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CONTENTS

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EDITORIAL

The Spring 2008 issue of the Skyline Business Journal is now in your hands. UAE and Gulf economies have undergone vast changes in recent years. The UAE economy has grown by leaps and bounds and it has set an ideal for other countries to follow. The significant growth in UAE economy becomes more important keeping in view of the sluggish international economic scenario. United Nations predicted only 1.8% growth in the world economy in 2008. The deepening credit crisis in major market economies triggered by the US-led slump in house prices, the declining value of the US dollar, persistent global imbalances, and soaring oil and commodity prices pose considerable risks to economic growth in both developed and developing countries. However, UAE's political leadership has steered clear the country out of problems and assured sound economic growth in all areas. The UAE's nominal GDP grew by 23.4 per cent in 2006 to reach Dh 599.23 billion. Key factors were the continued strong oil market, establishment of a number of major development and infrastructure projects and further expansion of free zones. Detailed strategic planning for economic growth in the coming period has also been a strong feature of financial governance during 2006-07. Development of the relatively new private property market in the UAE supported a rise in contribution to GDP of the real estate and business services sector. Similarly, the building and construction sector continued to boom. Sustained investment in education, health and social services maintained the government services sector (10.4 per cent) above the 10 per cent level of non-oil GDP. The healthy economic growth trends and sound fundamentals show the commitment of UAE Leadership to take this country to the new commanding heights. Skyline Business Journal is fulfilling a vital need of tracking these tremendous developments by creating a research platform for discussing such key issues.

The Skyline Business Journal has been monitoring the changes in UAE economic and financial landscape along with key international developments with the help of its research articles and book reviews on significant topics. The selection of articles in this issue reflects this thought process. One research paper on online communities in the context of UAE academic scenario provides a new perspective on the issue of significance of online communities in constantly improving academic landscape. Another paper analyzes the conflict between the local language and global minds in the globalization process with reference to MBA education in Saudi Arabia. One path breaking paper on communication skills traces the roots of communication concepts based on a 2000 year old treatise Tirukkural. Two papers on consumer behavior and consumer satisfaction provide new insights in the constantly evolving field of consumer behavior. One research paper on employee attrition reviews theoretical bases of coping strategies. Another research paper on macro-economic perspectives of special economic zones in India throws fresh light in this high potential area. One paper on MIS examines the development of ERP systems. Two book reviews provide expert opinion on human resource management in hospitality and tourism and art of writing cover letters for succeeding in job market. It is expected that these research papers would generate an active debate in their respective areas for the benefit of business and academic community.

Dr. A.K.Srivastava
Editor-in-Chief

EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN INDIA : A STUDY OF THEORETICAL BASES OF COPING STRATEGIES

Shefali Nandan

Abstract

The economic growth in India is accompanied with employee attrition problem. The attrition rate has been rising in various sectors. Organizations are devising innovative ways to retain talent. All retention strategies seem to be based upon certain theoretical concepts. Various researchers have tried to discover and analyze the work attitudes which play a key role in retaining employees. This paper discusses the concepts of Job Embeddedness, Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Engagement in understanding 'what retains employees'. An attempt has been made to identify linkages between these work attitudes so as to provide theoretical framework for devising effective retention strategies. The paper concludes with a discussion of implications for management practice.

Keywords: Job Embeddedness, Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement, Job Satisfaction, Attrition, Employee engagement, Employee retention

Introduction

The robust economic consolidation of India (touching about 8.5 percent rate of growth) has taken India Inc. to a position where there are numerous opportunities of expansion. This economic growth is also accompanied with growing employee aspirations, high turnover rates, shortage of skilled workers, scarcity of experts etc. Retention of key employees and treating attrition troubles has become a prime concern for companies as it is critical to the long-term health and success of any organization. Failing to retain a key employee is a costly proposition for any organization there are costs associated with recruitment, selection and training. A NASSCOM (National Association of Software & Services Companies)-Hewitt Associates Survey shows that the cost of attrition is 1.5 times the annual salary of an employee. This paper discusses certain important work attitudes, their probable linkages with each other and their possible impact upon employee retention. These attitudes explain the reason why people stay in their organizations even when other opportunities are available elsewhere. It also discusses the retention strategies adopted by different organizations. It is argued that retention strategies should be designed only after thorough understanding of theoretical concepts that explain employee behaviour. Two terms that are used in the context of employees leaving the organization are attrition and turnover. The former means the voluntary and involuntary permanent employee withdrawal from organization (Robbins, 1998). The matter of concern is voluntary exit of valuable performers. There is very little literature explaining the difference between the two terms. Hence, the two terms have been used interchangeably in this paper.

Attrition rates in different sectors in India: Some statistics

It is essential to understand the gravity of the attrition problem before discussing the retention strategies. Table 1 represents attrition rates in certain sectors like FMCG (http://retention.naukrihub.com), manufacturing, finance (ASSOCHAM Business Barometer (ABB) Survey, www.tribuneindia.com), IT and ITES (Ma Foi Employment Survey) in India, across different years. Figure 1 shows the attrition rates in different sectors in the year 2007.

Table 1: Attrition rates in certain sectors in India across different years.

	2004 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2007 (%)
FMCG 9.8	9.8	10.8	17	16-18
Manufacturing	-	-	Almost 20	20
Financial	-	-	32	40
Services	23.63% (IT) and 16.82% (ITES)	-	35-40	25-30

WHY DO EMPLOYEES LEAVE?

The essence of employee retention rests at the grassroots level with the relationship between managers and employees. This relationship is fundamental to any initiative related to improved employee engagement in the workplace. Employees look to their managers for challenging work, recognition of their achievements and opportunities to learn and grow on

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the job. Managers who fail to meet their employees' expectations are likely to lose their best employees to another firm (Rutledge 2005).
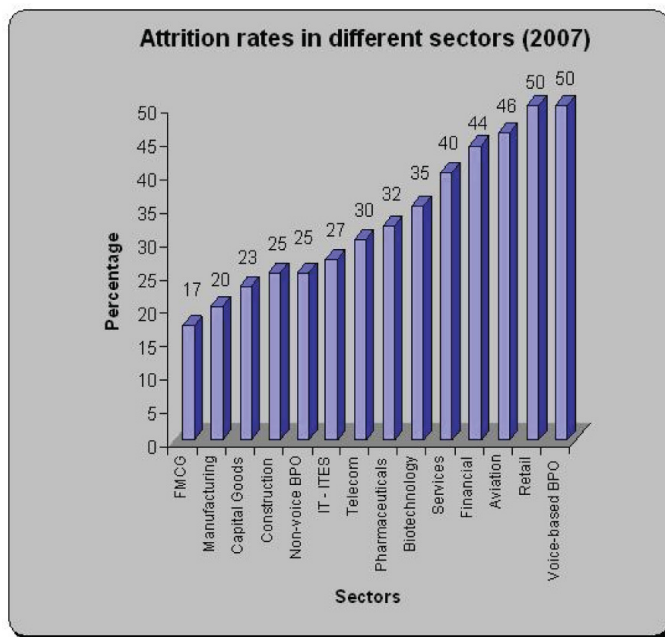

Figure 1: Attrition Rates in Different Sectors in India

(source: http://retention.naukrihub.com/attrition-rates-in-different-sectors.html)
Immediate gains in salary package and growth potential are mainly responsible for job change (ABB Survey). Pressure factors in BPO industry were found to be odd work timings, monotonous job, performance targets, cultural clash (for employees coming from small towns to big cities) and career growth (BPO's Young and Troubled, 2007). A Hay Group study (2002) showed that career advancement and utilization of potential is very important for employees.

BT-TNS- Mercer study shows that today one of the most important reasons for employees to stay with a company is the nature of work, which offers them some challenge and sufficient autonomy to innovate; opportunity for growth and development; fair treatment and transparency in system.

These studies point towards the fact that salary is not the only factor that is capable of retaining employee. Compensation may be seen only as a hygiene factor. Bad compensation may lead to higher attrition, but good compensation may not necessarily lead to higher retention. There are many intrinsic factors to which employees attach considerable importance. The importance of good work environment can be understood from the findings of a survey by Corporate Executive Board, a Washington based firm that which found that on a global average, an unattractive Employment Value Proposition (EVP) of an organization requires an offer of 21% increment to hire an employee as against 11% for attractive EVP. The attributes that form core of EVP globally include collegial work environment, compensation, development and future career opportunities, quality of manager, organizational stability and respect. Attributes that are important in India are ethics, growth rate of organization, innovation, job impact, market position, work-life balance, reputation of senior leadership and job-interest alignment (Sinha, 2007).

The implications of these findings for companies are that employees value these attributes in an organization and chances are that they would stick to the organization having these attributes. A pro-active rather than a reactive approach is likely to be more successful in dealing with this issue. The chances of retaining an employee who has initiated a job search are low because he has mentally left the organization.

Retention strategies in Practice
Ma Foi survey, July - September 2005 (Job Opportunities on the Rise in South, 2005) revealed that companies are investing heavily in controlling attrition. ABB survey found that companies now prefer to sign bonds for three years with employees as they are imparting them the necessary training and specialized knowledge of retail functions. Competitive pressures have encouraged organizations to be proactive in diagnosing HR problems and to adopt more innovative HR practices since these are no longer a matter of trend, but rather of survival.

At Juniper Networks it is ensured that a prospective employee understands the challenges in the company at the interview stage itself so that the candidate can decide whether he wants to work in the company. Twice a year the company undertakes a market survey where it benchmarks its compensation package with others in the industry.

Poaching is another issue of concern which is responsible increasing attrition. Bilateral agreements between companies are being signed. Basic norms are being put in place and code of ethics is being stressed upon by industry. For example, GE, HSBC, Nipuna, Microsoft, etc. informally agreed that they would not recruit someone who has worked for less than a year with his employer or someone who has switched 3 jobs in 2 years (www.icmr.icfai org).

At HTMT Global Solutions, a BPO company, employees are offered the options to move to other streams to overcome workers' ennui. At Xansa the problems of attrition is addressed by building a strong internal referral process. This ensures that as those being referred are more aware of the work environment and have a more aligned cultural fit.

Samsung Telecommunications has evolved compensation and benefits plan where a performer can earn up to 600% of his base pay. Besides it has also evolved a career and succession plan for employees. This strategy has been successful in bringing down the attrition rate to 6% (Purkayastha).

NASSCOM Hewitt Total Rewards Study 2006 for companies in IT and ITES Sector has shown that majority of companies use employee inputs to manage employee motivation/satisfaction and influence program/policy decision. Importance is attached to rewards & recognition by most of the companies. There were a variety of dependent care assistance programs, convenience services, amenities and alternative work arrangements provided by the sample companies. Flexible timing is the most common alternative work arrangement provided and this is provided by almost all organizations in the data sample. Perks like Rejuvenating holidays, spa therapies and fine-dining and so on are used for retaining top level talent (Dhamija, 2007).

Companies are working very hard to be seen as fair employers. Sasken Communication Technologies and Mindtree Consulting have in-house policies that strongly endorse equality and democracy. Mindtree offers stock options to all the employees.
Microsoft India (having attrition rate of 7.2%) focuses on leadership development in employees. Career growth concerns of employees are taken care of through internal transfers. There is transparency in the system of pay and appraisal.

Similarly, HCL Infosystems recognizes and rewards employees for innovations. The examples given above and an analysis of the findings of Business Today-Mercer-TNS study of the best employers in India 2007 reveal that the aspects taken care of in framing the retention strategies, particularly in the companies rated as best employers, include focus on career path and growth, inculcation of a sense of ownership, easy access to top management, giving room to be innovative, exposure to responsibility, flexi-hours, working from home, recreation programs (to facilitate

socialization and de-stressing), global opportunities, education initiatives, empowering employees, career mobility, taking care of special needs of women employees, transparency in system, counseling, learning and development, work-life balance, health and well-being, recognition and rewards.

Some Theoretical Aspects Underlying Retention Strategies
The retention strategies discussed in the previous section find their roots in different theories and concepts of organizational behaviour. Concepts of Job embeddedness, Employee engagement and three key work attitudes of Job satisfaction, Organizational commitment and Job involvement are discussed here.
Job embeddedness

According to Holtom, Mitchell and Lee (2006), when an employee develops a strong attachment to the organisation and its environment, he is less likely to leave the organisation. This is because by moving in search of better opportunities he has to forgo many things in the present environment, which are valuable to him.

Employee embeddedness is relevant to organizational staffing and retention policies. In numerous cases, organizations have operated on the assumption that high (or low) job turnover is due to largely intra-organizational factors and, therefore, can be addressed by more effective staffing and retention programs (Rousseau, 2004). However, sometimes low turnover may be due to embeddedness in a particular career path rather than to the nature of a particular organization's environment. On the other hand, high turnover may be a function of low "sunk costs" in an occupation rather than of organizational "errors" in managing personnel. Therefore, if employee's investment of efforts in career advancement and development and growth of his organisation is increased, he is less likely to leave the job because of certain unseen and intangible losses that he may have to incur on leaving the job.

According to Mitchell et al. (2001), organizational embeddedness is the totality of forces that keep people in their current employment. These forces include fit, links, and sacrifice. Fit is the extent to which an individual's abilities match organizational requirements and an individual's interests match organizational rewards. Links refer to the extent of ties individuals have with other people and activities at work (e.g., friendship ties or task interdependence). The more

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links one has in an organization, the more embedded one is in the organization. Sacrifice is the totality of losses which individuals would incur by leaving their organizations (e.g., pension benefits or accrued sick leave). Thus, increasing the employee involvement in organization through various means like ESOPS, timely promotions, rewards, increasing his social involvement in organization, making him a part of various decision making bodies like committees etc. may increase employee embeddedness.

These researchers are also of the view that the optimal levels of turnover and embeddedness can vary over time and across industries, and, thus, the managerial strategies for addressing that balance might have to vary, too. For instance, occupations in which there are high barriers to entry (e.g., pilots), organizations in which there are high barriers to entry and companies with seniority-based incentives (e.g., fixed-benefit pension plans) will have much higher base rates of embeddedness. Conversely, in labor markets where there are extreme shortages of labor it might be rational to encourage embeddedness even for average employees (Ng and Feldman, 2007).

Employee engagement
An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. According to Rutledge (2006) truly engaged employees are attracted to, and inspired by, their work ("I want to do this"), committed ("I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing"), and fascinated ("I love what I am doing").Engaged employees feel a strong emotional bond to the organization that employs them (Konrad, 2006). This is associated with people demonstrating willingness to recommend the organization to others and commit time and effort to help the organization succeed (Hay Group 2002). Many organisations are making recruitments on the basis of internal referrals. The concept of employee engagement suggests that people are motivated by intrinsic factors rather than simply focusing on extrinsic factors (Robinson etal. 2003).

Job satisfaction, Organisational commitment, Job Involvement
Job satisfaction reflects the extent to which an individual likes his/her job. Organisational commitment can be defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in an organisation (Levy, 2003). It is an important work attitude because committed individuals are expected to display a willingness to stay employed at an organiza-

tion (Kreitner and Kiniciki, 2004). Job Involvement is defined as "the degree to which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engagged in and concerned with one's present job" (Paullay et al., 1994).
A significant and strong relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction was found in a meta-analysis (Tett and Meyer 1993). It implies that if job satisfaction is increased, organizational commitment can be increased.

A study showed that job dissatisfaction caused employees to begin the process of thinking about quitting. Withdrawal cognitions had a greater impact on employee turnover than job satisfaction. (Hom and Kinicki, 2001). This implies that managers can indirectly help to reduce employee turnover by enhancing employee job satisfaction which also increases motivation (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004).

Job involvement was positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intrinsic motivation and negatively related to intentions to quit. Three implications of these results are: first, managerial attempts to improve any one of the three key work attitudes-job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job involvement are likely to positively affect the other two work attitudes. Second, managers can improve employee job involvement by providing work environments that promote intrinsic motivation (Thomas, 2000; Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004) third, improving job involvement can reduce employee turnover (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004). It may further be implied that employee engagement is positively related with job involvement.

There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This is reflected in literature which suggests that job satisfaction is a causal antecedent of commitment (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995; Williams & Hazer, 1986).

Both satisfaction and commitment contribute independently to the turnover process (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Morrison (2004), on the basis of various studies, suggests that satisfaction and commitment are invariably reported to be negatively related to turnover and intention to leave. A recent study showed that employees had lower intentions to quit their job when they were committed to their respective organisations (Hackett et al 2001).

The studies and definitions discussed above suggest that job involvement, job satisfaction and organisa-

tional commitment may be seen to be positively related with job embeddedness. If latter three increase, Job embeddedness may be increased leading to increase in retention. Further, it may be implied from the above discussion that an increase in job involvement may give rise to an increase in employee engagement. These linkages are shown in figure 2.

Researchers have suggested that reciprocity is a mechanism underlying commitment (Angle & Perry, 1983; Scholl, 1981) and that employees will offer their commitment to the organisation in reciprocation for the organisation having fulfilled its psychological contract (Angle & Perry 1983; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994). By fulfilling obligations relating to, for example, pay, job security, and career development, employers are creating a need for employees to reciprocate, and this can take the form of attitudinal reciprocity through enhanced commitment and consequently influence employees to stay with the organisation (Furnham, 2002; Wagar, 2003)
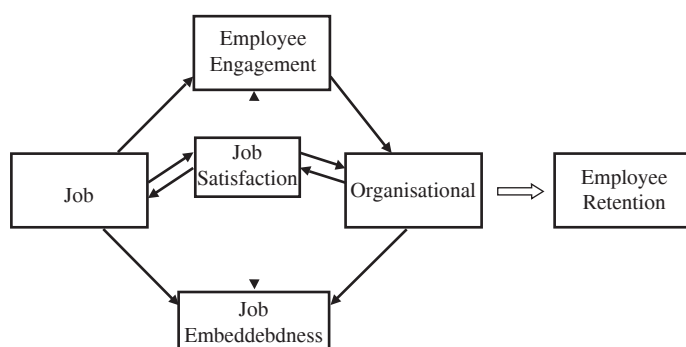

Figure 2. Linkages between the five work attitudes

Previous studies of the concept of commitment (Mowday et al.1982; Meyer & Allen 1991) have substantiated that employee commitment to the organisation has a positive influence on job performance and a negative influence on intention to leave or employee turnover. In addition, empirical evidence also strongly supports the position that intent to stay or leave is strongly and consistently related to voluntary turnover (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000; Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001).

A number of employee retention-commitment models particularly advocate the advantages of high involvement or high commitment human resource practices in enhancing employees (Clarke, 2001; Mercer, 2003). Previous work (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Shaw et al., 1998) indicated that high-involvement work practices will enhance employee retention. The identified HR practices included selective staffing, competitive and equitable compensation, recognition, comprehensive training and development activities (Ichniowski, Shaw & Prennushi, 1997; Youndt et al., 1996).

Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2000) found that both person-job fit and person organisation fit predicted job satisfaction; however, person-organisation fit was a better predictor of intention to quit. Thus, people who are not well suited for the job and/or organisation are more likely to leave than those who have a good person-job or person-organisation fit. Lee et al. (1992) believe that an employee's satisfaction with a job, as well as propensity to leave that job, depends on the degree to which the individual's personality matches his or her occupational environment. This implies that the organisation should not only match the job requirements with personality but should also carefully match the person's personality and values with the organisation's values and culture (Kristof, 1996; Rhoades et al., 2001).

This implies that suitable and appropriate selection methods must be implemented so as to predict successfully 'organisation-personality-job' fit aspect of prospective employee. This is a proactive approach to prevent turnover.

This study also revealed that rewards and recognition play a key role in the commitment of core staff. A fair wage is the cornerstone of the contractual and psychological agreement between employees and employers (McCallum, 1998; Parker & Wright, 2001). A number of recent studies have highlighted the rewards-retention link (Mercer, 2003; Tower Perrin, 2003).

Recent studies (Accenture, 2001; Clarke, 2001; Mercer, 2003;) suggest that there is a set of best practices for managing employee retention.

Chew and Entrekin (2004) highlight eight key factors influencing retention. These HRM retention factors were categorised into two bundles: 1) HR factors (person organisation fit, remuneration, training and career development, challenging opportunities) and 2) organisational factors (leadership behaviour, teamwork relationship, company culture and policies and satisfactory work environment). Similarly to Fitzenz (1990), this study implies that both organisational factors and human resource practices may influence retention of staff and thereby commitment.

Therefore, a challenge for human resource practitioners is clearly to design holistic systems that influence

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commitment and provide positive work experiences simultaneously.

Studies show that are that the same qualities that hold employees are the ones that best serve the customers: Employees who can make quick decisions on behalf of the customer and the company; employees who have a broader scope of responsibility that allows them some freedom and leverage to solve customer problems; learning opportunities that give employees the skillfulness to address customer issues; and supportive management and supervisors who use any mistakes that occur as teaching opportunities. Thus training programs can play an important role in developing these qualities within the employees who, in turn, can inculcate these attributes in their subordinates. This may also act as a retention strategy.

The findings of Business Today-TNS –Mercer survey about the aspirations of today's employees reveal that employees want challenging jobs. This may necessitate redesigning of jobs to make them more 'interesting' for employees. Job design also known as job redesign refers to any set of activities that involve the alteration of specific jobs or interdependent systems of jobs with the intent of improving the quality of improving the employee job experience and their on the job productivity (Bowditch and Buono,1985). The motivational approaches to job design attempt to improve not only employees' effectiveness and attitudinal reactions (such as job satisfaction) but also intrinsic motivation and many behavioural outcomes, including turnover (Edwards et al., 2000).

Employees tend to remain with the organisation when they feel their capabilities, efforts and performance contributions are recognised and appreciated (Davies, 2001). Recognition from managers, team members, peers and customers has been shown to enhance commitment (Walker, 2001).

Conclusion
Organizations may consider to offer a distinct value proposition to successfully attract talent. The right mix of culture and HR practices contributes to the above in a big way. Compensation is most certainly a key driver in such situations but other factors are certainly very important. Organisational policies should be framed such that they encourage an employee to believe that his knowledge, skills and values match the demands of his job.

A scientific and analytical approach should be imple-

mented to check attrition. Understanding the implications of various studies can help employers formulate effective retention strategies. It can be seen that the concepts of organisational commitment, job embeddedness, job involvement, job satisfaction and employee engagement are interrelated; focusing on enhancement of any one or two of these employee related aspects can automatically enhance the other aspects. Thus HR specialists can move in a systematic and focused manner in thinking of effective retention strategies rather than taking a random and haphazard approach involving hit and trial method to retain talent.

The recognition and rewards programs are not the only ingredients for developing an engaged workforce. The factor that holds people includes effective and participative management providing good leadership, besides others factors. Old hierarchy systems are making way for knowledge-based companies where employees reign supreme, especially in IT sector.

Every company is unique, and every industry has its own set of unusual challenges. However, a very costly mistake is made when it is believed information from one sector doesn't apply to other sectors. Retention strategies can be more successful if their theoretical bases and underlying interrelationships are better understood. These linkages between the five work attitudes discussed in the paper imply that one motivator is capable of affecting many work attitudes, each of which have a considerable impact upon employee's intentions to quit. Therefore each retention strategy must be carefully implemented. The 'package' must be such that each retention strategy must have an overall additive impact in the retention program of the organisation, rather than having a 'duplicating' effect. Each strategy must complement the supplement the other strategies so as to give a synergistic effect.

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CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM, ATTITUDES AND INTENTION TO PURCHASE: BANGLADESHI EVIDENCE THROUGH APPLICATION OF STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM)

Ahmed Shahriar Ferdous
Shahid Hossain

Abstract

The purpose of study is to investigate attitudinal differences between local and foreign made products among Bangladeshi consumers. Additionally, the paper investigates degree of consumer ethnocentrism in the Bangladeshi market and test empirically, through structural equations modeling, the association between consumer ethnocentrism, attitudes and purchase intentions. The findings in the study revealed that Bangladeshi consumers surveyed for the purpose of this study are moderately ethnocentric. For the majority of product category and respective attribute tested significant differences were found between consumer attitudes toward local and foreign made products. Structural path results confirmed significant associations between consumer ethnocentrism, attitudes and purchase intention. In terms of practical implication the findings provides understanding for foreign firms in terms of what their scenario are when they consider Bangladeshi market and also add tremendous value for both multinational and local companies while formulating marketing strategy in countries belonging to transitional economies.

Keywords: Consumer Ethnocentrism, Consumer Attitudes, Purchase Intention, Structural Equations Modeling.

Introduction

With the spirit of globalization which is a phenomenon in the 21st century success or failure of any business entity largely relies on understanding and meeting the needs of customers (Czinkota, Ronkainen & Moffett, 2000). This has become a real challenge with the notion of consumer ethnocentrism, which relies in the assumptions that buying foreign made products can be viewed as unpatriotic and may challenge the domestic economy (Klein, 2002). Though ethnocentrism is a global phenomenon many researches have concluded the fact that the degree of ethnocentrism varies from one country to another depending on where the study took place (Javalgi, Khare, & Gross, 2005)

Today's world trade environment has been characterized with more market grouping, free trade agreement, and global cooperation followed by a significant drop in formal barriers like tariff, quota, and red tapes (Hill, 2004, pp. 173). This relaxation of foreign trade policies have brought consumers around the world closer toward foreign made products/services than ever before. As a result, customers' attitudes toward foreign products have been a subject of considerable interest and research in international business for decades (Wang & Chen, 2004). Previous studies relating to the country-of-origin effect (COO) have confirmed the fact that consumers have tendencies to prefer domestic over foreign made products especially if they lack information about those products (Damanpour,

1993; Elliot and Camoron, 1994). As per the study by Shimp and Sharma (1987) it has been confirmed that the tendency of consumers to be ethnocentric largely depends on the beliefs about the appropriateness and moral rightness of purchasing foreign products. Ethnocentric consumers prefer domestic goods because they believe that products from their own country are the best (Klein, Ettenson, & Morris., 1998). The more a consumer places importance on whether or not a product is made in his/her country, the higher the ethnocentric tendency will be (Huddleston et al., 2001). While investigating the consequences and impact of ethnocentrism, researchers have hypothesized that certain variables have an effect on the relationships between consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes and in turn, attitudes and purchase intention (Javalgi et. al, 2005). Consequently, our aim in the study is to use this concept and investigate the attitudinal differences between local and foreign made products and the degree of ethnocentrism among Bangladeshi consumers. Additionally, the paper investigates empirically, through structural equations modeling, the association between consumer ethnocentrism, attitudes towards foreign made products and purchase intention.

Literature Review
Consumer ethnocentrism
Shimp and Sharma (1987) explained "consumer ethnocentrism" as a domain-specific sub-set of ethnocentrism. An extension of ethnocentrism concept

"consumer ethnocentric tendency (CET)" indicates a general tendency of customers to avoid and to reject the imported products irrespective of products attributes concerned like price, quality etc, mainly due to nationalistic reasons (Shankermahesh, 2006). It is note worthy to mention that consumer ethnocentrism may result in overestimation of the domestic product attributes and quality in general and under estimation of the quality of foreign products (Sharma et al., 1995). Many researches have successfully concluded that consumers in the developed countries have general tendency to prefer products manufactured in their country (Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Samiee, 1994). But this statement can be challenged by the findings that people from developed countries tend to be less ethnocentric than their counterparts in developing and emerging nations (Sharma et al., 1995; Lindquist et al., 2001). This is probably due to the fact that consumers' evaluation of the quality of foreign/imported products will influence their purchase preference. As a result the impact of willingness to buy domestic/foreign products will be different in developing and developed countries (Wang & Chen, 2004).

Attitudinal differences between local and foreign product attributes
The term "attitude" is frequently used in describing people and explaining their behavior which basically indicates a persistent tendency to feel and behave in a particular way toward some object (Fishbein & Ajen, 1975; Fazio et al., 1989). It was argued from Kinra (2006) study that national reputation for products vary from country to country as a result, consumers generalize their attitudes and opinions in term of their level of familiarity and background with that country. In addition, product attributes like "technological superiority", "product quality", "value for money", "status and esteem", and "credibility of Counrty of Origin" of a brand play significant roles (Kinra, 2006). This country of origin (COO) found to be a significant factor and primary cue for consumers in evaluating new products depending on their expertise under several conditions (Maheswaran, 1994) as oppose to other product related attributes (Kinra, 2006). Here, it is noteworthy to mention that consumers' perception of products' country of origin are based on three components as far as the standard attitude model is concerned namely "cognitions" indicating the knowledge about a specific product, "affect" indicating favorable/unfavorable attitude, and "conative" indicating actual purchase of a foreign brand (Papdoupoulos et al., 1993).

Also research has shown that people from developed, more modern nations, tend to be less ethnocentric than their counterparts in developing and emerging nations (Lindquist et al., 2001; Sharma et al. 1995). Groups from developing nations and groups from developed nations are different also (Hult & Keillor, 1999). Here it can be mentioned as an example that low income consumers with lower level of educational qualification emphasize on physical attributes of the products whereas higher income people with higher educational qualification emphasize on augmented attributes of the products (Keynak and Kara, 1998).

Consumer attitudes and purchase intention
Understanding consumer attitude has always been a subject of interest as there are growing evidences that it influences purchase behavior especially when the product is high involvement in nature (Sharma et al., 1995; Watson & Wright, 1999; Kaynak & Kara, 2002). Marketers are convinced that attitude surely influences consumers' purchase (Fishbein & Ajen, 1975; Fazio et al., 1989). As per the study of Klein et al., (1988) attribute judgments are assumed to influence purchase but most research on consumers' evaluation of foreign products has not measured purchase intention or decision directly. But general impression drawn from the study by Clark et al., (1990) concludes that customers' enduring behavior as a pattern and personality characteristics are extremely important to customers and strategic decision making.

As mentioned earlier that consumers in the developed countries prefer products from their home country (Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Samiee, 1994). Research have pointed out the fact that highly ethnocentric consumers sometimes overestimate domestic product while underestimate imports and feel a moral obligation to buy domestic products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 1991; Sharma et al., 1995). Consequently, Huddleston et al. (2001) study reveals that the influence of consumer ethnocentrism on willingness to buy domestic products will vary from developed to developing countries.

Hypothesis development
Consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes towards local/foreign products
Previous studies indicate that attitudes towards foreign products vary from country to country ranging from developing to the developed (Javalgi et al., 2005; Kinra, 2006). One of the key factors that will affect customers' attitudes toward local and foreign products is definitely ethnocentrism. Findings from previ-

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ous studies states that the more ethnocentric consumers, the more the consumer will be against importing foreign goods (Sharma et al., 1995; Watson &Wright, 2000). Sharma et al. (1995) study shows negative relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and attitude towards foreign products in a more developed country. Further, Klein et al. (1998) study in transitional country found consumers with strong ethnocentric beliefs evaluated foreign products negatively than those who did not hold such beliefs. In addition, Javalgi et al. (2005) study found negative association between consumer ethnocentric tendency and attitudes toward importing of foreign products in France. From the discussions it may be articulated that associations between consumer ethnocentrism and attitude towards foreign products were tested in transitional and developed countries. However, testing such relationship in a least developing country (LDC) setting is yet to be explored therefore we propose that:

H1: Consumer ethnocentric tendency and attitudes towards foreign products is negatively associated in Bangladesh, a least Developing country (LDC).
Consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention Studies related to consumer ethnocentrism integrated the construct in models of consumer decision making by empirically investigating antecedents and identifying the moderating factors that reduce the ethnocentrism effect on purchase intention (Han, 1988; Sharma et al., 1995). Researchers have hypothesized that certain variables have an effect on the relationships between ethnocentrism and attitude and in turn, attitude and purchase intention (Javalgi et al., 2004). These variables include product necessity, product serviceability, country-of-origin, and consumer animosity (Sharma et al., 1995; Huddleston et al., 2001). On the other hand, Han (1988) and Herche (1992) in their studies found empirical support for a positive relationship between CET and purchase intention of domestic products. Klein et al. (1998) also found significant statistical evidence for the direct negative link between consumer ethnocentrism and willingness to buy (WBD) foreign products (considering the word "WBD" interchangeably taken as 'purchase intention' in some studies). Further, Zarkada and Fraser (2002) also found negative associations between consumer ethnocentric tendency and support for foreign retail outlets. Therefore, from the above discussion we propose that:

H2: Consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention towards foreign made products are negatively associated in a LDC such as Bangladesh.

Attitude towards local/foreign products and purchase intention
It is noteworthy to mention that attitude would not be important to marketers if it had not been shown to influence the purchase intention of consumers (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Fazio et. al., 1989). This relationship proved to be pivotal when the product categories are "highly involved" (Keynak & Kara, 2002; Sharma et al., 1995; Watson & Wright, 2000). Klien et al. (1998) found significant and positive association between consumer evaluation of local products and purchase intentions. Javalgi et al. (2005) study conducted among French consumers revealed that attitude toward importing products from any country can be expected to influence the decision to purchase a foreign product. Now when we undertake this study to test association between attitude towards local and/or foreign products and purchase intentions among Bangladeshi consumers we must keep in mind that only 10 percent population live in urban areas and nearly 80 percent depends on agriculture for livelihood compared to most developed countries (Kucukemiroglu, 1999). But it is also true that Bangladesh is religiously, ethnically, linguistically, and socially extremely homogenous (Kochanek, 1993). This homogeneity will invariably be beneficial for this study in order to generalize findings while testing any proposition concerning consumer attitude towards local or foreign made products and purchase intention. Therefore, against these backdrops we propose that:

Figure 1 The conceptual model
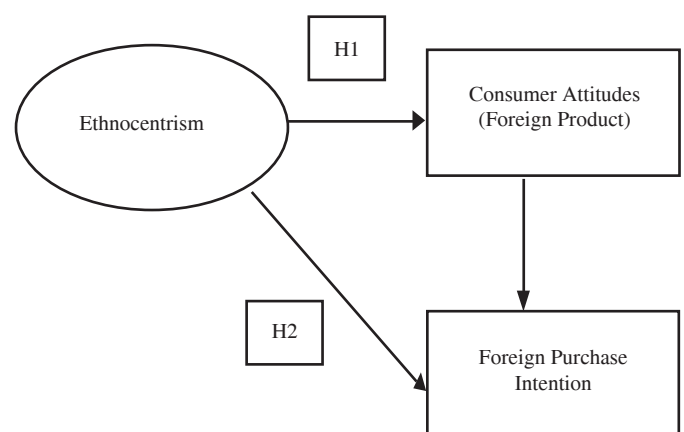
H3: Attitude toward foreign product is positively associated with purchase intention of imported products.

Based on the conceptual framework presented in this section, Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model and the hypothesis that are to be tested.

Methodology

Participants and procedure

A survey was conducted on a sample of 255 consumers, out of which 245 completed and usable responses were obtained. Probability sampling using a multi-stage cluster-sampling method was used to select a representative sample of consumers in the city of Dhaka representing as a cluster identical to other major growing cities in Bangladesh. Respondents were selected from different region covering major residential areas including north, south, east, west and central part of the city. Households were selected through systematic random sampling. Respondents chosen were all adult members of the household and with age above seventeen years.

The sample consisted of 66.9 percent male and 33.1 percent female respondents. In terms of age, 42.7 percent of the respondents were between 17and 25, 25 percent between 26 and 33, 17.7 percent between 42 and 50 and 6.8 percent above 50 years. Majority of the respondents in the sample, 54.7 percent, had income range below 10000 Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) per month. 18 percent had income range between 10000 and 20000 (BDT), 14.7 percent between 20000 and 30000, 4.1 percent between 30000 and 40000 and 8.6 percent above the income range of 40000. The sample comprised of different professional people including 42.9 percent students, 6.9 percent housewives, 30.6 percent private service holders, 2.4 percent government employees and 17.1 percent businessmen. As far as level of education was concerned majority of the respondents were well educated with 2 percent of respondents having secondary school certificate, 31.2 percent having higher secondary certificate, 56.3 percent having graduation degree and 11.4 percent with post graduation degree. Overall the sample is a good representation of the urban people living in Dhaka city and by the nature and characteristics if it described so far we can infer that majority of the respondents would be able to express their opinion regarding local and foreign made products thus providing a good representation of the population under study.

Personal face to face interview were conducted at consumers homes by students recruited from North South University, Bangladesh with bilingual ability and were well trained before conducting the interviews. In cases where respondents were unable to fill in the questionnaire by themselves the interviewer filled in the responses via listening to the respondent's verbal responses, however, in rest of the cases the respondents filled in the questionnaire by themselves.

Measurement instruments

A quantitative survey comprising of 41 items was administrated in order to emphirically investigate the degree of consumer ethnocentrism, consumer attitude towards local and foreign made products and purchase intention. Degree of consumer ethnocentrism (CE) among Bangladeshi consumers was measured using the reduced and validated 10 item CETSCALE (Shimp & Sharma 1987; Martýnez et al. 2000; Lindquist et al. 2001). To measure differences between attitude towards local and foreign made products a seven point semantic differential scale was used where respondents were asked to describe their opinion, 7 (indicating most positive) and 1 (indicating least positive), about various consumer products and its attributes relating to "value for money", "technicality", "quality", "credibility of country of origin" and "status and esteem". The product attributes chosen in this study is similar to the ones used in previous studies by Kinra (2006) and Watson and Wright (2000). Consumer products chosen were mostly nondurable items due to the fact that very few local durable products/brands are available in the Bangladeshi market as alternative to foreign made durable products, thus making it difficult to compare differences in consumer attitudes between locally and foreign made durable products. Consequently, the study uses range of consumer product items having both local and foreign brand alternatives in Bangladeshi market such as shoes, ceiling fan, pen, soap, canned juice and potato chips/snacks.

In order to measure overall product attitude consumers were asked to indicate their opinion separately about local and foreign made products using a single item seven point differential scale with '5 as most favorable' and '1 as least favorable'. Product purchase intention was measured by asking single item question "what is the likelihood that you would buy product (X) from the following country (Y)" similar to that as used in Javalgi et al. (2005) study. The product items used to measure the purchase intention were pen, soap and shoes and countries mentioned were Bangladesh, India and Thailand. The final part of the survey also included various demographic questions.

Analysis and Results

Computing degree of Ethnocentrism

According to Hamim and Elliott (2006) the mean scale value of CETSCALE is taken as the indicator of the intensity of consumer ethnocentrism (CE) that is a higher mean scale value indicates higher CE among consumers. The total mean scale value of CE-

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TSCALE using a 10 point reduced instrument for the current study is 46.52 among Bangladeshi consumers. Thus reflecting that Bangladeshi consumer are less ethnocentric in comparison to consumers from countries such as India (M=66.96, SD= 16.41), USA (M=52.92, SD= 16.37), New Zealand (M=62.21, SD=25.79), Poland (M= 69.19), Korea (M=85.07) and Indonesia (M=74.50) (Upadhyay & Singh 2006; Good & Huddleston 1995; Sharma et al. 1995; Watson & Wright 1999; Hamim & Elliott 2006) and more ethnocentric in comparison to consumers residing in countries such as Great Britain (M=30.29, SD=9.47), Japan (M=40.10, SD=17.3) and Sweden (M=38.40, SD=18.5) (Hult et al., 1999; Baumgartner, 1998).

Attitudinal differences

Differences in consumer attitudes toward local and foreign made products reveal some interesting findings. Table I illustrate the attitudinal difference between local and foreign made product across a various range of consumer products attributes. Surprisingly, only in the case of 'value for money' attribute there is no significant difference between consumer attitude towards locally manufactured and foreign made pen (5.33:5.37; p=0.670). The reason behind it may be due to the fact that foreign branded pens available in the Bangladeshi market is similarly priced as that of local brands of pen that are currently available. However, from the findings it can be reflected that consumers still evaluates foreign made pen more favorably in terms of technical aspects, quality, and status and esteem.

Interestingly, significant differences are found between consumer attitudes toward local and foreign made products across all the consumer products and its attributes considered for the purpose in this study. Further, from the mean ratings of local and foreign made products it is revealed that Bangladeshi consumers are significantly more favorable towards majority of foreign made product in comparison to local alternatives. These findings are quite contradictory with the results found in the study done by Kinra (2006) in Indian market considering the fact that Bangladesh and India are neighboring countries and lot of similarities exist as far as consumer behavior pattern is concerned among these two countries. Kinra's study found insignificant difference in attitude towards local and foreign made brands in respect to "value for money" attribute with items such as shoes, shampoos and ice creams. Further, in terms of "credibility of country of origin" there was also no significant difference between mean ratings between shoes, ice creams

and cold drinks. Whereas in the Bangladeshi market

Table I Product attributes differences between local and foreign made products

Attribute/ Product	Locally made (Mean rating)	Foreign made (Mean rating)	t-value	P value
Value for money				
Shoe	4.46	5.34	7.025	0.000**
Ceiling fan	4.97	5.62	5.074	0.000**
Pen	5.33	5.37	4.270	0.670(NS)
Soap	4.78	5.61	6.343	0.000**
Canned juices	4.54	5.74	11.08	0.000**
Potato Chips	4.57	5.55	8.309	0.000**
Technicality				
Shoe	4.11	5.32	9.111	0.000**
Ceiling fan	4.60	5.59	10.07	0.000**
Pen	4.76	5.50	7.397	0.000**
Soap	4.53	5.60	8.865	0.000**
Canned juices	4.36	5.72	12.02	0.000**
Potato Chips	4.26	5.44	10.57	0.000**
Quality				
Shoe	4.44	5.38	7.097	0.000**
Ceiling fan	4.69	5.99	4.337	0.000**
Pen	4.96	5.57	5.544	0.000**
Soap	4.72	5.72	7.489	0.000**
Canned juices	4.45	5.66	9.858	0.000**
Potato Chips	4.59	5.39	7.618	0.000**
Country of Origin				
Shoe	4.46	5.30	6.181	0.000**
Ceiling fan	4.62	5.54	8.486	0.000**
Pen	4.91	5.58	6.540	0.000**
Soap	4.54	5.76	9.919	0.000**
Canned juices	4.24	5.87	13.821	0.000**
Potato Chips	4.46	5.50	9.733	0.000**
Status and Esteem				
Shoe	4.48	5.73	9.951	0.000**
Ceiling fan	4.92	5.67	6.427	0.000**
Pen	4.88	5.77	6.955	0.000**
Soap	4.64	5.98	10.409	0.000**
Canned juices	4.24	5.94	13.562	0.000**
Potato Chips	4.58	5.75	10.229	0.000**

Note: *significant at p < 0.05; ** significant at p < 0.01; NS = not significant

it is observed that respondents studied in this paper are less ethnocentric and have the tendency to significantly evaluate most foreign alternate products and brands in favorable way than local made ones. Therefore, the next section of this study empirically investigates whether degree of consumer ethnocentrism have an impact on attitude towards foreign products and purchase intention in a least developing country (LDC) such as Bangladesh.

Measurement model

Before running a full structural equation model (using Amos 7 software) to test the association between ethnocentrism, attitude towards foreign product and foreign purchase intention (based on the hypothesis developed previously) confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out on individual constructs where

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necessary (Wang & Chen, 2004; Nguyen, 2007; Wong & Merrilees, 2007). In order to test construct validity fit indices like overall model chi-square (x^2), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), confirmatory fit index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), root mean square (RMR) and root mean square of approximation (RMSEA) values were used (Hair et al., 1998; Chan and Cui, 2004). Ethnocentrism in this study was treated as the first order latent factors and 10 items describing it were considered as the observed variables. Internal reliability of the 10 item CETSCALE showed good results: cronbachs alpha (internal reliability) = 0.94, however, results from confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) indicated a poor fit of the model with the data under study thus showing lack of construct validity of the 10 item reduced scale: x^2 (245) =270.68, (p=0.000), GFI=0.785, AGFI=0.663, CFI=0.895, TLI=0.865 and RMR= 0.163, RMSEA= 0.166. Therefore, the 10 item CETSCALE was purified further and finally 5 items were retained for the study resulting in all item-to-scale values to be over 0.8 and overall reliability of 0.934. Further, CFA results showed evidence of construct validity of the 5items measurement model as the fit indices reflected adequate model fit with the data: x^2 (245) =6.635, (p=0.249), GFI=0.989, AGFI=0.968, CFI=0.998, TLI=0.997 and RMR= 0.034, RMSEA= 0.037 (Hair et al., 1998; Wang and Chen, 2004).

The overall attitudes of consumers towards foreign product and foreign purchase intention are treated as the observed variables in the overall structural model. The purpose of doing so was to achieve more reliable estimates and better structural model adequation. As overall foreign product attitude of consumers was measured using a single item question of testing its validity as a measurement model did not arise. The other observed variable foreign purchase intention was obtained by aggregating average scores of the three different product categories (pen, shoe and soap) originating from the two mentioned foreign countries (India and Thailand).

Structural equations model
The structural equation model was treated next as shown in Figure 1 using the maximum likelihood method (ML) as the results of MLE correspond to events that are likely to happen based on the observed variance-covariance matrix (Cherrier & Munoz 2007). Fit indices from the structural equation model shows value of GFI=0.966, AGFI=0.927, CFI=0.985, TLI=0.975 and RMR= 0.048 and RMSEA= 0.075. The chi-square value of the overall model with sam-

ple size of 245 is 30.612 and p=0.004 (less than ac-

Figure 2 The structural equations model
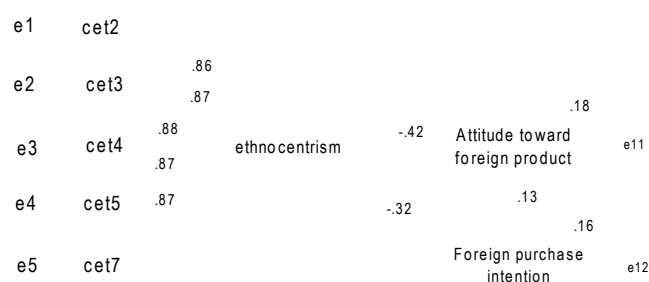
ceptable p- value of 0.1), however, according to Hair et al. (1998) chi-square test becomes sensitive and its significance test becomes less reliable as the sample size becomes more than 200. Therefore, considering the fact that this study comprises of sample size more than 200 (n=245) and other fit measures reflecting good and acceptable values the overall structural equation model can be inferred as acceptable and good model fit with the data under study (Hair et al. 1998, Nguyen 2007; Cherrier & Munoz 2007; Wong & Merrilees 2007).

Table II shows the unstandarized path estimates, critical ratio (standard error) and p values. Consumer ethnocentrism accounted for 18 percent variance in explaining attitude towards foreign product both which in turn accounted for 16 percent variance in foreign purchases intention. All the path (unstandardized) estimates as shown in Table 2 have critical ratios (equivalent to t values) over acceptable value of 1.96 (Hair et al. 1998, Nguyen 2007). As predicted by H1 the first order latent ethnocentrism construct is a significant and negative predictor of attitude towards foreign owned products. Therefore, indicating that an incremental unit change in ethnocentrism among

Table II Structural path (unstandardized) estimates for the proposed model

Hypotheses			Estimate	C.R. (S.E)	p-value
H1	Ethnocentrism	Foreign Product Attitude	-2.88	6 .88 (0.42)	0.000
H2	Ethnocentrism	Foreign Purchase Intention	-0.172	4.74 (0.04)	0.000
H3	Product Attitude	Purchase Intention	0.102	1.99 (0.05)	0.047

Bangladeshi consumers results in 0.288 unit decrease in their attitudes toward foreign product. This is consistent with the findings from previous studies (Klein et al., 1998; Zarkada & Fraser, 2002). In addition, H2 is also supported meaning that ethnocentrism significantly and directly predicts foreign purchase intention

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of consumers reciprocally. Furthermore, the results indicate that H3 is also supported in our study thus providing some evidence that purchase intention is significantly and positively determined by what sort of attitude consumers in developing country have towards country specific products/brands.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the total mean scale value of CETSCALE for the respondents in this study 46.52. This suggests Bangladeshi consumers show less ethnocentric tendency when it comes to foreign purchase decision. Consequently, it was further revealed that significant attitudinal differences existed between local and foreign made products that were tested in this study. For majority of the non durable products considered for this study consumers in Bangladesh found better and distinct edge of foreign products over local ones in terms of attributes such as "value for money", "technicality", "quality", "country of origin" and "status and esteem". The only exception was "pen" where consumers found no significant differences between local and foreign product alternatives in terms of "value for money" attribute. Even though these findings are consistent with the results found in other studies (see Watson & Wright, 1999; Kinra, 2006) but interestingly, in the case of Bangladesh consumers are giving significant lower mean ratings for majority of the non durable local products/brands available in the market.

The construct and predictive validity of the ethnocentrism instrument was found from the overall model fit indices and concomitant variation between the first order latent construct of consumer ethnocentrism tendency and its consequences respectively. Further, the overall structural equations model showed acceptable fit indices indicating good model fit to the data. Results from structural equations modeling confirmed significant and negative association between consumer ethnocentrism and attitude towards foreign product. Direct and significant negative association was found between ethnocentrism and foreign purchase intentions. Therefore, providing evidence that attitudes towards and intentions to purchase foreign and/or local products are significantly determined by what degree of ethnocentric tendency exists among Bangladeshi consumers. In addition, path between foreign product attitude and purchase intention was found to be significant and positive. As a result accepting all hypotheses set out in the structural model.

Managerial implication

Consumer ethnocentrism has now been under study around the world for quite some time. But as we mentioned before most of those studies have been conducted in the developed countries as opposed to the least developed or developing countries except India where some interesting studies have been conducted in the last decade. But it is quite interesting to explore that given the fact of many similarities among Indian and Bangladeshi consumers in terms of culture, society, life style, economic status, values, consumer behavior; there is significant difference between consumer ethnocentrism in these two countries even though both of them are developing nations (with Indian economy rising much faster then Bangladesh). We found mean scale value of CETSCALE in this study 46.52 among Bangladeshi consumers whereas in India it is 66.63 implying quite high score (Good & Huddleston 1995; Hamim & Elliot 2006; Upadhyay & Singh 2006). However we must appreciate the fact that India is a multiethnic society whereas Bangladeshi consumers are extremely homogeneous in terms of religion, ethnicity, language, and race. But this does not provide a fair understanding why Bangladeshi consumers are less ethnocentric comparing to other countries from developing and developed groups.

This finding can easily convince many that foreign MNCs are in an advantageous position when they enter into Bangladeshi market as opposed to local manufacturers. Local manufacturers, per se, have to battle against this soft but very powerful non-tariff barrier call "Lower Ethnocentrism" in Bangladesh which usually results in poor consumption of domestically produced products. But does it mean that foreign firms have a blanket guarantee in market dominance in Bangladesh? The answer will be no because in this age of globalization nothing is guaranteed. Trends can change dramatically over time. So, we feel that our findings in this study will provide a fair understanding for foreign firms in terms of what their scenario are when they consider Bangladeshi market. Also the findings of this study will throw a big challenge to our local firms trying to be a major player into Bangladeshi market about how to tackle this phenomenon of low consumer ethnocentrism to battle their minds off to uplift the image of domestically made products and build consumer confidence thus providing a platform to local companies operating in Bangladesh in their marketing strategy formulation.

Limitation and future research

There are few limitations that can be identified in this

study. First, the research sample even though was large but did not necessarily represent all consumers in the Bangladeshi market. Due to time and resource constraint the study was carried out in the capital city of Bangladesh only. Therefore, similar future research can be carried out in other major cities in Bangladesh including large rural consumers to cross validate the results found in this study. Second, the study empirically provides evidence of concomitant variation between degree of consumer ethnocentrism and its consequences. Future may investigate the antecedents of consumer ethnocentrism in developing countries. Finally, the study emphasis on the 'measurement' aspect of consumer ethnocentrism in terms of a mean rating score. The study, however, don't reflect on why Bangladeshi consumer are less ethnocentric. Therefore, in order to investigate and explore the reasons for such behavior or consumers attitudes qualitative research techniques may be applied.

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APHORISMS OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN TIRUKKURAL OF TAMIL: TRACING THE 2000-YEAR-OLD ROOTS OF THE CONCEPTS OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES.

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to bring the focus on the origin of the relatively young field of 'Communication Skills' or 'Business Communication' which has come to be an integral part of various professional and management courses around the globe over the past few decades. In the modern day world, communication skills are becoming increasingly important and a lot of academic effort is being put into developing, testing and standardizing the concepts in this field. However, not much effort appears to have gone into tracing the history of this particular branch of learning. Keeping this in view this paper attempts to trace the origin of the concept of Communication Skills in the ancient literature of India. A two thousand year old Tamil text, viz. Tirukkural written by Tiruvalluvar who is also known as Aacharya Kundkunda Swami has been surveyed to unravel the thinking of those times regarding the concepts of 'communication'. This has been reviewed in light of the thoughts of modern scholars of the field. Some interesting pieces have been produced here that demonstrate that the field of Communication Skills is not without a history: people in India have for millennia been devoting attention to, and developing concepts for effective communications. Many such concepts and norms of communication have been handed down to us in the form of aphorisms or sayings. It is very likely that such norms must have been based upon earlier works, folk practices and in general must have been in tune with the wisdom of the time.

Given the importance of communication in human life, it is not surprising that the study of communication skills has gained the attention of scholars right from the ancient days. Trenholm (1986) says, "For more than 25 centuries, communication inquiry has been an important part of human knowledge" and Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg xiii) point out that ancient educators held public speaking to be at the center of liberal education. Lucas (2007) also points out "Given the importance of public speaking, it's not surprising that it has been taught and studied around the globe for thousands of years."

Nearly two thousand years ago Kural was written in Tamil, a Dravidian language spoken in the southern part of India. It is prefixed with tiru (equivalent of Hindi shri) as a mark of reverence, as it is cherished by several religious groups as a sacred work.
Tirukkural was written by Tiruvalluvar who is also known as Aacharya Kundkunda Swami.
Tirukkural is basically a treatise on good social and moral conduct, though the issues of politics are also taken up by it. The aphorisms have a timeless quality and many of the things said in them are as contemporary as they were two thousand years ago. Many

modern concepts of communication skills can be seen scattered across the Tirukkural. There are concepts which are not fashionable with the modern scholars of communication skills or which have an altogether different connotation in the Tirukkural, as compared to the modern usage.

A pertinent and inadvertent question in this context is: to what extent this traditional wisdom has influenced our modern knowledge and beliefs regarding communication? It is not sought to explore this aspect in detail here, as it would be outside the purview of the present work. It can be hoped that this issue be explored in more detail in future works.

Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that this is written evidence that even two thousand years ago people found the issue of communication skills to be important and serious thought was given to it. Further, norms and guidelines were laid down for communication in general and for communication in specific situations like, for one to one communication, diplomatic communication, and public speaking by specific people, viz. lay people, secret agents, diplomats and kings. It is very likely that such norms must

have been based upon earlier works, folk practices, and in general, must have been in tune with the wisdom of the time.

These aphorisms are an attempt to unite communication skills with good moral conduct and spirituality on the one hand and on the other, they aim at person and personality development. In this aspect, Tirukkural is a representative of ancient Indian thinking and literatures, in general.

Today, we study communication skills in the cold objective manner of science, this approach has its own obvious advantages, but perhaps the poetic and lyrical manner of the Tirukkural makes imbibing these principles much easier.

Modern scholars of communication skills recognize that several principles are the foundation stones upon which successful communication rests. For example Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 8-9) list clarity, completeness, correctness, and a manner of writing that saves readers' time as some of the criteria for good writing. Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC63) list clarity, completeness, conciseness, consideration (being considerate), courtesy and correctness as the principles of communication.

Paul Grice's maxims form a modern classical basis of these principles of communication, along with the cooperative principle given by him in 1975. The cooperative principle of Grice (1975) is, "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged." The four maxims of Grice are named the Maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. According to the maxim of quantity, one should neither speak more or less, than what is required. The maxim of quality says that one should speak the truth and his or her facts should be verifiable. According to the maxim of relation, the contribution of the speaker should be relevant in the given context. The last maxim of manner means that the contribution of a communicator should be brief, clear, and orderly.

It is evident that brevity, appropriateness, clarity, and accuracy have a correspondence with the Gricean maxims of manner, relation, manner, quality respectively.

The Importance of Communication Skills

Tirukkural recognized the importance of language in its spoken as well as written forms: it says that the power to speak is a big boon that is independent of other boons (65-1), the use of written language is hailed by it by calling the numerals and alphabet the eyes of humanity (40-2) and Education as the eyesight (40-3).

The art of effective communication is extolled in Tirukkural, one whose speech is refined and whose language is confidence infusing shall control the world (65-8). Tirukkural also says that you may make those your enemy who carry a bow and arrow but never poke at those whose weapon is the tongue (88-2), thus recognizing the power of language.

Modern research in communication shows that a professional spends 70% to 80% of his/her working time communicating. (Mohan and Banerjee, 1990, pg 7); Adler and Elmhorst (2002, pg 6) note that communication skills are important not only for "people-oriented" careers, but for practically every kind of career. Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC4) call communication as the lifeblood of business.

It also says that the knowledge of the people who cannot explain well and convey their knowledge to others is useless (65-10), which interprets to mean that just studying specialized fields of knowledge like management, technology, medicine, etc. is not sufficient. It is very important that a student learns well the art and the science of communicating with others in order to achieve success. This goes well with the present day educational philosophy: students of fields like management and technology are taught communication skills as a part of the curriculum. Although, it remains a mystery to the author why students of medicine are kept bereft of such training in most of the institutions worldwide. It is needless to say how important it is for doctors to be an expert in all forms of communication, viz. language communication, nonverbal communication and paralinguistic communication as they have to deal with people, who are as much if not more, in need of understanding and sympathy as medical treatment.

Sweetness, Politeness, and Kindness

The importance of sweetness, politeness, and kindness in communicating is generally overlooked or they find a rather indirect reference in modern texts. This may be so because of the fact that defining con-

cepts like "sweetness" is a challenging task. Oxford Talking Dictionary defines "sweet" as "That which is pleasant to the mind or feelings", Sweetness may be characterized indirectly as the speech which is not harsh, or which is courteous, pleasant, and positive. Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 8) say: "It is believed that a charming person has a pleasant voice."

Kindness. (10-8) calls kind words as givers of happiness to the speaker. Kindness is quite similar to the concept of empathy and sympathy in communication as highlighted by many modern scholars. Trenholm (1986, pg 112) says, "The empathic communicator must be able to infer the feelings and needs of others." Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 24) prescribe empathy to communicators as a way for understanding their audience. Bovee and Thill (1995, Pg 41) list empathizing with speakers as a method of overcoming listening barriers.

"Sweetness" of speech is emphasized repeatedly in Tirkkural e.g. in (10-2) and (10-5). It says that your speech should delight the listeners' hearts (10-4), you should shun harsh words in favor of sweet ones (10-9) and (10-10).

In the matters of statecraft, too, communication skills are very important: A king who speaks harsh words, and who is unforgiving perishes soon (57-6), harsh words destroy a king's authority (57-7). Sweetness of speech is one of the important attributes of an ambassador (69-5).

Politeness, according to Yule (1997) may "Involve ideas like being tactful, modest and nice to other people" it is defined by him as showing awareness of another person's public self-image (or "face").
Politeness in speech wins friends (10-7) and humbleness is one of the hallmarks of a true well-bred gentleman (96-3). Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 298) note that good listeners are generous. It is further said that meritorious men do not speak even to their enemies without civility (100-5). A fool utters censured and harsh words (84-3). The king who has no control over his speech shall eat the humble pie (87-4). If the well-born (noble) say clumsy and useless things then people will doubt even their birth (in a good family) (96-8). Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 109) very aptly say, "No one likes to deal with people who seem condescending or rude."

Accuracy
A fool who shows his knowledge about unknown subjects creates doubt even about the known subjects (85-5).

Context and Appropriateness:

Before interacting with a king it is important to judge the mental state of the king and understand the context and then to speak pleasing words in front of him (70-6). This sensitivity to context is, of course, applicable to all forms of communication. People who do not understand the importance of talking diplomatically and sweetly are denounced (A fool utters censured and harsh words, 84-3). At the same time, a true well-bred gentleman is supposed to have the attribute of sweet speech (96-3). Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 22) point out that "People exist in a context." They say that the context influences people's response to a message. Dimbleby and Burton (1985) say, "…context always affects the act of communication".
Thiruvalluvar has stressed upon the need to speak appropriate and necessary words (20-10). Be sure of appropriateness before speaking as life and death are in the control of the tongue (65-2). First, consider and then speak that which is appropriate (65-4). An ambassador must examine his words before speaking (69-7). An ambassador should not utter inappropriate and lowly words (69-9).

Goodwill
The oratory, which brings the friends closer and attracts even the enemies, is true oratory (65-3). This emphasizes developing goodwill as a function or purpose of communication like Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 6) do by listing building goodwill as one of the three basic purposes of messages in organizations.
Adler and Elmhorst (2002) highlight the goodwill function of speaking in a business environment as, "Representatives of organizations frequently speak to audiences to promote interest or support for their organizations." Kural further lists oratory (69-5 and 69-6), brevity, and sweetness of speech (69-5) amongst the qualities of an ambassador. Sweetness or pleasantness understandably has the role of promoting goodwill. Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC4) say, "If there exists effective communication between the management and the employees, it helps to bring about an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence."

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Oratory

Thiruvalluvar says that one cannot be a good speaker without a good education (41-2), those who have studied oratory know how to deliver a lecture and they do not make mistakes in front of the audience (73-1), and it is foolish to go to the dais without sufficient knowledge (41-1). The modern scholars echo similar views, too. For example, the concept of "Competence" as used by Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 37) generally reflects the above views when they say, "Competent speakers seem informed, intelligent, and well prepared. You can appear to be competent only if you know what you are talking about." Watkins (2005) says that "The best way to appear confident in front of an audience is to be prepared" and Williamson (2006) says that you add a lot of energy and commitment to a presentation by simply practicing. Lucas (2007, pg 36) also emphasize, "The better you prepare, the better your speech will be."

Thiruvalluvar further elaborates that one who has ignored studying will be shamed in speaking in an assembly or meeting (41-5). The theme is continued in (42-9), it is difficult to become a good speaker without listening to wise people. This has to be interpreted keeping in mind the oral tradition of education and learning that prevailed in ancient India. Furthermore, the modern instructor and authors of the art of speech also believe that exposure to experienced and good speakers is needed to learn the skill of public speaking.

It is impossible to defeat a person in debate if he is a good speaker, and who is neither afraid nor does he falter (65-7).

Fear and Anxiety of Speaking:

Kural has several aphorisms devoted to the issue of public speaking anxiety:

There are many who can stand in the battlefield and face the death bravely, but such are few who can stand on the stage in front of the audience without shivering (73-3). A modern author also notes that, "You might be one of the many who would rate your fear of public speaking alongside or ahead of death!" (Yemm, 2006). Adler and Elmhorst (2002, pg 399) quote Wallace and Wallechinky "book of lists" to inform that a sample of 3,000 Americans report speaking before a group to be a greater fear than the fear of death. According to Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 55) practically all speakers have to face communication anxiety.

Present the knowledge that you have gained in front of the scholars (73-4). Learn logic properly so that you can speak without fear in front of an assembly (73-5). Lucas (2007, pg 444) also tell prospective public speakers to know "how to reason clearly and persuasively."

Kural, at the same time asks, what is the use of logic to those who are afraid of facing the scholars (73-6). The knowledge of a person who is afraid of coming in front of the audience is as useless as a sword in the hand of a eunuch in the battlefield (73-7). People who cannot sink their principles into the hearts of the audience, their study, howsoever vast it may be, is useless (73-8). People who are learned but are afraid of coming in front of the wise are worse than the ignorant (73-9). Those who are afraid of coming in front of groups of people and are unable to expound their principles are worse than dead (73-10).

Karres (2008) says, "The sad part is that people can go a lifetime of sitting on the back row with a head full of great ideas, and a heart full of stage fright." Siwolop (1986) says, "The phobia that presents the most practical problems in the workplace is the fear of driving, followed by the fear of public speaking."

Listening

Thiruvalluvar says, ears are the best wealth (42 -1), thus symbolically underlining the importance of listening. He denounces poor listeners by saying that, people who are bereft of the enjoyment of listening are useless (42-10). He further adds that it is difficult to become a good speaker without listening to wise people (42-9). Exposure to experienced and good speakers is indeed needed to become a good speaker. Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 32) have quite aptly said that "Listening is an act which helps as much at the interview as in social situations." Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 70) also point out that "Effective listening benefits both listeners and speakers." Young (2007) puts it in a very interesting way, "Listen with your mouth closed. The words "listen" and "silent" are an anagram. They have the same letters but in a different order. You can't listen while you're talking. Gitomer (2007) gives a practical business communication tip, "Your prospect will tell you exactly what they want. But make sure you listen with the intent to understand, and with the intent to respond."

Hearing v/s Listening

Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 297) differentiate between hearing and listening as, "In interpersonal

communication, hearing denotes perceiving sounds. Listening means decoding and interpreting them correctly."

Raman and Sharma (2004, pg 71) note that hearing and listening are different things. According to them hearing is a physical act while listening requires conscious effort. The Kural is quite definite in differentiation between listening and hearing. It says, those ears, which can hear but not listen to the words of the wise, are deaf (42-8) and that it is difficult to become a good speaker without listening to wise people (42-9).

Modern authors are more explicit in defining the difference between hearing and listening. For example, according to Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 69) "Listening is a voluntary process that goes beyond the mere physical reaction to sounds." Ludlow and Panton (1992, pg 20) elaborate that "Active listening requires definite commitment and personal discipline." Listening requires attention as an important factor in addition to hearing: Andal (1998, pg 186) says, "Attention is the key functional factor in communication." According to Raman and Sharma (2004), "Listening is a process of receiving, interpreting, and reacting to a message received from the speaker."

Silence:
Even a fool will be considered intelligent if he can keep silence in front of the wise (41-3). Silence is not only a part of effective listening; it is also a tool of communication in its own right. Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 49) point out that "Silence also has different meanings in different cultures and subcultures." Thus recognizing silence as a tool of communication. Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC34) say, "We do not communicate through words, signs and signals alone, we communicate through silence also."
Kural gets to the root of the malady when it points out that people who lack the art of expressing themselves succinctly are the ones who speak a lot (65-9). After all wordiness and talking too much is often a sign of inefficient communication skills. Silence may even be taken as an extreme case of brevity!

Brevity
Kural instructs the speakers to leave unnecessary words (20-1) (20-10); talking unnecessarily is bad (20-4) (20-2); Present day authors Leigh and Maynard (1993, pg 19) also have something similar to say, in spoken communication, greater the conciseness, clarity, and specificity, the better it is. Lauer (2007) also

emphasizes the importance of brevity in speaking and writing. This is in confirmation with the Gricean Maxim of quantity also.

Thiruvalluvar goes further to the extent of saying that, using words unnecessarily proclaims a man's incompetence (20-3) and that, talking unnecessarily leads to a loss of respect and dignity (20-5). According to him, philosophers do not utter words when not needed (20-8) and people with a broad vision do not utter unnecessary words (20-9). A learned and contemplative man will not talk unnecessary things (42-7).

He minces no words in coming down heavily on people who do not respect brevity in speech: one who talks unnecessarily should not be considered a human being (20-6), the next aphorism quite aptly justifies this harsh treatment by saying that harsh words are better in certain circumstances than unnecessary words (20-7). In our own day, Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 334) warn, "Long, drawn-out speeches lose audience interest." Leigh and Maynard (1992, pg 53) say that, "Brevity is not only the soul of wit, it is also another foundation stone of perfect communications." Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC26) emphasize that a message should be as brief as possible. Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 135) add that redundancy should be avoided and proceed to define redundancy as, "Redundancy is the part of the message that can be eliminated without loss of information."

Clarity
Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 330) say, "Unless you are clear, your speech will fail from the outset." We hear an ancient echo of this thought in Kural: An intelligent man speaks in a manner that everyone is able to understand him (43-4). Likewise, Raman and Sharma (2004) say that in a presentation the speakers should make their points clear and easy to understand. Adler and Elmhorst (2002, pg 460) prescribe the use of precise terms, description in detail and quantification of facts as some of the ways to achieve clarity in writing. Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg OC1) say that "Clarity is the first major characteristic of a good speech."

Naturalness:
Naturalness is the hallmark of the speech of good people (10-1). Pal and Korlahalli (1997, pg EC27) say, "Nothing impresses so much as the natural way of speech." Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 343) suggest that for making oral presentations, "Build on your natural style for gestures." According to Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 53) an effective presentation sounds natural and spontaneous.

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Audience Analysis

First, know your audience, and, then, speak (72-1). Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 101) say, "The more you know about your audience and speaking situation, the more effective your speech should be." Kural says, first understand the mental state of the audience and, then, speak according to it (72-2); Those who speak without knowing the mental state of the audience do not know the art of oratory and neither are they fit for any other work (72-3); Discuss knowledge and wisdom only in the assembly of scholars but keep in mind the foolishness of the fools before replying to them (72-4); The wisdom of the scholars shines to its glory only in the assembly of the wise (72-7); It is inappropriate to speak didactically (instructively) in front of the wise (72-8). Watkins (2005) says, "Any audience—from audit committees to colleagues to volunteer boards to your local parent-teacher organization-includes different types of people who need to know different types (and, amounts) of information." Similarly, Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 335) emphasize, "The more you know about your audience, the better you can adapt your message to the audience."

Antagonistic Audience

Thiruvalluvar warns that speaking to an audience that is antagonistic to you will be futile (72-10). Osborn and Osborn (2002, pg 108) also point out that "Audiences that have negative attitudes towards your position may distort your message, discredit you as a communicator, or even refuse to listen to you." Although these authors do not go to the extent of prohibiting speaking in front of such audiences, rather they suggest some measures while speaking in such a situation. Similarly, Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 335) say, "If your audience is indifferent, skeptical, or hostile, focus on the part of your message the audience will find most interesting and easiest to accept." These authors also suggest that, "Only after the audience is receptive should you try to persuade the audience to hire your agency rather than a competitor."

Nonverbal Communication
Facial expressions

According to Kural, qualities of an ambassador include impressive facial expressions (69-4). The secret agent should be able to control his facial expressions so that no one doubts him, he should not get mixed up in front of any one and he should be the one who does not let his secrets out (59-5). Facial expressions of a man change with his thoughts and express what is in his heart (71-6), and there is nothing more expressive than the facial expressions because the first to disclose whether the interior is pleased or angry is the facial expression (71-7).

This emphasis on facial expressions is, generally speaking, valid for all communication situations. Smith and Taylor (2002, pg 71) say, "Most of all, body language and facial gestures are powerful communicators. An understanding of body language allows an individual to learn more about what another person is really feeling." Bovee and Thill (1995, pg 31) point out that "Nonverbal cues are especially important in conveying feelings." However, Raman and Sharma (2004, pg 98) warn, "Facial expression is difficult to interpret." According to Andal (1998, pg 87), "The face functions primarily as an affect display system. No other communication system serves this function so effectively or efficiently." Sethi and Michigan (2001) hold that the human face expresses many feelings visually. Likewise, Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 11) claim, "Of all the parts of the body the face is the most expressive." Raman and Sharma (2004, pg 98) also note, "The face is the most expressive part of our body." Elmhorst (2002, pg 95) say, "A person's face communicates emotions clearly."

A true well-bred gentleman has a happy face, generosity, sweet speech and humbleness (96-3). Perhaps the simplest interpretation of a happy face is a smiling face. Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 26) also say that, in a conversation "Be always courteous and cheerful."

Eyes:

Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 11) say, "The eye contact with the listener is perhaps the most important aspect of the body language." In the Kural it was noted that the eyes convey character (58-5); Eyes should show appropriate respect (58-4); Hate or love can be read from the eyes (71-9), and the eyes tell whether a man is decent or is a crook (71-10). According to Raman and Sharma (2004), "Eye contact is a direct and powerful form of nonverbal communication." Adler and Elmhorst (2002, pg 95) claim, "The eyes themselves communicate a great deal."

Posture:

People who can read the intentions of a man by his figure/posture will prove to be good advisors to you (71-3). Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 9) say, "Posture also conveys a wealth of meaning in an economical way."

Reading the mind

One who understands others without their speaking is a jewel (71-1). One who can read others' mind is like a god (71-2). People whose eyes are not able to read what is on someone else's mind in a glance have nothing special in their eyes (71-5). All your desires can be fulfilled by casting a glance at a man who can read your mind (71-8). People who can read other's thoughts belong to another category though their facial expressions and figure/posture may be like that of anyone else (71-4).

Reading the mind may be put as understanding the underlying feelings of a verbal or nonverbal exchange.

Feeling

In the tenth chapter of Kural it is said that one should talk straight from the heart (10-3), and in a later chapter, it tells that, an intelligent man speaks in a manner that everyone is able to understand him, and he understands others' feelings behind their words (43-4). This emphasis on the importance of emotions and feelings in communication is quite contemporary if we cast a glance at the literature. This is an indication for avoiding emotional barriers in communication and for becoming effective listeners.

It is a politician's duty to speak in a manner that the hearts of the audience are touched and to understand the meaning of others' words soon (65-6). Judge the mental state of the king and understand the context, then talk pleasing words in front of the king (70-6). The message is, avoid psychological and contextual barriers. Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 200) claim, "People don't make decisions-even business decisions-based on logic alone." Locker and Kaczmarek (2007, pg 299) further list listening consciously for feelings as one of the ways of avoiding listening errors that may be caused by focusing exclusively on facts. Lucas (2007) says, "When you have to talk with someone about a touchy issue, you usually wait until the situation is just right."

Truth in Speech

Gricean Maxim of quality recognizes the value of truthfulness in speech, but it does not attempt to define truth or characterize it. Kural does all this and a bit more.

Tirukkural veritably states the Gricean Maxim of quality as, do not say something which you know to be false, in (30 -3). It attempts to define truth when it says, truth is that speech which harms none (30 - 1); and that lie which does good has the quality of

truth (30 -2). It declares truth to be a virtue when it says, Truthfulness is a big virtue (30-6); Truth is the brightest virtue (30-10); Purity of mind is proven by truthfulness (30-8); and, Love for truth is one of the five supporting pillars of good conduct (99-3); The well-bred (noble) never go astray from speaking the truth (96-2). This way a link between communication and etiquettes was recognized. Tirukkural praises truthfulness and lists its benefits, something that is generally not discussed in modern communication literature: Truth is the true light (30-9); Truth gives you the power to rule hearts (30-4); Truthfulness makes a man great (30-5). Finally, truth is linked with religion in (30-7) by declaring truthfulness as the essences of religion.

Barriers, Problem Participants

Do not talk to people in low tones or secretively and do not even smile or laugh with others in front of the king (70-4). In the terminology of Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 47) don't be a commentator! Mohan and Banerjee (1990, pg 47) give this concept a contemporary treatment when they say, "the whispered side-conversations in which a commentator indulges can distract and split the group."

Socioeconomic Aspects of Communication:

Tirukkural recognizes a link between the economic status of a person and his/her communication by saying, poverty even kills sweetness of speech (105-3). Sweetness is most probably taken as a paralinguistic component of the verbal communication here. Tirukkural talks about communication with respect to different socioeconomic classes in a society like the well-bred, lay people, diplomats, and kings.

Conclusion:

This paper attempted to trace the origin of the field of 'Communication Skills' in a two thousand year old Tamil text, viz. Tirukkural (also known as Kural) written by Tiruvalluvar who is also known as Aacharya Kundkunda Swami. The concepts of communication discussed in the Kural have been viewed in the context of the modern literature of communication. Communication issues like politeness, context, appropriateness, goodwill, oratory, fear and anxiety of speaking, listening, silence, brevity, clarity, naturalness, nonverbal communication, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, reading the mind, feeling, barriers and problem participants have been examined. A general correspondence is observed with the treatment of these issues in the modern literature.

It stands out that there is a remarkable similarity in

the modern concepts and the concepts propounded in the Kural.

We also see that norms and guidelines were laid down for communication in general and for communication in specific situations like, for one to one communication, diplomatic communication, and public speaking by specific people, viz. lay people, secret agents, diplomats and kings. This tailor-made approach to communication is indeed not generally found in the contemporary works.

By virtue of the antiquity of Kural it can be one of the valid assumptions to believe that many modern concepts of communication might have been influenced by the wisdom propounded in the Kural. This wisdom or knowledge could very well have permeated into the world cultures over this vast amount of intervening time of two millennia since the writing of the Kural. Modern scientific approach to communication could of course not have been in a vacuum, culture must have acted as a substrate for this field of social sciences.

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Note: The figures separated by a hyphen, in brackets represent, respectively the chapter number and the aphorism number of the Tirukkural. Moreover, the quotations from the Tirukkural are based on its Hindi translation by Govind Rai Jain Shastri, (undated) published by Shri Kundkund Bharati, Delhi.

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TO RETAIL INDUSTRY: AN SERVQUAL APPROACH

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Abstract

Competitiveness and search for profits have called more attention towards customers' satisfaction and increased researcher's interest on the topic of service quality. In this context, this study applies SERVQUAL for assessing service quality in a retail industry. The main objective is to assess a quality service dimension that is delivered through the perspectives of customers. This work was performed in a shopping mall including two hundred shops located throughout the NCR. A questionnaire was developed based on the service quality dimensions and asked to the customer for gathering data from which results was analyzed. The results of this study show the responsiveness and assurance quality dimensions and characteristics that call customer attention.

Keywords: Service Quality; SERVQUAL; Quality Dimensions; Repair Retail Business, SPSS15.0

1. Introduction

Since the 90's many service companies have pursued to enhance their performance and effectiveness in search of achieving differentiation in the market. An example of that is the attempt to convince customers that their quality is superior to the competitors. In addition, the importance of service sector has sharply increased at both developed and developing countries. Over 75% of all US jobs now reside in services industries. Further, the services sector generates over 85% of all new jobs and 66% of the GNP of the US. In developing countries like Brazil, where this work was developed; services correspond to 54.5% of the GNP (Cauchick Miguel and Salomi, 2004).

With greater choice and increasing awareness, Indian consumers are more demanding of quality service (Angur, Nataraajan and Jahera, 1999) and players can no longer afford to neglect custom service issues (Firoz and Maghrabi, 1994, Kassem, 1989). Research on services has grown correspondingly. In particular, academics and practitioners alike have exhibited considerable interest in the issues that surround the measurement of service quality. Service quality is one of the major issues facing operations managers (Gupta and Chen, 1995) but it is an area characterised by debate concerning the need for assessing customer expectations and service quality assessment (Parasuraman et al., 1994).

In this sense, the objective is to identify which quality dimensions as most important to customers of a retail industry. In addition, it also assesses the service that is delivered to them. In order to accomplish these objectives, the paper is structured in different sections. Section 2 contains the theoretical background related to service quality models. Section 3 describes the re-

search methodology, including the sample, and data collection procedures. Section 4 presents the results based on a statistical analysis as well as discusses the findings and Section 5 draws the conclusions and implications of this work.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Background

The emergence of service quality and its assessment has attracted the attention of numerous researchers in the past two decades or so. In this sense, there are two main lines of thoughts on measuring service quality: an American and a European perspective (Kang and James, 2004). Brady and Cronin (2001) suggest that the researchers generally adopt one of the two conceptualisations in their work. The focus on functional quality attributes is referred to as the American perspective of service quality while the European perspective suggests that service quality considers two more components.

The European perspective considers additional aspects other than the process of service delivery. Grönroos (1984), for instance, noted that the quality of a service as perceived by customers consists of three dimensions: functional (the process of service delivery to customers), technical (the outcomes generated by the service to the customers), and image (how the customers view the company). Considering those dimensions, the quality of the service is dependent upon two variables: the expected service and the perceived service.

Functional quality of a service is often assessed by measures of customers' attitudes, as in customer satisfaction questionnaires. As described by Hayes (1997), the process of identifying customers' attitudes

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begins with determining customers' requirements or quality dimensions. Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified in a first study 10 quality dimensions based on a series of focus group sessions. From this study, the authors concluded that customers use the same criteria to assess service quality independently of the type of service.

For Hayes (1997), however, some quality dimensions are generalised across many services, but some will apply only to specific types of services, and it is necessary to understand quality dimensions to be able to develop measures to assess them. The author explains then two ways of identifying important quality dimensions of services: quality dimension development approach and critical incident approach. The first one uses different sources of information, such as opinions of providers and literature. The other one is a process to obtain information from customers.

The 10 determinants of service quality established by Parasuraman et al. (1985) provide a list that can guide investigation on the first approach. The authors subsequently developed SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988), a two-part instrument for measuring service quality that was refined later (Parasuraman et al., 1991). Much of the research to date has focused on measuring service quality using this approach and its use has become quite widespread (Brown et al., 1993; Kang and James, 2004).

SERVQUAL instrument consists of a 22-item instrument for assessing service quality based on customer's perceptions, which is, by his/her turn, the difference between the customer's perceived quality and his/her expectation. The perceived quality is assessed based on service quality dimensions that correspond to the criteria used by consumers when assessing service quality. There are 10 potentially overlapping dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, assurance, competence, courtesy, understanding/knowing the customer, and access. A more detailed description of those dimensions can be found in Zeithan et al. (1990). Afterwards, these dimensions were reduced to five, namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy. Using those 10 or 5 dimensions as the evaluation criteria the specification of service quality becomes the gap between customers' expectations and their perceptions (Parasuraman et al, 1985). This performance-expectation model was also adopted by other authors (e.g. Brown and Swartz, 1989).

However, there has been an extensive debate whether the perception-minus-expectations specification would be appropriate or assessing perception alone would be sufficient. Some concerns about the SERVQUAL instrument were raised by Cronin and Taylor (1992; 1994) and Teas (1993). The authors argue that there are serious conceptual and operational drawbacks associated with the SERVQUAL model, inducing Cronin and Taylor (1992) to propose a perceived quality model called SERVPERF. The perceived quality model postulates that an individual's perception of the quality is only a function of its performance. Considering that the 22 performance items adequately define the domain of service quality, Cronin and Taylor (1992) proposed the SERVPERF instrument, which is a more concise performance-based scale; an alternative to the SERVQUAL model. In addition, they compared the SERVPERF model with SERVQUAL and two other alternatives: the weighted SERVQUAL and the weighted SERVFERF models. Those weighted versions consider the importance of a quality attribute as a determinant of perceived quality. In response to the criticisms, Parasuraman et al. (1994) claimed that many of those concerns are questionable and offered a set of research directions for addressing unresolved issues.

2.2 Literature analysis

As can be seen, models for measuring service quality is either viewed as a measure of the degree of discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations (e.g. Parasuraman et al., 1985) or a tool for assessing the perceived quality (Teas, 1993). Yet, further alternative models have been offered by other authors (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Bolton and Drew, 1991). A literature review those models can be found in Cauchick Miguel and Salomi (2004), from which the Table 1 summarises their main characteristics.

When examining the literature, it becomes clear that there is no consensus on which model is more appropriate in a general sense. SERVQUAL heightened the interest of many researchers but there are some arguments against its validity. Criticisms include the use of different scores, applicability, dimensionality, lack of validity, etc. Critical reviews of SERVQUAL are offered by Asubonteng el al. (1996) and Buttle (1996).

Cronin et al. (1994) continue the debate between the effectiveness of SERVQUAL and SERVPERF for assessing service quality. The authors remained unconvinced of both, that including customer expectations

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Table 1 - Proposed Models for Measuring Service Quality (Cauchick Miguel and Salomi, 2004).

Author	Model	Main Characteristics	Application
Author Grönroos (1984)	There is no mathematical representation	Quality is a function of expectations, outcome and image	Different types of services
Parasuraman et al. (1985,1988)	SERVQUAL $Qi = Pi-Ei$	22-item scale using 5 quality dimensions	Different types of services
Brown and Swartz (1989)	$Qi = Ei-Di$	Use 10 quality dimensions defined by Parasuraman et al. (1985)	Medical surgery
Bolton and Drew (1991)	Assessment model of service and value. There are many equations representing the model	Use four dimensions developed by Parasuraman et al (1988) and introduce the concept of value for quality	Telephone services
	representing the model	assessment	
Cronin and Taylor (1992)	SERVPERF $Qi = Pi$	Use 5 quality dimensions defined by Parasuraman et al. (1988)	Different types of services
Teas (1993)	I $Qi=-$ Model of ideal performance	Use 5 quality dimensions defined by Parasuraman et al. (1988)	Retail stores

in measures of service quality is a position to be supported, and that SERVPERF scale provides a useful tool for measuring overall service quality. Moreover, Lee et al. (2000) empirically compare SERVQUAL (performance minus expectations) with performance-only model (SERVPERF). The authors also conclude that the results from the latter appeared to be superior to the former.

Despite those criticisms, a large number of applications of SERVQUAL have become available. In addition to the applications listed in Table 1, different types of services have been investigated using SERVQUAL. Examples of service are fast-food, airlines and long distance telephone calls (Gupta and Chen, 1995), banking (Newman, 2001; Cui et al., 2003), physiotherapy (Curry and Sinclair, 2002), web sites (Iwaarden et al., 2003), health care (Wong, 2002; Kilbourne et al., 2004) to name but a few. The investigations on SERVPERF applications have also been intense but not as much as SERVQUAL. Nevertheless, instances of service types include public services (Bigné et al., 2003) and hotels (Nadiri and Hussain, 2005). Kang and James (2004) presented the application of Grönroos' model (Grönroos, 1984) to explore the European perspective of measuring quality of cell phone services considering other dimensions (technical and image) besides the functional ones.
A comprehensive and more recent review of other models, besides SERVQUAL and SERVPERF, is provided by Seth and Deshmukh (2005). The authors critically examine 19 different service quality models reported in the literature. A relevant deliverable from that work is a set of research streams in the field of service quality assessment.

3. Research Methodology
3.1 Methodology
The work was performed in a Shopping mall which includes one hundred shops located NCR.
SERVQUAL was adopted as the instrument to assess service quality according to the literature (Parasuraman et al., 1985; 1988). Although there is no consensus in the literature of which instrument is most effective, SERVQUAL was chosen because it was tested in a similar work conducted by Zeithaml et al. (1990) and it is useful to provide evidence of service quality for further service operation improvement (Page Jr. and Spreng, 2002).
Data were collected through an instrument developed using four service quality dimensions (tangibles, empathy, responsiveness, assurance) with 20 questions aiming at reducing questionnaire size and then improving the response rate. The answers were offered using a 5-point Likert-type scale anchored by "1 – strongly satisfied" to "5 – strongly dissatisfied" based on Parasuraman et al. (1994). Moreover, previous study (Parasuraman et al., 1994) suggested that customers have a range of expectations (named zone of tolerance) bounded by desired service - the service level customer believe companies can and should deliver - and adequate service, i.e. the minimum service level customers consider acceptable. Hence, two-column format questionnaire that generates separate ratings of "expected" (E), and "perceived" (P) with identical questions, side-by-side 5-point scales, mentioned earlier. This approach was carried out because it might be considered as diagnostically rich (Parasuraman et al., 1994). The assessment was targeted to customers in two separate analyses. P minus E assesses the service quality of a given dimension/question, calculated as, where:

QSk - service quality in the dimension k

Pjk - performance perception in the dimension k to customer j

Ejk - expected performance in the dimension k to customer j
This work is quantitative in nature and uses a non-probabilistic conveyance sample, determined accord-

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ing to Rea and Parker (2002). Our sample size was one hundred so, we distributed as many questionnaire to the various customers who visited the three malls (Silver city, Shipra & Pacific mall), keeping in mind to cover the different demographic factors. In order to minimise the problem of a low response rate, we personally interacted with the customers.

The data of the questionnaires were input in an electronic spreadsheet to organise data and for further analysis of results. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 15.0 software. Further analysis of the results from the assessment enable to identify the opportunities of improvement in the services provided.

3.2 Measurement tool and Research Variables

Measurement tools are means, which the researcher applies to collect and record the necessary information during the course of research. Some of these tools are questionnaires, observations and interviews.

Questionnaire is a collection of written queries, which is arranged putting all the essential variables for the research and can be completed by the respondents in presence, in absence, directly or indirectly.

Measurement scales are the units that are applied to test the qualities in the information collection tools. These are nominal, ordinal interval and ratio scales (Hafeznia, 1999: 121- 25).

This research has used the questionnaire tool to collect the opinions of retail customers. During designing process of measurement tool (questionnaire) the author developed a 40-item measurement scale (20 items evaluating customers of the retail industry and 20 items evaluating their expectations). To asses' satisfaction of customers of the retail industry in India, therefore a local questionnaire for the different retail outlets in the different states is designed and through this way SERVQUAL MODEL and its dimensions is utilized in the retail industry. It should be mentioned that the proposed questionnaire is designed for retail industry of India. Table 2 in the next page shows the characteristics of questionnaires along-with variables and related questions.

3.3   Sections of Measurement Tools

Table2: Characteristics of Questionnaires along-with Variables and Related Questions:

Sections	Variables	Related questions	Scale	Form of answer
Section 1: Specifications of Respondents	Age	1	Ordinal	Five - answer
	Occupation	2	Nominal	Five - answer
	Income	3	Nominal	Four – answer
	Education	4	Nominal	Three – answer
	Marital status	5	Nominal	Two – answer
	Sex	6	Ordinal	Two – answer
Section 2: Perceptions of consumers	Tangible	P 1 – P 9	Ordinal	Likert - 5
	Empathy	P 10 – P 13	Ordinal	Likert – 5
	Assurance	P 14 – P 17	Ordinal	Likert – 5
	Responsiveness	P 18 – P 20	Ordinal	Likert – 5
Section 3: Expectations of consumers	Tangible	E 1 – E 9	Ordinal	Likert – 5
	Empathy	E 10 – E 13	Ordinal	Likert – 5
	Assurance	E 14 – E 17	Ordinal	Likert – 5
	Responsiveness	E 18 – E 20	Ordinal	Likert – 5

4 Analysis of Data

4.1 Reliability of Questions related to Perception

For the perception dimension of service quality, 20 questions have been designed then reliability test gives following results.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics of Questions related to Perception

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.719	20

The acquired number is bigger than 0.6 (0.719) so the data can be used for the further analysis.

4.2 Reliability of Questions related to Expectation.

For the perception dimension of service quality, 20 questions have been designed then reliability test gives following results

Table 4: Reliability Statistics of Questions related to Expectation

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.715	20

The acquired number is bigger than 0.6 (0.719) so the data can be used for the further analysis.

4.3 Demographic
Table 5: Demographic for Age

	Frequency	Percent
15 - 25	40	40.0
25 - 35	29	29.0
35 - 45	14	14.0
45 - 60	14	14.0
>60	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

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- The above table shows that the maximum number of respondents belong to the age group of 15-25 year i.e 40%.

- Minimum numbers of respondents are from age group of greater than 60 years i.e 3%.

Table 6: Demographic for Occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Student	39	39.0
Business man	21	21.0
Govt. Service	8	8.0
Private Service	28	28.0
Retired.	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

- The above table shows that the maximum numbers of respondents are students i.e 39%, followed by private service people i.e 28%.

- Minimum number of respondents are from retires personnel i.e 4%.

Table 7: Demographic for Income

	Frequency	Percent
Below 1lac.	43	43.0
1 lac. - 2.5 lac.	22	22.0
2.5 lac. - 5 lac.	24	24.0
Above 5 lac.	11	11.0
Total	100	100.0

- The above table shows that the maximum number of respondents belong to the income group of below Rs. 1 lacs i.e 43%, followed by income group of people belonging to Rs.2.5 lac to Rs. 5 lac. i.e 24%.

- Minimum numbers of respondents are from income group of greater than Rs. 5 lac i.e 11%.

Table 8: Demographic for Education

	Frequency	Percent
Intermediate	14	14.0
Graduate	51	51.0
Post Graduate	35	35.0
Total	100	100.0

- The above table shows that the maximum numbers of respondents are Graduate i.e 51%.

- Minimum numbers of respondents are from Intermediate i.e 14%.

Table 9: Demographic for Marital status

	Frequency	Percent
Married	51	51.0
Un Married	49	49.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 10: Demographic for Sex

- The above table shows that 51% of respondents are Married & 49 % of respondents are Unmarried.

	Frequency	Percent
Male	79	79.0
Female	21	21.0
Total	100	100.0

- The above table shows that 79% of respondents are Male & 21 % of respondents are Female.

5. Results and conclusions

The SERVQUAL values for the four dimensions were obtained by averaging the respondents' scores. This overall measure, however, does not take into account the relative importance of the various dimensions to the customer. The overall weighted SERVQUAL score taking into account the relative importance of the dimensions is summarised and tabulated in Table 4.3. This shows the overall expectation scores of the customer is 9.710. The overall perception scores of the customer are 12.007.

Table 11: Weighted Expectation and Perception Scores for

SERVQUAL Score		Perception Mean	Expectation Mean
Weighted	Tangible	2.589	2.326
	Empathy	3.058	2.392
	Assurance	3.120	2.538
	Responsiveness	3.240	2.517
	Overall	12.007	9.710

The data was collected using SERVQUAL from the 100 sample for both the expectation & perception regarding retail industry using 5- point scale with 1 (strongly agree) & 5 (strongly disagree). The average mean score for 4 dimensions & 20 statements of the expectation & perception is shown in Table 4.12. The average expectation & perception for tangible was found to be 1.96 & 2.301 respectively. Then the service quality gap was found for each dimension & along 20 statements using basic gap model without considering the weightage of each dimensions. So, the service quality gap of service dimension Tangible will be -0.341(1.96-2.301). Similarly the gap was found for each dimension & 20 statements. The Table 4.2 shows the gap for the 4 dimensions i.e Tangible (-0.341), Empathy (-0.653), Assurance (-0.690), Responsiveness (-0.690). Since, the gap above all the four dimensions is negative so the perceived service

is greater than the expected service. The ranks are given to the 4 dimension on the basis of the service gap, the minimum gap is rated as rank 1 & maximum gap is raked 4.

Table 4.11 also shows that the rank that is provided to all the 20 statements of the service quality dimension. The gap is lowest in E9 and is rated as rank 1. Similarly the rank is given to all the 20 statements according to service gap.

Table 12:

S.No	Dimensions	E	P	Mean (E)	Mean (P)	Gap (E-P)	Rank	Sig. (2-Tailed T-Test)	Diff.
	TANGIBLE			1.96	2.301	-0.341	4		
1	Physical facilities of the outlet are appealing	E1	P1	1.74	1.92	-0.18	18	0.083	NS
2	Outlet have modern looking equipment and fixtures	E2	P2	3.64	2.57	1.07	20	0.000	S
3	Presentation of merchandize is excellent	E3	P3	1.73	2.22	-0.49	9	0.000	S
4	Employees are well dressed	E4	P4	1.75	2.22	-0.47	11	0.000	S
5	Store layout makes it easier to find things	E5	P5	1.85	2.10	-0.25	15	0.020	NS
6	Store accepts all major debit and credit cards	E6	P6	1.57	1.54	0.03	19	0.762	NS
7	Store layout made it easy to move around	E7	P7	1.92	2.21	-0.29	713	0.003	S
8	Employees are neat and tidy in appearance	E8	P8	1.62	2.10	-0.48	10	0.002	S
9	Special facilities for handicap people	E9	P9	1.82	3.83	-2.01	1	0.002	S

	Empathy:			2.007	2.66	-0.653	2		
10	Staff is polite	E10	P10	1.78	2.09	-0.27	14	0.005	S
11	Employee respond my request	E11	P11	2.14	2.74	-0.60	7	0.000	S
12	Employees give a pleasant parting remark	E12	P12	2.04	3.01	-0.97	4	0.000	S
13	Employee offer personal attention	E13	P13	2.07	2.80	-0.73	6	0.000	S
	Assurance		2.155	2.155	2.795	-0.640	3		
14	Employees understand my specific needs	E14	P14	1.84	2.86	-1.02	3	0.000	S
15	Employees provide additional information	E15	P15	1.95	2.92	-0.97	4	0.000	S
16	Employees ask pertinent questions	E16	P16	2.67	2.88	-0.21	16	0.090	NS
17	Behavior of the employees develop confidence	E17	P17	2.16	2.52	-0.36	12	0.004	S
	Responsiveness			2.107	2.797	-0.690	1		
18	Receive personal attention	E18	P18	1.81	2.39	-0.58	8	0.000	S
19	Depend on the employees	E19	P19	2.55	2.74	-0.19	17	0.215	NS
20	Employees at the store pressurize customer for purchase	E20	P20	1.96	3.26	-1.30	2	0.000	S

Also from Table 3 it is seen that the t test value for Pair E1 & P1, E5 & P5 and E6 & P6 (Tangible dimension) is greater than 0.05 at 95% level of significance. So the null hypothesis in the above three pair is accepted and there is a no significant difference between the expected and perceived. But in pair E1 & P1 E5 & P5 the perceived mean is greater than the expected mean so there is not much more need to improve, but in case E6 & P6 statements the perceived mean is less than the expected so there is a gap and retail industry need to work in this statements.

From Table 13 it is seen that the t test value for all Pair dimension is less than 0.05 at 95% level of significance. So the null hypothesis in the above three pair is rejected and there is a significant difference between the expected and perceived.
From Table 12 it is seen that the t test value for Pair 3 (Assurance dimension) is greater than 0.05 at 95% level of significance. So the null hypothesis in the above pair is accepted and there is a no significant difference between the expected and perceived. But in pair 3 the perceived mean is greater than the expected mean so there is not much more need to improve in this statements(employee ask pertinent questions)

From Table 13 it is seen that the t test value for Pair 2 (Responsiveness dimension) is greater than 0.05 at 95% level of significance. So the null hypothesis in the above pair is accepted and there is a no significant difference between the expected and perceived. But in pair 2 the perceived mean is greater than the expected mean so there is not much more need to improve this statement (dependency on employee).
Please refer Table 13-16in appendix

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The primary objective of the study is to measure service quality of retail outlet in NCR using gap model. We first computed service quality of retail using a simple version of gap model to know the overall perception of respondents for retail mall.
The gap model provides a good starting point for the analysis/ modification in terms of other approaches. In gap model, problem with average approach to aggregate service quality measure arise when gaps have different signs. Gap model also helps us to identify which dimension & factor is more important for the retail & where to take corrective action to improve the service quality. To sum up our argument, the gap model can be used to find out the minimum level of customer expectations & perceived performance with respect to the expectation. The techniques for service

quality model can be accommodated in a frame work of service quality improvement that measures service quality gaps selects an optimal combination of attribute levels to deliver customer satisfaction. This techniques when used in a complementary manner, can achieve much more then simple measurement.

Paired Samples Test

| | | Paired Samples Test | | | | | | | |
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	The physical facilities of the outlet are appealing? - I like physical facilities of the outlet to appealing	.180	1.029	.103	-.024	.384	1.750	99	.083
Pair 2	The outlet does not have modern looking equipment and fixtures? - I like to go to outlet which does not have modern looking equipment and fixtures	-1.070	1.591	.159	-1.386	-.754	-6.726	99	.000
Pair 3	The presentation of merchandize is excellent? - I prefer to go to store where presentation of merchandize is excellent	.490	1.259	.126	.240	.740	3.891	99	.000
Pair 4	The employees are well dressed? - I like to go store where employees are well dressed	.470	.881	.088	.295	.645	5.332	99	.000
Pair 5	The store layout makes it easier to find things? - I like to go to store where the lay out is provided	.250	1.058	.106	.040	.460	2.364	99	.020
Pair 6	The store accepts all major debit and credit cards? - I like to go to store which accepts all major debit and credit cards	-.030	.989	.099	-.226	.166	-.303	99	.762
Pair 7	The store layout made it easy to move around? - The store layout made it easy to move around	.290	.957	.096	.100	.480	3.032	99	.003
Pair 8	The employees are neat and tidy in appearance? - I expect employees to be neat and tidy in appearance?	.480	.847	.085	.312	.648	5.670	99	.000
Pair 9	There are special facilities for handicap people? - There store provide special facilities for handicap people	2.010	1.772	.177	1.658	2.362	11.34	99	.000

Table 14: Empathy dimension

Paired Samples Test

| | | Paired Differences | | | | | | | |
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	The staff is polite? - I like staff to be polite?	.310	1.089	.109	.094	.526	2.847	99	.005
Pair 2	The employee are never too busy to respond to my request? - I m unlikely to go to a store where employee are busy to respond	.600	1.544	.154	.294	.906	3.886	99	.000
Pair 3	The employees give a pleasant parting remark? - I prefer employees give a pleasant parting remark	.970	1.298	.130	.712	1.228	7.470	99	.000
Pair 4	The employee don't offer personal attention? - I m unlikely to go to a store where employee don't offer personal attention	.730	1.530	.153	.426	1.034	4.772	99	.000

Table 15: Assurance dimension

Paired Samples Test

| | | Paired Differences | | | | | | | |
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	The employees don't understand my specific needs? - I m unlikely to go to a store where employees don't understand my specific needs?	1.020	1.428	.143	.737	1.303	7.141	99	.000
Pair 2	The employees provide additional information? - I prefer employees to provide additional information	.970	1.432	.143	.686	1.254	6.775	99	.000
Pair 3	The employees ask pertinent questions? - I expect employees to ask pertinent questions	.210	1.225	.123	-.033	.453	1.714	99	.090
Pair 4	The behaviour of the employees develops confidence in me? - I prefer that behaviour of the employees should develops confidence in me	.360	1.210	.121	.120	.600	2.974	99	.004

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DESIGNING MIS STRUCTURE: COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TOWARDS DEVELOPING ERP SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT

MIS structure is the conceptual framework that comprises various process components and information components pertaining to the specific system which could either have an Administrative or Business objectives. The pattern of MIS structure of an organization is affected by its activities and functions. Hence, it significantly varies from one firm to others operating under the common Industry level considerations. Studying the variation of the MIS structure that exists in the firms of specific Industry focus will help in identifying the perfection and degree of coordination with which each of the business entities are functioning. However, lack of clarity in the design methods of MIS structure both in literature as well as in practice is noted and hence, an effort is made in this work to define the design methods for MIS structure. A qualitative research framework comprising the initial reference position established on the previous studies is the methodological approach followed in the work. A model is developed as an outcome of this work and it will act as the check list towards designing MIS structure for any group of firms operating under common Industry level considerations. This understanding helps in mapping the best breed of process models for the Industry and thus, a standard can be established towards the creation of best practice software like ERP systems

Keywords: MIS Structure, ERP System, Best Breed of Process Models, Design Methods and Qualitative Research.

MIS Structure

MIS structure is the conceptual framework that comprises various process components and information components pertaining to the specific system which could either have an Administrative or Business objectives. According to Davis and Olson (1984), the conceptual structure of management information systems is a federation of the functional subsystems, each of which is divided into four major information processing components namely Transaction processing, System support on Operational control, System support on Management control and System support for Strategic planning. According to Gupta and Sushil (1993a), MIS structure of an organization is nothing but the holistic representation of the organization as a network of Decision units and Information Units and they proved that a cyclic relationship often exists between the MIS structure of the organization and its smooth functioning. According to Davis and Olson (1984), the MIS structure of an organization is affected by its activities and functions. Hence, it significantly varies from one firm to others operating under the common Industry level considerations. Studying the variation of the MIS structure that exists in the firms of specific Industry focus will help in identifying the perfection and degree of coordination with which each of the business entities are functioning. This understanding helps in mapping the best breed

of process models for the firms operating under single Industry focus and thus, a standard can be established towards the creation of best practice software like ERP systems.

The MIS structures of the enterprises is basically conceptualized as a matrix with the columns representing organizational functions and the rows representing transaction processing, operations control, management control and the strategic planning component of an enterprise. This model of MIS structure was proposed by Davis and Olson (1984) and it is diagrammatically represented as shown in the Figure- 1, where F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, and F7 could represent different organizational functions like sales and marketing, production, logistics, personnel, finance and accounting, information processing and top management. In Figure –1, representing the conceptual model of MIS structure the different cells (SS11, SS12, SS13…etc.) of the matrix will represent the different subsystems with which the business or administrative enterprises are functioning. Each of the subsystems will have different set of activities which are required to be identified towards determining the perfection and co-ordination with which the business enterprise is functioning.

Figure-1: Conceptual Structure of Management Information Systems

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
Strategic Planning	SS11	SS12	SS13	SS14	SS15	SS16	SS17
Management	SS21	SS22	SS23	SS24	SS25	SS26	SS27
Operational	SS31	SS32	SS33	SS34	SS35	SS36	SS37
Transaction	SS41	SS42	SS43	SS44	SS45	SS46	SS47

Source: Davis (1984)

According to Gupta and Sushil (1993a), the clarity and smooth functioning of any organization depends on the clarity of its MIS structure or architecture. Hence, they stated designing of MIS structure as a potential research problem towards the development and implementation of MIS. In this context, it should be noted that MIS structure always exist for all categories of enterprises out of which a few were conceptualized and mapped with best breed of process models in some of the existing ERP systems. However, market potential for new ERP product always exist as many firms under different Industry perspective moves towards computerization and automation. Despite this, only a few ERP products are successful in the market and it's because of their incorrigible fitment into the organizational systems (Wagner et al, 2006).This problem can be solved, if appropriate MIS structure of the organizations are properly designed and analyzed before assessing the suitability of the ERP product or creating entirely a new one based on Industry focus. However, non clarity in methodological focus in designing MIS structure is viewed as the core issue in developing new ERP products.

Benefits of designing MIS structure of an organization.

From various literatures on MIS structure, the following benefits are worth mentioning in the context of designing MIS structure of an enterprise.

1. It will help in identifying and defining the various functional subsystems in an organization. In this context, Davis and Olson (1984) stated that the structure of information systems can also be described in terms of the organizational functions. The identification and definition of various functional subsystems in an organization will in turn help in computerizing the enterprise in terms of providing complete ERP solutions.

2. It will also help in identifying the degree of perfection and co-ordination with which an organization is functioning. In this context, Gupta and Sushil (1993a) reported the existence of cyclic relationship between the MIS structure of the organization and its smooth functioning. Also, Davis and Olson (1984) stated that the structure of MIS is affected by management activity and organizational functions.

3. It will help in understanding the holistic outlook of the enterprise with various functional activities and the corresponding control applied over it. In this context, Davis and Olson (1984) stated that the overall architecture or structure of the information system provides a framework for detailed organizational level planning. Also, Gupta and sushil (1993a) stated that the major purpose of designing MIS structure is to provide the holistic outlook that can facilitate the network representation of the enterprise.

4. Most of the system analysis and system designing procedures are found to be without clarity because of the non-availability of universally accepted methodologies. However, designing MIS structure will act as the source document based on which the system designing tasks can be carried out with well-sorted boundaries of various subsystems. According to Davis and Olson (1984), further amplification of the structure is the introduction of common software. The common software solutions can be provided for each of the subsystems separately or it could be in the form of common ERP solutions for all the functional subsystems.

Issues on System Development

The major concern in System Development task revolves around kind of focus that should be improvised in terms of researching the enterprise under study. In this context, Cooper (1990) and Kwon (1987) have classified the research focus of Information system design and development into three categories called process research, factors research and political research. These researches can be carried out with the help of various models developed and validated. On methodological issues of System Development, Banbille and Landry (1989) stated that the study of Information Systems is undertaken in various ways with no unique methodological framework. Further, it is opined in the above study that the scholars working in this area should consider other disciplines as possible areas that can add to the richness and complexity of Information System studies.

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Studies providing the model building methods on validating the systems developed could be identified as Mahmood and Soon (1991) developed a model that can be used to study the performance of Information Technology and its strategic impact in an Organization. As an extension of this study, Sethi and Carraher (1993) validated the model developed by Mahmood and Soon (1991). This model was extended and subsequently used by Palvia (1997) to study the impact of IT in a global strategic context. Similarly, Rajmohan and Panchanatham (2003) developed a model that can be used to find out the economic feasibility for investments in Electronic Commerce Systems. Regarding the implementation aspect of MIS, Rajagopal (2002) stated that the implementation of newer MIS could potentially lead to re-structuring of the entire organization and hence, he observes case study method as the suitable method for studying the implementation aspect of MIS in an Organization.

In an attempt to build Information Systems with more organizational focus, Rajmohan and Panchanatham (2000) suggested case building methodology to computerize the back office activities of share brokers and Depository Participants. However, Benbasat et al (1987) have opined that case study is suited for research in Information Systems, if the problem identified has more orientation towards organizational issues rather than the technical issues. Also, it is identified that the case study is employed by the researchers to solve the problems pertaining to a specific organization and hence this methodology cannot be generalized for all types of research in Information Systems.

Regarding the traditional System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) approach, Xu (1992) stated that there exist a mismatch between the IS Development methods and the system to be built. Further, its opined in the above study that SDLC could further be improved by introducing a new framework to Information System Design. Thus, this study reiterates that the new framework should be built upon the system paradigm consisting mainly of the concepts of systems, subsystems, and dimensions matching appropriate methods to systems types and characteristics. Regarding the Object-Oriented approach for system development, Shounhoung Wang (1997) stated that the methodology of Object-Oriented Analysis for Information System Development is far from mature. Further, its opined in this study that a separate research is required to investigate an extension of the Object-Oriented approach usable at macro level particularly in the context of ERP systems.

The methodology named as Unified Approach for Information System Development given by Ali Bahrami (1999) has used simple Business Process modeling using UML activity diagram. In similar vision, Jacobson et al (1995) proposed two methodologies called OOBE (Object Oriented Business Engineering) and OOSE (Object Oriented Software Engineering) that can cover the entire life cycle of the system development. But both these methodologies rely heavily on CASE tools. "The availability of automated support tools helps the programmers and system analysts concentrate on the truly creative part of the job and spend less time worrying about mundane parts of the job". (Yourdon, 1989) However, Sadahiro et al (1995) stated that the success or failure when introducing the CASE method largely depends on management factors like developers maturity and the resources under the utility.

In a remarkable shift towards defining system design methods, Booch et al (1997) proposed a methodology that categorizes system development process into macro development process and micro development process. This study mentions 'design of system architecture' as third step in any macro system development process consisting of five different steps. The terms system architecture and system structure were interchangeably used by Gupta and Sushil (1992) when they proposed a methodology for structuring the information flow in the Large Scale Systems (LSS). In the methodology proposed by them, MIS Structure for Large Scale Systems is represented as the network of only Information units and Decision units with no consideration for process aspects in the system.

The conceptual articles of Ackoff (1967) and Dearden (1972) have emphasized the fact that the design of MIS should be compatible with the structure and process of the organization in which they are embedded. In similar vision, Gupta and Sushil (1992) stated that it would be much easier to achieve a fit of MIS with the organizational structure, if both are taken up for simultaneous design. The above study observes that the design of structure or architecture aims to achieve fit between the form and the context. Forming the context of MIS is the outcome of design efforts as 'MIS architecture' that can provide a holistic view of the system. In this context, Gupta (1990) stated Architecture or structure as Design problem in MIS development.

Problem statement

The review of different methodologies and related literature of MIS reveals the fact that the MIS structure or architecture is required for all macroscopic System Development approaches including Object-Oriented approach and CASE (Computer Aided System Engineering) based approaches. Thus, it is identified that the MIS structure is an important link between the application as well as implementation aspect of the Information System and the development of the same for a specific Business establishment. Hence, design of MIS structure for various Business Models can be considered as potential research problem in making entirely a new ERP product. However, inadequacy of comprehensive methodology to design MIS structure of different business models is visible through various literatures. In this context, a need is felt to develop the methodology that can help in designing the MIS structure for various business models as prelude towards ERP system development. Hence, the following are taken to be the objectives for this qualitative study.

1. To provide the holistic view of the entire system (i.e) the business model under consideration as network, with various information units, decision units and the processes.

2. To help in identifying the various subsystems in the business model under consideration.

3. To help in identifying the various business processes that can be selected and improvised in terms of BPR(Business Process Re-engineering).

Proposed method for Designing MIS structure
Step-1

The first step in designing the structure of MIS should concentrate on establishing the relation ship between the various organizational elements and the various activities in the business model. This can be achieved by formulating the matrix consisting of identified activities and the various positions corresponding to each identified activities. This method of formulating the matrix, was proposed by Kirchgessner (1980) and he suggested interview method for collecting the information regarding activities and the positions in the organization. But, before proceeding with the interview schedule the formal documents like organization chart can be reviewed. Interview method will be more suitable if the study is carried out in a single organization, but if the information is required to be collected from the group of similar busi-

ness establishments, then questionnaire method can also be followed. The Matrix developed at the end of this stage of the design process will be like the one shown in the figure-II.

Figure- II: Showing the matrix of positions and activities

Related activities	Position 1	Position 2	Position 3	Position 4	Position 5
Activity 1.	RC11	RC12	RC13	RC14	RC1N
Activity 2.	RC21	RC22	RC23	RC24	RC2N
Activity 3.	RC31	RC32	RC33	RC34	RC3N
Activity 4.	RC41	RC42	RC43	RC44	RC41
Activity N.	RC21	RC21	RC21	RC21	RCNN

In figure – II, the organizational elements like various positions are taken in the columns of the matrix. The various organizational activities are taken in different rows of the matrix. Inside the cells of the matrix the various relationship codes (RC11 to RCNN) are give. Kirchgessner (1980) suggested set of relationship code that can relate the position and the activity in an organization. They are " (a) General responsibility (b) Operating responsibility (c) Specific responsibility (d) Must be consulted (e) May be consulted (f) Must be notified (g) must concur". These sets of relationship codes can be considered for designing the interview schedule or a questionnaire, required to collect the information for the construction of matrix. A similar type of matrix was proposed by Gordan.B.Davis (1984) with Operational control and Management control taken in the rows and various activities taken in the columns. He adapted this method to mention the different functional sub-systems in an organization.

Step – II

The matrix developed in the step – I, will represent the static model of the organization where the process will be either a completed one or a non-starter. To over come this inadequacy in the designing process, the tool developed by Hendry and Ludo (1999) named Organigraphs can be used to represent the dynamic model of the organization. This drawing tool developed by them will help in representing the organization with different ongoing processes. Based on the details generated from the stage –I of the design process, the Organization can be represented as the model with set, chain, hub and web.

Symbols used in organigraph:

The symbols used in the Organigraph namely set; chain, hub and web are shown in the figure-III and

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they can represent the different basic forms of organizing.

Figure III showing the symbols of Organigraph

Set	Chain	Hub	Web
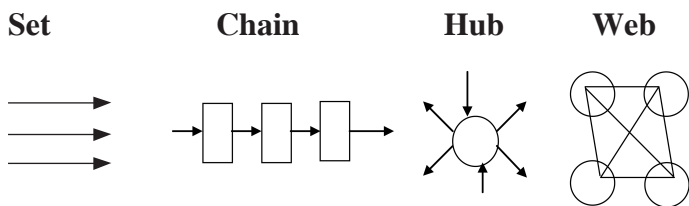
According to Hendry and Ludo (1999) every organization is a set of items, sharing independently or collectively, the common organizational resources and those set of items include people, machines and finished products. The symbol chain is used in the organigraph to represent the sequence of events and they can help in clarifying and systematizing the many complex process that constitutes the business The symbol hub is used to represent the coordinating centers in the business. Hub depicts movement to and from one focal point. The symbol web can be used to represent the interrelated connectivity between different hubs.

## Organigraph and dynamic system modeling

Hendry and Ludo (1999) demonstrated the flexibility of Organigraph with 3 different process models for the same banking corporation as shown in the figure iv, v and figure vi
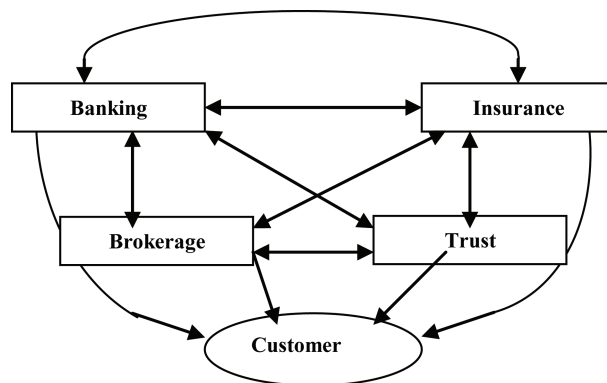
Figure IV
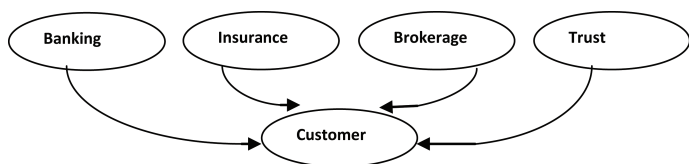
In the first possible process pattern shown in the figure IV. The organigraph depicts the bank's original structure, where each division with different member sets operates independently and approaches the customer independently.

Figure V
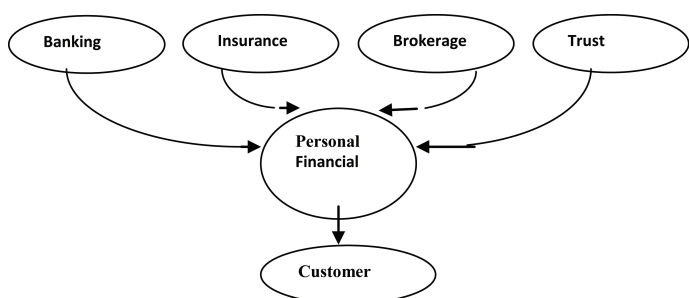
In the second possible process pattern, shown in the figure V, the organigraph depicts one strategic option that all divisions converge on financial advisers acting as hub and he can approach the customers in an integrated way.

Figure VI

In the third possible process pattern shown in the figure VI, the representatives from each business, work cooperatively in the pattern of web but, approaches the customer independently. Thus, the organigraph can be used to represent the specific business model with various possible process patterns. Hence, at the end of the second step of the design process the designer can identify the macroscopic view of the business organization as a business model with different possible process patterns. This will help the designers to develop a list of key business processes in the organization under study.

Step III

The details generated out of the first two steps of the design process will help in identifying the various process and function based subsystems in the business organization under study. However, Hassan Gomma (1989) stated the seven criteria to identify the subsystems. According to him, a subsystem may satisfy more than one of these criteria. They are given as follows.

1. **Functionality**. A sub system performs a well-defined function or closely related group of functions. The data traffic between these functions may be high, so that structuring them into separate subsystem would potentially increase system overhead.

2. **Server**. This subsystem provides the service. It responds to request from client subsystems. It does not initiate any request. Frequently the server provides services that are associated with a data store.

3. **Agent**. An agent subsystem provides an indirect service. In order to perform the service, it has to make requests of other subsystems. Thus, it acts as an intermediary between a client and a server.

4. **Proximity** to the source of Physical data. This ensures fast access to the physical data and is particularly important if data access rates are high.

5. **Localized control**. In some cases the subsystem performs a specific site-related function. Often the same function is performed at multiple sites. Each instance of the subsystem resides on a separate node that provides greater autonomy and local control. Assuming a subsystem operates relatively independently of other nodes, then it can be operational even if nodes are temporarily unavailable.

6. **Performance**. By providing a time critical function within its own node, better and more predictable performance can often be achieved

7. **User interface**. With the proliferation of workstations and personal computers, a subsystem providing a user interface may run on a separate node, interacting with subsystems on other nodes. A user interface subsystem performs an actor role."

Based on these criteria, the designer can identify the various subsystems in the business organization under study. This will help in disintegrating the system into key subsystems so as to facilitate system development in modules within the holistic and integrative framework provided by overall MIS structure of the system under consideration. This method of disintegrating the system into subsystems and then integrating all the subsystems inside the single framework namely MIS structure was adapted by Gupta and Sushil (1990). Hence, at the end of the third step of the design process the designer must be able to generate the details of various subsystems in the system under the study.

Step-IV
The details generated at the end of the third step of the design process namely the different subsystems can further be structured and analyzed with the conventional tools for structured analysis like DFD (Data Flow Diagram), STD (State Transition Diagram), Process Flow Charts and Data Dictionaries. In this step of the design process, each identified subsystem should be considered individually for further structuring and analysis. At the end of this step of the design

process, the designer should be able to find out the complete list of Subsystems, Information units, Process units and possibly the Decision units all within the holistic framework of MIS structure.

Step-V
The details generated at the end of the fourth step of the design process namely the list of Subsystems (1,2 and N), Information units (I1,I2 and IN), Process units (P1,P2, and PN) and Decision units (D1,D2,and DN) can now be represented diagrammatically as network of different units under the centrally controlled component namely 'Management Control'. This type of network representation will provide the structure of Management Information Systems as shown in the figure vii

Figure VII showing the structure of MIS with different subsystems
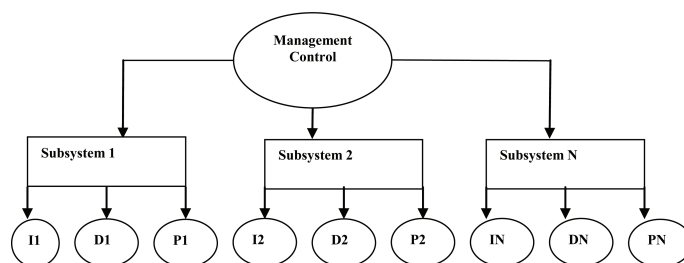
Conclusion
The MIS structure shown in the figure VII will provide the holistic view of the entire business system under study. This will also act as the blue print for computerizing the various Information Units and Decision Units. Also, the processes identified in the various subsystems can be analyzed for possible Re-engineering. The various steps stated in this work are developed as Model designed with conventional Data Flow Diagram (DFD). This model is shown in the figure VIII, which could act as initial reference position towards creating new ERP products with specific Industry focus.

Figure VIII Showing Model for Designing MIS structure

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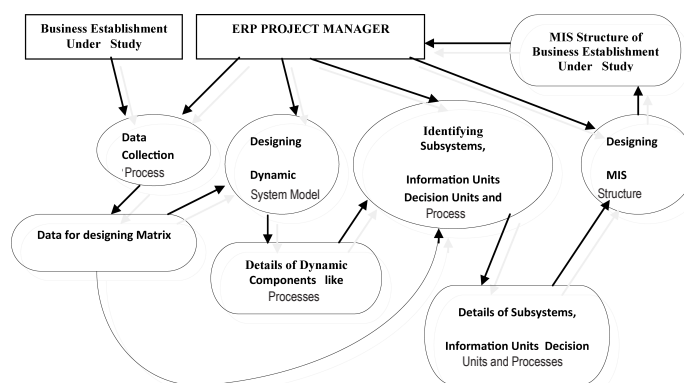
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ONLINE COMMUNITIES – THE UAE ACADEMIC SCENARIO

Vishwesh Laxmikant Akre

Abstract

There is an enormous role, Online Communities such as Virtual Communities of Practice (VCoPs) play as learning aids for students studying in the UAE, or for that matter anywhere in the World. Such Online Communities are usually topic based and initiate discussions between topic experts and beginners or students. There is no geographical barriers to such discussions, i.e. the participants can be situated anywhere across the globe. The students become member of VCoPs such as Blogs or Discussion Forums and share there queries or problems with other members, who themselves may be students or experts who are geographically dispersed across the globe. In such VCoPs, new members check answers to similar problems or to post their questions which are then answered by more experienced VCoP members. This paper is an attempt to determine the significance of Online Communities such as VCoPs in the academic life of any average student from the United Arab Emirates. The main focus although is on the Information Technology students. Such significance can be highlighted in terms of analysing – the objectives for initial participation, resultant of participation and desire for continued participation. The methodology adopted for this paper is that of statistical analysis of Primary Data collected by Questionnaire instrument, filled by a group of students from various Institutes in the United Arab Emirates.

Keywords: Communities of Practice, Virtual Communities of Practice, Online Communities, Knowledge Management.

1 Introduction

The Higher Education provided by Institutions and Universities in the United Arab Emirates is blend of Educational systems around the world. Various Universities from countries such as United States of America, United Kingdom, India, Pakistan and Australia are having their branch campuses in various Emirates such as Dubai, Sharjah, Ras – Al – Khaimah etc. Also there is an array of local Government run or accredited Universities. Hence there is a huge diversity in the academic programs offered by the said Universities to students undergoing undergraduate or post graduate education. Many times the study material such as text books, reference books etc may not be readily available in libraries or bookstores, as the array of prescribed textbooks is huge; a large number of Universities and their course diversity being the main reason. In case of non-availability, it takes 4 to 6 weeks to procure such books. Hence there is an enormous role Online Communities such as Virtual Communities of Practice (VCoPs) play, as learning aids for students here. The students become member of such VCoPs and share there queries or problems with other members, who themselves may be students or experts who are geographically dispersed across the globe. The methodology followed in such VCoPs is to for new members to check answers to similar problems or to post their questions which are then an-

swered by more experienced VCoP members. In most cases, the students are successful in finding solutions to their problems by participating in VCoPs.

An Online Community or an e – Community is a group of people that primarily interact via communication media such as letters, telephone, email, or USENET rather than face to face. If the mechanism is a Computer Network e.g. Internet, then it is called Online Community –a Wikipedia definition. Earliest such Communities were described by Lave and Wenger (1991) as Communities of Practice (CoPs). CoPs are a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in – relation to each other. In such CoPs, a new-comer learns from old-timers by being allowed to participate in certain tasks that relate to the practice of the community. Over time, the new-comer moves from peripheral to full participation. With the advent of Internet and its growing billions of users worldwide, the concept of CoPs has been extended in the online environment to Virtual Communities of Practice (VCoPs). Millions of people share knowledge freely and continually in online forums, blogs, email – groups and other discussion mediums. VCoPs are informal networks, existing outside of any one particular organization, that support professional practitioners to develop a shared meaning and engage in knowledge building among their members by providing opportunities for relationship building

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and interaction through the use of Internet based Information and Communication Technologies as well as other methods.

2 Review of Literature
2.1 Online Communities
The Wikipedia definition of Online Community (also called as Virtual Community) is that it is a social network with a common interest, idea, task, or goal that interacts in a virtual society across time, geographical and organizational boundaries and is able to develop personal relationships. Since at least 1979, when the first Usenet news sharing programs were created, online communities have co-evolved with the growth in computer networking (Ling. K. et. al. 2005). Today, 29 years later, people share news, information, jokes, music, discussion, pictures, and social support in hundreds of thousands of online communities. People benefit from the presence and activity of others in online communities—from the information and other resources they provide and the conversations they participate in.

Pioneers of online community development and research (Rheingold. H 1993) and (Hiltz. S. R 1985) used the term 'online community' to connote the intense feelings of camaraderie, empathy and support that they observed among people in the online spaces they studied. Other researchers have attempted to operationalize the term so that it is useful in the analysis, design, and evaluation of community software platforms and management practices (De Souza & Preece, 2004; Preece J and Maloney-Krichmar, 2005). These researchers focus on 'the people who come together for a particular purpose, and who are guided by policies (including norms and rules) and supported by software.' Others researchers have identified key parameters of community life and then looked for their presence online.

It is increasingly common for online communities to rely on members rather than editors to contribute and moderate content (F. Harper et. al. 2007). To motivate members to perform these tasks, some sites display social comparisons, information designed to show members how they compare with others in the system.

2.2   Communities of Practice (CoPs)
The concept of a community of practice (often abbreviated as CoP) refers to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations. It refers as well to the stable group that is formed from such regular interactions.

Etienne Wenger (2006) defined CoPs as "Communities of Practice are groups of people who share concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly". This definition of Wenger encompasses three essential characteristics of CoPs:-

• The Domain – The Community must be oriented around a particular interest that stimulates commitment.

• The Practice – Members of a CoP participate in collective knowledge building. They are practitioners who, whether consciously or not, share and learn valuable, workable knowledge.

• The Community – Interactions and discussions among members are key characteristics. Individuals who work in the same office are not engaged in a CoP unless they, through whatever means, discuss and interact with each other, building relationships which enable them to learn from each other.

Also as per Wenger (2006), following are motivational factors for participating in CoPs:-

• Reasons for a short term participation	• Reason's for prolonged participation
• Accept Challenges	• Personal Development
• Access to Expertise	• Professional Development
• Confidence Building	• Network
• Fun with Colleagues	• Marketability
• Meaningful Work	

The members of a CoP need not be from the same discipline; in fact the Community can be strengthened and invigorated by drawing the expertise of its various members (Maura Borrego et al. 2006). Although prior acquaintance can make it easier to collaborate in certain CoPs, it is not a sufficient condition for them to achieve their objectives (Dianne – Gabrielle Tremblay 2004).

Gheradi and Neolini (2000) draw out an important conclusion that the key feature of any CoP is the Community Knowledge accumulated through the practice in CoP is greater than the sum of individual knowledge of members of that CoP.
The abstract purpose of CoP's is knowledge crea-

tion and knowledge communication or in other words CoPs can be identified as setting for effective knowledge sharing. Despite these valuable benefits, to create a community of practice is not always as simple, fast and successful as put forth in theory because in real conditions, it can be quite a challenge, when dealing with individuals from different cultures and addressing needs and challenges specific to the contexts in which they interact (A. Carvajal et. al. 2008). Tackling this challenge can produce outcomes somewhat different from those normally expected from a Community of Practice.

2.3 Virtual Communities of Practice (VCoPs)

Internet – based networking technologies, which can provide a convenient single platform for groups or networks of groups to form within larger organizations have led to the proliferation of various forms of virtual teams, virtual groups and virtual communities.

Kimble et. al. (2000) define a virtual team as a "micro-level" form of geographically dispersed workers is brought together to accomplish a specific organizational task using Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs). Johnson (2001) suggests that whilst traditional communities are situation specific and tend to have clearly defined membership, Virtual Communities are task centered, and are formed as the need arises. VCoPs are physically distributed groups of individuals who participate in activities share knowledge and expertise, and function as an independent network over an extended period of time using various technological means to communicate with one another, with the shared goal of furthering their 'practice' of doing their work better(Maura Borrego et. al. 2006). A VCoP may use a large array of traditional media (phone, teleconference, fax etc) and more of less sophisticated technological tools such as e – mail, videoconference, newsgroup, online meeting space, common database, website or intranet to establish a common virtual collaborative space. (Line Dube et. al. 2006).

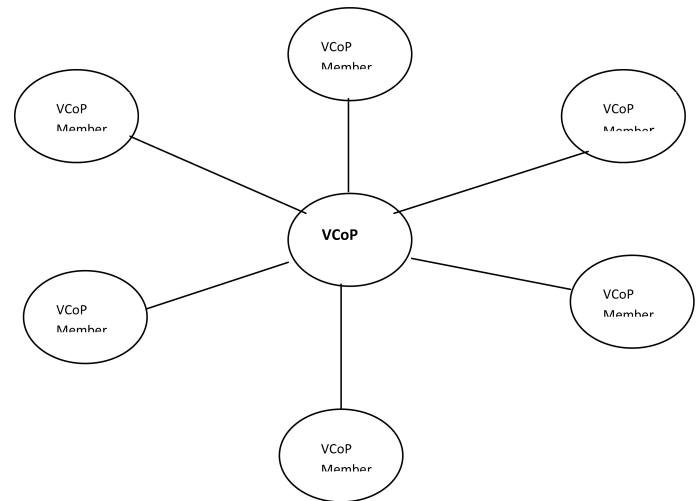**Following figure shows the graphical depiction of a VCoP:-**

Figure 2.1: Graphical Depiction of a VCoP

Pallof and Pratt (1999) have defined the formation of Virtual Communities as a multi staged process, having following stages:-

• Definition of Community's purpose.
• Establishing norms and code of conduct.
• Establishment of member roles.

Johnson (2001) suggests that current web-based and text-based environments are conducive in allowing VCoPs to form and operate as "learning entities". Hildrith et. al. (2000) assert that some aspects of CoPs such as common purpose and shared interest could translate from the co-located world to the virtual world fairly easily.

Christof Lattemann and Stefan Stieglitz (2005) researched that the key factors that lead to the success or failure of Virtual Communities are having clearly defined community goals and community objectives, allowing routine time for community participation, providing an appropriate level of Management support insisting on the distribution of quality information and utilizing technologies that facilitate communications among VCoP members. The success of a Virtual Communities of Practice is also the resultant of a series of Management Practices that respond specifically to the challenges and opportunities faced by the community because of its structuring characteristics (Bourhis Et. al. 2005).

In simple terms, once a VCoP is set up, the people from various facets of life become its members. Some of the members join the VCoP to seek answers to their problems or questions, whereas others who are ex-

perts of their fields and senior members of the VCoPs contribute to the VCoPs by answering the questions of the members who have posted them on the VCoP forums or blogs. The VCoPs motivate such contributors by offering them participation and Contribution rewards such - Points for each correct reply, Stars for attaining a certain points tally, Silver or Golden membership on attaining a certain number of stars or Discounted or free training programs on attainment of Silver or Golden membership.

2.4 Knowledge Management
Knowledge is information that has been organized and analyzed to make it understandable and applicable to problem solving or decision making. Organisational knowledge is processed information, embedded in routines and business processes that enable intelligent action. Knowledge Management seeks to make the best use of knowledge that is available in an organization in order to create new knowledge. Knowledge Management thrives in capturing, organizing and storing the knowledge and experience of individual workers and groups within an organization and converting this individual knowledge into a form of knowledge that can be used by others in the organization. At this level, knowledge can be closely tied to Competitive advantage, innovation and agility in an organization.

As per research done by (Hafeez K and Alghatas F, 2007), Communities of Practice (CoPs) are regarded as one of the top ten topics of Knowledge Management (KM). Co- founders of this concept, (Lave and Wenger 1991), go to extent of considering CoPs "an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge" (Kimble et. al. 2000). The CoP has been particularly recognised as main tool for converting "implicit" knowledge into "explicit" form of knowledge (Davenport and Prusak 1998).

3 Objective and Methods
3.1 Objective
Extensive research has been conducted worldwide in the fields of Knowledge Management, Online Communities such as Virtual Communities of Practice and Communities of Practice. Most of the stated research concentrated on Knowledge conversion models, Communities of Practice – success or failure analysis, proposing strategies to build and maintain Vistrual Communities of Practice. The research has been mainly concentrated in case examples or workshops conducted in various Industries or professional associations of Lawyers etc. Less emphasis has been given to Academic Situations or Case studies. Universities and Institutions are very good examples of communities and can be used as potential sources of information for analysing the performance and penetration of Online Communities. But as stated earlier, less research effort has been made in this domain. Hence there exists a sort of research gap in this domain. Whatever little work has been conducted in the Academic Scenario has been concentrated to the Western World and the Universities and students existing there.

The main objective of this paper is to explore the gap mentioned above. It aims to verify the role and the impact of online communities such as virtual communities of practice on the education of students who are studying under various academic programs offered by Universities functioning in the United Arab Emirates. It is one of the rare attempts to explore the concept of Online Communities and their impact on 'student learning and skill development' in the United Arab Emirates. The following research papers form a sort of motivational background for this paper. Each of the following research examples have been conducted in an academic setting ranging from a United Kingdom based High School to esteemed United States of America based Institute such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

One particular Research on Online Communities was carried out in 2005 by McDowell and group in the MIT Centre for Reflective Community Practice. The findings stated are - the integration of the type of knowledge that arises from research that is 'formal' and taught in academic institutions, with the type of knowledge that resides in the work and minds of practitioners, is critical for improving society because it brings two complementary views of the world; and this is critical for the formation and success of online communities (McDowell et. el. 2005). The above citation cannot be more applicable to anyone other than students, studying in any given academic program, in any part of the world.

As per a research workshop done by (Newman J et. al. 2004) in a High School, post compulsory education involves inducting the student into a community of learners. Within such a community, learning results not only from student – student and student – tutor interactions, but also via 'vicarious learning' from observed interactions among other community members. Students learn from observation of one another's contributions to task solutions and the queries, feedback and discussions these give rise to.

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While conducting research on Online Communities in Bradford University (United Kingdom), (Hafeez K and Alghatas F, 2007), examined a number of Knowledge Management Tools such as story telling and Discourse analysis to illustrate how knowledge is transferred and learning takes place in a Virtual Community of Practice.

3.2 Methodology

The methodology adopted for this paper is graphically depicted in the following diagram:-

Deciding the Objective of the Paper	→	Deciding the Survey Method	→	Selecting the Sample Participants	→	Preparing the Questionnaire sheet

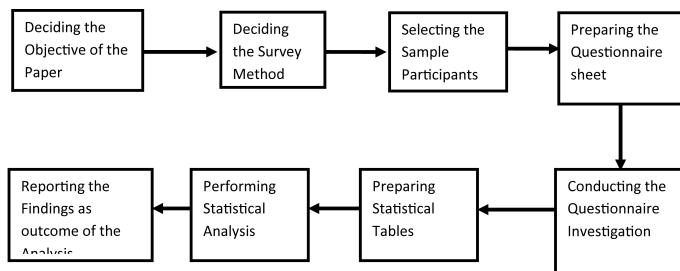| Reporting the Findings as outcome of the Analysis	←	Performing Statistical Analysis	←	Preparing Statistical Tables	←	Conducting the Questionnaire Investigation

Fig 3.1 Graphical Depiction of the Methodology

As shown in the above figure, following steps were carried out:-

1. After doing a literature Review of more than 30 research papers in the fields of Online Communities and Knowledge Management, a proper objective was decided to explore gap in the research studied.

2. After careful consideration of factors such as objective, availability of resources, time and finances, it was decided that Questionnaire tool would be used for primary data collection.

3. A random sample of respondents (students) was formed - Several students from undergraduate and post graduate academic programs, from various Institutes in UAE were selected in the sample group. These students belonged to various nationalities. Some of them were students who had recently graduated and were currently working.

4. A Questionnaire sheet was meticulously designed so as to attain the primary objective of data collection and to support statistical analysis.

5. Questionnaire Investigation was undertaken in one of these two ways – 1) paper and pen method, wherein the respondents filled in blank questionnaire sheets in presence of the author, 2) Remotely situated respondents were send questionnaire by email and were requested to fill out the same remotely and send the filled sheets back by email to the author.

6. Statistical Tables were prepared. They are covered in the next section (4.1 Statistical Tables).

7. Statistical Analysis was performed. The details are covered in next section (4.2 Statistical Analysis).

8. The Outcome of the Analytical Process is discussed in Section (5.1 Findings)

3.3 Statistical tools employed

The Statistical Analysis Methods followed in this paper is that of Mode Analysis as a measure of Central tendency, as the data can be categorized as ungrouped data. The Mode factor undertaken in this analysis is the Maximum factor in each statistical table generated in the following section in response to respondent's answers to each question from the Questionnaire (Annexure I).

4 Analysis

As discussed in the previous section, several students from undergraduate and post graduate academic programs, from various Institutes in UAE were approached to participate in the Data Collection Process (through Questionnaire sheets). These students belonged to various nationalities. Some of them were students who had recently graduated and were currently working for various organisations. They were requested to fill out a Questionnaire for collection of Primary Data for this paper. The mode of filling the Questionnaire Sheet was either in presence of the author (pen and paper) or through email (digitally). The questions covered in this questionnaire were divided into two sections – Section I (Participant Details) and Section II (Participation Details). The Questionnaire sheet has been included in Annexure I of this paper.

After collecting the primary data, Statistical Tables were formulated in order to perform Statistical Analysis of the data.

4.1 Statistical Tables

The study involved approximately 106 participants comprising of students from a variety of Institutes in the UAE. The author contacted 47 participants personally and took the survey by physically distributing the questionnaire to these participants. The remaining participants were surveyed using email as a medium for sending the blank questionnaire sheet and collecting the duly filled questionnaire sheet. Following are some facts collected about the participants:-

The research participants were primarily from the following Institutes:-

- MAHE Manipal Dubai Campus (MMDC)
- AL Ghurair University (AGU)
- University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD)
- BITS – Pilani Dubai Campus etc (BPDC)
- Other Institutes (Ajman University, S. P. Jain, I.M.T, Dubai etc)

Out of the Sample group of 106 respondents, only 81 respondents were active members of Online Communities. Remaining 24% of the respondents were either unaware of the concept of Online Communities or had never been a part of one. Following Statistical Tables were created as outcome of the different Questions pertaining to Section II from Questionnaire sheet (Annexure-1). Only 81 respondents were applicable for this section:-

The following table is created from response to Q 8 from Questionnaire:-

Q8) : What are the usual methods you follow for solving your academic Problems – such as Computer Programming Problem, Theoretical Assignment Problems etc?

Preferred Problem Solving Method	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Asking Questions to Faculty Searching for Online Information Resources (such as	35
mation Resources (such as Wikipedia etc)	75
Searching in Text Books Participating in Seminars/	40
Workshops/ Coaching Classes/ Computer Institutes	12
Connecting to Online Communities	81

Table IV. 1 Statistical Table for Question 8 from Questionnaire sheet

The following table is created from response to Q 9 from Questionnaire:-
Q9) : What type of Learning Environment is preferred by you?

Preferred Learning Environment	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Classroom Teaching	75
Directed Reading	14
Online Tutorial	45
Studying Online Community Discussions	47

Table IV. 2 Statistical Table for Question 9 from Questionnaire sheet

The following table is created from response to Q 10 from Questionnaire:-
Q10) : What was your primary motive of joining an online community?

Primary Motive for Joining Online Community	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Trying to find solutions for a problem	69
Learning from Discussions	9
Casual Surfing	3

Table IV. 3 Statistical Table for Question 10 from Questionnaire sheet

The following table is created from response to Q 11 from Questionnaire:-
Q11) : What was your personal gain from participating in the Online Community?

Personal Gain from participation	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Acquired Skill/ Knowledge	64
Problem was Solved	56
Opportunity to Voice Opinion	5
Social Interaction	2

Table IV. 4 Statistical Table for Question 11 from Questionnaire sheet

The following table is created from response to Q 12 from Questionnaire:-

Q12) : Are you involved is the Online Community after your primary motive was solved?

YES / NO _____ If YES, kindly specify the reason.

Reason for Continued Participation	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Continuously Updating Knowledge/Skills	23
Contribute to the Online Community	19
To maintain online peer interactions	18
To gain Recognition for skills	10
To aim to gain rewards by regular contribution	7

Table IV. 5 Statistical Table for Question 12 from Questionnaire sheet

The following table is created from response to Q 13 from Questionnaire:-

Q13) : Why do you think that Online Communities are very important in the Academic Life of a student of the United Arab Emirates?

Importance of Online Communities in Academic Life of student in UAE	Total Number of Respondents applicable
Lack of Book Availability	20
Problem cannot be solved only through book content	35
Online Communities are fast in getting solutions	75
Online Communities are easy to access and use	81
Online Communities facilitate social networking	21

Table IV. 6 Statistical Table for Question 13 from Questionnaire sheet

1.   Analysis of Responses to Q8)

As Shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Connecting to Online Communities" as the preferred Problem Solving Method among sampled respondents, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (100%) have chosen this option
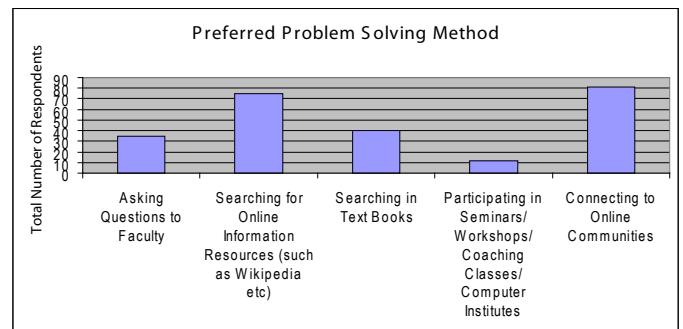

Fig 4.1 Graphical depiction of Respondent Answers for Q8 from Questionnaire

2.   Analysis of Responses to Q9)

As shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Classroom Teaching" as the preferred Learning Environment among sampled respondents, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (93%) have chosen this option.
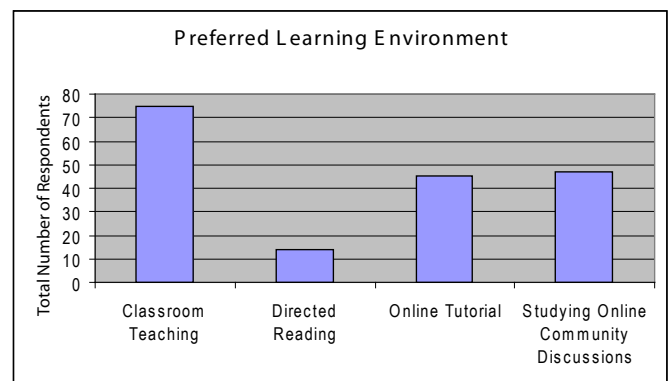

Fig 4.2 Graphical depiction of Respondent Answers for Q9 from Questionnaire

3.   Analysis of Responses to Q10)

As shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Trying to find solutions for a problem" as the Primary Motive for Joining an Online Communities among sampled respondents, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (85%) have chosen this option.

4. Analysis of Responses to Q11)

As shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Acquired Skill/ Knowledge" as the biggest personal gain from participation in Online Communities among sampled respondents, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (79%) have chosen this option
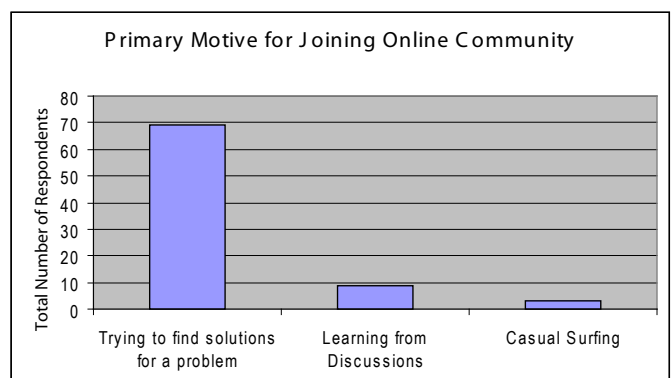

Fig 4.4 Graphical depiction of Respondent Answers for Q11 from Questionnaire

5. Analysis of Responses to Q12)

As shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Continuously Updating Knowledge / Skills" as the biggest motivational reason for continued participation in Online Communities among sampled respondents, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (28%) have chosen this option.
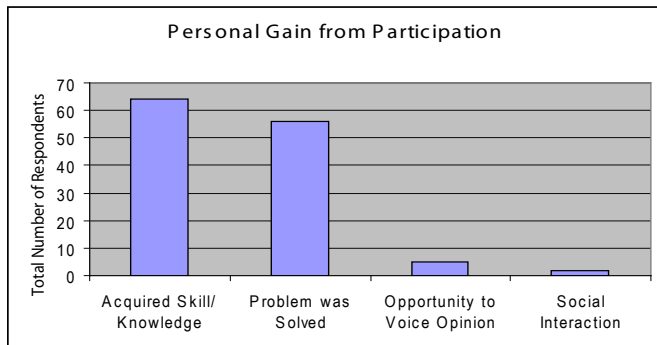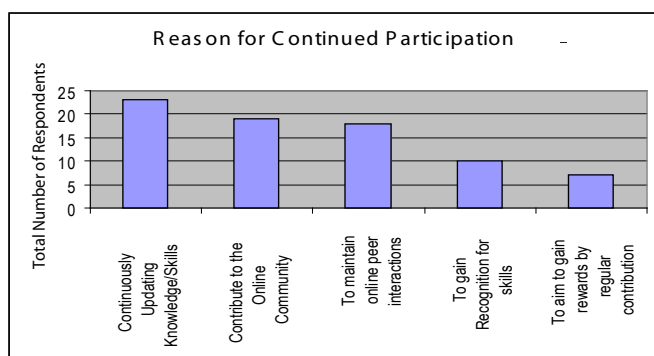

Fig 4.5 Graphical depiction of Respondent Answers for Q12 from Questionnaire

6. Analysis of Responses to Q13)

As shown in figure below the Mode for this Question is the option "Online Communities are easy to access and use" as the biggest factor that states the importance of Online Communities to UAE students, the reason being that the maximum numbers of respondents (100%) have chosen this option.
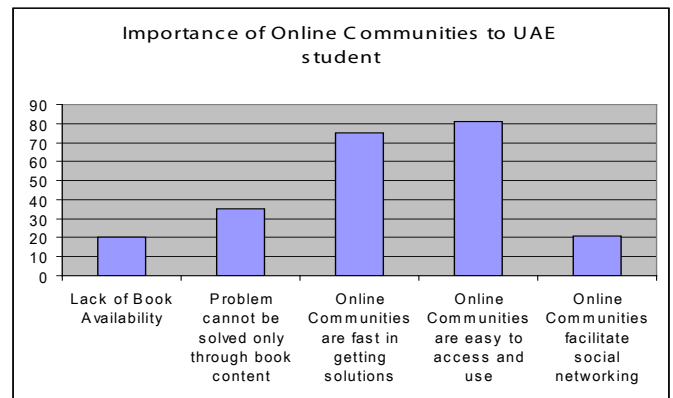

Fig 4.6 Graphical depiction of Respondent Answers for Q13 from Questionnaire

5 Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Findings

From the statistical analysis performed in previous section, there were some important interpretations made to co-relate the analytical findings and literature review findings. Some notable observations made are as follows:-

1. Online Communities play a very important role in the academic life of students form the United Arab Emirates as they find that it is one of the most readily available, easy to use, cost effective means of solving their academic problems. Study of literature supports this interpretation as most of the research papers have stated that most of Online Communities are free of cost for members and the success of the Online Community lies in member retention. They do it by motivating experts to share their field knowledge by offering rewards in various forms. This in turn is good from student perspective as it increases the probability of finding proper solution to their problems.

2. The most preferred learning method by UAE students is still classroom teaching, which casts serious doubts about the future acceptability to e – learning methods. Even though the primary motive for joining an Online Community is to find solution of the problems, but as Literature supports, the continued participation is due to varied factors such as acquiring and updating individual skill-set, gaining recognition in the society and personal satisfaction in contributing to solve problems of other members of the community. This is an important reading, and can be positively used by modern Institutes to initiate an innovative method of learning and knowledge transfer among student peers within an Institute.

3. One of the reasons why the respondents feel that

Online Communities are important from the academic perspective of the students is that Online Communities can be accessed from home or Institute or any Internet Café irrespective of the day of the week or time of the day. The same is not true for accessing Library books, or faculty for discussions. This is a direct resultant of the benefits of Internet Technology, and hence there lies a huge untapped potential in the United Arab Emirates to initiate Online Communities specifically for the vast ever increasing students community in this rapidly growing nation.

5.2 Conclusions
This work has been conducted with the focus on the United Arab Emirates Education and students studying in this part of the world. Further research can be conducted by expanding the domains from the United Arab Emirates to the other countries in the Middle East or even by including other Asian countries. This work was limited to students; further research could include professionals, academicians, housewives etc. Further work could be conducted in form of a workshop wherein an Online Community could be set up in an Institute and the students and faculty would be included as peripheral members of the Community. These peripheral members could then be encouraged to participate in the Community as part of their directed studies (concept of e – Learning) for some of the academic courses. The objective of this workshop would be to encourage knowledge transfer from faculty to students, among students or from senior students to junior students, from expert students to novices. The resulting transfer of knowledge could be measured on various parameters. The overall concept is feasible from an educational institute's perspective.
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GLOBAL QUALITY EDUCATION CHALLENGES BETWEEN THE LOCAL LANGUAGE AND GLOBAL MINDS IN THE

GLOBALISATION PROCESS
(Case Study, Jeddah Training Centre- MBA Program)

Rashad Alsaed
Nitham Sweedam

Abstract

The Global success of Quality Education (GQE) in the new millennium will require superior performance in both product and service provision. Product quality is a given in today's global arena-it is a basic requirement to compete. The universities that will excel will be those that truly 'delight' the students and provide 'added' value as defined by the student. Quality service may be provided by helping student's lower costs or by otherwise improving the ability to provide better service to their students.

Learning to excel at both quality local language and quality global mind is challenging even in a national environment. Attempting to excel on a global basis requires a different teachership global mind, the development of a unified global quality vision, special skills training for all staff, and the evolution of a worldwide quality culture throughout the organisation. The roles of senior lecturers, staff and students all change dramatically in this new environment. Students must develop a new understanding of how work processes are similar /dissimilar on a global/national basis. The importance of both vertical functional work processes and horizontal cross-functional work processes must be clearly understood and accepted. (Jeddah training Centre- International Business Centre) interested to join of working with the Arabic Academy of Science & Technolo & Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) that is the global program, so, must see itself as a learning organisation, one that is in the process of gaining a knowledge of change focused on continuous improvement and innovation. This program needs known locally language and global minds challenges and quality vision.

Keywords: Global Quality Education (GQE), local language, global mind, Product/Service quality, Jeddah training Centre.

Introduction

Learning to teach - like teaching itself- is always the process of becoming; a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become. ''The goal of this Jeddah training Centre- International Business Centre is to facilitate development of educators who "demonstrate excellence through continual, lifelong, reflective processes of learning". This goal is articulated in the Conceptual Framework developed by The Arabic Academy of Science & Technology and Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) and affirmed by a majority of the Centre. Discussion about how to authentically assess this Framework resulted in the implementation a global review procedure as an admission requirement for Internships I and II. This process posed not only GQE problems, but as with most innovations, the expected debate, dissension, and disequilibrium of "learning something new". The purpose of this paper is to briefly describe how GQE assessment was implemented and to focus on how this process impacts centre, students, and program development. This research clearly reveals that professional GQE are constructive instruments for authentic assessment of students and that this among process has provided a substantive catalyst for professional dialogue and development of faculty.

Background & Limitation of study

Members of the Arabic Academy of Science & Technology and Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) are elected to represent all programs in the Jeddah training Centre- International Business Centre. The role of this team is to collaborate for congruence and relevance to the needs of the larger educational community. In 1995, Jeddah training Centre- International Business Centre began the process of an external program review and the role of this committee became one of documenting congruence between the Conceptual Framework and The Arabic Academy of

Science & Technology (MBA Program). Simultane-ously, in 2001Jeddah Training Centre-(MBA Program in Jeddah), recommended to the instrument with Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) the chair of Jeddah based on the Center Conceptual Framework, should be an application requirement for both Internships, Traditionally, students applying (full-time, 16 week experience with a certified training) were required to complete an application form, document the required GQE, and write a brief autobiography. It was determined that quality assessment offers a more effective way to examine both the breadth and depth of preservice teacher thinking and behavior prior to actual teaching in global. It was also agreed that this process would provide a vehicle for internal program review.

Literature Review
Teachership Global Mind
Lecturers responsible for GQE understand that the complexities of mastering quality excellence in a global arena require added dimensions as compared with a national program. The School identified six key minds required of global lecturer (Stephen, 1992):

1. Teachership with global minds focuses on the broader picture and is constantly looking for context. They are never content with one explanation for an event.

2. Teachership with global minds understands that the world is complex and that life is constantly presented with contradictory forces and outlooks. Conflict management is a key skill needed for all global lecturers.

3. Teachership with global minds placed greater trust in organisational processes than in formal hierarchical structures. Organisational processes such as information and decision-making processes as well as norms of behavior are valued highly by global lecturers.

4. Teachership with global minds value, multi-cultural teamwork and diversity are requiring flexibility and sensitivity.

5. Teachership with global minds view change as an opportunity and are comfortable with ambiguity and surprises.

6. People with global mindsets continually challenge their own paradigms, experiences and assumptions. They are constantly seeking to improve themselves and those around them.

Teaching Portfolio Guidelines
The Arabic Academy of Science & Technology and Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) as a guide for students as they prepare their Professional Portfolios. The sections selected for the Professional Portfolio were derived from the College of Education Conceptual Model. The sections include Commitment; Collaboration; Communication Skills; Ethical Standards; Knowledge of Content; Knowledge of Pedagogy; Reflective Practice; Diversity and Technology. The Portfolio Guidelines provide suggestions for evidence, and examples of reflections. Students are instructed that the reflections must be more than descriptive statements, and they are given a guide that describes technical, practical and critical reflections.

GQE: Evolutionary phases
The phases of evolution of GQE directly mirror the phases of evolution in the global quality education. It is a basic premise of business that program leaders will rise to meet the expectations of the marketplace; so it is true of the evolutionary phases of GQE

Phase One: 1945-1975
The three decades spanning the end of World War II were characterised by a newly freed world with an unquenchable thirst for education. In the early years of this era emphasis was placed on quantity graduation and programmes of universities. As competition increased, universities improved efficiencies through focused learning planning that complemented market needs

Phase Two: 1975-1985
The universities of the world experienced a major shift in education focus during the mid-1970s. Surplus supply and over-capacity developed in many programmes. The learning options for students improved dramatically. Value rather than availability became the norm. This dramatic reversal inaugurated the birth of the quality initiative in research centres around the globe. Universities focused intensely inward to improve the quality of the modules they produced. Emphasis on just-in-time (JIT) learning, meeting specifications and 'school' became the norm to millions of students.

Phase Three: 1985-2000
The 1980s saw tremendous gains in the quality of modules produced. Many of those universities that failed significantly to improve their quality were forced out of business, absorbed by other universities or became marginal players in the global arena. Students grew to demand superior quality as a given.

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Programs that will be flourishing as we entered the year 2000 were those that embrace the catch-phrase 'delighting the Student'. Those universities that live by a philosophy that regards students, students and subsidiaries as equal partners in their GQE process will enjoy success in the remainder of the period. (Patrick, 1992)

Phase Four: 2000-2010:

GQE requires world-class Universities to be simultaneously internally focused (conforming to requirements) and externally focused (excelling in student satisfaction). Many universities around the world are still catching up with the internal requirements of GQE. Universities will be required to develop a significant paradigm shift to achieve GQE. Developing the motivation and skills to focus simultaneously internally on processes and externally on 'delighting' the student, and to create a single unified global vision with a globally diverse workforce, will be a major determinant of success in this decade.

Criteria for success

In order to prepare for these challenges, senior management must understand the criteria for success via GQE. These include:

Global information	Knowledge	Culture /languages
- Need for a 'global minds' - Formal and informal organisational structural dynamics - GQE mission and vision - Cultural change requirements with GQL - The role of senior lecturers, staff and line workers - The value of training	- Process improvement - Learning processes and business processes - Benchmarking	- Focus on the student - Quality-conformance to requirements - Speed - Flexibility - Service quality - Focus on results

Local language and global minds: needs and goals. Executives engaged in

Local language and global minds: needs and goals. Executives engaged in global program quality initiatives need to pay careful attention to the similarities and differences of perceived local language and global minds the needs and goals among their various subsidiaries and headquarters. A unified global strategic vision and common focus are essential if the universities goals are to be achieved. Throughout this research we will refer to various recent studies that compare the attitudes of Jeddah Training Centre from a variety of Staff with the critical components of GQE (Knight 1990).

A recent study by focused on the emerging quality issues of 2003. We highlighted the following as key demands for change in the new program of Arabic Academy of Science & Technology and Maastricht School of management MBA program in Jeddah:

◆ MBA program in future should respond to the survey said they are currently conducting quality improvement programs.

◆ MBA program in future should report that the demands for quality and service have never been higher.

◆ MBA program in future should state that quality problems are central issues-not-just production issues.

◆ MBA programs in future should benchmark themselves against program rivals.

◆ MBA programs in future should have a formal process to measure their students' perceptions of quality.

◆ MBA programs in future should focus greater emphasis on the task of controlling logistics.

◆ MBA programs in future should have initiated customer awareness programs in their companies.

◆ MBA programs in future should benchmark themselves against universities in other programs.

◆ Business performance: Virtually all programs in the survey view quality as a critical success factor in their strategic performance. The use of quality performance as a criterion for compensating senior management has been used sparingly in the past but will rise significantly across all countries.

◆ Student focus: Less than 50 per cent of the surveyed programs make student input an integral part of the strategic planning process.

◆ Competitors in the strategic process: Benchmarking competitive activity currently occurs more frequently in Saudi Arabia and Dutch universities.

◆ Process improvement: Saudi Arabia Centres consistently outperform UK, Dutch, US and Canadian universities in their use of routine process simplification.

◆ Employee involvement: Saudi Arabia Centres maintain the highest rate of routine student participation in scheduled meetings about quality.

Since 2003, senior management participated in comprehensive, in-depth interviews. The findings indicate that Arabic Academy of Science & Technology & Maastricht Staffers see themselves as moving toward parity with their non-Maastricht competitors. The senior management analysed factor determinants of competitiveness, and those factors were rated as critical by at least 74 per cent of them (Table 1) (Kearney, 1992). The relatively high ratings given to such a large number of factors is indicative of the senior management s' recognition of the complexity of GQE.

Global Quality Teachership
Uncertainty and the rapid rate of change in today's GQE require that universities develop a solid foundation in the core elements of GQE. Global universities will not be successful in developing world-class quality products and services that 'delight' the student without first establishing the five core elements on which GQE is founded ((Fig. 1):

1. Shared global vision of the School's strategic mission
2. Organisational dynamics that clearly identifies the roles of senior lecturers, staff and line workers
3. Organisational hierarchy that supports the strategic mission
4. Corporate quality culture development needed to produce world-class quality
5. Global quality training requirements
Fig. 4.1 Global quality teachership (GQT): core foundation elements

Table 1 Jeddah Training Centre learning competitiveness: top 15 determinants of competitiveness

Determinants of competitiveness
- Finished module exam quality
- Focus on learning quality processes by total module
- Marketing
- Student service provided
- Learning production
- Course price
- Education/skills
- Staff commitment and continuity
- Process or learning technology
- Product engineering
- Investment in R&D
- Product technology
- User economics
- Learning engineering/process engineering
- Productivity

It is essential for corporations to master the five core elements that form the basis for GQE before becoming too involved with implementation programs such as JIT, quality circles, total quality control, process improvement projects, school and inventory reduction. All of us can cite examples of failure or of only modest success with 'quality' programs that focused extensively on implementation of programs and made insufficient preparations for attention to the core elements of GQE (Ernst & Young, 1991).

Shared vision of the School's strategic mission
A successful GQE program requires all personnel of the school to develop a shared 'global strategic vision' of the school and of its quality initiative. This is a monumental task when one considers the problems of communicating and gaining acceptance of such a concept across multiple cultures and geographic locations.

A well-designed shared global strategic vision of the school clearly defines the knowledge the school will be concerned with in the future. A quality vision statement will clearly explain how the school will work after quality improvement thinking has occurred. It will describe how things will get done and who will be responsible for what. Most importantly, it will embrace the values and beliefs that will motivate all staff to pursue quality excellence in a united, focused manner. (Huge190) & (David, 1993)

The quality vision statement must be developed with a clear view to the future and must be based on a set of quality principles that are understood and embraced by all employees. It is important that the senior lecturers that develop the quality vision statement focus on the end-results desired without allowing themselves to be limited by current perceived obstacles to their success. (Huge, 1990) & (Alexander, 1992)

Learning organisation dynamics
The roles of senior lecturer, staff and line workers require new focus and skills for programs pursues GQE (Fig. 2). Many problem-solving decisions and responsibilities will be driven downward. The organization will begin to see that the previous number of layers of management is no longer needed to successfully accomplish unit goals.

Role of senior lecturers: The focus of senior lecturers activity is to create a clear, unified strategic vision of the future direction of the school. Senior lecturers must also develop an appropriate strategy to achieve the unified vision while balancing both short-term and long-term school needs. Some of the senior lecturers decision-making responsibilities will be transferred to lower levels of management.

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Role of staff: Middle staff's role evolves from one focused primarily on directing to one with an emphasis on coaching. This evolutionary change requires special training and is a difficult transition for many first-line supervisors. A major responsibility of staff is to assimilate and transfer the school's quality vision statement and strategies into everyday tactical activities. Staff must develop an atmosphere that encourages student's work-teams and group problem solving. They must assist line student-workers in identifying key problem areas, and they must empower student-workers to develop and initiate solutions.

Role of line workers: Those closest to the work have always been the most knowledgeable concerning what actions are needed to improve efficiency. Under a GQE program, empowered line workers are encouraged to work closely with cross-functional teams to develop process improvement and product innovation.

Restructuring the learning team hierarchy
Learning team restructuring is a powerful tool of the GQE team. Programs can develop strategic competitive advantage by continuously adapting the team's hierarchy when the changes are focused on achieving its 'quality vision'. Unfortunately, very few restructuring decisions are based on a clear vision of the long-term goals of the team. Few schools carefully assess their global strategic vision and modify their organizational structures to best align themselves with the long-term needs of the team. Many universities restructure as a reactive mechanism to short-term pressures and tend to organise to achieve short-term objectives.

No.	Quality Local languages responsibility	No.	Quality Global minds responsibility
1.	Quality is the responsibility of line staffs and first line supervisors		Senior lecturer is responsible for quality and must establish a unified quality vision complementary to cultural and geographic differences
2.	Quality is the responsibility of the quality control department		Quality is everyone's responsibility
3.	Line staff follow directions from senior lecturer on quality initiatives		Line workers are empowered to initiate quality improvements and to improve learning processes
4.	Training is formalised, generic and focused on line workers		Training starts with senior lecturer; training programs are developed locally and focus on local needs while supporting the 'quality vision'
5.	Vertical staff processes and hierarchical control dominate; unit goals take precedence over student needs		Cross-functional module processes are viewed as the critical focus of how work is done and focused on the student's needs
6.	The degree of emphasis on quality varies by department and subsidiary		Emphasis on a corporate 'quality culture' with all staff focused on the needs of the student

Fig(2) The evolving paradigm for the new GQE era: Organisational hierarchy and dynamics

The classic example is those universities that reduce head count and expenses equally among units and divisions. Although many staff may view this as 'fair', the better decision would be to carefully examine the future global strategic vision of the school, and reorganise human and financial assets in a way that will maximise the long-term goals of the school.

GQE: Quality culture change
Successful universities of the future will demonstrate the ability to develop and embrace changes in senior lecturer accountabilities, staff focus and line worker acceptance of responsibility and empowerment. The evolution of these new roles is difficult to develop in a national environment; developing these changes in a global environment is even more challenging. Corporations Practicing GQL will need to be successful in developing a global attitude and a global culture focused on superior quality and student service.

Universities engaged in quality initiatives should carefully scrutinise educational and training programs to ensure that they actively account for national cultural differences. One program rarely fits all.

Several excellent recent studies have documented cultural differences towards quality and student service. A recent study focused on Jeddah training centre attitudes toward quality. (Knight 1990), it found that:
♦ Arab students were perceived to be more influenced by price compared with Dutch students.

♦ Arab students were seen to be influenced by quality compared to Dutch customers.

♦ Jeddah training center and Maastracht School of Management planned to change the way they organised student service activity compared with only of Dutch programs.

A clear and unified culture among all workers in all geographic locations is needed to meet the competitive pressures of the 2000s. This common culture, spearheaded by a shared global strategic vision, will be a basic requirement to compete successfully in the remaining years of this decade. Peter Drucker has noted:

Because the modern organisation is composed of specialists, each with his or her own narrow area of ex-

pertise, its mission must be crystal clear. The organisation must be single-minded, or its members will become confused. They will follow their own speciality rather than apply it to the common task. They will each define results in terms of their own speciality and impose its values on the organisation. Only a focused and common mission will hold the organisation together and enable it to produce. Without such a mission, the organisation will soon lose credibility and, with it, its ability to attract the very people it needs to perform. (Peter, 1992)

The cultural change required in GQE focuses on common, shared values. Implementing a change in quality culture requires a program of well-signed education and coaching. All employees must share in the same experience and develop a common business language and a common focus based upon shared values with a common mission. (Macdonald, 1990)

GQE: Global quality training
Appropriate training measures are necessary to ensure a smooth transition in culture and to enable the quality revolution to develop in a predictable fashion.
According to Jeddah training centre should include the entire hierarchy of the school and should begin with senior lecturers. Jeddah training centre recommends a training program that is designe by broadly based task forces rather than prefabricated commercially available courses. The basic purpose of quality training should be to change behavior, and line staff should participate in the planning of the training program.

Programs that will be rolled out to subsidiaries require early input from senior subsidiary management. These training programs should be written at the subsidiary level while using the corporate program as a prototype. This will allow for proper cultural adaptation and proper language translation.

World-class training programs will enable workers to:

1. Understand the need for quality improvement and not rebel against it

2. Develop a sense of unified global vision and mission which will be reflected in increased productivity

3. Utilise new tools to solve problems

4. Identify customers' true needs

5. Show how each employee fits into the organisational structure

6. Help create a culture devoted to problem-solving and to continuous improvement

7. Develop new organisational models based on employee initiative, teamwork and multi-skills (Joseph, 1989)

Conclusion
Our research has alerted us to our own roles in this process and to the pitfalls of making assumptions about GQE. Frequent discussions and personal experiences of GQE resulted in shared understanding of the purposes and uses of portfolios and the value of reflections. We then assumed that the Arabic Academy of Science & Technology & Maastricht School of Management (MBA Program) had similar understandings. We also overlooked the risk involved in the review process itself when students select evidences that result from coursework; it is then shared with all of the faculty review committee members. In addition, the committee members who organised the portfolio underestimated the resistance to change and the disequilibrium often experienced by those who do not share the same visions. While this process was initiated and supported by Maastracht School of Management (MBA Program) and administrators who caution teachers about making assumptions about their students, we found that we were 'guilty' of making assumptions about our colleagues and that these assumptions have resulted in building some barriers to change.

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PERCEPTION OF ORGANIZAIONAL CULTURE, EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT AND CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

In this study an attempt has been made to assess if links do occur between organizational culture, employees' commitment and clients satisfaction. This triangular link is assessed in private and public sectors. Dimensions of culture studied were locus of control, other directedness, role-boundedness, androgyny, power-distance Tolerance, ambiguity tolerance, contextualism temporality, narcissism particularism and four Orientations, viz: Expressive, Conserving, Assertive, Expanding. Profiles of culture reveal that they affect two dynamic groups i.e. employees and Customers

After few years spent in the organization employees perceive themselves incorporated into organizational culture, this in turn leads to their stronger commitment to the organization, this leads to satisfaction in employees.

Consumers are precious for running of an organization prosperously, the day is not far when customers' satisfaction rating becomes the statutory disclosure standard for a public issue,equity,debt. hence organizational culture has direct/indirect impact on consumers/clients satisfaction.

In this study cultures prevailing in public and private sectors(Hospitals) were studied.T tests were calculated for perceived total culture(T culture),and fifteen dimensions of culture. There was no difference between private and public hospitals employees on their perception of organizational culture(t value=.04,insign.).On 15 dimensions t values for 7 dimensions revealed significant differences, for example :locus of control(-2.77sign.01 level),context sensitivity(2.02,sign.05level),narcissism(-3.22sign.01 level),individualistic orientation(5.84,sign.01 level),inner directedness(2.41sign.05 level),universal(2.09,sign.05 level) and androgyny(-2.58,sign.05 level).

Correlations revealed that there was no effect of perceived organizational culture on commitment but when 15 dimensions of culture were correlated with total commitment scores for all employees were significant for 7 dimensions.

Whether private or public enterprises, employees perform their jobs committedly disregarding organizational culture. Patients show that whatever the organizational culture,. if they get services within reduced rates they will be satisfied. Implication is for private hospitals to give their best if they want satisfied employees and satisfied patients

Keywords: Organizational Culture,Commitment, Customers Satisfaction, Private/Public Enterprises.

Introduction

Organization exists for various purposes like earning profits, community welfare, providing comforts to people living in society, serving people, etc. The wheels of the organization are in the hands of employees. The organization can only survive when employees perceive themselves as part of organization. This is possible only if organization culture is perceived as a motivational force. The outcome of this perception will be more efficient employees and more comfort and satisfaction of the people living in the society where organization exists. In this study an attempt was made to assess if links do occur between organizational culture and employee commitment and clients satisfaction.

Organizational Culture

Schien (1985) defines culture as "a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adoption and internal integration that have worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.

Kluckhorm and Strodtbeck (1961) proposed five orientations based on the meaning of human existence, meaning of human labour and endeavour, relationship of man and nature, time – orientation and relationship of man and fellow beings.

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Quinn and McCrath (1985) have suggested four types of organizational culture : rational (market), developmental (adhocracy), consensus (clan) and hierarchical (hierarchy).

The various dimensions of culture were derived from six concerns.

1. Relationship with Nature:
Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck (1951) suggested this dimension. If nature is seen as dominating individual is seen as helpless, a fatalistic orientation may result. The opposite orientation scientism may result from the belief that man can manipulate and change nature.

2. Orientation to the Environment (Context) :
The environment may be seen as structured and unchanging, any ambiguity may by disturbing. On the other hand, people may enjoy ambiguity (ambiguity tolerance by Adorno and Frankl – Brinsurck 1983).

Another dimension relates to importance given to a context to understand the meaning of some phenomena, or ignoring of the context in search of clear universal meanings. The terms high context and low context cultures have been proposed (Hall, 1977).

3. Time Orientation :
This dimension has been proposed with an orientation to past, present and future. It may be seen as collection of discrete units or as a flowing phenomenon.

4. Orientation to Collectivities :
Individualism may result if individual is seen as more important than and independent of collectivities. Collectivism may result if collectivity is seen as subordinating individuals. Collectivities may be defined by their identities and persons belonging to them may have stronger identification with them. This is called particularist orientation contrasted with universalist orientation in which individuals do not have strong in group versus out – group feelings.

5. Orientation to Sex Differences :
If biological differences between men and women are over – emphasized and social roles are divided according to gender, than masculinity results. If differences are not over emphasized in social allocation of roles we may have an orientation of feminity. Androgyny may occur as integration of characteristics usually attributed to the two sexes.

6. Orientation to Power :
Power is not distributed equally in a collectivity. However, there may be uneasiness about unequal distribution of power. Other collectivities may tolerate the differences in power. Hofstede (1980) calls this power distance.

After reviewing the six concerns of human beings an account is given of the dimension of culture :-

(1) Locus of Control: If most members in a culture feel helpless in relation to nature an orientation of fatalism or external locus of control may develop. In contrast the orientation of scientism holds that nature can be changed and adopted for better use of human society. Internal locus of control may develop.

(2) Ambiguity Tolerance: First studied by Aderno et at (1950), later by Hofstede (1980) who called it uncertainty avoidance. If members of a collectivity feel uncomfortable with ambiguity and try to structure situations to avoid it their tolerance for ambiguity is low or their uncertainty avoidance is high. Under ambiguity tolerance, situations that are unstructured, vague and unpredictable provide opportunities for using multiple approaches.

(3) Contextualism: In a high context culture, the meaning of events, phenomena and behaviour are interpreted in the context in which they occur. In a low context culture all events and behaviours are judged by one standard, attempt is made to evolve universal rules or explanations.

(4) Temporality: Culture may differ in their orientation to time. Past oriented cultures think and indulge in events of the past (usually glory) and are oblivious of present demands and future possibilities and problems. Present orientation called temporality here, is reflected in the importance given by members of a culture to the present. Such people get involved in immediate tasks, however, they may not ensure the endurance and continuity of these tasks. There is tendency for switching from one to another.

(5) Collectivism Vs. Individualism: According to Hofstede (1985) individualism stands for a preference for a loosely knit social framework in society where individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate family only. Its opposite collectivism stands for preference for a

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tight knit social framework in which individuals can expect their relatives, clan or other in group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyality.

(6) Narcissism: In a narcissistic culture, individuals are concerned about themselves as individuals, families or groups. They indulge in self seeking behaviour. Concern is narrow.

(7) Particularism Vs. Universalism: In a collectivity there are several groups whose identities are formed on some basis,: ethnic, religious, regional, caste, etc. If such groups have strong identities resulting in an in – group / out – group feeling, the orientation is particularistic. This is the opposite of universalist orientation in which the group do not have insular and strong identities. In a particularist culture an individual feels secure in his own in – group and tends to make the in – group stronger in comparison with out – groups (Sinha 1982).

(8) Other directedness Vs Inner directedness: In inner directedness behaviour is directed by internal standards. In an other directed culture a person is guided by the accepted standards of conduct of of a collectivity. Confrontation is avoided for fear of losing face.

(9) Role – boundness: In some cultures role taken by an individual may be seen as primary, and the individual may be bound by it. The individual is prepared to undergo inconvenience in order to fulfill his role obligation (as a father, son, executive, etc.)

(10) Androgyny: Different qualities have been attributed to the two sexes. Men are attributed toughness, competition, aggression, perseverance, achievement, assertiveness. Women are seen as having qualities like compassion, empathy, harmony, collaboration.

If the society emphasizes the differences between the two sex roles, and allocates social roles according to such differences, it would expect men to work in areas of achievement and physical activities and women to work in areas requiring female virtues (nursing, housekeeping, etc.). This is a sexiest orientation .e.g: Western Culture. In contrast if there is less differentiation between sex roles and social roles are not allocated according to differences in sex; an orientation called feminism

may develop. E.g Indian, ndonesian culture In such societies, the qualities that are attributed to men and women are both valued and integrated. Such culture is called androgynous. In androgynous cultures impersonal trust is highly valued. Harmony and friendship are seen as desirable, there is high concern for the weak and the underdog. Mahatma Gandhi represents this orientation well.

(11) Power – distance Tolerance: Hofstede (1980) studied this dimension and defined power distance as the extent to which the members of a society accept that power in institutions and organizations are distributed unequally. People in large power distance societies accept a hierarchical order in which every body has a place which needs no further justification. People in small power distance societies live for power equalization and demand justification for power inequalities.

(12) Use of Power: Power can be used to strengthen oneself or to make an impact on others and strengthe

Four Orientations may result:
In Expressive culture learning from others is highly valued. There is emphasis on verbal expression and aesthetics.

In Conserving culture emphasis is on conservation of traditions, discipline and conformity are stressed.
In an Assertive culture emphasis is given to competition and achieving results.
In Expanding culture emphasis is on creation of organizations and institutions to consolidate and sustain gains and achievements in the culture.

The various dimensions of culture exist in all organizations whether they are business organizations or service organizations or social organizations, whether they are public sectors, private sectors or joint ventures.

Various organizations have evolved their own cultures based on the various dimensions given above. They affect the working of the organizations, i. e., their communication processes, leadership styles, job designs, etc.

Profiles of the culture reveal that they affect two dynamic groups which are intensively linked with them, i. e., employees and customers.

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Employee Commitment:

Employees play an important role in the organizations. Once a culture is in place there are practices within the organization that act to maintain it by giving employees a set of similar experiences. The selection process, performance evaluation criteria, training and career development activities and promotion procedures, ensure that those hired fit in with the culture, reward those who support it and penalize those who challenge it (Robbins, 1999).

After a few years spent in the organization it is assumed that employees will perceive themselves incorporated into organizational culture and may develop strong belief about their organizational culture. This in turn may lead to their stronger commitment to the organization. This commitment may lead to satisfaction on the part of employees.

An organizational commitment is defined as (1) a strong desire to remain a member of a particular organization (2) A willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization and (3) a definite belief in, and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization (Luthan, 1995).

There is growing support for a three component model (Meyer & Allen). They are :

(1) Affective Commitment - involves the employees emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization.

(2) Continuance Commitment – involves commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving organization.

(3) Normative Commitment – involves the employees feelings of obligation to stay with the organization.

Recent researchers (Meyer & Allen, Luthans, 1995) have revealed that organizations with more satisfied and committed employees tend's to be more effective than organizations with less satisfied and committed employees. Can one satisfy one's employees by giving a good professional working environment ? This study has attempted to answer this question. An attempt was made over here to assess impact of organizational culture on employees organizational commitment.

Consumers / Patients Satisfaction :

The day is not far when customers satisfaction rating becomes a statutory disclosure standard for a public issue, equity or debt.

Factors that influence consumers behaviour are cultural (e.g., culture, sub – culture, social class) social (i.e. Reference Groups, family, roles, statuses) personal (i.e. Age, Life Cycle Stage, Occupation, Income, Life Style, Personality) psychological (i.e., Motivation, Perception, Learning, Belief and Attitudes). Consumers are previous for the running of an organization prosperously, hence organizational culture has direct / indirect impact on the consumers/ customers / clients satisfaction. In this study an attempt is being made to assess whether organizational culture influences its popularity and demand of its products / services in the market.

Public and Private Enterprises :

Public Enterprises: Means state ownership in operation of industrial, agricultural, financial and commercial undertakings (A. H. Hanson Public Enterprises and Economic Development).

Objectives of Public Enterprises according to BFP Survey are :-

(1) To help in the rapid economic growth and industrialization of the country and create the necessary infrastructure for economic development.

(2) To create employment opportunities.

(3) To promote balanced regular development.

Private Sector: In a mixed economy, the private sector, too has an important role to play. The private sector is dominant in most of the consumer goods industries. It plays an important role in a number of capital goods industries too. In a number of important industries it functions side by side with the public sector.

Difference Between Public and Private Enterprises:
(Shukla. 2000)

1. Main Objectives: Main objective of public enterprises is services and improving public welfare. Private organizations main aim is maximizing profit and minimizing costs

2. Nature of Industries : Public sectors are owners of industries which require very much finance and involve greater risk. Private industries owners

invest less finance and bear less risk and require lesser gestation period.

3. Performance Criteria : Performance criteria in private industries is measured by their productivity and contribution to profit. Public enterprises measure performance criteria on the basis of the employees contribution to exchequer, best performance, etc.

4. Secrecy: In public enterprises secrecy is observed in defence industries, otherwise there is no secrecy. In private organizations secrecy is maintained in a very staunch way.

5. Autonomy: Private industries managers have lot of freedom in running the industries while in public industries managers do not have much freedom.

6. Market Situation: Marketing strategies are different for private and public sectors.

7. Social Overhead: Role of private industries towards social welfare is less as compared to public enterprises. Who have to think of Employees welfare and customers welfare.

8. Flexibility: In private organizations rules regarding production, employment rejection suspen After assessing these differences between private and public sectors an attempt was made over here to observe whether public and private sectors differed in the organizational culture prevailing in their organizations as perceived by their employees.

In this study an attempt was made to assess organizational culture in hospitals (service organizations) which may be classified into government hospitals and private nursing homes and hospitals. Aim was to assess organizational culture prevailing in private and public hospitals as perceived by employees and assess how they affect employees commitment to organization and how satisfied their patients are.

Rational of the Study : Through observation it has been observed that organizations put in effort to please their customers / clients. Clients look for effective culture organization. In order to appear effective the organization has to keep its employees satisfied and develop their commitment to the organizations. At the same time it also tries to attract as many customers as possible and also tries to maintain them. This triangular relationship of give take satisfaction may survive effectively if organizational culture is appro-

priate for the purpose for which it is created.

Objective of the Study: An attempt is being made to make a comparative assessment of organizational culture of two types of hospitals viz. private and public hospitals and evaluate its impact on employees' organization commitment and patients satisfaction. . As mentioned by Shukla (2000) private organizations are concerned more about minimum expenditure and maximum profit while Pubic organizations are more concerned about public welfare hence they are economical but not very well managed as usually employees are slack and don't bother much about customers. They get placed permanently hence become a bit casual in their customers' dealings. Hence it is expected that they will be less committed than their counterparts in private organizations as their work has to be perfect if they want good pay hence they concentrate more on their work to get more and more incentives. .This applies to hospitals
Variables: Variables in this study are organizational culture, employees organizational commitment and patients satisfaction.

These two types of hospitals exist in all cities and are equally important for maintaining positive health of the society. An attempt will be made over here to chalk out the differences between private and public hospitals' organizational culture, and try to relate it to employees organizational culture, and try to relate it to employees organizational commitment and patient satisfaction.

Hypotheses
(1) Employees of private and public hospitals will perceive their organizational culture differently

(2) Perception of Organizational Culture in totality and it's dimensions will affect organizational commitment of employees.
(3) Patients of government hospitals will reveal lesser satisfaction with their hospitals as compared to patients of private hospitals.

Tools for the study: Following tools were used in the present study.

Organizational Survey questionnaire:
This tool was same as Organizational Survey questionnaire designed by Pareek 1991. It measures fifteen aspects of organizational culture like context sensitivity, future orientation, conserving, etc. These dimensions are measured through 36 items (Table – I)

for example dimension 1 is internal locus of control and it includes items 1, 12 and 23 of Organization Survey. Asterisk means that the scores of these items will be Reversed, i. e. if score is 1 it is 5. A respondent is required to rate items 1 to 33 on a 5 pt. Scale on how accurately he describe his department, unit, organizations. Each of the last three items (35 and 36) contains 4 alternatives, and the respondent is required to rank them (4 to 1) from most characteristic of the organization to least characteristic. The score for each item are totaled. Split half reliability for 152 managers was 73.

Table – 1 Dimensions and Cluster of items included in them

	Dimensions		Items		
1.	Internal	1*	12	23*	
2.	Ambiguity tolerant		2	13*	24
3.	Context Sensitive		3*	14	25*
4.	Narcissistic (-)	4*	15	26*	
5.	Future Orientated		5*	16	27*
6.	Individualistic	6*	17*	28	
7.	Inner directed	7*	18*	29*	
8.	Universal		8*	19*	30
9.	Role bound		9*	20*	31
10.	Androgynous	10*	21	32	
11.	Power Parity	11* 22*	33		
12.	Expressive		34a	35d	36c
13.	Conserving		34b	35c	36a
14.	Assertive		34c	35b	36d
15.	Expanding		34d	35a	36b

* Items marked with an asterisk must be reversed while scoring.

Organizational Commitment:

It was measured by organizational commitment Questionnaire (Mowday 1979). This questionnaire will assess the attitude reflecting employees loyalty to their organization, it expresses their concern for the organization and its continued success and well being. This questionnaire was used to measure employees commitment to their organization. It includes fifteen statements which are rated on a five point scale, with scale point anchors leveled (1) strongly disagree (2) slightly disagree (3) neither agree nor disagree (4) slightly agree

(5) strongly agree, subjects have to check one of the five alternatives given. Score will include summated ratings on 15 items. These statements represent feelings that employees might have about organization for which they work.

Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire :

This questionnaire was constructed on the basis of patient satisfaction interview schedule (Timmappaya A, Pareek U, Agawal G.K., 1971). It contains twenty items. 1 to 5 items ask about general information about patients, e. g. where do you come from ? 6 – 20 items measure how patient perceive the conditions of the hospitals for e.g. is the hospital clean? Each item was rated on a 3 point scale,
i. e. 2 = Positive Score, 1 = Mild Dissatisfaction, 0 = Negative. Summated ratings gave a total satisfaction score of the patient.

Sample :

1. Forty employees of a government hospital (Grade I – IV) and forty employees of private hospital of Allahabad were included in data collection. Reasons for this comparison were differences observed between Government organizations and Private organizations with regards to their infrastructure and working environment (Shukla,2000). It is observed that who ever can afford go to private hospitals for treatment rather than public hospitals because of poor care and unhygienic environment in public hospitals.

As far as sample size is concerned only one hospital from each category was considered, and the number of employees in the private hospital was just fifty, hence the same number was taken from public hospital.

2. Forty patients from government hospital and forty patients from private hospital were included for data collection. Patients were less in private hospitals hence the number of patients from both public and private were determined by this aspect.

Data Collection :

Doctors, nurses, other administrative staff of both private and government hospitals were given organizational survey questionnaire to assess how they perceived the organizational culture. Next they were administered the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire to assess how much committed they were to their organizations. Patients from private and public hospitals were contacted and Patient Satisfaction Interview Schedule was administered on them. After data collection appropriate analysis was performed to assess perceived organizational culture, organizational commitment, and patients satisfaction for both public and private hospitals. It will provide with a comparative view of the two type of organizations.

Results

After the data was collected from eight employees (40 from private and 40 from public hospitals) on perceived organizational culture and their commitment towards their organization and eighty patients (40 from private and 40 from public hospitals) on the satisfaction with their hospital treatment towards them, it was analysed.

Employees Perceived Culture and Commitment

T tests were calculated for perceived total culture (T culture), and fifteen dimensions of organizational culture for employees of private and public hospitals employees. There was no difference between private and public hospitals employees on their perception of organization culture (Table II). When private and public hospitals employees were compared on fifteen dimensions of organizational culture, t value for 7 dimensions revealed significant difference between private and public hospitals staff. viz; namely internals, context sensitivity, narcissistic orientation, individualistic orientation, inter – directedness, universal and androgyny.

Table II
Comparison of Government and Private Hospitals Employees on various dimensions of perceived culture

Culture Dimensions (D)	Government (mean)	Private (mean)	T value
T culture	122.80	122.7	.04
D1 Internal	7.62	10.33	-2.77**
D2 Ambiguity Tolerance	9.15	8.92	.45
D3 Context Sensitivity	9.05	8.07	2.02*
D4 Narcissism	8.18	10.33	-3.22**
D5 Temporality	9.65	10.79	-1.96
D6 Individualism	7.63	4.46	5.84**
D7 Inner-directed	5.90	4.64	2.41*
D8 Universal	8.30	7.53	2.09*
D9 Role bound	9.52	8.74	1.67
D10 Androgyny	9.58	10.92	-2.58
D11 Power Parity	8.30	7.97	.65
D12 Expressive	8.30	8.41	- .24
D13 Conserving	6.63	6.33	.74
D14 Assertive	6.70	7.38	-1.86
D15 Expanding	8.40	7.84	1.37

Perceived organizational culture and commitment :

There was no effect of perceived organizational culture on total commitment. When the fifteen dimensions of culture were correlated with total commitment score for all the employees (private and public) correlations was significant for seven dimensions (Table III) viz: internal, ambiguity, tolerance, narcissism temporality, individualistic, inner -directedness and androgyny.

Table III
Correlations of Cultural Dimensions with Total Commitment Score (Overall, Government & Private Hospitals)

Commitment (Total)

Dimensions	Overall	Government	Private
D1 Internals	.48 **	.24	.59 **
D2 Ambiguity Tolerance	.34 *	.32	.41 *
D3 Context Sensitivity	- .22	.03	- .27
D4 Narcissism	.34 *	.26	.27
D5 Temporality	.37 **	.07	.48 **
D6 Individualism	- .40 **	.05	- .58 **
D7 Inner – directed	- .51 **	- .40 *	- .56 **
D8 Universal	- .16	- .25	.01

When public and private hospitals employees were evaluated separately, in the case of public hospital employees only two dimensions correlated significantly with commitment viz. inter – directed and assertive dimensions.

In the private hospitals employees revealed significant correlations between seven dimensions and total commitment viz. internal, ambiguity tolerance, temporality, individualistic, inner – directedness, role bound and androgyny.

Correlation between duration of service and total commitment score for public and private hospital employees did not show any significant finding (Table IV) but when dimensions of perceived culture and commitment were correlated, on internal, inner – directedness both private and public hospital staff showed significant correlation. Next, on assertive dimension government hospitals showed significant correlation with commitment (r= .39 **) but for private hospital staff correlation was almost negligible (r = .004) i. e. duration of service did not bring any change in their assertiveness nor commitment. Otherwise among private hospital staff correlations were significant for ambiguity tolerance, temporality, individualism, role – bound and androgyny dimensions and total commitment.

Table IV
Correlations of Durations of Service & Commitment among Employees

	Overall	Government	Private
D1 Internals	.48 **	.23	.59 **
D2 Ambiguity Tolerance	.34 *	.31	.42 *
D3 Context Sensitivity	- .22	.03	- .28
D4 Narcissism	.34 *	.25	.27
D5 Temporality	.37 **	.07	.48
D6 Individualism	- .40 **	.05	- .59
D7 Inner directed	- .51 **	- .40 **	- .56**
D8 Universal	- .16	- .25	.01
D9 Role bound	.09	- .10	.38 *
D10 Androgyny	.36	.17	.45 *
D11 Power Parity	- .05	- .10	.016
D12 Expressive	.06	- .11	.025
D13 Conserving	- .21	- .26	- .17
D14 Assertive	.20	.396 **	.0046
D15 Expanding	- .04	- .198	.13

Contd. …27.

Patients Satisfaction Results

When private hospital and public hospital patients were compared on their satisfaction with the services of the hospitals, a significant difference was found between them i. e. (t-6.97**) government hospital patients were significantly more satisfied by the treatment given to them then private hospital patients (Table V).

Table V

Results of Patients Satisfaction in Private and Government Hospitals

Calculations	Public	Private
Mean	20.36	18.10
SD	2.98	1.94

t value = 3.97**

To summate the results, there was no significant difference among employees of private and government hospitals in their perceived organization culture but on about 7 out of 15 culture dimensions there were significant differences between public and private hospitals employees. On the relationship between organization culture and commitment, there was no significant relationship but among 7 out of 15 dimensions all employees (private and public) showed significant

correlations. Next, in the case of government hospitals only two dimensions revealed significant relationship with commitment, while among private hospital only 7 dimensions revealed significant relationship with commitment. Duration of services of employees did not reveal significant correlations with commitment but on some dimensions duration of services did reveal significant correlation with commitment.

Discussion

After the results were analyzed the findings were interpreted one by one. There was no significant difference between employees of private and government hospitals on their perceived organizational culture. This finding may be interpreted in terms of Schein's (1984) view that organizational culture is the pattern of basic assumption taught to all organizational employees, old and new hence, whether they belong to government hospitals or private hospitals the total culture view inculcated in them stays equally in them.

Another interpretation for this insignificant finding may be unemployment problem in our cities. Persons in jobs are thankful to God for giving them jobs and try their best to retain them, hence gradually

perceive organizational missions, philosophy, goals, objectives, systems, technology, managerial practices and relationship in positive light (Sinha 1988) and gradually develop ingroup feelings towards their organizations whether they belong to private or government organizations.

Another interpretation for this finding may be the life and death situations existing in hospitals. Patients admitted in hospitals are usually severely ill, hence employees (doctors, nurses, ward boys, etc.) put their duties on the highest priority disregarding the aspects of private or public.

Next, the public and private hospital employees were compared on the fifteen dimensions of culture, t values of seven dimensions revealed significant differences.

Next, when correlations between total culture and total commitment were calculated, no significant correlation emerged between perceived total culture and total commitment score. This finding can be explained in the light of conceptualization emphasized by Super (1982). Work culture is defined as the importance attached to work, which is understood in terms of two levels of concepts viz. commitment and participation plus knowledge, which in turn leads to involvement. These components are the basic psychological components of affect, action and cognition. On the basis of these components Sinha (1990) devised the work cultures' role in a persons life. If it plays a pivotal role in their life than commitment will be high but if employees maximize their socio – personal gains without caring to realize organizational objectives than commitment will be low. The subjects in the two types of organizations represented in this study seem to be depicting the non – work culture.

When the cultural dimensions were correlated to commitment for all the employees, seven dimensions revealed significant correlations viz. internal, ambiguity, tolerance, narcissism, temporality, revealed significantly positive correlations while individualism and inner – directedness revealed significantly negative correlations.

In private hospitals also similar types of correlations

were observed among the same dimensions, on role – bound dimension also positive with commitment appeared.

On the relationship between duration of service and commitment there was no significant correlation between them, neither all employees nor public or private hospital employees revealed significant correlations between duration of service and commitment, only on some dimensions of culture like internal, ambiguity tolerance, narcissism, temporality, individualism, inner – directedness, androgyny, role – bond significant correlations were observed. This finding may be interpreted in the light of Hatch (1993) research which observed that during acculturation process behaviour norms are assumed to be central levers for becoming a member of the group on organization i.e. whether two years or ten years or more acculturation process starts as soon as an individual enters and organization, he learns to adopt the taught norms and values and gradually starts perceiving them as his own, and he himself is not aware of how gradually he becomes highly committed to his organization.

Next, hypothesis which was disproved in this study was patients satisfaction with the services provided to them by their hospitals. Government hospital patients revealed greater satisfaction with their hospital than private hospital patients. This finding may be interpreted on the basis of economic analysis. Patients of private hospitals paid more money for the service provided, hence their expectations were higher, while patients of government hospitals do not pay much money for their treatment, hence their expectations are less. Hence government hospitals patients felt that they were getting quite a lot in spite of spending very less money in comparison to private hospital patients. As has been observed in private hospitals, charges of every service provided is ten times more, e.g. if a bed in general ward of government hospital costs only Rs. 10 per day, in private hospital it will also cost Rs. 100/- other services also show high differences, hence private hospital patients feel tensed up all the time of what more will be charged next.

To summarize findings revealed no significant difference between private and government hospital employees nor significant correlation was observed between perceived organizational culture and commitment except for a few dimensions but patients did reveal significant difference in their satisfaction with the services of the hospitals, with government hospital leading to greater satisfaction than private hospitals.

Implications

These findings are not able to link perceived organizational culture with employees commitment in private and government hospitals whether private or public, employees perform their jobs with high commitment, disregarding organizational culture but patients findings show that whatever the organizational culture, if they get services performed within reduced rates they will be satisfied. Organizational cultures are similar in both the types of organizations, employees are equally committed, only some dimensions show significant differences. These findings have implication for private hospitals. Their cultural dimension do show some significant findings yet, they are not able to provided satisfactory services to their patients, their customers.

This point was clearly expressed in a two day workshop on Human Resource Management in Hospitals. This workshop was organized by Lucknow Nursing Homes Association on 3rd and 4th April, 2004, with the aim to improve the working in private hospitals. Most frequent complaints of private staff were being scolded and humiliated in public, not being empathetic towards the staff, owners taking all credit to themselves. The HR expert from the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow said that hospitals work is team effort hence credit should be given to the team, just like cricket team. If praise for patient's satisfaction is given, then praise should be showered on the hospital staff, then the system can work. This realistic world view of private hospitals seems to reflect the findings of this study. The motivation for work, for contributing their best is absent in private hospitals hence less satisfied patients.

Government hospitals are doing service but the picture created by them about themselves is that they are indifferent, bureaucratic hospitals, and are in – hygienic. If they may improve on these aspects than private hospitals many stand nowhere in front of them in customers service.

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MACRO ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Special economics Zones (SEZ) with various nomenclatures in different countries have been adopted as a strategy for focused development and economic growth especially in the developing countries. There are important lessons to be learnt from one another to reap the benefits of liberalization in a global economy. This paper is an attempt to understand the concept of SEZ; their evolution and competitiveness in the light of various macro economic policies in India. They are further identified as a strategic growth model for developing economies like India. A conceptual model is proposed to highlight the macro variables and related policies that need to be adapted for deriving sustainable benefits through SEZ.

Keywords: Macro Economic Variables, Special Economic Zones, India.

Introduction

Trade policy of any country can be appreciated in the broader context of its macro economic policies. Nations have adopted different strategies to boost exports; one of them being the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZ), which has gained much importance in the last three decades. However, the establishment of such special geographic areas, to achieve economic gains is not a new idea. SEZ have been established by many countries as a tool for augmenting exports in their respective trade policies. While some countries have been able to achieve dynamic and substantial gains from an SEZ, many others have not. SEZs contribute about 64% of the total exports in Mauritius, 40% in Mexico, 20% in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka while in India it has been around 4% of the total exports (Agarwal, 2004).

This paper is an attempt to understand the concept of SEZ, their evolution and competitiveness in the light of various macro economic policies in India. A conceptual model is proposed to highlight the macro variables and related policies that need to be adapted for deriving sustainable benefits through SEZ. The paper is presented in following sections:

1) Concept of SEZ,
2) Chinese SEZ model as a reference
3) SEZ in India
4) Macro economic perspectives of SEZ - Issues identified
5) SEZ model for sustainable benefits
6) Feasibility of the Model for India
7) Conclusions

Concept of Special Economic Zones (SEZ)

The growth of SEZs in last three decades has gained momentum in different parts of the world. Since these Zones have different economical and political backgrounds, they have been set up with different objectives and are at various stages of development. There are different definitions/concepts that are used for free economic zones, and it poses a problem for the academic scholars to classify comprehensively. It is not possible to equate the different SEZs situated in different parts of the world and define them by one single term. Some of the commonly accepted definitions/concepts are outlined below;

"SEZs are geographically or functionally limited parts of an economy in which rules and other institutions concerning production and distribution of goods and services differ from those in the rest of the economy. These special institutions are realized in order to promote and favor economic activities in a specific area. Generally, they offer both financial incentives, such as lower taxes and tariffs, and subsidies as well as substantial deregulation of the legal and administrative framework (Ahrens and Meyer-Baudeck, 1995)." In Japan it is called as, 'Foreign Access Zones', while Mexicans call it, 'Maquiladora Operations', which are working on the same concepts. As per World Export Processing Zones Association (WEPZA) Report 2002, there are more than 115 countries with more than 3000 zones providing employment to 42 millions people.

India has experimented with three categories of such enclaves (Singhal, 2005), these are: Free trade zones, Export processing zones and Special economic zones. According to the Department of Commerce, "Special

Economic Zone (SEZ) is a specifically delineated duty free enclave and shall be deemed foreign territory for the purposes of trade operations, duties and tariffs". In addition to special rules there are exclusive regulations regarding taxation, environment, labour and governance of SEZ in India. These Zones are self-contained and integrated with their own infrastructure and support services. The infrastructure may include the transport system, generation and distribution of power, telecom, hospitals, hotels, educational institutions, leisure and entertainment units, various residential, industrial, commercial complexes, water supply sanitation, sewerage system and any other facility required for development of the Zones.

Chinese SEZ Model as a reference

Among the most widely quoted success stories of developing countries, China stands as a nation which has attained substantial gains through its SEZs. An attempt is made to understand the objectives, its development process and finally how Chinese SEZs can be used as a reference for creating a successful Indian SEZ model.

The transition in Chinese economy started in 1979 with the establishment of SEZs. A gradual approach was adopted towards reforms and opening of its economy. SEZ worked as second best liberlisation for the opening of the Chinese economy and it provided considerable economic benefits to the nation. The strategy behind SEZ in China were to attract foreign direct investment, emphasis on managerial and skill training, technology transfer and employment generation, (Kundra, 2000).

Following objectives were further identified and these have remained consistent since 1979:

1. To develop the coastal area of China through experimental, controlled enclaves;

2. To provide a window to the outside world -- to technology, knowledge and management. Chinese SEZs used financial and legal tools, much larger in size, with better social and industrial infrastructure. They have independent administrative authority with large role delegated to states in which SEZs are being located. China used its SEZs for creation of regions with concentrated industrial activities and worked for creating of synergies through backward and forward linkages. It sparked the industrial activities in that region since the administrative authority assured the participation of population in the development process. The agglomeration strategy worked, and the whole region got developed in this process. Another important strategy adopted was in choosing locations. China established SEZs in the regions proximate to non resident Chinese Diasporas in the border region of Hong-Kong, Taiwan, Macau, Singapore etc. The strategy resulted in influx of funds to the nation significantly and these regions started emerging as the manufacturing hubs of the whole world (Guangwen, 2001).The taste of success with the establishment of SEZ in one region created a cascading effect on the economy and SEZ, after SEZ was established in different regions. It can be termed as "Capitalistic region in the Socialist state". The ethnic Chinese with a common language and cultural proximity with the main land, were able to attract foreign investment for development. This created an ambience where large money could be channelised and linkages between the ethnic Chinese and the foreign investors established. This suggests that SEZ can be used not only as a growth policy but also for regional development and finally for complete transformation of economics of a nation.

The Indian government adopted SEZ, as a recipe to boost export with the objective to replicate the export led growth of China. The Chinese example of opening up its economy and attempting reforms with the help of SEZ, offers some definite policy lessons for India (Kundra, 2000):

• The formulation of aims and policies has to be on a long term basis. It is a strategic decision which should be planned to reap benefits only after a certain period of time.

• Deciding the location of an SEZ has to be pragmatic based on economic criteria. It could be on the basis of the existing industrial clusters which have developed due to various social or cultural reasons or it could be areas where the available infrastructural facilities would provide further impedes for growth.

• Sector or areas for SEZ should be selected with backward and forward linkages for the development of agglomerates. The selection and relocation of firms from domestic area to SEZ area (for financial incentive) should be discouraged.

• The establishment and managing of SEZ has to properly plan.

• Only short term financial incentives should be provided at SEZ. It makes the companies self sustaining.

SEZs in India

In India the concept of SEZs existed in different forms such as Free Trade Zones (FTZ), Export Oriented Unit (EOU), or Export Processing Zones (EPZs). The country's first FTZ came up in Kandla in 1965. After Kandla, seven EPZs were established in different parts of India. However these zones could not yield results, because of lack of clarity of objective in setting up these zones. The inward looking policy and heavy control regime marred the prospects of developing these zones. The Government appointed various committees to review the working of these zones. The final evaluation of the Tondon Committee (1982) strongly recommended additional 4 to 5 zones in the country to provide a direction to the country's export promotion efforts (Agarwal, 2004).

Four new EPZs were established between 1984-87 at Noida (Uttar Pradesh), Falta (West Bengal), Cochin (Kerala) and Chennai (Tamilnadu). With the liberalization of Indian economy in 1991 wide-ranging measures were initiated by the Government for revamping and restructuring of the EPZs (Kundra, 2000).

In April 2000, Special Economic Zones (SEZ) was conceptualized with the additional benefits/features to companies as compared to EPZ, and all the existing EPZs were converted into SEZs. SEZs were identified as, "specifically delineated duty-free enclaves that are deemed foreign territory for the purpose of trade operations, duties and tariffs. Foreign investments were to be allowed till 100 per cent, exemption of income tax, single-window clearances scheme and a host of preferential policies and tax breaks were announced for SEZ developers and tenants". The policy related to SEZ is contained in the foreign trade policy and incentives and other benefits available for SEZ developers and the units located in the SEZ are provided by various circular and notifications by respective ministry and departments. Before the enactment of Special Economic Zone Bill, 2005 by the Government, there were eleven functioning SEZs at FALTA and Salt Lake(West Bengal), Kandla and Surat (Gujarat), Santacruz (Maharashtra),Cochin(Kerala),Chennai(Tamil Naidu), Vizag (AP), Indore(MP), Jaipur (Rajasthan) and Noida (UP). In addition, approvals were given for setting up of 35 new SEZs in private/joint/state sector before the Bill was placed in Parliament.

SEZs in India functioned from 1.11.2000 to 09.02.2006 under the provisions of the Foreign Trade Policy, and fiscal incentives were made effective through the provisions of relevant statutes. India's Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09 duly recognizes the potential of SEZ for enhancing export and generating employment, especially in semi-urban and rural areas. With this background SEZ policy has been formulated; to reduce restriction i.e., liberal access to capital, duty free imports, and flexible labour laws, provision of incentives such as long term income tax concession, better infrastructure, single window clearance, and permission for Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) sale and sourcing. A comprehensive law passed by the legislation i.e. the SEZ bill has been implemented from 10th of February, 2006.

Macro Economic perspectives of SEZ and Indian economy-Issues Identified

The success of SEZ can be assessed in terms of its contribution to the economy. A study of various statistical data indicate that SEZ have progressed in terms of number of units , export earnings, employment growth, FDI investment and infrastructure capabilities. Some of the selected macro economic variables are further analyzed. There contribution to Indian economy further highlights the role and importance of SEZ.

Growth of SEZ: There are about 17 functional SEZ s in India. Consequent upon the SEZ Rules w.e.f. 10th February, 2006, formal approval has been granted to 242 out of 462 proposals and number of valid in principal approvals are 135. As on date 15.05.08 the number of notified SEZ are 222 out of 462 (www. sezindia.nic.in). The land under SEZ has increased substantially. There is approximately 642 sq km land under formally approved and notified SEZ and approx 1213 sq km under valid in principle approvals. This is though a small percentage of total land in India but with new proposals coming up the total land requirement of 101 proposals would be approximately 20503 hectares. In the coming years the industrial agglomerates in India would be witnessing a major change. Such growths in investment project indicate the scope for development, especially since 2000 onwards

Export Potential of SEZ: The overall export performance of SEZ has increased by 381% over past four years (2003-04 to 2007-08). Exports from the SEZs during 2006-07 were of the order of 346145.6 million (Rs) as compared to the export of 666376.821 million(Rs) during 2007-08 (Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India). In the 1990s, the engineering sector accounted for the largest share of exports followed by drugs, electronics and gems & jewellery. Exports of gems and jewel-

lery which had only a share of 11% in 1990 rose rapidly and accounted for 42% of the total SEZ exports in India in 2002. The share of electronics exports also grew from 25% in 1990 to 34% in 2002 faster than the overall zone exports, although 50% of the electronics sector being software. Thus in 2002, the electronics and gems & jewellery sectors accounted for more than 75% of the total exports from SEZs in India and thus can be named as the key exporting sectors in Indian SEZs. Out of the approved SEZ as on 10th October 2007, around 52% of the projects are related to IT and IT Enabled Service sector. Such a focused development on key exporting sectors would further develop India as a major destination of IT/ITES and such outsourced services. The key exporting sectors in SEZ also account as top exporting products /services of the total exports in India. It clearly indicates that India relies on SEZ for its export earnings to a very large extend. The share of EPZs in a country's exports is an index of their relative role amongst various other instruments of export promotion (Kundra 2000, p. 69).

As it is evident from Figure A, exports from SEZs have a steady increasing trend over the period of time; the export figure from SEZs has actually doubled over the period of time.

Employment Growth in SEZ: The total employment in SEZ increased from 70 to around 89,000, from 1966 to 2002. At present, 1087 units are in operation in the SEZs, established prior to the Act coming into force, providing direct employment to over 1.85 lakh persons; about 40% of whom are women. Table 1 clearly suggests that growth in employment in EPZ/SEZ in the initial years from 1966 to 1990 was quite high but it has gone down after the start of liberlisation to the economy. The reason behind this can be attributed to the fact that no new EPZ were established during the period from 1991 to 2001.

If we follow the employment trend out of the notified and formally approved SEZ , it is further proposed that they would provide 22,00,000 and 4 million additional employment respectively. At present 33.6235 billion people are employed in SEZ. Such figures are really going to change the social demographics of the people working in the SEZ regions.

FDI Inflows in SEZ: Investment made by the units operating in these Zones is in the order of Rs. 772.1 billion as on 31st March 2008. Under the SEZ scheme therefore FDI is expected to assume a much larger role as is evident from Table 2. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has further predicted that FDI investment in SEZ would further increase to US$ 2 billion by 2009. This is a clear indication that SEZ as a strategy can be developed to create synergies between the local as well as foreign investors.

Issues related to SEZ: Thus the study of various macro economic variables of SEZ in Indian economy reveals its impact on Indian economy. However several issues related to SEZ emerge, which suggest the need for further planning and development at different stages. Some of the critical issues that emerge are discussed below:

The SEZ Act has also incorporated the participation of private sector, which has resulted in sharp inflow of project application by leading corporate houses in India. Since the role of infrastructure creation is of paramount importance as we have seen in the case of China, participation of private sector in developing, managing and maintaining the SEZ is a welcome step. As per recent developments, SEZ's are now been empowered to provide licenses for 100% FDI and allow all manufacturing activity in the SEZ. At present six states in India has already passed the state SEZ legislation, unfortunately though theses Acts are silent about labour reforms which is urgently required.

Another issue about the minimum size of the SEZ, has mired into controversy after enactment of law. The SEZ scheme seems to encourage maximisation of land acquisitions and this is being compounded with the fact that state governments are offering land to SEZ developers at a concessional rate. This is an area where rebate should not be given, considering the eviction difficulties in this country. This is a rather a negative step for developing SEZ. This will result in attraction of short term real estate players to misuse this opportunity.

The attraction of tax breaks for being locating in SEZ has seen two important phenomenon in India, first is the mere re-location of existing firms towards SEZ area and second is investment diversion rather than creation. This will probably attract 100,000 crore of investment but it provides, little convincing evidence of SEZs attracting investment over and above what may anyway have occurred.

One of the other important facts debated over is that; socially, culturally and politically we are not geared to executing and operating, large centralized projects

efficiently (Karnik, 2006). Mr. Tarun Khanna (Mckinsey quarterly, 2005) summarises that genius of India lies in its grass root entrepreneurship. Although the number of approved SEZ is high but the pace of implementation remains slow because of slow land acquisition process and inadequate experience of developers to manage every aspects of setting up a SEZ.

Besides these issues, labour laws, environmental norms and quality standards, needs to be adopted. The foreign investors would demand world class infrastructure to develop competitive products and services for global markets. SEZ would be expected to maintain the minimum required norms and standards.

SEZ Model for Sustainable Benefits

Such major issues identified need to be resolved at different levels to achieve sustainable benefits from SEZ. Based on secondary information sources and literature review a SEZ Model for sustainable benefits is proposed considering the various macro variables of Indian economy. The model aims at;

• Developing processes for integrating with the world economy through backward and forward linkages and projecting SEZ as a window to the outside world

• Analysis of macro environment variables which are important for sustainable development of SEZ in India

• With these aims following important aspects are identified in the model.

• First step is a Macro Environment Feasibility Study which includes political, social, technological and economic studies

• Next step would be Location analysis area /region wise to identify product/services sector where competitive and comparative advantage could be achieved for India. Development and administrative strategies to ensure the interest of various stakeholders viz, central, state and private partners.

In authors view, integration of SEZ with the Global economy is important to achieve sustainable benefits. Developing backward and forward linkages, and promoting the concept of agglomerates for regional integration can have a cascading effect, which can also be concluded through various references already

mentioned. Macro environmental factor such as economic, social, cultural, and technological and the political ideology can be used pragmatically to achieve sustainable benefits. They are not only important indicators of growth, development and regional integration but are the basis of various strategic management options. Issues such as location analysis, Governance policies, public- private partnership and project management are the basis for success of SEZ. The performance indicators identified for success of an SEZ can be further concluded in terms of its growth, export potential, employment generation and foreign direct investment. This is further represented in the figure 1 below.

Feasibility of the Model for India

In today's globally competitive business environment, integrated systems and value delivery networks have an increasingly important role to play. Such systems are not only related to firm level strategies but also at national, regional and global levels. Global skills for managing human resources, natural and financial resource management skills, and in particular global sourcing, and marketing skills are needed to make an economic impact for sustainable benefits. Efficient logistics and supply chain visibility (Vishwanadham, 2006) are some of the strategic solutions for efficient integrated systems and value delivery networks. This integration can be achieved through development of core competencies of SEZ that exist in their macro environment.

Taking a sequential approach the first step would be macro environment feasibility study. It includes analyzing the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the business environment (social, economic, technological, cultural and political). The various macro environment variables and their applicability to SEZ are further elaborated as follows.

Economic feasibility: A zone wise economic feasibility should be undertaken to highlight their contribution to domestic economy, competitive and comparative advantage that India can attain. India has core competencies in certain export items like gems & jewelry, handicrafts, carpets, textiles and the most recent IT and IT enabled services. A focused sect oral development would give it competitive and comparative advantage. Political consensus ensures a better synergy between Center and State. Various international financial institutions, consultancies and non-government organizations can be involved in the process. The flow of FDI in priority sectors can be assured for

a more focused development. Trading agreements between important regional blocks and countries would further facilitate the export/import process and procedures. A political consensus in a democratic country like India is a must.

Technological Feasibility: Indian products/services need to be continuously upgraded and enhanced to reach world standards of quality infrastructure, technological innovations and up gradations. The core benefits for quality infrastructure would include better multimodal transportation facility, internet connectivity, water and electricity supply and other sources of energy management systems. Substantial efforts need to be undertaken in this direction. Developing India as a global manufacturing hub and as centers of excellence can be the prime objective of SEZs in India.

Socio/Cultural Feasibility: SEZ are major development projects which will shape India s future, development and growth. However the China 'model' is unlikely in India, given the contrasting socio-political framework in the countries. To put it bluntly, China's policy on land acquisition for developmental projects are actually a story of unreasonable and undue land appropriation by local-level officials leveraging the might of the state and the powerlessness of rural peasants. India, being a democratic country needs a very pragmatic and equitable land acquisition policy, which ensures participation of farmers and other social systems existing in the country.

Such a macro environment analysis and its applicability in SEZ, further helps in determining the zonal and regional strategies for India. This can be the next sequential approach for the model. Some of the selected strategies are further discussed under the following heads-:

Location Strategy: Taking decision for investing in India is easy, but deciding which region or zone to invest is a tough one. There are various kinds of build, operate and transfer (BOT) models available depending on the context. Strategic location and multi modal connectivity with major trading destinations are critical factors for success of the SEZs. It has been observed that the most successful zones are strategically located giving the units in the zone an easy gateway to international trade (Vishwanadham, 2006). SEZ are interfaces or window to outside world. For location analysis of SEZ following approach can be taken; First step is to identify specific zones or regions in the country considering the core competencies of

that area. Once it is done, it is necessary to develop zones as industrial clusters of specific products and services. Zones in the long run need to give way to industrial clusters of specific products or closely related products.

Development Strategies: The evolution or development of an SEZ further determines the direction and the future potential of a zone. Two development strategies can be identified: one is to start developing a new site, where cost will be very high and it will take longer duration to cover that investment since in the initial years the number of users will be low. Second is to concentrate on existing location and upgrade it to world class infrastructure. This strategy seems to be better in case of India since it is much inexpensive to augment existing facilities and existing location will be near to industrial base and quite accessible to worker availability. Focused sector-wise development of such zones or regions has given immense benefits. As seen in the development of labor-intensive manufacturing sectors such as textiles, apparel, automotive components, footwear, leather goods, jewelry, processed foods, and electronics assembly. They also include high-technology products and services as IT-Enabled services, biotechnology (e.g. pharmaceuticals) that relies on India's tremendous scientific and engineering capacity. The focus area should be export intensive manufacturing sector in which the role to be played by SEZ cannot be over emphasized. This would not only help to develop India as a manufacturing hub but would also improve export competitiveness with greater returns.

Administrative Strategy: At present, the SEZs administration functions as a government department office. Ideally, they should be managed by autonomous authorities, constituted under specific Acts with specific responsibilities. Functional departments should be created managing specific issues within SEZs. For example, there can be an Investor Services department for all the investment processing issues, an Industrial relations department handling labour issues, etc.

SEZ Model cannot work in isolation. Center, State and private investors need to develop a model for public –private partnership. In our opinion, each partnering relationship should be identified as a project which would include following stages;

• Project Preparatory activities; includes getting formal/informal approvals, assistance, grants available

to SEZ ,regulatory and statutory approvals required at central and state level

• Project development activities; Includes not only development of business plan, which includes feasibility study, strategy formulation, financial modeling, risk management but also developing linkages and conglomerates for backward and forward integration with domestic economy and global economy

• Project implementation structure; involves operations and management arrangements, project execution and detailed operational plans .It would include organizational structure, marketing financial structuring and manpower planning

• Project execution; includes engineering, procurement, management and supervision

• Such a strategic model at different levels would ensure sustainable benefits for the Indian economy and would be successful in not only integrating with the world economy considering the macro variables of Indian economy.

Conclusion

To summarise, there should be a vision in the planning, development and administration of the SEZs. It can be concluded that the government needs to enact legislation, create a focused administrative infrastructure to govern SEZs, offer highly attractive incentives and locate zones in the best possible locations. SEZs must be liberated from nepotism and other political evils vis-à-vis vested interest adopting transparent and simplified policies. Zones are a part of the economy and require overall improvement in the investment climate to ensure success in the long run. They should not, therefore, be viewed as a sole alternative to the overall development model of a country.

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Diagram 1: Trend in export performance of SEZs
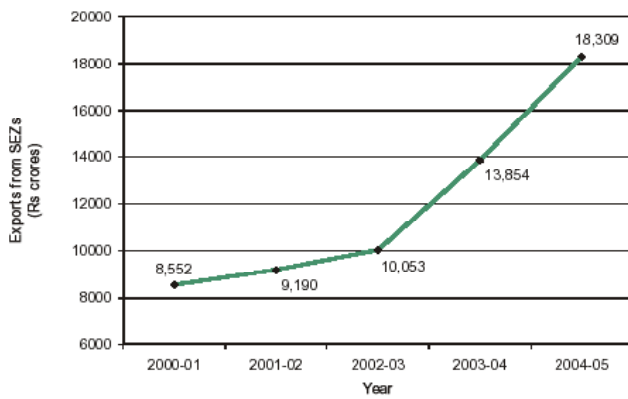
Diagram 2: SEZ Exports as % share of total exports in India

Figure A (Source: http://www.ciionline.org/northern)
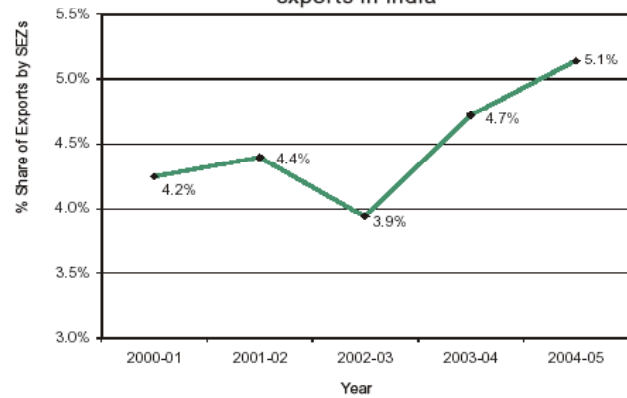
Year	Total employment (as on numbers)	Average Employment per unit (as on numbers)
1966		70
1970	450	450
1975	1450	725
1980	6000	3000
1985	16200	4050
1990	35205	5868
1995	61431	10239
2000	81371	11624
2002	88977	12711

Table 1: Employment growth in the Indian export processing zones (Source: Ministry of commerce, Government of India)

Year	Share (%) FDI(%) in
1997	17.3
1998	17.4
1999	N.A
2000	18.5
2001	21.7
2002	21.2
2003	24.9

Table 2: Share (%) of Foreign Direct Investment in SEZ in India (Source: Ministry of commerce, Government of India)

Macro-environment Feasibility Study
•Political
•Economic
•Social
•Technological

Centre

SEZ
Strategy
-Location
-Development
-Administrative

SEZ; nation's interface with global economy

State   Private

Figure 1: Sustainable model for SEZ India

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BOOK REVIEW
'Slam Dunk Cover Letters' (2nd Edition) by Mark Rowh

Urvashi P. Jain
Prasannanshu

The inherent importance of communication is well underlined by the expansion in related literature and the increasing specialization and sub specializations seen in this field. 'Slam Dunk Cover Letters' highlights this phenomenon. Effective communication is required not only in our day to day personal lives but, also, in the business space at all points: be it the process of getting the job, retaining the job or progressing in the job. Mark Rowh has focused on the importance of written communication for the job seekers.

In the present age when correspondence, even in the highly competitive cut throat job market has limited itself to the electronic media where premium is placed on lexical economy, this book goes a long way to demonstrate how the reader can ensure that his/her resume is not one of the unfortunate ones to find its way into the stand-by-applications file that rarely sees the light of the day. It is true that both job seekers and employers today prefer the e-mail rather than the conventional postman to establish and maintain the communication channel. It is equally true that for a resume to get a positive nod and a second reading from a selector, the covering letter plays a pivotal role in arousing interest. The covering letter decides which will be the short listed even if all of them appear similar. In the job market where the supply in most sectors far exceeds the demand for candidates, the covering letter ensures that your resume is the one set aside from a stack of others as a preliminary step towards selection. After all, screening the resume is a far more serious, tedious, and time consuming task than screening the applications that present at a glance the suitability of a candidate for a job. The first step of the short listing of who all seem to be passable candidates largely involves the rejection of many more that do not seem to fit the bill. It is truly a process of weeding out of applications that fail to impress the selector or arouse his/her interest in the first.

In the introductory chapter itself, Rowh establishes the significance of the covering letter, he demonstrates that both the resume and the covering letter are complementary to each other: sloppiness in either can cost you that job which you thought was tailor made for you! He shows how the covering letter prepares the backdrop against which, at a subsequent stage, the employer will look at your resume. It is what prompts him/her to read your resume and to invite you for an interview. Well, that is exactly the purpose that the covering letter is intended to serve.

A good application, Rowh says is like the first impression −'lasting and decisive'. Therefore, it is imperative that you present yourself as a promising candidate without sacrificing the brevity of the letter, remembering well that the selector has to juggle his routine chores alongside zeroing in on one or a few likely applicants that suit the job profile. Moreover, there may be more than one selector down the line with a variety of profes

sional backgrounds such as, clerks, assistant managers, placement consultants, and even higher-level workers, such as, directors and advisors. It is obvious that to be a winner your letter be of interest to as many of them as possible. He lists some fundamental qualities that go a long way in ensuring that your letter appeals to a larger and varied audience. These are clarity and understandability; focus on your suitability for the job.

The prewriting task involves undergoing what Rowh calls the "why / what test", a kind of self-scrutiny that asks what your objective is in writing; why would anyone read it; what do you wish to achieve by it; and how will the reader react?

The second chapter, 'Cover Letter Fundamentals', begins with a discussion of the importance of the cover letters. There are many job adverts that specifically demand a covering letter. Secondly, any one resume may fit the requirements for several job openings available with the employer; a covering letter clearly indicating the job you are interested in will help the selector screen your resume with the specific job profile in mind. Then there is the likelihood that a resume addressed to no one in particular will only succeed in being lost in the personnel department at best. However, addressing it to a specific person not only fulfils the demand of basic business etiquette, but also ensures that the resume reaches the person or department it is intended for. A dated cover letter helps put on record when the resume was submitted, helpful in case there is an application deadline. Finally, information that you wish to highlight from

your resume can be mentioned in the letter as a means of reinforcement.

The next section addresses a very pertinent issue: the significance of cover letters vis-à-vis the electronic age. Rowh attributes it to the experts that even when resumes are posted electronically, the cover letter still has its role to play; as discussed in the previous section. However, this may take the form of a covering e-mail message or be a conventional covering letter in the form of an attachment file. Moreover, electronic submissions are sometimes a follow up to a traditional letter. Finally, a cover letter helps place the resume in context even if sent electronically and waters the job scene sufficiently for the resume to take roots.

Among the basic elements of cover letters, Rowh touches upon the return address; date; inside address; subject line; salutation; body; complimentary close; name and signature; and notations.

The subsection on the aesthetic aspects of a cover letter is useful. Rowh suggests that the paper be a standard 8.5 by 11 inch white sheet of heavy paper, preferably the same size as the resume. The chapter concludes with special tips for electronic submissions.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the two basic styles of cover letters. Which one the writer chooses is a matter of personal choice and dependent on the recipient it is intended for. The first type is the standard, polite, and formal type that has an undertone of respect for the employer. The second type is what Rowh calls the 'Bold and Brassy letter'. A feature wise comparison of the two styles allows the writer to decide upon his/her choice. Included among the samples of both the types are scores of letters to give the reader a good glimpse of how s/he can go about the task. Stylistic elements may be varied to suit the specific job requirements and the employers.

In Chapter 4, 'Playing the Cover Letter Game', Rowh elaborates on the microelements of the components broadly discussed in chapter 2. Much of the chapter gives in to repetition, though the section on making the most use of the information gleaned from the job insert is additional. In the same chapter, a worthwhile section is the one giving out tips on how not to be 'annoying' in the cover letters. Elements best avoided are slip-shoddiness, excessive punctuation, highlighting, hyperbole, pushiness, and definitely, humor. The section on the use of internet and e-mail, however, tends to repeat a great deal of what has been presented in earlier chapters. Even so, tips on sources, such as, reference books can be useful. Also useful is the discussion on how to be honest in presenting your weaknesses carefully in a positive language.

The penultimate chapter of the book is much like a conclusion for the writer and has little relevance for the reader. It could well have been dropped from the book without having any impact on its general feel or layout.

The final chapter is a collection of thirty Slam Dunk Cover Letters as Rowh calls them, of which some are in the form of e-mail messages, though the need for a separate such chapter escapes the reader when chapter 3 was already devoted to the purpose. The samples themselves offer a wide variety and are useful to not only the new but also the veteran job seeker.

Paying attention to the tools of the e-age is certainly strength of this book. Overall, the book has been well conceived and well begun, but the inspiration and energy of the author appears to wane somewhere by the middle of the book. Despite its usefulness, the book betrays a few notable and at times glaring shortcomings. Instead of skipping a section on grammar altogether, some practical tips for dealing with grammar would have been of great value to the users. A number of unnecessary repetitions of concepts and ideas do not apparently serve any useful purpose; they rather have a perplexing effect upon the reader. Finally, the front and back covers of the book declare that the book carries more than 100 sample cover letters, though the fact is the number of letters in the book is much smaller (80)! The section titled 'helpful words and phrases to use in cover letters' is indeed an innovative approach, but a more detailed and better designed list would have been more in place.

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BOOK REVIEW

Human Resource Management: International Perspectives in Hospitality and Tourism
Norma D' Annunzio-Green, Gillian A Maxwell and Sandra Watson
Continuum, (2002) New York, USA ISBN: 0-8264-5765-7

Syed Ahmad Rizwan

The dynamics and complexity of human resource issues make it extremely complex for an author to deal the issues within the boundaries of a book. The international perspective make the task all the most arduous and challenging.

Human Resource Management: International Perspective in Hospitality and Tourism brings together issues in global hospitality and tourism supported by contemporary management principles.Title provides international insights on the topic with authors drawn from Australia, New Zealand, Europe and USA. This edited book consisting of three parts and seventeen chapters, each dealing with an internal issue of concern.

 The book opens with a chapter by the editors which prepares the author's background of the book and also prepares the reader for the further chapters issues preoccupying International tourism and hospitality organization's. The discussion in the chapters enlighten readers on the often confused terms of strategic HRM and international HRM. The presentation provides whiff of noveau thinking to the author.

Part one deals with the intricacies involved in Employee Resourcing. Chapter two analyses the recruitment and selection issues and strategies. The text has been dealt in a comprehensive manner so as to provide certain issues and matching strategies for procuring and hiring potential employees and also not letting the high quality employees wander. The case study attached further clears the queries in the minds of the readers, if any.

Chapter three Barrie Humphrey and Kathy Elvin discusses the systematic approach to recruitment and selection in an international hospitality business. An Australian hotel serves as a case study. Lot of emphasis have been laid upon the proactive approach and a more targeted approach in the areas of recruitment and selection to maximize effectiveness.

Chapter four by bring into light the grave issue of labour turnover which in its extreme can ruin the industry. The economic, sociological and psychological treatment of the existing theories has been excellently handled. This no longer remains a theoretical chapter as cause effect relation has been analysed and probable solutions have been suggested. the case study attached cite example of how to maximize employee's performance and develop staff along with gaining their loyalty.

Information Technology has not been ignored and is well attempted by J. Kandam Puley and Ria Duddy. The authors asserts through examples that at no stage can technology replace humans but will always act as an aid. The case study of Hilton at Brisbane is one of the well knitted one.

Chapter six analyze the competencies and skills needed by managers to operate effectively. The cross-cultural employer-employee relationship is effectively stated with focus on Russia. This chapter closes Part I.

'Employee Development' constitute Part II . The focus here shifts to quality service development through HR. To smoothen the process of quality service ongoing training has been recognized to be of immense help which is the basis of chapter eight by Conrad Lashley has ascertained this fact. Author states that training has to be viewed as an investment not as a expenditure. The case study here cites example from a restaurant. at uses fast food chain MacDonald chain as a case study. Chapter Nine talks of Multi Site management: HRM Implications in the same pretext. The contribution of middle management is recognized. It introduces the conceptual framework of multi site managers.

Performance management is a key responsibility of HR managers, point well raised by Bruce Millet in chapter ten. How performance management can be a tool is well explained by study of Australian Marriot. Chapter eleven recognizes the fact that hospitality training is equally important especially to areas which have resource crunch and belong to developing nations. Part II closes with this concept.
'Employee Relations' forms the concluding part of the book as Part III . Chapter twelve provides a review of research on organizational commitment. De-

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bra F Cannon presents a hypothetical case study.

Much ignored issues of ethics in HRM has been developed to taste in chapter thirteen by discussing OHS (Occupational Health and safety) in hotels and fast food sectors. This gains it importance from the fact as the human resource suffers from low wages, poor working conditions and seasonal aspects of jobs.

Chapter fourteen by Nils Timo and Michael Davidson discusses employee relation. The study questions the oft repeated yet important questions on cost minimization on flexible form of labour and standardization on cost of minimum investment in terms of labour and training. Study concludes with emphasis on the same.

Conrad Lashley desire and demand a feeling of empowerment in chapter fifteen. Author argues and consoles that if motivation is used as a tool empowerment of every individual organization can be thought of.

Multicultural corporations not only comprise cross-cultural customers but should also compose multicultural workforce. This will help in better communication and interpretation, and minimal space for communication and cultural gaps. The issue of diversity has been theoretically defined in chapter sixteen by Conmie Mok. The chapter is suggestive of ideas to manage diversity.

The psyche and psychological relation of the service provider and customer brings an emotional element in the read in Chapter seventeen. The study recognizes means and ways to achieve quality service encounters.

No doubt the book because of an international perspective and a well drawn case study from all over the world is a welcome read. The book unlike other edited books does not suffer from jumbled or mismanaged chapters. Each chapter is sequentially placed and will definitely help in knowledge management. The foreword by Tom Baum is an asset. The case study provides a food for the thought. It addresses key concerns on a somewhat neglected topic of HRM in Tourism and Hospitality. The book is excellent as a use for reference. The examples are cited will be handy to any instructor dealing HR in service industry. Researchers can also benefit a lot as it cites some early references of researches undertaken. It could be introduced at masters' level as bachelor students will need to prepare a background to understand the book.

One thing that seemed to be missing is that authors heavily draw from the developed regions and authors also tend to come from these regions. The issues of developing countries could not be tabled in a robust fashion.

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1	Dubai	7-10 October,2008	Supply Chain Risk Management	http://www.iqpc.com/ShowEvent.aspx?id=77508
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3.	Dubai	9-12 November,2008	GCC Home Finance Summit	http://www.iqpc.com/ShowEvent.aspx?id=120056
4.	Dubai	16 November 2008	Finance for non-Finance professionals	http://www.meirc.com
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4.	Paris, France	14 to 17 December 2008	International Conference on Information Systems, 29th ICIS	http://www.icis2008.org
5.	Atlantic City, New Jersey, USA	6 to 9 January 2009	2009 Winter Global Conference on Business and Finance	http://www.theibfr.com/atlanticity.htm
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4	Phitsanulok, Thailand	5 to 7 November 2008	The First International conference in Business Management and Information Science	http://www.icbmis.org/
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   Swann, W.B.,Jr., Milton, L.P., & Polzer, J.T. (2000). Should we create a niche or fall in line? Identity negotiation and small group effectiveness. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79: 238-250

   Books Referred:

   Swann, W.B., Jr., Rentfrow, P.J & Guinn, J.S. (2002). Self verification: The search for coherence. In M.Leary & J.Tagney (Eds.,). Handbook of self and identity: 367-383. New York: Guilford Press.

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