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## MISSION STATEMENTS- A STUDY OF INTENT AND INFLUENCE

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**Abstract:** Businesses like ships have destination, crew members and course. Getting the behaviors of diverse people coalesce around a central theme is a major challenge for the top management. In this context vision and mission statements have emerged as strategic tools. The values espoused in the mission and vision can act a powerful pull for people who identify with them and emotionally charge them to perform passionately. The value congruence between what an organization stands for and of its members can transform the jobs into a mission with a higher order meaning. This study aimed to discover the values that are espoused by the management of companies operating in India and what is the perceived reality at the receivers' side. Mission statements are no longer used as decorative devices rather the espoused values are enacted by managers in their behavior and policies. Further respondents feel that mission do have an influence on their thinking and behavior.

[PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

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Businesses like ships have destination, crew members and course. Getting the behaviors of diverse people coalesce around a central theme is a major challenge for the top management. In this context vision and mission statements have emerged as strategic tools. The values espoused in the mission and vision can act a powerful pull for people who identify with them and emotionally charge them to perform passionately. The value congruence between what an organization stands for and of its members can transform the jobs into a mission with a higher order meaning. This study aimed to discover the values that are espoused by the management of companies operating in India and what is the perceived reality at the receivers' side. Mission statements are no longer used as decorative devices rather the espoused values are enacted by managers in their behavior and policies. Further respondents feel that mission do have an influence on their thinking and behavior.

### INTRODUCTION

In April 2003, Sony announced a new line of consumer electronics products range but under the brand name Qualia, the brand name intended its customers to experience feelings of welcome with open arms (Williams, 2003). Toyota redesigned its best selling car Camry and replaced its sign off from 'Toyota everyday' to 'get the feeling'. Toyota now believed that it is not enough for a car company to compete on basis of performance any more; the new competition is on emotion (Elliot, 2001).

The right brain orientation appeals to reason and urged people to perform better. Corporate systems rely heavily on sanctions to extract obedience and conformance to expectations set by corporate agenda. The strategy seeks to eliminate distractions and thereby aims to make it impossible to avoid work. (Fishman,1999). But this approach is limited and one sided.

### LEFT AND RIGHT ORIENTATION

The appeal to reason has its own limits. Rational appeal can pull performance up a threshold but not beyond. People can be forced to perform for the fear of loss but this leads to work without spirit. Many industries rely on customer contact. What plagues these industries is not similarity of equipments and technology but also the indistinguishable customer contact. A high degree of common content in corporate training manuals and standard operating procedures causes this. Coping with customer situations yields similar robot like responses. Workers performances are marred by lack of real commitment and emotions. The real challenge in making a

quantum jump lay in by developing dual appeal to both reason and non-reason. The idea is to develop a connection between the people and organization beyond the narrow confined of the reason.

Organizations must become places of soul gratification along with sanctuaries of economic satisfactions. What differentiates a job in a workplace and service in a church or a temple? The task acquires a new dimension in these contexts. The more menial is a job more worthy it becomes. People sweep floors, clean shoes and do other odd jobs with unparalleled sincerity and earnest. But how does this transformation takes place? Something that makes little sense at rationalistic level makes eminent sense at non-rationalistic level. It is this sense after all that transforms an ordinary person into something extraordinary. The mundane task acquires a dimension that catapults it into something of higher relevance and value. Behaviors move into the domain of inexplicability bordering so called domain of non-reason. It is identification with the cause that is primal force in these situations.

The job unless infused with higher order relevance remains a chore. It is something done for 'them' but surely not for 'self'. But when a higher order connect is developed the job becomes an opportunity, a reward and a gift. The job needs to be transformed into a meaningful activity. Thus businesses have a challenge of appealing to its people both at lower level of sustenance and at a higher level of existence. Vision and mission statements, declarations, credos, mottoes, oaths, aspirations are used to suggest explicitly what needs to be done (Mark 2001). Where are you headed must be stated correctly and concisely and cared for passionately. One should be proud of where one is headed (Peter and Austin 2007). Vision empowers and helps people in making smart choices and excites them to reach for what they truly desire (Blanchard 2007). Vision is important in establishing the purpose of the enterprise; coordinate people actions and efforts; inspire and invite commitment; and create future of the company (Wall, 1992). Two primary purposes that mission statements serve (Klemm et al 1991) are communication with external publics and motivate employees internally.

#### THE RATIONALE

Theory of reasoned action proposes that people need reason for the action. If a business corporation wants its people to give the best performance then proper reasoning must be advanced for doing so. One of the ways to convey the fundamentals of the corporation is to use business charter. In the last two decades they have emerged as a commonly deployed direction providing tools. About half of the U.S. business corporations had some kind of statement to the effect of mission or vision statement (Levering, 2000). This number was double of what was further ten years ago in eighties.

One of the reasons for their proliferation is that these try to capture the elusive essence of the company. Besides a good value statement can act as ultimate control system. When values are agreed upon it does away the need to monitor and control. Similarly, when people share same values it built quality within. Finally, in modern day business situations, the decisions or actions have to be taken in an instant as the situations arise. There is no opportunity to refer to rule- book. The action governing values have to be internalized (Frarnham, 1993). Many outstanding performers owe their performance to inscribing their vision and mission in the hearts and minds of their people (Ahmad and Chopra 2004).

The lure of immediate success often causes firms to be myopic get tactical. Consequently small, frequent, and incremental tactical maneuvers start characterizing the core identity. What sets apart the companies that endure success is their ability to clearly demarcate between what is to be preserved as constant what is open to change. The core purpose and values for these companies remain constant while business strategies and practices change as per the changing environment (Collins, J.C. and J.I. Porras, 1996). The mission must answer fundamental questions why a company is in business, and what it wants to become and how growth is to be achieved (Terrill and Middle brooks, 2003). Vision involves answering questions about your identity as to who you are, where you are headed or going and what are guiding values. For vision to become a reality it must be communicated and lived (Blanchard and Stoner 2003).

Vision serves as a guide as to what core to be preserved and direction of progress. The core ideology defines

the enduring character or consistent identity of the organization. The two elements in the core ideology are core values (the timeless tenets like respect for individuals in HP) and core purpose (reason for being like for Walt Disney making people happy). Purpose acts as a guiding star on the horizon. The role of the leader is to set vision and ensure that people not only see it rather live and breathe in their actions. Vision of little use unless communicated and reinforced (Welch 2005). On the issue of whether companies really practice their professed values regarding various stakeholders like employees, customers and society in their missions answer a study arrived at was 'sometimes' (Bartkus and Glassman, 2008).

In terms of relationship between employees and management two types of companies can be distinguished (Wall, 1992): companies with vague sense of despair and resignation and companies with a feel of excitement and energy. This feel in both cases is not attributable to physical aspects. Three elements that set apart the energetic companies are shared purpose, shared values and the presence of leadership. Shared purpose allows sight to go beyond the immediate details of work that people generally get involved in. It gives them a mission. Shared values bind the people together around some core beliefs that establish the internal culture. Finally leadership is critical in sustaining the culture and direction. Leaders inspire commitment that is much more than compliance.

Two schools of thought can be distinguished about mission and vision (Campbell and Young, 1990). One looks at the mission in terms of business strategy and the other takes the philosophical and ethical angle. The strategy school views mission as a strategic tool that defines the commercial rationale and target market. The philosophical school views missions as cultural glue that makes the organization work as collective unity. In some sense, the strategy aspect of mission can influence the minds of the people while the philosophical or ethical aspects influence the hearts of the people. Companies like Southwest, Cisco, NUMMI and SAS Institute convey the larger purpose of the organizations and create differentiating performances. People can not be motivated if they believe that what they are doing is worthless or violates their fundamental values (Reilly 2000).

#### ADOPTION AND PRACTICE

Almost ten years ago one study discovered the widespread use of mission and vision statements by the business corporations in India. One out of every two companies used vision as a management principle (Sen, 1996). In an early study in the Indian context three aspects were explored (Verma, 2004): the extent of usage of vision and mission statements by the companies operating in India; the physical structure; and contents of these statements. Out of 200 companies from the most valuable companies a total of 143 were discovered to have a formal mission and mission statement. Prima facie it appears these statements have become of the commonly followed business agenda. Babu (2008) reported that Indian managers do not exploit the power of these statements. However younger companies and organization in IT domain have greater dialogue on vision and values compared to brick and mortar systems. Vision describes the corporate character like a brand charter spells out the brand's DNA. Identity lends meaning, consistency, and character to brand so does a mission and vision. Brand identity defines its individuality, goals, ambitions, values, basic truths and recognition signs (Kapferer, 1992).

Business corporations are fast moving into parity trap. The resource structures of firms in an industry do not differ much. It is prompted by mobility of technology, men, capital and other resources. It is in this background like brands, firms have to bank upon the invisibles to cultivate superiority. Corporate vision is one step in this direction of building character and identity to unleash and harness human potential. Corporate identity can be articulated to reveal its philosophy and strategy. This is communicated through communications, behaviors, and symbolism. One of the important methods of communicating the identity to both internal and external public is mission statement (Leuthersser and Kohli, 1997). The message embedded in mission statement also acts as disciplining device. This achieved by mounting pressure on people to act in sync the mission (Morsing, 2006).

#### THE STUDY

Vision and mission statements have gained recognition as tools of strategic importance. What is contained in these statements is important because of their influence on people behavior and resource allocation (Bar 1997). The values denoted or connoted by these provide direction, focus, and a sense of meaning to the work. Organizations of all kinds do employ these statements but the question remains do these really influence people in a system. The case of Tylenol poisoning provides evidence in support of the importance of these statements. The values came as an easy guide to managerial behavior In situations of emergencies and contingencies the blanks are easy to fill if the values are clearly and vividly communicated. The company's response during this juncture of ultimate crises was profoundly influenced by the values espoused in the mission of J&J (Nash ,1988). Ford's credibility suffered and it lost market share when it reluctantly took responsibility in recall of defective Firestone tires fitted on Explorer vehicles when it failed to live its professed value of quality as number one job.

A study (Davis et al 2007) attempted to figure out the influence of ethical contents in the mission statements on the students of the universities. The study found that students of the universities with ethical statements in their mission had significantly higher perceived character trait importance and character reinforcement in comparison to the universities that did not contain ethical statements in their missions. The mission however do not by themselves produce any orientation unless coupled with the overall strategic education process is adopted (Krohe,1995). Articulation of mission and creation of a sense of mission leads to numerous benefits (Campbell and Tawady, 1990). These include commitment and loyalty of employees; facilitation in selection, recruitment, promotion and development of people and greater cooperation and trust. Further, strong values can help decision- making. Decisions are often made on the judgment calls; values can improve the judgment calls and help them being consistent.

A contrarian belief also exists that mission statement have little tangible value. They are nothing more than a fad and an effort in window dressing. It is against this background the present study was under taken to discover the perception and influence of mission statements on the executive behavior. Specifically the following aspects were explored:

- The awareness of presence and structure of the mission
- The focus or emphasis (espoused values)
- The perceived consistency between the espoused values and manager behavior;
- The emotional buy in
- The behavioral influence of mission

A structured instrument was used for the purpose of the study. A thirteen item instrument was developed to capture the influence of mission on the executive behavior. The first two questions mapped the presence and the structure of mission. The second part of the questionnaire was given to exploring the values or concerns that companies emphasize trough their mission statements. The specific dimensions included the aspirations, core value, concern for people, and social responsibility. The prime reason for the inclusion of these dimensions was because these were found to be the commonly espoused. The purpose was to discover whether the company espoused values actually get across the target groups for whom they are meant. The question was aimed to measure the emphasis placed on a continuum of high emphasis to no emphasis with a do not know option at the end. The response this section will allow us to understand the extent of emphasis laid by companies on different espoused valued. Another section of the questionnaire attempted to gauge the extent of influence of mission on the people behavior.

The mission statement would get reduced to a hanging on the wall unless they are accompanied by corresponding manager behavior. Therefore it is essential that managers' exhibit value- behavior consistency. Therefore one question attempted to explore their consistency or lack of it. Do top managers really behave in synchronization with the espoused corporate values? Finally questions were included about the awareness, knowledge and influence of mission. The items were anchored on the scale of agreement to disagreement on a

five point scale. A judgmental convenience sample plan was used to administer the questionnaire. The study was limited to Delhi. The targeted respondent were middle level executive who were participants in executive master program in management at top two business schools in Delhi. In all a total of 150 questionnaires were distributed of which 116 were received of which 100 were found to be usable. Out of the total respondents 80 percent represented the middle management and rest of 20 per cent represented either the lower or higher management.

#### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Literature on vision and mission amply demonstrates the value of vision and guiding principles. These guide human behavior and define working relationships. Vision helps to shape employee relationships with each other and external publics or stakeholders especially with the customers. Many business organizations worldwide are driven by core values. The values drive thinking and creativity of all those involved in these organizations (Wall, Solum and Sobol, 1992).

#### COMPANY FOCUS

Missions are worded by because these communicate organizational aspirations and influence behaviors and resource allocation (Bart 1997). This way consistency and focus is achieved between intentions and actual behaviors. Mission provides direction by focusing attention on purpose, interests of stakeholders, and acting as control mechanism by providing values and behavioral benchmarks. What do companies lay stress on in their vision and mission statements? To discover the thrust areas the participants in the study were asked to provide responses the scale measuring extent of emphasis on six aspirations areas generally found in these statements. These included market, product and value leadership, wealth maximization and profit leadership. The data reveals that highly emphasized aspirations are: market leadership, product leadership and customer value leadership. Historically companies' focused goal used to be wealth or profit maximization. But now companies don't seem to focus as much on these ends as they on others. Only 38 and 27 percent of the respondents claimed that their company laid high emphasis on wealth and profit maximization as against 76, 66, and 65 percent for market leadership, product leadership and value leadership respectively. This finding is quite in line with the external focus proposed in the marketing concept. Levitt (1960) in his eminently philosophical concept of myopia in marketing laid foundation for a corporate orientation wherein it was urged that customer should serve as the pivot not the products. Profit is the reward a company gets for creating satisfied or delighted customer.

#### CORE VALUES

One of the important reasons for the articulation of mission and vision in a business corporation is to define and diffuse a set of beliefs and notions that guide people behavior. They communicate in explicit form as to what is important for the organization and what it cherishes. Often organizations that have strong leader acquire values and cultural orientation of that leader. Such cases include Virgin, IBM, and Hewlett Packard. The personal values of the leaders like Richard Branson, Sir Watson have found way in the corporate way of doing things of the companies they were behind. Such is also true for Indian business house like Tata, Ambani and Sriram group. It is now well accepted that the vision and mission statements are important tools for shaping the corporate culture. It is therefore expected that they would include important values that would guide people behavior and relationships among them.

Various instance of corporate misdemeanor have put the corporate conduct under scanner of various governmental and non- governmental watch groups. Ethics and transparency are no longer a matter of conscience rather it also makes good business sense. Universal values that form a corporate tapestry can envelop people and bonding based on trust. Accordingly the emphasis scores were obtained on the values such as honesty, ethics, transparency, conscience. It is revealed that honesty in dealings, adherence to code of ethics, and transparency are highly emphasized by companies in the present day business environment. Companies do seem to use mission to focus on universal values.

## CONCERN FOR PEOPLE

Business systems are predominantly human systems. People are the prime driving force behind any business.. Historically, Japanese firms were once upon a time known to give critical importance to human dimension of the business. Japanese leadership in various business fields is attributable to the excellent human performance. The Japanese culture focused on harnessing the human potential by creating structure and systems that were based on recognition of people as individuals and not as machines. This seems to be learning coming full circle. The ideas that originated from the land of rising sun traveled to Europe and America are also now visible in the Indian companies.

The critical role played by human resource in the corporate success requires that means must be adopted to foster the human excellence. In this regard recognition, trust, fair- play, dignity and recognition assume importance. It is found in the study that these companies do lay emphasis on people. Close to half of the sample respondents believe that their missions do pay high emphasis on these concern related dimensions and a thirty to forty percent think their companies pay 'some' emphasis on these issues.

## HUMAN RESOURCE

The human resource policy and practices have profound influence on shaping the people orientation in the business. A study (Verma, 2004) of the contents of mission statements revealed companies try to promote environment excellence, promote team orientation, empowerment, and worker satisfaction and encourage dissent as espoused values. It is widely recognized that in a highly competitive environment, human element is crucial in achieving excellent performance. Establishment of a set of global values and principles is essential for developing a shared mindset for the members of an organization. The actions in this regard can range from creating mission statement to writing corporate policy manuals (Ashkenas et al 1998).

Emotional buy in passion with which people perform their jobs can be a powerful differentiator. This is particularly true for firms that involve direct customer contact. The perception of respondents on the above dimensions revealed a mixed result. Companies do seek to foster an environment of professional excellence promote team orientation (54 and 56 percent respectively claimed to place high emphasis). Compared to other dimensions, respondents felt that worker satisfaction and empowerment is lesser emphasized. However not high emphasis is placed on worker satisfaction as a key to customer satisfaction.

## CUSTOMER FOCUS

In theory, a business exists to serve somebody outside the system. The customer has not been the focal point of business always. During the early period of evolution of business, the monopoly or near monopoly conditions assured easy survival and growth. Customer was not the dictator but the dictated. But with the intensifying competition businesses are forced to realize the imperative of being customer driven. The realization is downing upon the businesses that the sole reason and rationale for a business lies in customer. The customer the reason and customer satisfaction is the rationale. In clarifying the business purpose (Drucker, 1973) wrote that the purpose of a business is to create a satisfied customer. Jack Smith, CEO of General Motors, observed that customers are the ultimate arbiters of success and failure for a company therefore everything- all assets and decisions- should be focused on them.

But now the organizations seem to be making an attempt to promote customer focus and mindedness at least if one looks at the espoused values enacted in the mission and vision statements. Customer focus has become the key to getting the organization behave and create value to which customers say yes. Over seventy percent of the respondent in this study do agree that their mission statement laid very high emphasis on three constructs related to customer focus: attention on customer satisfaction, getting committed to the customer's cause and winning customer loyalty and trust. However approximately only fifty percent of respondents felt that very high emphasis is placed on getting out of way to serve customer and exceeding expectations

## QUALITY

If winning the customers is the goal then the instrument is excellent product quality and service quality .The

initial business focus on making the product and making it available is gradually shifting to provision of quality products and services. It is therefore, quality as a concept is now vigorously pursued. Quality is emerging as cultural construct cutting across entire business. Mission statements are used to signify quality as an important axis of business performance. The abundance of choice to customer has made quality as one of important drivers of productivity and profitability. On the flip side wide appreciation and adoption of quality is ceasing it to be a powerful competitive weapon. Quality therefore must become a moving target instead of destination. In a growing number of industries, quality has virtually disappeared as a differentiator. It is taken for granted. In such a background, quality needs to be promoted as one of core values governing a business.

Unlike the past when quality used to be one of the intermittent initiatives or drives taken off and on as when need arose, presence of quality concern in the vision and mission statements testify the importance attached to quality as one of core promoted values. As managers feel expected quality is a highly emphasized factor in corporate mission statements. On all the quality related dimensions like commitment to quality, encouragement of quality excellence, programs on quality, and adoption of best in class practices, more than fifty percent of respondents claimed that their mission laid high emphasis on these dimensions.

#### RISK TAKING

Even the strong companies that are given to status quo are exposed to a great risk. Markets now do not work and behave in predictable and stable fashion. Thus in a rapidly changing and unpredictable marketplace equilibrium is disturbed by innovations from unexpected quarters. The domain of innovation that earlier used to be confined to product or process is large seen from a larger context. Mere innovativeness in the product or production area is not sufficient. Accordingly innovation or innovativeness must percolate the entire organization.

Marketing innovations are now what distinguish a superior performer from the mediocre performer. Companies like Hindustan Lever, ITC, and TVS are attempting to create breakthrough nonincremental endeavors. In this study the perceived importance of innovation and entrepreneurial culture is visible through the expressions that appear in vision and mission statements. On this particular account the respondents felt that risk taking is not stress in the corporate mission. On most of the dimensions the scores on high emphasis has been found to be less than fifty percent. Only about thirty percent believed that their mission laid high emphasis on fostering risk taking and promotion of intrapreneurship. Thirty eight per cent believed their mission promote out of box thinking. On the whole risk taking has been emphasized but in moderation.

#### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Business entities are now scrutinized using a holistic perspective, especially in the context of their impact on society and environment. The area of social responsibility involves a concern about how acts of a person or institution have bearing on the interest of interests of others. Businesses' goals short term profits have to be harmonized with the long term societal needs (Bennet,1988). The risen societal concerns among various stakeholders is exerting pressure on managers to look beyond immediate marketing and financial metrics like sales and profits and incorporate ecological and social well being in their behaviors(Hitchcock and Willard, 2002). Many Indian businesses are now do see value in being a good corporate citizen (Ratnam 2006). But it is really making businesses socially and environmentally sensitive?

The societal concerns do seem to have seeped into the corporate conscience. The responses on the question about the extent of emphasis lay on this aspect in the mission and vision statements revealed that more than half respondents felt that this aspect highly emphasized. What is to be noticed here high emphasis. Behaving in socially consistent and responsible manner is encouraged. If the scores of the second column in the scale indicating the some emphasis is combined with the high emphasis then the scores on the most items jumps beyond eighty per cent. This suggests that companies do lay stress and encourage their members to be sensitive about society and behave accordingly.

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#### Enactment of Mission

Mission can be effective only when the core values embedded in them are enacted by members. Donkin (1994) observed that mission statements are nothing but a bunch of pretty words if these are not reviewed frequently and are acted upon. Missions fail to provide direction and inspiration if espoused values and managerial actions are inconsistent. Values must therefore underpin corporate behavior. How behaviors of the top echelons are decoded by lower rungs is crucial. The seriousness and earnestness of mission is revealed to lower rungs in many ways. In a study by Verma (1995) it was found that companies used Chairman's' speech to convey strategic intent to its publics. The perceived effect of liberalization policies initiated by the Indian government and the business challenges it unleashed were visible in speech contents. Companies employed these speeches to focus on things that were important to make corporate functioning in synch with the emergent realities.

Unlike the commonly held belief that mission statements do not go beyond being hollow statement. Scarcely do they convey the real business intent. But in the perception of executives in this study missions are no longer decorative devices. Rather they are used as a strategy tool. Managers' behavior does tend to reflect the values embedded in the corporate missions. Over eighty five percent of the executive strongly agreed or agreed to the issues like top manager living by the espoused values in mission and plans are made in consistency with the missions. On the other hand on only twenty two percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the fact that company uses mission only for decorative purpose only. An overwhelming percentage of over eighty percent of respondents do perceive value- behavior consistency with respect to mission enactment.

#### KNOWLEDGE, FEELINGS AND INFLUENCE

Mission statements would loose its purpose if the articulated thoughts do not get across to the member and there is lack of 'buy in'. In this regard an attempt was made to understand the knowledge and feelings of respondents of their missions. With respect to knowledge and understanding of missions close to ninety percent of respondents did know and understand the mission. Which implies a great number of people seems to be in the know of company mission. This wider understanding can potentially be helpful in bringing convergence and coherence in the actions of people working in the organization. Besides knowledge do respondents feel good and enthusiastic about company missions? If such a feeling is created by business missions it is likely to result in benefits like passionate and committed performance. In this regard, more than eighty percent respondents indeed felt good about company missions and like to work enthusiastically for them.

Does mission actually influence people behavior? Missions would have little value if they do not guide thinking and behavior of people. In this regard the study discovered that more than eighty percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statements measuring the influence of missions on individual's thinking,

missions acting as a point of reference. However the scores go lower down to sixty percent in regard to mission's role in resolving conflicts and doubts in the instances of ambiguity. Though relatively this level of agreement appears to low but nevertheless it does suggest that mission do have an instrumental role as a guide in ambiguous situations.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Mission and vision statements seek to create the superstructure uniqueness so established can go a long way in building competitive advantages that are not perfectly imitable. Based on the list of the aspirations, common concerns and values that companies seek to convey, this study sought to determine the executive perception. The message contained in the mission statements does seem to get across to the intended target audience. The lack of awareness or don't know responses have been found to be consistently low. Companies' mission statements lay high emphasis on among other things leadership, honesty and ethics, customer satisfaction, loyalty, commitment to quality. Two things that scored relatively lower on emphasis score were risk taking and welfare programs. Mission statements were once upon a time were criticized for being decorative motherhood statements with very little practical implications. It is not true any more. Highest disagreement was expressed to the statement suggesting that mission for decorative purpose only. On the contrary, respondents felt leaders and managers live by espoused values and long term plans are drawn in consistency with business mission. Further the contents of the mission influence thinking and act as point of reference for executive behavior. A strong agreement was found on issues whether mission make executive feel good and motivate to perform enthusiastically.

The firms can and used their charters to signify and overall intent and set normative framework specifying limits for behavioral legitimacy. A clearly worded and lived through mission can be used by top management as a powerful device in influencing decision making across the system. The normative benchmarks so set act as guides in prioritizing emphasis with respect to various business domains like employees, customers, quality, returns and corporate citizenship. This allows organization to converge around the key values and achieve harmony between vision, culture, strategy, and tactics across the length and breadth of the organization. Various corporate scandals including the Satyam (falsified accounts), AOL (inflated sales), AIG (accounting of deals) and various others have taken the world by surprise. This certainly throws light on the dark side of the business behavior. In this context missions assume greater importance in creating conditions for laying the structural mechanism whereby deviations are automatically detected and corrected.

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