

Subcultures in organization

[Business](#), [Organization](#)



Discuss whether an organization might be better considered as consisting of many sub-cultures which are conceptually different, rather than one 'major' culture. * An introduction Culture, whether in some organization or society, is about people. People play a key role in culture. People create culture.

And because people are individual units with different opinions, values, goals, attitudes, wants and needs but at the same time they interact with other people, they share all of these things with others on the base of the communication and they influence each other, so naturally it leads to exchange of their opinions, many confrontation and conflicts. But confrontation and conflicts do not always mean something wrong, it can bring improvement, progress, and change. And likewise, it goes the same in organizations. One person is equal to one opinion in some particular issue.

And nobody can say this is a good or bad way or decision. For somebody it is obvious that some manner is the best and for another person it can mean something totally different. More people, more opinions and more points of view. Sometimes it can make more difficulties and another time make things easier. That is why it is not easy and clear to say whether an organization might be better considered as consisting of many sub-cultures which are conceptually different, rather than one 'major' culture. Because we have to take into account all of these things which I mentioned before.

In this essay I try to assess all factors related to corporate culture and its sub-cultures and find out pros and cons of one 'major' culture and sub-cultures in the organization. * A central part In the beginning let's have a look at two basic terms which are fundamental in this topic. These are <https://assignbuster.com/subcultures-in-organization/>

corporate culture and sub-culture. Everybody knows what to imagine under these words. But everybody can imagine something else, each of us perceives corporate culture differently and this is the reason why there exist a lot of definitions of culture.

Of course I will not write down many definitions here but I would like to mention just one which on my opinion is the most apposite. According to Andrew Brown (1995, 1998) who stated the definition of organizational culture in his book *Organizational Culture* is the following: " Organizational culture refers to the pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping with experience that have developed during the course of an organization's history, and which tend to be manifested in its material arrangements and in the behaviors of its members. Simply said, organizational culture is everything what surrounds us at work. Organizational culture influences everything what it happens in a company, company's success and efficiency. When we are taking into account two companies with the same technological equipment, so theoretically they should be equally successful, but they are not. Why? The answer is different corporate culture. Corporate culture can support strategy and company's goals but on the other side it can mean for company obstacles in progress, higher cost and low competitiveness. Every organizational culture can contain many sub-cultures.

And sub-culture in organization is the second very important term which I want to mention. We can say that sub-culture is natural phenomenon within the company and a subgroup of a larger organizational culture with the unique values and beliefs. Subcultures are caused by a particular employee's interests, different levels of management (e. g. hand worker x manager)

different functional areas (people have another scope of employment or solve totally different types of problems or with the same scope of employment but with insufficient cooperation - e. . Human resources x Informatics) or by large distance within the same organization. In many cases the presence of sub-cultures is desirable for company and positive but the culture in the company has to be dominant and people within the sub-cultures have to follow common goals and values. In other cases it is counter-productive and subcultures deny dominant culture and they can damage the whole company because subcultures can get in to the conflict and complicate integration and coordination within the organization.

For dominant culture are typical definite communication within the company, clear company's goal and values, desirable behavior, uniform attitudes and following quick decision making and planning and increasing motivation and team belonging. The majority of company believes in the core values of organization. But the strong cultures have to deal with some problems as less flexibility, sticking to the past experience; company is not too willing to accept change, isolation from the surrounding environment and information.

On the other hand there exist weak corporate cultures where there are really bad communication among members of company, variety of opinions and values and people do not follow company's core ideas. If the managers do not support meetings, cooperation a communication among employees, sharing information and experience, then people look for their own way how to communicate, solve the problems, make decisions and set up the priorities according to their own values, needs and wants. * A conclusion And

back to the question “ what is better”? One company = 1 culture or 1 company = many subcultures?

Do we want one major culture where the well-defined values and principles will be followed by almost all employees in the company? If course, we do. But what will be happening if these values and principals are not so clearly defined and managers do not follow it? Or these values are considered as fundamental and unchangeable and company never wants to accept another new approach although things are changing with time. The company finds itself in crisis. And what about the other possibility? What about the presence of some subcultures in the company? The one strong culture and co-existed other subcultures?

Subcultures which are different from each other, with different values, needs, behavior for example according to level of management or function but still identifying with the core values of dominant culture of the company. But what will be happening in the case that the culture is not so dominant? Then people in the subcultures will have totally different opinions, they will follow other values and the goal of the company will be different and company will have big difficulties to achieve their goals, satisfy their employees and also customers, the communication will be confused and a lot of conflicts will be occurred.

So how to get to the ideal solution? As we know nothing is ideal but we can try to get to ideal solution as closer as possible. In case of one main culture and other subcultures on my opinion the organization should insist on clear and accurate definitions of its strategy, mission - the fundamental purpose of the organization, what business the company is, vision - where does

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company wish to go? , core values - what are the desired behavior and characters, attitudes and etc. Also another really important thing is clear formulation of well-arranged conditions of work, e. g. required ways of behavior at work (dress code, manners), assessment, remuneration, education and trainings (mandatory or voluntary) of employees. Company should inform their employees not only about changes but also about all things mentioned above as much as possible. Each a new employee should be familiarized with company's strategy, its values, mission, vision and so on. Company should also support communication among particular subcultures for example organizing regular meeting where they will make them acquainted with all news in each subculture, with changes, outcomes, future plans and all important things which happened.

Another advice which I would recommend is to arrange teambuilding activities and trips, company-wide actions (cultural, sport, charity) which converge employees together. And managers also take care of different opinions and values of his employees and appropriately motivate them. In case of the one dominant culture without any subcultures in the company I would recommend to target the opened mind during a decision making and take into account and assess more alternative than one and for example the company can hire some external experts in a lot of tasks because they can bring a lot of new ideas into the company.

Also an employee participation in many staff trainings, courses and seminars and their exchange of experience there can help to see things in a different light. Because nowadays the life is going really fast, things are change every day, technological progress and also people's thinking as well that is why I

think that company should be open to all changes, new approaches and methods so on my opinion and with respect to present time the one strong culture with many subcultures is the most suitable for companies.

And we have to take into account that organizational culture is not important only for current employees of the company but also for new coming employees; sometimes people prefer atmosphere in the company to for example salary. And corporate culture gives current employees some confidence what direction the company will take and what they can expect. Because when we have a look at this fast going and changing world it is clear and understandable that people need security jobs and income and the right corporate culture can help to find it and also maintain it.

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