

Organisation culture

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Organisation culture

Organisation culture can be defined as the collection of relatively uniform and enduring beliefs, values, customs, traditions and practices which are shared by an organisation's members and which are transmitted from one generation of employees to the next. One view in the field of organisation culture is the culture [metaphor](#). A metaphor is a word or phrase applied to an object or action which it does not literally denote.¹ Metaphor can be powerful means of communicating ideas and are in common use in many organisations. It asserts that

culture is a mental state that has to be tolerated since it is incapable of being changed by management. It adopted a phenomenological standpoint and conceptualised culture as a 'process of enactment' – not as something that exists 'out there' separate from people, but which was actually manufactured by company employees as they interacted with one another on a daily basis within the workplace.² In highlighting the symbolic significance of virtually every aspect of organisation life, the culture metaphor thus focuses attention on a human side of organisation that other metaphors ignore or gloss over. The culture metaphor opens the way to a reinterpretation of many traditional managerial concepts and processes. It also helps to reinterpret the nature and significance of organisation environment relations.

Culture of the organisation plays a key role in determining a structure that would suit. The organisation stance towards participation and risk-taking will have an impact on the decision pertaining to number of levels and [delegation](#) of authority. Congruence between culture and structure is important. Lack of congruence can result in mixed signals across the organisation. Organisational culture is based on differences in [norms](#) and shared practices which are learned in the workplace and are considered as valid within the boundaries of a particular organisation. Therefore the efficiency of an organization structure is determined by how well it fits into the

culture in which it is set.

The environments affect the structures chosen by organizational decision-makers through their society's cultural expectations.

Organisational structures are designed to insure survival through social legitimacy by reflecting the surrounding culture's values and beliefs (Birnbaum-More a...

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...se of authority here. For the most

part individuals are encouraged to perform their tasks with few

questions asked though important decisions are likely to be made as a

result of political manoeuvring. The greatest strength of power

cultures is their ability to react quickly but their success largely

depends on the abilities of the person or people at the centre.

In conclusion, organisational culture exercises a potent form of

control over the interaction of organisational members with each other

and outsiders. By supplying people with a toolbox of values, norms,

and rules that tell them how to behave, organisation culture is

instrumental in determining how they interpret and react to a

situation. Thus, an organisation's culture can be a source of

competitive advantage.

References

1. Andrew Brown.1995, 'Organisational Culture' Chap1, p13
2. David Buchanan & Andrzej Huczynski. 1997, 'Organizational

Behaviour' Chap 18, p514

3. David Buchanan & Andrzej Huczynski. 1997, 'Organizational

Behaviour' Chap 22, p681

Additional References

1 Gaeth Morgan. 1986 'Images of Organization'

2 Laurie J Mullins. 2005 'Management and Organisational Behaviour'

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