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Waves of Indian Entrepreneurship: Redefinition of Work Culture by Creative Indian Companies

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Structured Abstract:

Purpose: The research paper focuses on exploring entrepreneurship, creativity and evolving work culture in India. It explores India's evolution as a centre of innovation and entrepreneurship, highlighting how shifting mind-sets—particularly in workspace design and organizational culture—are shaping the future of businesses. It examines the transition from traditional 'jugaad-based' problem-solving to more refined and bold entrepreneurial strategies.

Design / Methodology / Approach: The analysis draws on observed trends in India's start-up ecosystem, with a focus on case examples from creative industries that are redefining workplace norms. The discussion is grounded in cultural and behavioural shifts rather than empirical data, offering a conceptual perspective.

Findings: Indian entrepreneurs are moving beyond survival-driven innovation (jugaad) to deliberate, value-driven strategies. Workspace design and company culture—once seen as Western concepts—are now prioritized as key drivers of collaboration and innovation (e.g., open layouts, shared ideals). Progressive companies are actively rejecting traditional hierarchical models, fostering environments that encourage unrestricted idea-sharing and alignment around core values.

Value: This perspective underscores the growing sophistication of India's entrepreneurial landscape, demonstrating how cultural and structural changes within companies influence their long-term vision and success. It provides insights for stakeholders aiming to cultivate innovation in emerging economies.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Creativity, Work Culture.

Introduction

India, a country with a vibrant history of innovation and entrepreneurship, has emerged as a global powerhouse in business over the last few decades. From technology to manufacturing, Indian corporates have continuously pushed the boundaries of possibility, transforming industries and paving the way for sustainable growth. The Indian corporate sector has experienced exponential growth in the past 30 years. With a rising middle class, a tech-savvy youth population, and the increasing global integration of the economy, Indian companies are becoming leaders in sectors ranging from information technology (IT) to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and automotive. What sets these companies apart is their ability to take calculated risks, embrace innovation, and drive change across industries. They are not just focused on profit; many also prioritize sustainability, social impact, and community development. This shift in focus from mere financial success to broader value creation has allowed Indian corporations to build lasting legacies. Reliance Industries, under the leadership of Mukesh Ambani, has become a prime example of how transforming possibilities can reshape entire industries. The launch of Jio, India's largest telecommunications service provider, completely disrupted the telecom market. Jio's arrival brought affordable 4G internet to millions of Indians, democratizing internet access in the country and fostering a digital transformation. Before Jio, internet penetration in India was limited, and data prices were exorbitantly high. By offering free voice calls and dirt-cheap data plans, Jio radically shifted the telecommunications landscape, forcing competitors to revise their business models. Jio is a testament to how Reliance turned a highly competitive and mature sector into an innovative powerhouse that reached unprecedented heights. The Tata Group, one of India’s oldest and most respected conglomerates, has been at the forefront of transforming possibilities for several decades. From steel to automotive and technology, the Tata Group has continually redefined what is possible. The acquisition of Jaguar Land Rover in 2008 is a prime example of this transformation. Tata Motors, which once focused on the domestic Indian market, redefined its global strategy and became an international force by acquiring one of Britain’s most iconic automotive brands. Under Tata’s leadership, JLR was revitalized, and its sales surged, bringing new levels of profitability and innovation. This acquisition allowed Tata Motors to transcend geographical and sectoral boundaries, challenging the preconceived notion of what an Indian automaker could achieve on the global stage. Moreover, Tata’s commitment to sustainability through Tata Power and its efforts to make India's rural areas more energy-efficient showcases how the group is transforming possibilities in the energy and infrastructure sectors. When Infosys was founded in 1981 by Narayana Murthy and his colleagues, it marked the beginning of India’s rise in the global IT services industry. What started as a small startup with just seven people has now become a multi-billion-dollar corporation that provides technology and consulting services to businesses worldwide. Infosys was one of the first companies to make use of the "offshoring" model, where business processes were outsourced to India due to its relatively low labor costs and highly skilled talent pool. This model allowed Infosys to provide world-class services to global clients, transforming how businesses across industries accessed IT solutions. Moreover, Infosys has embraced digital transformation by shifting its focus from traditional software services to cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and cloud computing. Today, Infosys is not just a service provider but a strategic partner to companies looking to undergo digital transformations themselves. Biocon, India's largest biopharmaceutical company, founded by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw in 1978, is another excellent example of transforming possibilities. Biocon focuses on developing affordable biotechnology solutions, especially for diabetes, cancer, and autoimmune diseases. One of the key innovations is the development of Insulin, which made affordable treatment options available to millions of diabetic patients globally. Through continuous research and development, Biocon has expanded into the global biotech market and now provides high-quality, affordable drugs to people worldwide. Mazumdar-Shaw's vision of "affordable healthcare" has transformed possibilities for millions in developing countries by offering world-class medical solutions at competitive prices. Her success has not only brought innovation to the forefront of the pharmaceutical industry but has also positioned India as a global leader in biotechnology and biosimilars. Mahindra & Mahindra, one of India's leading automobile manufacturers, has also made significant strides in transforming possibilities within the automotive industry. Traditionally known for its rugged SUVs and tractors, Mahindra has now turned its focus toward sustainable mobility. The company made a bold entry into the electric vehicle (EV) market with the launch of the Mahindra e2o and has been a key player in India's growing EV ecosystem. Mahindra has also embraced the concept of shared mobility with its partnership in Ola Electric and by focusing on electric-powered public transport. In doing so, it is addressing some of India's most pressing challenges: air pollution and unsustainable energy consumption. Mahindra's willingness to pivot to green technologies in a traditional industry shows how Indian corporates can create new possibilities for the future of the planet. Indian corporations are proving that there are no limits to what can be achieved with the right vision, innovation, and dedication. Whether it's through technological advancements, global expansion, or sustainable practices, Indian corporates are breaking barriers and setting new benchmarks in the world of business. By transforming possibilities in various sectors, these companies are not only changing their industries but are also inspiring future generations of entrepreneurs. As India continues to grow as a global economic force, the corporate sector's ability to push boundaries will remain a crucial driver of the country's success. The research paper focuses on exploring entrepreneurship, creativity and evolving work culture in India.

What is Entrepreneurship?

While it has become widely acknowledged that entrepreneurship is a vital force in the economies of developed countries, there is little consensus about what actually constitutes entrepreneurial activity. Scholars have proposed a broad array of definitions, which when operationalized, have generated a number of different measures (Hebert and Link, 1989). Herbert and Link (1989) have identified three distinct intellectual traditions in the development of the entrepreneurship literature. These three traditions can be characterized as the German Tradition, based on von Thuenen and Schumpeter, the Chicago Tradition, based on Knight and Schultz, and the Austrian Tradition, based on von Mises, Kirzner and Shackle. The Schumpeterian tradition has had the greatest impact on the contemporary entrepreneurship literature. The distinguishing feature from Schumpeter is that entrepreneurship is viewed as a disequilibrating phenomenon rather than an equilibrating force. In his 1911 classic treatise, Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung (Theory of Economic Development), Schumpeter proposed a theory of creative destruction, where new firms with the entrepreneurial spirit displace less innovative incumbents, ultimately leading to a higher degree of economic growth. Even in his 1942 classic, Capitalism and Democracy, Schumpeter (p. 13) still argued that entrenched large corporations tend to resist change, forcing entrepreneurs to start new firms in order to pursue innovative activity: "The function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionize the pattern of production by exploiting an invention, or more generally, an untried technological possibility for producing a new commodity or producing an old one in a new way…To undertake such new things is difficult and constitutes a distinct economic function, first because they lie outside of the routine tasks which everybody understand, and secondly, because the environment resists in many ways." Despite the Schumpeterian emphasis on the process of starting a new enterprise as the defining entrepreneurial activity, there is no generally accepted definition of entrepreneurship for the developed countries of the OECD (OECD, 1998). The failure of a single definition of entrepreneurship to emerge undoubtedly reflects the fact that it is a multidimensional concept. The actual definition used to study or classify entrepreneurial activities reflects a particular perspective or emphasis. For example, definitions of entrepreneurship typically vary between the economic and management perspectives. From the economic perspective, Hebert and Link (1989) distinguish between the supply of financial capital, innovation, allocation of resources among alternative uses and decision-making. Thus, an entrepreneur is someone encompassing the entire spectrum of these functions: “The entrepreneur is someone who specializes in taking responsibility for and making judgmental decisions that affect the location, form, and the use of goods, resources or institutions” (Hebert and Link, 1989, p. 213). By contrast, from the management perspective, Sahlman and Stevenson (1991, p.1) differentiate between entrepreneurs and managers in that, “entrepreneurship is a way of managing that involves pursuing opportunity without regard to the resources currently controlled. Entrepreneurs identify opportunities, assemble required resources, implement a practical action plan, and harvest the reward in a timely, flexible way.” The most prevalent and compelling views of entrepreneurship focus on the perception of new economic opportunities and the subsequent introduction of new ideas in the market. As Audretsch (1995) argues, entrepreneurship is about change, just as entrepreneurs are agents of change; entrepreneurship is thus about the process of change. This corresponds to the definition of entrepreneurship proposed by the OECD, “Entrepreneurs are agents of change and growth in a market economy and they can act to accelerate the generation, dissemination and application of innovative ideas….Entrepreneurs not only seek out and identify potentially profitable economic opportunities but are also willing to take risks to see if their hunches are right” (OECD, 1998, p. 11). While the simplicity of defining entrepreneurship as activities fostering innovative change has its attraction, such simplicity also masks considerable complexity. Entrepreneurship is shrouded with complexity for at least two reasons. The first reason emerges because entrepreneurship is an activity crossing multiple organizational forms. Does entrepreneurship refer to the change inducing activities of individuals, groups of individuals such as networks, projects, lines of business, firms, and even entire industries, or even for geographic units of observation, such as agglomerations, clusters, and regions? Part of the complexity involved with entrepreneurship is that it involves all of these types of organizational forms. No single organizational form can claim a monopoly on entrepreneurship. The second source of complexity is that the concept of change is relative to some benchmark. What may be perceived as change to an individual or enterprise may not involve any new practice for the industry. Or, it may represent change for the domestic industry, but not for the global industry. Thus, the concept of entrepreneurship is embedded in the local context. At the same time, the value of entrepreneurship is likely to be shaped by the relevant benchmark. Entrepreneurial activity that is new to the individual but not the firm or industry may be of limited value. Entrepreneurial activity that is new to the region or country may be significant but ultimately limited. By contrast, it is entrepreneurial activity that is new across all organizational forms, all the way up to the global, that carries the greatest potential value. Thus, one of the most striking features of entrepreneurship is that it crosses a number of key units of analysis. At one level, entrepreneurship involves the decisions and actions of individuals. These individuals may act alone or within the context of a group. At another level, entrepreneurship involves units of analysis at the levels of the industry, as well as at spatial levels, such as cities, regions and countries.

Table 1. Definitions of the entrepreneurship

Author	Definitions
Cole (1968)	The entrepreneurship is an activity dedicated to initiation, maintenance and development of a profit oriented business.
Drucker (1985)	The entrepreneurship is an innovation act who presupposes the endowment of the existing resources with the capacity of producing wealth.
Gartner (1985)	The entrepreneurship is the creation of new organizations.
Hisrich and Peters (1989)	The entrepreneurship is the process of creating something different, with value, by allotting the necessary time and effort, presupposing the taking of financial, social and physical risks, and obtaining monetary rewards and personal satisfaction.
Stevenson et al. (1989)	The entrepreneurship is following an opportunity irrespective of the existing resources.
Herron and Robinson (1993)	The entrepreneurship is a set of behaviours which initiate and manage the re-allotment of economic resources and whose purpose is the creation of value by these means.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a system of values, beliefs, and behaviour patterns which subconsciously drives members of the organization to make each choice and decision (Ortega-Parra & Sastre-Castillo, 2013). Schneider et al. (2013) indicated organizational culture as the norms that members of an organization perceive as their work environment, and these norms influence how members behave and adapt to achieve organizational goals. Organizational culture is the way that organizational members interact with each other and other stakeholders (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2014). Yirdaw (2016) indicated organizational culture as the glue which combines the nonhuman resources to the human resources in an organization to build teamwork and good performance. Weber and Tarba (2012) indicated that business managers use the organizational culture to differentiate their organization from other organizations. Though Apple Inc., International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), and Hewlett-Packard Corporation (HP) have similar technologies and operating environment, these organizations have diverse cultures (Schein, 2010). The culture of Apple involves the development of simple, innovative and elegant products (Toma & Marinescu, 2013). The priorities of IBM culture are long-term thinking, and highly committed employees (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). The cultural focus of HP is innovation and autonomy of employees (Childress, 2013). Organizational culture contributes favourably to corporate governance and management (O'Connor & Byrne, 2015). The influence of effective organizational culture on corporate performance is recognized by many business managers (Unger et al., 2014). Warren Buffet, one of the world's wealthiest entrepreneurs, asserted how organizational culture is important for organizational performance (Childress, 2013). Likewise, Howard Schultz, the founder of Starbucks Coffee Company, confirmed that corporate culture is a key factor in Starbucks' success (Flamholtz & Randle, 2012).

Sources of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture may be derived from various sources, such as the beliefs and assumptions of the founders, and the learning experience of members of the organization (Ruiz-Palomino & Martínez-Cañas, 2014; Schein, 2010; Uddin et al., 2013). Flamholtz and Randle (2012) indicated that the founders of the organization are the primary source of establishing a new culture for their organization. Founders can make a significant impact to the organization culture since they have an opportunity to introduce the strategy and direction at an early stage of the organization (Andish et al., 2013). The initial business strategy and direction are mostly based on the operational assumptions of the founders, which may be derived from their personal experience and cultural history (Toma & Marinescu, 2013). Founders may enforce their personal experience and culture on their employees and partners (O'Reilly et al., 2014). For example, Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Inc., enforced his personal experiences and assumptions on employees, which contributed to build an effective organizational culture at Apple Inc. (Kaliannan & Ponnusamy, 2014; Toma & Marinescu, 2013). Apple's organizational culture contributed to transform the vision of the founder into realities. Schein (2010) indicated that Apple Inc. is a perfect example to illustrate how the personal culture and assumptions of founder greatly influence the culture of the organization. The learning experience is another source of organizational culture, which is derived from the social trends and the dynamics of the business environment (Nguyen & Aoyama, 2014). Members of the organization may adapt some attributes from the community as well as from the business environment (Uddin et al., 2013). Gibbs (2012) indicated that community may enforce its cultural attributes on the organization through members of the organization.

Strong and Weak Organizational Culture

Strong organizational culture is vital to enhance organizational performance (Nwibere, 2013; Sharma & Good, 2013). Raza et al. (2014) indicated that strong organizational culture plays a significant role in aligning the future business trajectory of the organization. Organizational members have common opinions towards the organization in a strong organizational culture and are consistent with organizational values (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011). Kotter and Heskett (1992) indicated that strong organizational cultures encourage to share organizational values and goals across the organization, facilitating the rapid adaptation of these values to new employees. Business managers empower their employees to take part in the critical decision making process within a healthy organizational culture. Miguel (2015) indicated that the involvement of the employees in the organizational decision-making process is critical for enhancing performance. When engaged in the organizational decision-making process, employees may build a sense of ownership and obligation (Engelen et al., 2014). As employees build a culture of ownership and obligation, their loyalty and commitment towards the organization increases substantially even without close supervision (Denison, 1990; Nwibere, 2013; Pinho et al., 2014). When employees and business managers build respect and integrity among themselves, they can support each other and integrate their expertise and experience to enhance corporate performance (Miguel, 2015). Business managers with a strong organizational culture use open and transparent communication to inspire employees and enhance performance (Kohtamaki et al., 2016; Senaji et al., 2014). In an organizational culture with open communication, organizational members easily share relevant information across the organization (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2014). Transparent communication involves a high level of participation by all members of the organization. When organization members engage in transparent communication, all members of the organization have a high degree of engagement (Miguel, 2015). Establishing a set of organizational standards and trends mainly involves developing a well-defined communication channel between managers and employees (Schein, 2010). Cao et al. (2015) indicated that business managers may use the communication channel in order to create transparent communication to promote a culture of sharing and teamwork among organizational members. A strong organizational culture is critical for motivating the employees of the organization (Schein, 2010). Motivated employees are the key drivers for achieving organizational goals and enhancing organizational performance (Fiordelisi & Ricci, 2014; Simoneaux & Stroud, 2014). Motivated employees make productive use of their time to perform their daily tasks (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011). Business managers and employees with a strong organizational culture have an exceptional professional quality which leads to the enhancement of organizational performance (Pinho et al., 2014). According to Busse (2014), professional quality includes three main elements: respect and dignity between managers and employees, strong commitment to customer services, and motivation and moral engagement for achieving organizational goals. In a strong organizational culture, business managers may establish a set of formal rules and trends of doing business (Denison, 1990; Flamholtz & Randle, 2011; Simoneaux & Stroud, 2014). Customers and other stakeholders may perceive and use the culture and work trends of members of the organization to distinguish the organization from other organizations (Childress, 2013; Cian & Cervai, 2014). Management with weak organizational culture has a significant potential to affect business profitability of the organization (Shahzad et al., 2012). If the organizational culture is weak, the existence of the organization is at risk since the members of the organization have different values and beliefs, where they may work against the priorities of the management (Eaton & Kilby, 2015). Childress (2013) indicated that in a week corporate culture, there is always a challenge for employees to identify the values of the organization and establish the appropriate business process in order to achieve the organizational goals. Flamholtz and Randle (2011) indicated that employees with a weak organizational culture may act in a way that is inconsistent with organizational goals due to inadequate communication and lack of clear direction from the leadership.

Effective Organizational Culture

Effective organizational culture is an amalgamation of strong organizational culture and positive organizational culture. In a strong organizational culture, organizational members behave in a manner which consistent with organizational values. In a positive organizational culture, employees understand and share the corporate goals and values across the organization (Flamholtz & Randle, 2012). Childress (2013) indicated that an effective organization culture is a combination of five sub-organizational cultures: healthy customer service, employee-oriented management, strong interpersonal relationship, exemplary leadership, and ethical decision-making process. Hartnell et al. (2011) indicated that business managers deploy an effective organizational culture to shape employee attitudes, improve operational effectiveness, and increase financial performance in the organization. Business managers deploy an effective organizational culture to create a healthy working environment in order to enhance performance in the organization (Flamholtz & Randle, 2012; Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014; O'Reilly et al., 2014; Pinho et al., 2014; Shahzad et al., 2012). Flamholtz and Randle (2011) indicated that an effective organizational culture is an asset while an ineffective culture is a liability for organizational performance. Business managers with an effective organizational culture encourage an innovative business environment (Givens, 2012). Engelen et al. (2014) indicated that effective organizational culture sustains employee-focused leadership, sound interpersonal relationship, and ethical decision-making process. Low employee turnover and high employee satisfaction are characteristics of an effective organizational culture (Hartnell et al., 2011). An effective organizational culture is important to motivate and retain competent and trustworthy employees in the organization (Berg & Wilderom, 2012; Eaton & Kilby, 2015). Teamwork is an important factor in achieving a common organizational goal. Effective organizational culture involves shared values and common purpose to develop a sense of teamwork (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011; Schein, 2010). Wiewiora et al. (2014) indicated that business managers deploy an effective organizational culture to promote teamwork and information sharing environment. In an effective organizational culture, business managers and employees work together to enhance corporate performance (Childress, 2013; Schein, 2010). Customer service: a source of sustainable competitive advantage, is an important responsibility for business managers in an effective organization culture (Berg & Wilderom, 2012; Givens, 2012; Miguel, 2015). In an effective organizational culture, employees share the organizational values and beliefs (Denison, 1990). As employees share the organizational values and beliefs, they are inspired to accomplish organizational goals by delivering a professional customer service (Childress, 2013). In an effective organizational culture, business managers deploy employee-focused and transformational leadership to enhance performance in the organization. Veiseh et al. (2014) found that effective organizational culture and transformational leadership are connected with a positive relationship. Transformational business managers promote collaboration and teamwork (Wiewiora et al., 2014). As business managers promote collaboration and teamwork within the organization, employees may benefit from supportive alliance and mutual expertise (Man & Luvision, 2014). In a supportive and friendly business environment, employees are motivated to deliver better performance (Veiseh et al., 2014;

Wiewiora et al., 2014). Strong interpersonal relationship is an important element of an effective organizational culture (Engelen et al., 2014). When there are strong interpersonal relationships within an organization, employees may positively communicate with their managers, and share their ideas and opinions without reservation and hesitation (Nongo & Ikyanyon, 2012; Veiseh et al., 2014). Busse (2014) indicated that business managers deploy an open-door policy and strong interpersonal communication with their employees in order to build a high degree of faith in the leadership. When employees are satisfied and have faith in their leadership, they would build a sense of ownership and obligation towards the organization, which is an important factor in engaging and inspiring employees to achieve better performance (Denison, 1990; Nongo & Ikyanyon, 2012).

The Role of Organizational Culture in the Corporate Group

A corporate group is a combination of two or more legal independent member companies with different business segments under one corporation with the power of control, governance, and leadership (Eukeria & Favourate, 2014; Gajewski, 2013). Under a corporate group business structure, member companies may involve with similar or diversified products and services from a different business sectors and geographical locations (George & Kabir, 2012). Organizational culture is an important element to unify various units and divisions in the corporate group structure (Kenny, 2012). The organizational culture must align with the corporate business strategy. Eaton and Kilby (2015) indicated that 68% of corporate business managers in the world believe that their organizational culture does not align with their business strategy. Several empirical evidences in the area of corporate groups showed that without the support of effective organizational culture, managers fail to implement and maintain their strategy (Eaton & Kilby, 2015; Weber & Tarba, 2012). Cultural integration between corporate office and member companies is also a key factor of the performance of the corporate group (Idris et al., 2015). Weber and Tarba (2012) showed that 89% of newly acquired businesses in the United States of America fail to succeed because of a lack of cultural integration between corporate office and member companies. Whalen (2014) indicated that organizational culture change initiatives in corporate groups have more than 50% failure rate. Business managers believe that establishing an effective organizational culture in the corporate group is important to manage and lead diversified companies under the corporate group (Lee & Gaur, 2013; Neffke & Henning, 2012). Many well-known business managers confirmed the benefits of deploying diversified business strategy with an effective organizational culture to enhance performance in the organization (Kenny, 2012). Research findings show that when diversification supports with effective organizational culture, diversified companies outperform the other companies (Gajewski, 2013; George & Kabir, 2012; Lee & Gaur, 2013). In contrast, Coad and Guenther (2013) indicated that diversification activities contribute less financial return in the short-term, but high financial return and competitiveness in the long-term. Business managers with a diversified business strategy may benefit from many opportunities in an effective organizational culture (George & Kabir, 2012). The key benefits are: sharing limited resources, economies of scale, taking the advantages of cost saving, strategic adjustments and financial economics, and experience sharing among managers of member companies in the group (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011; Hashai & Delios, 2012; Man & Luvision, 2014). In a business acquisition and merger process, it is vital for management to integrate with the different cultures of merging companies (Eaton & Kilby, 2015). Hirsch (2015) indicated that 70% of newly acquired businesses fail to integrate with the organizational culture of the corporate group, and 83% fail to increase the shareholder value. Tarba et al. (2017) indicated that synergy potential (similarities and complementarities) between high-tech merging companies, and effectiveness of post-acquisition integration of organizational culture positively influence the overall acquisition performance of merging high-tech companies. Business managers use collaborative organizational culture to make a successful integration between member company culture and corporate culture (Gajewski, 2013; Kenny, 2012). Latif and Ullah (2016) indicated that collaborative culture and internal service quality have a direct and positive impact on the organizational performance whilst internal service quality partially mediates the relationship between collaborative culture and organizational performance. The corporate group leadership encourages a decentralized organizational structure to empower general managers of each company and to distribute power and responsibility (Kenny, 2012). Weber and Tarba (2012) indicated that the decentralized organizational structure is important for delegating accountability and power at the levels of member companies. Zahavi and Lavie (2013) indicated that within the corporate group, general managers and divisional managers need to perform like small business owners. General Managers of member companies are responsible for the profitability and return on capital employed at each company level (Cian & Cervai, 2014). Managers of business units have to understand their customer demands in delivering a competitive service at the business unit level (Kenny, 2012). It is necessary to incorporate an appropriate and consistent performance measurement tool to evaluate the role of organizational culture and performance of each division and Member Company within the corporate group (Eukeria & Favourate, 2014; Zahavi & Lavie, 2013). Effective corporate groups typically use return-on-capital, net profit, or earnings per share to evaluate the performance of member companies (Eukeria & Favourate, 2014).

The Indian Corporate Landscape: A New Era of Transformation

The Indian corporate sector has experienced exponential growth in the past 30 years. With a rising middle class, a tech-savvy youth population, and the increasing global integration of the economy, Indian companies are becoming leaders in sectors ranging from Information Technology (IT) to Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) and automotive.

What sets these companies apart is their ability to take calculated risks, embrace innovation, and drive change across industries. They are not just focused on profit; many also prioritize sustainability, social impact, and community development. This shift in focus from mere financial success to broader value creation has allowed Indian corporations to build lasting legacies.

2. Examples of Indian Corporates Transforming Possibilities

1. Reliance Industries: Revolutionizing Digital Connectivity

Reliance Industries, under the leadership of Mukesh Ambani, has become a prime example of how transforming possibilities can reshape entire industries. The launch of Jio, India's largest telecommunications service provider, completely disrupted the telecom market. Jio's arrival brought affordable 4G internet to millions of Indians, democratizing internet access in the country and fostering a digital transformation.

Before Jio, internet penetration in India was limited, and data prices were exorbitantly high. By offering free voice calls and dirt-cheap data plans, Jio radically shifted the telecommunications landscape, forcing competitors to revise their business models. Jio is a testament to how Reliance turned a highly competitive and mature sector into an innovative powerhouse that reached unprecedented heights.

2. Tata Group: Transforming the Global Business Landscape

The Tata Group, one of India's oldest and most respected conglomerates, has been at the forefront of transforming possibilities for several decades. From steel to automotive and technology, the Tata Group has continually redefined what is possible.

The acquisition of Jaguar Land Rover in 2008 is a prime example of this transformation. Tata Motors, which once focused on the domestic Indian market, redefined its global strategy and became an international force by acquiring one of Britain's most iconic automotive brands. Under Tata's leadership, JLR was revitalized, and its sales surged, bringing new levels of profitability and innovation. This acquisition allowed Tata Motors to transcend geographical and sectoral boundaries, challenging the preconceived notion of what an Indian automaker could achieve on the global stage.

Moreover, Tata's commitment to sustainability through Tata Power and its efforts to make India's rural areas more energy-efficient showcases how the group is transforming possibilities in the energy and infrastructure sectors.

3. Infosys: Enabling Global IT Transformation

When Infosys was founded in 1981 by Narayana Murthy and his colleagues, it marked the beginning of India's rise in the global IT services industry. What started as a small startup with just seven people has now become a multi-billion-dollar corporation that provides technology and consulting services to businesses worldwide.

Infosys was one of the first companies to make use of the "offshoring" model, where business processes were outsourced to India due to its relatively low labor costs and highly skilled talent pool. This model allowed Infosys to provide world-class services to global clients, transforming how businesses across industries accessed IT solutions.

Moreover, Infosys has embraced digital transformation by shifting its focus from traditional software services to cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and cloud computing. Today, Infosys is not just a service provider but a strategic partner to companies looking to undergo digital transformations themselves.

4. Biocon: Redefining Healthcare Innovation

Biocon, India's largest biopharmaceutical company, founded by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw in 1978, is another excellent example of transforming possibilities. Biocon focuses on developing affordable biotechnology solutions, especially for diabetes, cancer, and autoimmune diseases.

One of the key innovations is the development of Insulin, which made affordable treatment options available to millions of diabetic patients globally. Through continuous research and development, Biocon has expanded into the global biotech market and now provides high-quality, affordable drugs to people worldwide.

Mazumdar-Shaw's vision of "affordable healthcare" has transformed possibilities for millions in developing countries by offering world-class medical solutions at competitive prices. Her success has not only brought innovation to the forefront of the pharmaceutical industry but has also positioned India as a global leader in biotechnology and biosimilars.

5. Mahindra & Mahindra: Transforming Mobility with Sustainability

Mahindra & Mahindra, one of India's leading automobile manufacturers, has also made significant strides in transforming possibilities within the automotive industry. Traditionally known for its rugged SUVs and tractors, Mahindra has now turned its focus toward sustainable mobility. The company made a bold entry into the electric vehicle (EV) market with the launch of the Mahindra e2o and has been a key player in India's growing EV ecosystem.

Mahindra has also embraced the concept of shared mobility with its partnership in Ola Electric and by focusing on electric-powered public transport. In doing so, it is addressing some of India's most pressing challenges: air pollution and unsustainable energy consumption. Mahindra's willingness to pivot to green technologies in a traditional industry shows how Indian corporates can create new possibilities for the future of the planet.

3. Key Drivers of Transformation in Indian Corporates

1. Innovation and Technology

Indian corporates are increasingly investing in research and development (R&D) to drive innovation. They understand that staying competitive in today's fast-evolving global marketplace requires continuous technological advancement.

2. Globalization

With the world becoming increasingly interconnected, Indian companies are expanding their horizons. By venturing into global markets, they're transforming possibilities not just for themselves but for the entire Indian economy.

3. Sustainability

Sustainability is no longer an afterthought. Indian corporates are increasingly adopting green practices and building businesses that are environmentally responsible. This focus on sustainability is transforming possibilities by fostering long-term value creation.

4. Social Impact

Many Indian corporates are aligning their business goals with societal progress. Companies like Tata, Infosys, and Biocon are investing in education, healthcare, and environmental initiatives that are transforming the lives of millions.

Companies elevating workplace culture in India

In the dynamic world of Indian workplaces, a company's culture plays a crucial role in deciding its productivity, employee morale, and overall brand reputation. By now, many companies have realised the importance of maintaining a positive, unique as well as engaging culture. It not only attracts the best talent but retains them for the long run and keeps them motivated, which translates into better products and services, contributing to the overall brand's success.

On the other hand, companies that fail to do so face adverse impacts on their performance and employee results. Not only does this lead to increased employee turnover but a significant drop in the quality of the products or services as well. Hence, it has become critical to understand how a positive and strong company culture can be cultivated.

Flipkart's Big Billion Days' Gong

Flipkart, one of India's e-commerce giants, has taken a unique approach to celebrating its success during its annual Big Billion Days sale. So, instead of traditional methods, the employees ring a gong every time a significant sale is made.

Though appears a small step, this quirky tradition adds an element of festivity and creates an energetic and celebratory atmosphere. This in turn reinforces the sense of achievement among the workforce.

Zomato's Zoment

Next is Zomato, a leading food delivery platform, which has introduced 'Zoment'. It is a tradition where employees are granted a paid day off on their work anniversary. This practice not only acknowledges and celebrates each employee's commitment to the company but also contributes to increased job satisfaction and loyalty.

Wingify's Taco Tuesday

Yet another great example is Wingify, a software company, where employees break the midweek monotony with Taco Tuesday. This tradition involves gathering every Tuesday to enjoy tacos. However, this adds more than the delightful culinary experience, fostering a sense of camaraderie and providing an opportunity to connect and get to know each other well. This helps in creating a positive work environment.

BookMyShow's Fika Fridays

Next is 'Fika Fridays' by BookMyShow, an online ticketing platform. This concept is inspired by the Swedish concept of taking a coffee break to connect with colleagues. Here, employees get to engage in an informal discussion over coffee or tea. This provides a great opportunity to build stronger bonds and relationships within the workplace.

OYO's Ghar Ka Khana Day

The next example we have is a hospitality company, OYO. It has introduced Ghar Ka Khana (Home-Cooked Food) Day in which employees bring and share homemade dishes. This tradition not only promotes a sense of community but also celebrates the diverse culinary heritage of the workforce.

Myntra's 'Myntra's Got Talent'

Last but not least is Myntra's Got Talent. Myntra is an online fashion platform that organises a talent show named Myntra's Got Talent. During these events, employees showcase their non-work-related skills and talents. This adds an element of entertainment and creativity to the otherwise routine workplace.

The rise of Gen Z entrepreneurship

Generation Z is the most entrepreneurial generation yet, with platforms and technology lowering barriers to entry for launching businesses or side hustles. One report found that half of Gen Z aspires to start their own business. Starting a business using social media platforms, like TikTok or Instagram, has further fueled this trend, offering tools to monetize creativity and reach global audiences with minimal upfront investment. Unlike prior generations, Gen Z sees traditional employment as only one of many options. A corporate job is no longer viewed as the default; rather, it is one of several avenues to achieve financial independence and personal fulfillment. According to a recent report on workplace wellbeing, Gen Z is the only generation that prioritizes flexibility in where and when they work over competitive benefits. With the gig economy offering unparalleled flexibility and scalability, many young professionals are turning side hustles into primary income sources. This generation's comfort with diversifying income streams mirrors a broader cultural shift: the idea that work should be adaptable to life, not the other way around.

Rethinking People Leadership

For business leaders, the takeaway is clear: Gen Z expects more from work, and meeting these expectations requires a fundamental shift in leadership strategy. Here are three steps to engage this demographic effectively:

1. **Embrace individuality:** Gen Z values being seen as individuals, not cogs in a machine. Leaders must invest in understanding their employees' unique goals, strengths and challenges. This includes fostering meaningful relationships and tailoring career development plans.
2. **Redefine Work Culture:** Flexibility is paramount. Remote and hybrid work models are not just perks — they are expectations. Moreover, companies must create cultures that emphasize personal growth, mental health and work-life integration.
3. **Prioritize Purpose Over Profit:** Gen Z seeks purpose in their work. They want to know how their contributions make a difference, both within the company and in the wider world. Organizations that align with this desire by championing sustainability, inclusivity and social impact will have a competitive edge in attracting top talent.

Result & Findings

India's approach to work is a fascinating mix of tradition and evolving trends. A strong work ethic and dedication were traditionally paramount, often leading to extended hours. However, there's a growing shift towards achieving a healthier work-life balance. Respect for hierarchy remains deeply ingrained, with deference shown to senior colleagues and titles commonly used in everyday interactions.

Table 2: The difference between Indian and Western work culture

Aspect	Indian Culture	Western Culture
Hierarchy and Respect	Emphasis on hierarchy and respect. Clear hierarchical structure with well-established authority. Titles and formalities play a significant role. Decision-making often involves consultation with higher-ups.	Emphasis on open communication and a flatter hierarchy. Decision-making processes may be more decentralized.
Relationship Building and Teamwork	Strong emphasis on building personal connections. Collaborative and friendly atmosphere. Teamwork is highly valued. Decisions made collectively. Success attributed to the entire team's efforts.	Emphasis on individual achievements. Recognition of personal accomplishments. Success attributed to individual efforts rather than the collective team.
Work-Life Balance	Shift towards recognizing the importance of work-life balance. Growing awareness of employee well-being. Desire to establish a healthier equilibrium between professional and personal life.	Emphasis on structured work hours. Clear distinction between professional and personal time. Time management is crucial.
Regional Diversity	Significant influence of regional variations. Each region contributes unique flavors and practices. Fosters an environment of inclusivity and adaptability. Professionals encouraged to appreciate and learn from different customs and traditions.	May exhibit more standardized practices influenced by broader cultural context. Less influenced by regional differences.
Individual Achievements	Less emphasis on individual achievements. Success attributed to the collective team's efforts.	Strong emphasis on individual achievements. Recognition of personal accomplishments. Success attributed to individual efforts rather than the collective team.
Efficiency and Time Management	Shift towards recognizing the importance of efficiency and productivity.	Emphasis on efficiency and productivity. Work hours structured. Time management is crucial.
Cultural Homogeneity	Diverse regional variations contribute to cultural diversity.	May exhibit more standardized practices influenced by broader cultural context.

Conclusion

The future of work in India is advancing rapidly, offering both significant challenges and abundant opportunities. This transformation in work dynamics, fueled by technological advancements and shifting economic landscapes, demands that individuals equip themselves with a diverse skill set. This includes digital literacy, critical thinking, adaptability, effective communication, entrepreneurial acumen, and an unwavering commitment to continuous learning to thrive in the job market. Organizations that proactively adjust to these trends will be better positioned to attract and retain quality talent, driving their success in the evolving job market. Getting the opportunity to be your own boss is perhaps one of the most coveted and aspirational positions that we can strive for. What we often don't hear about, though, is the many little failures that cement the way there though, or the courage that it really takes to take that leap. Because contrary to popular belief, entrepreneurship is not for everybody. And it requires true stamina to see something through beyond the initial phases of establishing an idea in the market (not an easy job in itself) beyond thoughts on paper to the point that it attains any semblance of stability from where it can keep scaling. In those early years, it takes grit to fight against the obstacles and an all-powering faith even when nobody else agrees.

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