What Are the Missing Pieces of the Organizational Culture Puzzle and How to Develop them through Management Practices

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Abstract. *Organizational culture is a concept that gets much less attention and priority when it comes to think about it, build it and reinforce it in the day to day work within an organization compared to business results. Regardless of the definitions and the approaches, culture is a matter of perception. For the purpose of this study, we defined the culture as the common beliefs and behaviors that keep people together in an organization. In order to find out what pieces are missing and how to deal with them, we conducted a qualitative study on 100 managers and key people working for two organizations (one operating in production and one company in the creative industries area). Each person answered a structured interview that included open questions related to the history of the company, its perspective for the future and what makes it different on the market. It also included 8 variables for which, after answering open questions, the participants were asked to evaluate their current level on a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 is maximum. These variables were: shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products or services, leadership effectiveness, business results and organizational commitment. The results showed that communication, followed by work-flow & procedures received the lowest scores in people's views. In terms of communication, there was a need for a mix between the structure and consistency provided by meetings and formal communication of the objectives, plans, and results, as well as a human and authentic internal communication system. The participants also emphasized the need to update and simplify the work-flows and procedures, as well as clearly communicate and explain their benefits. The highest score was registered for the quality of products and services, most of the participants being proud of them. There were significant differences between the perceptions of managers compared to key people and also between the production versus the creative industry. Leadership effectiveness was evaluated at a higher level when people could see their leaders display "human" leadership behaviors and not "undecisive" behaviors. As expected, people look at and believe in what their leaders do, not at what they say and they are ready to get on board when they can benefit from consistent management practices.*

Keywords*: Organizational culture; organizational commitment; leadership effectiveness; perceived business results.*

Introduction

Organizational culture is "the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that determines how it perceives, thinks about and reacts to its various environments" (Schein, 1996, p.236). According to Hartnell, Ou and Kinichi (2011), there are over 4,600 articles that have examined the topic of organizational culture since 1980. This number of articles shows the importance of the organizational culture and its influence on teams and individuals within an organization. From a practical perspective, the culture is described as "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 2004, p.4). It shows that the organizational culture affects how people behave and it matters in any plan aimed to develop people and organizations. Organizational or corporate culture is "the pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions that may not have been articulated but shape the ways in which people in organizations behave and the ways in which things get done" (Armstrong, 2014, p.130).

An important role in developing the organizational culture is held by leaders, especially the ones who shaped the organization in the past, by the critical incidents, by the need to maintain effective working relationships and by the environment. The organizational culture is composed of values (expressed in care and consideration for people, competence competitiveness, customer service, innovation, performance,

quality, and teamwork), norms, artifacts and management style. Harrison (1972) provides a classification of organizational ideologies in four categories: power-oriented, people-oriented, task-oriented and role-oriented. Schein (1984) classifies the cultures in four categories, as well: power culture (leadership resides in a few and tends to be entrepreneurial), role culture (power is balances between the leader and the bureaucratic structure), achievement culture (focus on personal motivation and commitment, excitement and impact) and support culture (people contribute out of a sense of solidarity).

There is no right or wrong culture. A culture is appropriate when it is relevant to the needs and circumstances of the organization and helps its performance. Within this frame, this study is aimed to understand managers and key people's perceptions of shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products or services, leadership effectiveness, business results and organizational commitment through the lenses of their contribution to their organizational goals. The study consists of a literature review about organizational culture, objective and hypotheses, methodology, results and discussion of the implications.

Literature review

Chhokar, Brodbeck, and House (2007) conclude that the term culture is used to refer to a set of parameters that differentiate the collectivities from each other in meaningful ways. The focus is on the "sharedness" of certain indicators among members. According to GLOBE researchers, culture was defined as "shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations" (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2007, p.3). Based on the literature review, GLOBE researchers operationalized culture in several quantitative dimensions: assertiveness, future orientation, gender egalitarianism, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, performance orientation, power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Culture is often manifested in two distinct ways: "As Is" (manifested common behaviors, institutional practices, prescriptions and proscriptions) and "Should Be". In the current study, the goal was to analyze the organizational culture as it is.

The GLOBE project was designed to assess the impact of societal culture and organizational culture on perceptions of effective leadership. By leadership, the GLOBE team means "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2007, p. 6). Under the current study, the respondents evaluated to which extent the behaviors of their leaders enhance the performance within their organization.

Culture as the collective programming of the mind manifests in several ways: symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Symbols, heroes and rituals can be labeled as "practices" according to Storge and Warner (2001). The core of culture is formed by values that are "broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (Storge & Warner, 2001, p.195).

When the national culture is translated into the functioning of an organization, there are effects on the level of the organizational structure (influenced mainly by power distance and uncertainty avoidance), motivation (influenced also by power distance and uncertainty avoidance), performance appraisal and management by objectives (influenced by individualism and power distance), strategic management (influenced by uncertainty avoidance) and the humanization of work which encompasses all the approaches that aim to make work more interesting and rewarding (influenced by masculinity and individualism).

Adding a practical perspective to the organizational culture frameworks, Mc. Cord (2017) considers that it is important for all team members to understand the ultimate goad and being free to problem-solve in order to get there and the strongest motivator is represented by contributing to the success and working in a great team of people who trust one another. She also points out the most important responsibility of managers which is building and developing their team: "the most important job of managers is to ensure that all team members are such high performers who do great work and challenge another" (Mc. Cord, 2017, p. 13).

Hartnell, Ou and Kincki (2011) applied Quinn and Rohrbaught's (1973) competing values framework (CVF) and tested the relationship between 3 culture types (clan, adhocracy, and market) and 3 major indices of organizational effectiveness (employee attitudes, operational effectiveness and financial effectiveness). Based on data from 84 empirical studies, with 94 independent samples, they found that clan, adhocracy, and market cultures are differentially and positively associated with the effectiveness criteria. The authors summarized the basic assumptions, beliefs, values, and artifacts underlying each cultural type together with the effectiveness criteria predicted to relate to each type as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *The competing values framework's four culture types*

Culture Type	Assumptions	Beliefs	Values	Artifacts (behaviors)	Effectiveness criteria
Clan	Human affiliation	People behave appropriately when they have trust in loyalty to, and membership in the organization	Attachment, affiliation, collaboration, trust, and support	Teamwork, participation, employee involvement, and open communication	Employee satisfaction and commitment
Adhocracy	Change	People behave appropriately when they understand the importance and impact of the task	Growth, stimulation, variety, autonomy, and attention to detail	Risk-taking, creativity, and adaptability	Innovation
Market	Achievement	People behave appropriately when they have clear objectives and are rewarded based on their achievement	Communication, competition, competence, and achievement	Gathering customer and competition information, goal-setting, planning, task focus, competitiveness, and aggressiveness	Increased market share, profit, product quality, and productivity
Hierarchy	Stability	People behave appropriately when they have clear roles and procedures are formally defined by rules and regulations	Communication, routinization, formalization, and consistency	Conformity and predictability	Efficiency, timeliness, and smooth functioning

(Hartnell, Ou, & Kincki, 2011)

The same CVF framework is considered a meaningful structure for the ideational aspects of organizational culture by Buschgens, Bausch, and Balkin (2013) who conducted a meta-analytic review that comprised 43 studies with a combined sample size of 6341 organizations. Their study confirmed their hypothesis that managers of innovative organizations most likely implement a developmental culture, which emphasizes an external and flexibility orientation. At the same time, group and rational cultures were to a certain extent consistent with the goals of an innovative organization.

Within any organization, the way people communicate and collaborate matters. As Aamodt (2010) mentions, most communication in organizations can be classified into four types: upward communication, downward communication, business communication, and informal communication and it contributes to the effectiveness of any person, team, and organization. It is also important how people work together in cross-functional teams in order to accomplish common objectives or to complete complex interdependent tasks.

Jakson, Meyer, and Wang (2013) found that transformational/charismatic leadership was shown to be positively related to affective and normative commitment, while contingent reward and management by exception (active) were positively related to affective commitment. Laissez-faire leadership was negatively related to affective commitment. The effects of charismatic leadership and organizational culture on objective and perceive corporate performance were investigated by Wilderom, Van der Berg and Wiersoma (2012). After a longitudinal study, the results of structural equation modeling revealed that charisma

increased financial performance while the culture did not do so. Culture and charisma were interrelated and each of them was significantly related to perceived performance.

Klein, Becker, and Meyer (2009) define organizational commitment as a "perceived bond between the individual and a given target of interest" (Klein, Becker & Meyer, 2009, p. 99). They underline the difference between commitment as a bond and its antecedents (value congruence, support, job characteristics, leadership, investments, alternatives, instrumentality, individual differences), as well as its outcomes (organizational turnover, absenteeism, job performance, service performance, workplace deviance and well-being). As the organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct, the most widely investigated model is the tree-component model (TMC) developed by Mayer and Herscovitch (2001). According to them, employees with strong affective commitment want to remain, the ones with strong normative commitment feel that thy out to remain, and those with strong continuance commitment believe they have to remain. Bakker and Leiter (2010) make the distinction between organizational commitment as a psychological state of attachment and identification between the individual and the organization and work engagement which is about being involved in the work role or in the work itself. Work engagement is a psychological state, together with job satisfaction and job involvement and organizational commitment is an outcome. Davila and Garcia (2012) studied the organizational commitment and identification and showed that sense of belonging and affective commitment are different concepts and affective commitment seems to be more useful in predicting organizational citizenship behavior.

The organizational culture is important for guiding employees' day to day behavior. It is even more powerful during organizational changes. Iljins, Skvarciany and Gaile-Sarkane (2015) found that during the period of changes organizational culture has an impact on organizational climate through 5 factors: adaptability, consistency, employees' satisfaction, employees' involvement; mission. Nowadays, as the need to adapt is more important than ever and the global organizations encourages employees' mobility, cultural intelligence is growing. Day (2017) conducted a study using the methodology of rapid evidence appraisal and found that human capital departments in global organizations can improve their employee's motivation to adapt their behaviors in cross-cultural interactions through proper selection matched with trusted, purpose-driven managers and effective cultural intelligence training.

In the present study, the culture is defined as the common beliefs and behaviors that keep people together in an organization and are expressed in how people work and interact every day. In order to understand how the values and beliefs that are enacted by the management team and every employee, we investigated broader perceptions related to the history of the organization and its vision for the future, as well as what makes it different for customers and employees. Having in mind that there is no right or wrong culture and in order to be able to come with practical recommendations, we developed a framework to gather specific qualitative and quantitative data on 8 variables: shared values, relationships effectiveness (communication and collaboration), operational effectiveness (workflows & procedures, quality of products or services), leadership effectiveness, financial effectiveness (perceived business results), and organizational commitment (as an employee attitude criteria).

Objective and hypothesis

This study aimed to describe in a structured way the organizational culture as it is seen through the lenses of the management and key people team in terms of shared values, workflows & procedures, quality of products or services, business results, leadership effectiveness, relationships within the organization (communication and collaboration), and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 1: The organizational culture will be composed of beliefs and behaviors from multiple culture types. As the results of Hartnell, Ou and Kincki (2011) revealed, the presence of one culture type may not necessarily preempt the presence of another and instead "competing values" may be more complementary than contradictory.

Hypothesis 2: It is likely to identify differences between industries (production versus creative industry) and between the perceptions of managers versus key people on shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products or services, leadership effectiveness, business results and organizational commitment. Studies show differences among national cultures and their impact

on the organizational cultures (Storge & Warner, 2001). There are also data about specific industries (Avnet, 2015; Bingol, Sener, & Cevik, 2013).

Hypothesis 3: There will be differences in terms of organizational commitment, leadership effectiveness and business results depending on the leadership behaviors. Jackson, Meyer, and Wang (2013) found that transformational/charismatic leadership was positively related to affective and normative commitment. On the other hand, Wilderom, Van der Berg and Wiersma (2012) brought evidence that charisma increased financial performance and it was significantly related to perceived performance.

Method

Although according to Podskoff and Podsakoff (2018) the percentage of articles using laboratory, filed or quasi-experimental designs in management and leadership research remained relatively stable between 1990 and 2009 at around 7%, it had an increasing trend, the majority of studies about organizational culture are based on interviews and questionnaires. In order to match the research interest with the practical needs of the organizations, we designed this study as a qualitative one.

Data were collected from 1a convenient sample of 00 managers and key people (49 managers and 51 key people) working for two organizations (one operating in production, N=41, and one company in the creative industries area, N=59) based on a structured interview. Each person answered a structured interview that included open questions related to the history of the company, its perspective for the future, what makes it different on the market, the behaviors encouraged and discouraged within the company. The answers to these questions were coded in the following categories: trusting the future, human affiliation, openness to change, achievement orientation, valuing stability.

The questionnaire also included 8 variables for which, after answering open questions describing their perception on each variable, the participants were asked to evaluate their current level on a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 is maximum. These variables were: shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products or services, leadership effectiveness, business results, and organizational commitment.

Results and findings

Hypothesis 1:
At first, the answers to the open-ended questions were coded. The questions investigated how people see the future, what makes their organization different on the market, which are the behaviors encourage and discouraged within the company and which are the strengths of their team. The answers were organized into the following categories which are easier to be associated with the four types of cultures described in the competing values framework developed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983): human affiliation (clan openness to change (adhocracy), achievement orientation (market), valuing stability (hierarchy). The presence of these characteristics was noted with one and their absence with zero. In addition, we identified another three categories: trusting the future (when people express their optimism about the future and provided arguments for that as investments in technology and people), "human leadership" (openness to ideas and collaboration, respect, "friendly" attitude) and "undecisive leadership" (lack of decision and vision). Their presence or absence in people's answers was scored also with one or zero. The results are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. *The percentage for the categories shown in people's description of the culture*

	Human Affiliation	Openness to Change	Achievement Orientation	Valuing Stability	Trusting the Future	"Human" Leadership	"Undecisive" Leadership
N	98	98	98	98	99	91	90
Sum	79	15	15	49	79	40	50
Percent	90%	15%	15%	50%	80%	43%	55%

The results confirmed the first hypothesis, showing that there are elements of each culture type, the ones describing the clan culture (human affiliation) being dominant. Most of the respondents used the word "family" to explain the atmosphere within their organization. 50% of the respondents emphasized also

predictability and security (specific to hierarchy). There were fewer elements related to adhocracy and market culture. Most of the participants displayed an optimistic view about the future based on the plans they were aware of and for which they were able to see the first steps (investments in technology, people development, new products). When asked to describe the behaviors of their leaders without any judgment, 43% mentioned behaviors as friendly attitude, openness, respect, consideration that were included in the category "human" leadership while 55% mentioned lack of vision and inspiration, as well as delays, were difficulties in making decisions that were grouped under "undecisive" leadership. We came with "human" and "undecisive" leadership because transformational leadership and transactional leadership were not fully reflected in the descriptions we gathered from the participants and the use of these terms could have been inaccurate.

For the 8 variables scored by each participant on a scale from 0 to 10, the median is presented in the table below.

Table 3. *Median for shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of product or services, leadership effectiveness, business results, organizational commitment*

	Shared Values	Communication	Collaboration	Work-flow & Procedures
N	93	95	94	96
Median	8	7,5	8	7,5

	Quality of Products and Services	Leadership Effectiveness	Business Results	Organizational Commitment
N	90	86	95	88
Median	8,8	8	8	8

The lowest scores were registered for work-flow & procedures and communication, while the highest score was for the quality of products and services. Most of the respondents expressed their appreciation for their portfolio of products or services and recommended improvements in the work-flow & procedures (their simplification and clear face to face communication) and in communication with a focus on downward and business communication.

Hypothesis 2:
In order to test this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis tests have been computed shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products or services, leadership effectiveness, business results and organizational commitment according to the status within the organization (manager or key people) and to industry (production or creative industry).

The hypothesis was confirmed as the results revealed that the scores offered by the managers were lower compared to key people's evaluations in regard to communication (χ^2 = 4.24, p = .040, with a mean rank of 42.22 for managers and 53.66 for key people), collaboration (χ^2 = 4.75, p = .029, with a mean rank of 41.56 for managers and 53.44 for key people), work-flow & procedures (χ^2 = 17.27, p = .000, with a mean rank of 36.40 for managers and 59.63 for key people), quality of the products and services (χ^2 = 16.15, p = .000, with a mean rank of 34.83 for managers and 56.17 for key people), leadership effectiveness (χ^2 = 12.39, p = .000, with a mean rank of 34.26 for managers and 52.74 for key people), business results (χ^2 = 8.42, p = .004, with a mean rank of 39.96 for managers and 55.88 for key people), and organizational commitment (χ^2 = 4.30, p = .038, with a mean rank of 38.97 for managers and 50.03 for key people). There were no significant differences in terms of how they viewed the shared values within their organization and none of the two companies had formalized and communicated values.

There were also significant differences between the industries for all the variables examined with a higher mean rank for the production company: shared values (χ^2 = 12.50, p = .000, with a mean rank of 66.01 for production and 34.32 for creative), communication (χ^2 = 6.12, p = .013, with a mean rank of 56.23 for production and 42.27 for creative), collaboration (χ^2 = 4.06, p = .044, with a mean rank of 54.16 for production and 42.98 for creative), work-flow & procedures (χ^2 = 19.89, p = .000, with a mean rank of 63.24 for production and 37.97 for creative), quality of the products and services (χ^2 =56.58, p = .000, with a mean rank of 67.83 for production and 27.64 for creative), leadership effectiveness (χ^2 = 20.85, p = .000, with a mean rank of 57.97 for production and 33.57 for creative), business results (χ^2 = 32.75, p = .000, with a mean rank of 66.01 for production and 34.32 for key people), and organizational commitment (χ^2 = 13.46,

p = .000, with a mean rank of 56.54 for production and 36.55 for key people). Both organizations were local entrepreneurial businesses.

Hypothesis 3:
In order to examine the differences in terms of organizational commitment, leadership effectiveness and business results depending on the leadership behaviors, Kruskal-Wallis tests have been computed.
The results partially supported the hypothesis. When "human" leadership behaviors were reported, the mean rank was higher for organizational commitment (χ^2 = 4.67, p = .031, with a mean rank of 48.10 when human leadership behaviors were identified and 36.82 when not), leadership effectiveness (χ^2 = 12.40, p = .000, with a mean rank of 51.96 when human leadership behaviors were identified and 33.71 when not) and work-flow & procedures (χ^2 = 5.43, p = .020, with a mean rank of 51.47 when human leadership behaviors were identified and 38.95 when not). Contrary to our expectation, there were no significant differences in terms of perceived business results.

There were significant differences in terms of leadership effectiveness also when undecisive leadership behaviors were reported (χ^2 = 5.00, p = .025, with a mean rank of 47.53 when undecisive leadership behaviors were not identified and 36.03 when present). There were no other significant differences.

Conclusions and implications

The results confirmed that there are elements of each culture type within the two organizations examined, with human affiliation being dominant, followed by the need to predictability, structure and security and less openness to change and drive for achievement. Communication, followed by work-flow & procedures received the lowest scores in people's views. In terms of communication, there was a need for a mix between the structure and consistency provided by meetings and formal communication of the objectives, plans, and results which are part of the business communication, as well as a human and authentic internal communication system to facilitate the downward spread of information. The participants also emphasized the need to update and simplify the work-flow and procedures, as well as clearly communicate them and explain their benefits. The highest scores were registered for quality of products and services, most of the participants being proud of them and actively recommending them.

There were significant differences between the perceptions of managers and key people and between the production versus the creative industry. Managers proved to be more critical in their evaluations compared to key people except for their view on the shared values. They tended to have higher expectations from their leader, from their colleagues and from themselves. The perceptions of the people working for the production company on shared values, communication, collaboration, work-flow & procedures, quality of products and services, leadership effectiveness, perceived business results and organizational commitment were higher compared to the ones working in the creative industry.

Leadership effectiveness was evaluated at a higher level when people could see their leaders display "human" leadership behaviors and not "undecisive" behaviors. When "human" leadership behaviors were perceived, the level of organizational commitment and the effectiveness of work-flow & procedure were higher compared to the situation when these leadership behaviors were missing. As expected, people look at and believe in what their leaders do, not at what they say and they are ready to get on board when they can benefit from consistent management practices.

This study presents the reality of the organizations through the lenses of a theoretical framework and it has practical implications. According to these findings, the companies should focus more on establishing management practices to improve communication, developing an effective leadership style and aligning the whole team around their shared values.

It also has some limitations. The sample only covers two companies which creates difficulties in generalizing the results. Other companies should be included in order to develop a further understanding. In addition, the sample size is limited to management and key people; it should be extended to include all professional categories and have a better view on the perceptions that are consistent through all categories and the differences. Apart from these limitations, there are practical implications for companies in relation to their communication practices and to the leadership behaviors that will support the achievement of their goals.

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