

Definition of organization culture cultural studies essay



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Introduction Culture is effectively subjective and reflects the context and understanding that we typically attribute to situations, the solution that we apply to common problems. Culture refers to the basic values, beliefs and principle of practice that create a community. The characteristic of society is the self-image of its members, the things that create it different from other society, are its culture. The concept of a common culture suggests possible problems about whether organizations have cultures. Organizations are only based on one basic element of society. People enter them from the surrounding community and bring their culture with them. It is still possible for organizations to have cultures of their own as they possess the quality of being both ' part' of and ' apart' from society. They are fixed in the wider societal context but they are also communities of their own with distinct rules and values.

Definition of Organization Culture?

A basic organization culture is necessary to provide a point of departure in the quest for an understanding of the phenomenon. Martins and Martins (2003, p 380) state the general definition of organization culture as " a system of shared meaning held by members, distinguishing the organization from other organization". For new employees this would mean adaptive behavior within the organization that leads to new belief systems. This new and adaptive behavior instilled though organizational values and beliefs are associated with rituals, myths and symbols to reinforce the core assumptions of organizational culture (Hofstede, 1991). However, this pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, principle and assumptions may be unwritten or non- verbalised behavior that describes the way in which things get done

and to give the organization its unique character (Brown, 1998). In other words, organizational culture includes those qualities of the organization that give it a particular climate or feel. As a result the distinct qualities of an organization may manifest through four dimensions, namely power, role, achievement and support.

Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture

Hofstede identified four dimensions that he labeled as individualism, masculinity, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. His individualism-collectivism dimension describes that the cultures from more or less structured to tightly integrate. The masculinity, femininity dimension describes how a culture's control values are assertive or nurturing. Power distance refers to the distribution of influence within a culture. And uncertainty avoidance reflects a culture's tolerance of ambiguity and acceptance of risk.

1. Power Distance (PD) – This refers to the degree of inequality that exists and is accepted among people with and without power. A high PD score show that the society accepts an unequal distribution of power and people understand their place in the system. Low PD means that power is shared and well dispersed. It also means that society members view themselves as equals. For example, according to Hofstede's model, Malaysia is a high PD country where we would probably send reports only to top management and have closed door meetings and there will be only a select few, powerful leaders were in attendance. There are few characteristics in both high and low power distance. High PD characteristic do have centralized companies, strong hierarchies, and large gaps in compensation, authority, and respect. Meanwhile for the low PD characteristics are flatter

organisations and almost employees and supervisors are considered as equal. There both characteristic are not similar because high PD involves leader's power so that to make a decisions and needed to go to the top for answers but low PD uses teamwork where there will involve as many people as possible in decision making.

2. Individualism (IDV) – This refers to the strength of the connection between individual have to others within the community. A high IDV score show that a lack connection with the people. There will be a lack of interpersonal connection and little sharing of responsibility beyond family and a few close friends in the countries which has high IDV. A society with a low IDV score would have strong group attachment, and there would be a large amount of loyalty and respect for members of the group. The group itself is also larger and people take more responsibility for each other's well-being. For example, the Central American countries of Panama and Guatemala where the IDV scores are very low, a marketing campaign that emphasized benefits to the community or that tied into a popular political movement would likely be understood and well-received. There are few characteristic in both high and low individualism. The high IDV characteristic are high worth on people's time and their need for freedom, an expectation of rewards for hard work and delectation of challenges and respect for privacy. Meanwhile, for the low IDV are power on building skills and achieving in something, work for intrinsic rewards, and peace more important than honesty.

3. Masculinity (MAS) – This refers to how much a society sticks with, and values, traditional male and female roles. High MAS scores are found in countries where men are expected to be tough, to be the provider, to be assertive and to be strong. If women work outside the home, they have separate professions from men. Low MAS

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scores do not reverse the gender roles. In a low MAS society, the roles are simply blurred. You see women and men working together equally across many professions. Men are allowed to be sensitive and women can work hard for professional success. Application: Japan is highly masculine with a score of 95 whereas Sweden has the lowest measured value (5). According to Hofstede's analysis, if you were to open an office in Japan, you might have greater success if you appointed a male employee to lead the team and had a strong male contingent on the team. In Sweden, on the other hand, you would aim for a team that was balanced in terms of skill rather than gender.

Characteristics

Tips

High MAS

Men are masculine and women are feminine. There is a well defined distinction between men's work and women's work. Be aware that people may expect male and female roles to be distinct. Advise men to avoid discussing emotions or making emotionally-based decisions or arguments.

Low MAS

A woman can do anything a man can do. Powerful and successful women are admired and respected. Avoid an "old boys' club" mentality. Ensure job design and practices are not discriminatory to either gender. Treat men and women equally. 4. Uncertainty/Avoidance Index (UAI) – This relates to the degree of anxiety society members feel when in uncertain or unknown situations. High UAI-scoring nations try to avoid ambiguous situations whenever possible. They are governed by rules and order and they seek a

collective " truth". Low UAI scores indicate the society enjoys novel events and values differences. There are very few rules and people are encouraged to discover their own truth. Application: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions imply that when discussing a project with people in Belgium, whose country scored a 94 on the UAI scale, you should investigate the various options and then present a limited number of choices, but have very detailed information available on your contingency and risk plans. (Note that there will be cultural differences between French and Dutch speakers in Belgium!)

Characteristics

Tips

High UAI

Very formal business conduct with lots of rules and policies. Need and expect structure. Sense of nervousness spurns high levels of emotion and expression. Differences are avoided. Be clear and concise about your expectations and parameters. Plan and prepare, communicate often and early, provide detailed plans and focus on the tactical aspects of a job or project. Express your emotions through hands gestures and raised voices.

Low UAI

Informal business attitude. More concern with long term strategy than what is happening on a daily basis. Accepting of change and risk. Do not impose rules or structure unnecessarily. Minimize your emotional response by being calm and contemplating situations before speaking. Express curiosity when you discover differences. 5. Long Term Orientation (LTO) - This refers to how much society values long-standing - as opposed to short term - traditions

and values. This is the fifth dimension that Hofstede added in the 1990s after finding that Asian countries with a strong link to Confucian philosophy acted differently from western cultures. In countries with a high LTO score, delivering on social obligations and avoiding "loss of face" are considered very important. Application: According to Hofstede's analysis, people in the United States and United Kingdom have low LTO scores. This suggests that you can pretty much expect anything in this culture in terms of creative expression and novel ideas. The model implies that people in the US and UK don't value tradition as much as many others, and are therefore likely to be willing to help you execute the most innovative plans as long as they get to participate fully. (This may be surprising to people in the UK, with its associations of tradition!)

Characteristics

Tips

High LTO

Family is the basis of society. Parents and men have more authority than young people and women. Strong work ethic. High value placed on education and training. Show respect for traditions. Do not display extravagance or act frivolously. Reward perseverance, loyalty, and commitment. Avoid doing anything that would cause another to "lose face".

Low LTO

Promotion of equality. High creativity, individualism. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Self-actualization is sought. Expect to live by the same standards and rules you create. Be respectful of others. Do not

hesitate to introduce necessary changes. What problem does culture cause for MNC? Language usage is one aspect of communication. Across cultures words and phrases are normally used in different ways. For example, different country people have different way of speaking the same language. This may led to different meaning and may cause a misunderstanding meaning between each other communicators. Perhaps the appropriate degree of assertiveness in communicating can be also added to cultural misunderstandings. For example, some people raised their voices that they feel a sign of an exciting conversation among their friend, while some of them raised their voices a sign of fight. This makes the communicator feel uncomfortable to speak and they will feel irritate to hear the loud voice. Different attitudes toward conflictA few cultures view conflict as a positive thing, while others view it as something should be avoided. For example in the United States conflict is not usually adorable, but people often manage to deal directly with conflicts that arise. Besides that, meeting directly face to face will be a plus point to solve whatever problems. There are most of the Eastern countries, open conflict is experienced as embarrassing the rule, differences are best worked out quietly. A written exchange is also being the favored means to address the conflict. Different approaches to completing tasksVarious cultures move toward completing tasks in different ways. Factors involved are different access to resources, different judgments of rewards associated with task completion, different notions of time, and varied ideas about how relationship-building and task-oriented work should go together. When working together effectively on a task, cultures differ regarding importance placed on establishing relationships early in a collaboration. For example, Asian and Hispanic cultures tend to attach more

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emphasis on task completion toward the end as compared with European-Americans. European-Americans tend to focus immediately on the task at hand, and let relationships develop as they work on the task. This doesn't mean that people from various cultural backgrounds are more or less committed to accomplishing the task, or value relationships more or less, it just means they may pursue them differently.

4. Different decision-making styles
In the U. S., decisions are frequently delegated, an official assigns responsibility for a matter to a subordinate. In many Southern European and Latin American countries, a strong value is placed on the individual having decision-making responsibilities. Majority rule is a common approach in the U. S., but consensus is the preferred mode in Japan.

5. Different attitudes about open emotion and personal matters
In some cultures it is not appropriate to be frank about emotions, about the reasons behind a conflict or a misunderstanding, or about personal information. When dealing with conflict, be aware that others may feel differently than you about what they are comfortable revealing. Questions that seem natural to you (e. g., What was the conflict about? What was your role in the conflict? What was the sequence of events?) may seem intrusive to others. Variation in attitudes toward disclosure should be considered before concluding that you understand the views, experience, and goals of people you're working with.

6. Different approaches to knowing
There can be big differences among cultural groups about how people come to know things (epistemologies). European cultures tend to believe that information acquired through cognitive means (counting, measuring) is more valid than other ways of gathering information. African cultures prefer symbolic imagery and rhythm as a mode of learning. Asian cultures tend to emphasize the validity of

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knowledge gained through striving for enlightenment or perfection. Some may want to do library research to understand a shared problem and identify solutions, while others may prefer to visit places and people who have experienced challenges like the one being faced to get a feeling for what has worked elsewhere . Research shows that Western society is paying more attention to other ways of knowing, because this can reveal different approaches to analyze and resolve problems . There are three basic management attitudes toward the operation of MNCs include:* An ethnocentric attitude reflecting the belief that MNCs should regard homecountry management practices as superior to foreign country managementpractices*The polycentric attitude reflecting a belief that because foreign managers arecloser to foreign organizational units, they probably understand them better; therefore, foreign management practices generally should be viewed as moreinsightful than home country management practices*The geocentric attitude reflects a belief that the overall quality of managementrecommendations, rather than the location of managers, should determine theacceptability of management practices used to guide MNCs* The geocentric attitude is generally viewed to be best for managers in MNCs