

A Survey on Organizational Culture Based on Stephan Robbins's Theory (Case Study)

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Abstract. The main aim of this research is to evaluate an organizational culture based seven primary characteristics to identify it. Organizational culture is commonly known as the values, beliefs and basic assumptions that help guide and coordinate member behaviors. Appraising the organization on these seven characteristics then give a composite picture of the organization culture. Developing a better understanding of the organizational culture in which a quality improvement process is implemented can provide insight into what strategies an organization might undertake to improve readiness for implementation. Stephan Robbins's theory has been studied in Mashhad Electric Energy Distribution Company (MEEDC), a distribution system operator in the city of Mashhad, the capital city of Khorasan, Iran, with over 600 personnel. Eventually the results of statistical population assessment were negative and relatively negative also significant proposed solutions are represented to revise and reinforce the organizational culture of the company.

Keywords: organizational culture; Stephen P. Robbins; Likert scale; organizational behavior

1. Introduction

The concept of organizational culture first emerged in the 1970s and 1980s [1], and soon became one of the most influential but also most controversial concepts in management research and practice. According to Lewis (2002)[2] a universal definition of organizational culture has proven elusive, however it is generally considered to be the shared values, beliefs and assumptions that exist among employees within a company that help guide and coordinate behaviour [3].

Organizational culture is generally accepted to be a holistic and multidimensional concept that is historically determined and socially constructed. The values and beliefs that underlie organizational culture likely reflect what is most important to the founders and/or company leaders as they are responsible for the vision and purpose of the organization, and presumably exemplify and reinforce the core values and beliefs through their own behavior [3,4]. Organizational culture is also manifested through member dialogue and behaviors as well as organizational practice, Organizational culture and leadership[5]). According to Stephen P. Robbins theory organizational culture refers to a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization from other organizations. This system of shared meaning is on closer examination, a set of key characteristics that the organization values [6]. Despite the uncertainty of the concept's definition, the significance of culture is understood. Unfortunately, enhancement of the organizational culture is not considered as the most crucial responsibility of managers [7]. However, many researchers have described the culture as a predictive factor indicating success of an organization

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[8] .Dellobe, Haccoun, and Vendenberg (2000) have recently made reference to the understanding of the organizational culture as one of the most powerful theoretical tools for development of an organization. [9].

2. Importance of Organizational Culture

The reported effects of organizational culture on individual attitudes and behaviors as well as overall company performance are what make the phenomenon an attractive area of study. It is contended that organizational culture acts as a system of social control and can influence employees' attitudes and behaviors through the values and beliefs operating in a company [10]. Organizational culture has been shown to have a direct influence on staff satisfaction and commitment [11, 12]

Organizational culture holds the organization together and encourages employees not only to perform well but also to feel committed to the organization. Although organizational culture is implicit in organizational activities, researchers have proved that organizational culture does affect performance and efficiency. Organizational culture has been studied in relation to major organizational ideas and activities like creativity and innovation [13] and knowledge transfer. Furnham & Gunter (1993) summarize the functions of organizational culture as internal integration and coordination [14].

3. Theoretical Principles for Organizational Culture Assessment

This exploratory project is aimed to investigate the cultural organization based on characteristic as Stephen P. Robbins theory that as following:

Factor1: Innovation, Factor 2: Risk taking, Factor3: Leadership, Factor 4: Integration

Factor 5: Management support, Factor6: Control, Factor 7: Identity, Factor 8: Reward system

Factor9: Compromise with conflicts, Factor10: Communication patterns

4. Research Objectives

The intent of this research is to investigate dominated organizational culture based on years of work and education. In addition, organizational culture and subcultures in different layers in MEEDC have been identified by addressing the following research questions:

- What is the risk level in organization?
- How much managers support employees?
- How much is the integrity in organization?
- Possibility of innovation?
- How much is the feeling of identity?
- How is reward system?
- How is the dominated pattern communication?
- Is there any significant difference between manager's perception of organizational culture types?
- Is there any significant difference between employee's organizational culture based on their years of service?
- How is the compromise with conflict in organization?

5. Method

5.1. Participants

This is a descriptive research conducted as field study. The samples of this study consisted of employees work in 8 office of MEEDC company in Mashhad (N=200 but 185 complete)

5.2. Organizational Assessment Instrument

The questions were designed based on our goals and primary characteristics in Stephen P. Robbins theory [6] by our Consultants and experts (table1). All respondents were asked to rate their organizations' culture on a five-point Likert scale. In this scoring system, for each of the five response categories (completely disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and completely agree) a score of 1-5 was assigned, with the highest score of 5 being assigned to "completely agree

Table1 Questions in Questionnaire

Factor.	Questions.
Innovation and risk taking.	My company has welcomed the initiative and innovations.
	In my company the management prefers to do things in a typical way without innovation.
leadership.	In my company Organization's goals are clear for the staff.
	In my company lack of clear goals and priorities be seen.
Integrity.	In my company each part works independently.
	In my company different parts work coordinately to gether.
	In my company managers are working with the coordination and agreement.
Management support.	In my company If a problem occurs for me, I can count on my manger's support.
	my manager support my activities and efforts In my company.
	In my company possibility of getting help from my manager when I make a mistake.
Control.	my manager trust me In my company.
	employees control over their work In my company.
Identity.	In my company the destiny and success of organization is highly important to me.
	In my company my goals are different from the organization's.
	I do my best to organization's success.
	My job doesn't satisfy me.
Rewards system.	In my company reward based upon the performance.
	I feel my rewards is according to my performance.
	In my company reward is based on relations and connection.
Compromise with conflict.	In my company Managers pay attention to employees opinions even if they disagree with them.
	Problems are solved without confrontation in an effective way.
Communication patterns.	In my company I can get help from others when I face a problem.
	In my company it is Difficult to contact with managers when a problem occurs.

5.3. Procedure

Participants completed the questionnaire at work, either individually or in small groups, during a short training course like work shop to explain the questionnaires.

5.4. Data Analysis

We used random sampling. The overall cultural profile of an organization was then derived by calculating the average score of all respondents attitudes and then average score of answers were classified in four categories:

- Negative ($1 < \text{mean} < 1.75$)
- Rather negative ($< 1.76 \text{mean} < 2.5$)
- Rather positive ($2.51 < \text{mean} < 3.25$)
- Positive ($3.26 < \text{mean} < 4$)

Collected data were analyzed by the descriptive statistical method. We use the Cronbach's alpha for reliability of sub-scales to asses the items in this research.(Table 2). Results were presented based on the percentage frequency distribution tables and for each factor according to items

Table 2 Cronbach's alpha for reliability

Cronbach's alpha	Factor
0.5240	Innovation and risk taking
0.4703	Leadership
0.6891	Integrity
0.7313	Management support
0.4391	Control
0.4132	Identity
0.5949	Rewards system
0.6391	Compromise with conflict

6. Results

To provide an overview of the organizational culture of the average scores in each of the components measured. Attitudes of respondents (average score of answers) were classified in four categories:

- 1- Negative ($1 < \text{mean} < 1.75$) ,
- 2- Rather negative ($< 1.76 \text{mean} < 2.5$),
- 3- Rather positive ($2.51 < \text{mean} < 3.25$)
- 4- Positive ($3.26 < \text{mean} < 4$).

Based on the above classification of the respondent's answer in the different components of organizational culture, the evaluation in control and management support was negative and the other components are relatively negative. The important point is that the negative component of the evaluation (control and management support) are significant components of organizational culture. In fact, if employees feel they are under close observation and the managers and head managers don't trust them and they can't account manager's help also their support so in such situation we can't expect employees have a sense of belonging and commitment to the organization. Therefore, management attention in this area seems necessary.

In General the results showed that all components of the study population sample was negative and relatively negative. The lowest score 1.45 belong to the control and the highest was 2.15 ($1 < \text{mean} < 4$) belong to innovation and risk taking. Consequently, the dominant organizational culture was evaluated " a strong negative culture" in the company . To be more precise "a negative Orientation" relative to components of organizational culture is widely spread in organization (Table 3)

Table 3. Average score of each item

Items (component)	Number	Mean	Std.Deviation
Compromise with conflict	183	1.79293	0.7342
Control	181	1.4475	0.6614
Innovation	182	2.1484	0.5095
Integrity	178	1.97775	0.3971
Rewards system	183	1.9071	0.3737
Communication patterns	180	1.9111	0.5420
Management support	179	1.7207	0.6536
Leadership	178	1.7901	0.5870
Identity	178	1.7809	0.5444

7. Conclusion and Discussions

In this study we investigated organizational culture based on Stephen P. Robbins theory. The samples of this study consisted of employees work in 8 office of MEEDC company in Mashhad(N =200 but 185 complete). We used random sampling. Results showed that all components of the study population sample was negative and relatively negative. The lowest score of 1.45 belong to the control and the highest was 2.15 ($1 < \text{mean} < 4$) belong to innovation and risk taking. Consequently, the dominant organizational culture was evaluated "a strong negative culture" in the company.

It is proved that reforming an organizational culture is as difficult as developing it properly so organizational culture with the aim of increasing productivity should be changed. Due to this fact, we suggest following point to reform and modifying the MEEDC's organizational culture:

- **Training:**

Strengthening correct beliefs, attitudes and behavior patterns through appropriate educational programs for employees in different positions is one of the most important and most effective ways to improving organizational culture. The content of educational programs can be include:

- a- Subjects about the organization's goals and needs,
- b- The importance of the role of employee participation in the organization's success
- c- Expectations of management and staff.

In addition, Managers must specifically be trained regarding to importance of role in forming the organizational culture. In fact, they must learn proper attitudes then believe after those develop it in other layers.

- **Developing participation in organization:**

Employee's participation in decision making reinforces a sense of belonging, loyalty, identity and also reduces conflicts and collisions in organization. Using the proposals system is the simplest way to start employee's participation. It is obvious that employees should be sure and confident that the proposals are considered serious

- **System Performance evaluation:**

Personnel performance evaluation criteria should be designed and implemented. Personnel must be ensured that receiving rewards based on the quality and quantity of their activities

- **Self Monitoring and Self evaluation**
- **Employee participation in setting goals and solving problems**

Moreover, an organization should provide support to staff, make clear rules, promote innovation and ensure adequate coordination among departments and individuals. Organizations all over the world should emphasis on these work practices so that they can survive and benefit.

In summary, ability to measure organizational culture can help organizations and their managers to assess and examine organizational culture to improve performance. Also, a validated measure would provide a good foundation for useful studies that aim to relate organizational culture with other concepts of interest, innovation and knowledge management. If measuring organizational culture becomes possible then its influence on other organizational functions, like knowledge sharing, innovation and employee performance, can be empirically examined. [15]

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