenacity to absorb diversity, heterogeneity and multiplicity in a dynamic whole. If history is any evidence India as a culture has absorbed alien after alien invasions and not only managed the diversity in a coherence but has also allowed contradictory and sometimes opposing social differences to coexist and maintain their identities. As such, India is a rich college of diversity. Indian organisations in their attempts at uniformity, regularity, and bureaucracy have created a culture of rights and demands of similarities across diverse regions. However, the identity has remained anchored in primary systems and not organisations.

Membership within a social system gets activated in times of social, religious and familial rituals. This cultural systemic interface can be redesigned to create systemic membership of task organisations. This membership anchored in task settings would manage the inherent doubts, anxieties and suspicion of heterogeneity, diversity and differences. Indian cultural interface of systems accepts coherence and convergence of diversity and heterogeneity to coexist for task but not for social relatedness.

## 5. Concept of System-Individual Regeneration

It is suggested that the congruence between cultural and individual positives is essential for regeneration and vitalization of organisational culture. India has a cultural heritage of four thousand years. The attempt of Indian organisations to identify the positives of the culture and the individual can bring about new values congruent to the organisations, individual role taking and formal tasks. For too long new Indian society has indulged itself in attempting to eradicate those ills identified as the ills of the country and as such organisations. This is like chasing a mirage. The ills which are identified are anchored in a comparative frame and have a historical context of few hundred years. India does not suffer from poverty of culture. This is anchored in the economic coordinates and technological discoveries. It is only in the redefinition and reinterpretation of this culture of poverty and by owing up of the rich heritage of culture that organisations can regenerate dynamic interfaces between individuals, structures and systems. Such a shift demands new definitions and meanings of individuals, structures and systems in an organisation. Indian organisations would have to do a realistic appraisal of both structural and contextual dimensions and help foster either relevant cognitive and emotive maps and generate new interfaces in organisations. It is vital that both individual and organisations create space for these new interfaces and design processes so that these processes can acquire enduring qualities.



STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS: THE ISSUE OF CULTURAL INTERFACE IN INDIAN ORGANISATION

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the concept of structures, systems, and culture. It then examines the concept of interface and it gets influenced by the cultural processes. Indian organisations are squarely caught with the individual-authority interface anchored in personalized relationships. To design structure, system and professional role interface, Indian Organisations have first to understand the cultural interface with structures, systems and relationships. It has then to deal with

1. Changes in structure and as such need for designing new coordinative systems.
2. Increase in professionalism and as such new values and role taking.
3. Changes in the leadership and designing of corporate process and
4. Heterogeneity and as such processes of coherence and convergence emerging from shared values and perspectives.

In order to redefine and redesign task, organisational and role interfaces, organisation can do so by

1. Redefinition of emotive and cognitive maps of people, systems, structures and tasks,
2. Responsibility centres linked with corporate systems,
3. Belonging tied to career planning,
4. Finally acquiring an emotive map of systemic membership and
5. Finally, processes of system-individual regeneration and replenishment.

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