Analysis of organisational cultures
A survey about managers' view
at Algerian electricity production companies

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Abstract:

This study focused on the diagnosis of organizational cultures types in the Algerian electricity generation plants. After a study conducted on a sample of 134 managers. We have acquired the four types of organizational cultures of Harrison and Stokes model that consists the power culture, the role culture, the achievement culture and consolidation culture. The results showed the spread of the force culture, the role culture, the achievement culture, where it scored the biggest spread of the power culture. But the preferences were on a different form, has favored a culture of achievement rather of force, strengthening and the role cultures. These preferences included all the managers according the different of personal and professional characteristics. Well, after comparing the results on the cultures existing and desired, it revealed that the organizations has a power culture greater than the desirable, achievement and strengthen Culture are lower than the desirable. As well as the ratios are convergent regarding the existing and desired culture of the role.

Key words: organization, culture, organizational culture, managers

الملخص:

عنت الدراسة بتشخيص أنواع الثقافات التنظيمية الموجودة في محطات توليد الكهرباء الجزائرية، بعد دراسة أجريت على عينة مكونة من 134 اطارا يعملون بها . تم الحصول على الأنواع الأربعة من الثقافات التنظيمية من نموذج هاريسون وستوكس والتي وسماها بثقافة القوة، ثقافة الدور، ثقافة الانجاز وثقافة التدعيم. بينت النتائج انتشار لثقافة القوة، ثقافة الدور، ثقافة الانجاز، في حين سجل أكبر انتشار لثقافة القوة. لكن التفضيلات جاءت بشكل مختلف، فقد تم تفضيل ثقافة الانجاز مقارنة بثقافات القوة، التدعيم والدور، وهي تفضيلات شملت جميع الاطارات على اختلاف خصائصهم الشخصية والمهنية.

كذلك، وبعد مقارنة النتائج الخاصة بالثقافات الموجودة والمرغوبة، تبين بأن التنظيمات تمتلك ثقافة قوة أكبر مما هو مرغوب فيه، ثقافة انجاز   وثقافة تدعيم أقل منه ما هو مرغوب فيه، وكذلك نسب متقاربة فيما يتعلق بثقافة الدور الموجودة والمرغوبة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنظيم، الثقافة، الثقافة التنظيمية، الإطارات...

Introduction:

Many researches have been conducted in the area of organisational culture since the seventies of the last century. However, few researchers have paid attention to analyse organisational cultures in detail at Algerian companies in the age of globalisation. Little is known about the gap between the existing and preferred cultures in the field of electricity production. In addition, the idea that considers low performance as a result of the bad application of management theories met a lot of failures in many countries because of its ignorance of the management context strongly underlined in the literature of organisational culture. (**Schein,1999**).

On the other hand, the results of cultural studies in different countries indicate that the process of socialisation at the organisational level is strongly connected with daily practices than specific values (**Hofsted *and all*, 1990**). Also, if organisations want to introduce a successful programme of change, it is necessary to take the organisational culture constraints in consideration.

One of the previous research limitations is that organisational culture has tended to be regarded in a general sense (**Knowles and all, 2002**), some exceptions to this orientation is the works of Harrison (1972), Handy (1985), Harrison an Stokes (1992) who developed questionnaires that permit to diagnose four types of the existing and preferred cultures, and consider it as the distinctive constellation of beliefs, values, work styles and relationships that distinguish one organisation from another (**Harrison, 1993**).It includes those qualities of the organisation that give it a particular climate or feel.

Aims:

The purpose of this study was to use a broader questionnaire based on Harrison and Stokes questionnaire in order to achieve three objectives. The first objective was to determine what kinds of cultures managers in contemporary companies work in: either power, role, achievement or

support. In addition, the questionnaire was also able to determine the kind of cultures in which managers preferred to work, and this was the second objective. The third objective was to measure and compare the degree of correspondence between the managers' current and desired organisational cultures. A high degree of correspondence would indicate a close fit between the managers' current and desired cultures, but a low degree of correspondence would indicate the existing of a gap between the two sides that should lead to a low integration and performance.

Hypothesis development:

According to the background and objectives adopted for this study, we formulate the following hypotheses:

1: Algerian managers work in accordance with power culture orientation.

2: Algerian managers prefer to work in accordance with achievement culture orientation.

3: There is a significant difference between the existing and preferred culture among Algerian managers.

Literature and overview:

Many definitions about organisational culture appears since the first writings about the cultural dimension in organisations, specialists have proposed diverse and complex definitions that may be characterized by their special visions. Deal and kennedy consider it as the dominant values in the organisation, while Schein take it as the rules that permit the organisation to have internal integration and external adaptation, also Goffman describe it as an observed behavioural regularities when people interact **(Schein, 1991)**

Harrison and Stokes were created a survey based on two dimensions which are centralisation and formalisation **(Turner, 1990)**, and they developed a descriptive model that permit to classify organisational cultures in four types namely: power culture, role culture achievement culture and support culture **(Harrison, 1993)**.

Power culture orientation:

This orientation can be described as autocratic where power is concentrated by a few leaders in top management. It is defined by Harrison and stokes (1992:14) as an organisational culture that is based on inequality of access to resources. It is characterised by high centralisation and low formalisation modes of operation. It has a single source of power to control

and influence work and employees. Organisational members are connected to the centre by functional and specialist strings **(Harrison, 1993)**.

A good manager in this culture is a strong person, decisive and firm, but faire. He is protective, generous and indulgent to loyal subordinate **(Pheysey,2003:153)**. A power oriented culture organisation usually has a top down communication approach **(Harrison,1993)** decisions are taken on the bases of influence rather than procedures. The disadvantages of this type is that bosses are note questioned even when they may be seem to be wrong, people with power break the rules with rule by fear **(Harrison & Stokes, 1992)**

Role culture orientation:

This orientation can be described as being bureaucratic, rational and orderly with formalised procedures **(Harrison., 1972)**. It is defined by Harrison and Stokes (1992:15) as a system of structures and procedures which focuses on job description and specialisation. it is characterised by keeping a great importance to formalisation and centralisation on mode of operation. Work is mastered by low and well organised procedures that under lies Job description, which is more important than the person who fills the position or planed goals. Communication is related to the formal objectives and respects work procedures.

A good manager in this type of culture is an impersonal, and correct person who avoids the exercise of his authority for his own advantages, he demands from subordinates only that whish is required by the formal system **(Pheysey, 2003)**.

Those roles descriptions are coordinated at the top by a narrow band of senior management. Some disadvantages of this type is that it is more important to avoid deviating from the norm than it is to do the right thing. Jobs are so highly defined that there is little room to contribute one's unique talents and abilities, and this type can be represented as a hierarchical pyramid structure where power is derived from person's position in the organisation **(Handy,1985)**.

Achievement culture orientation:

This orientation can be defined by excellence and performance for satisfaction together with a personal commitment to the task. It is defined as the aligned culture that lines people up behind a common vision or purpose

(**Harrison & Stokes,1992**), its mode of operating is characterized by high in formalisation and low in centralisation to maintains organisational members focusing on realising the set purpose and gaols of the organisation. The organisational structure is like a net, with some of the strands of the net thicker and stronger than others (**Harrison, 1993**).

A good leader in this type of culture is the egalitarian man who can be influenced in matters concerning the task, he use his authority to obtain the resources needed to get on with the job (**Pheysey,2003**), he is used to direct the energy of employees, determine allocation of financial resources and to define systems and structures required to accomplish its achievement (**Harrison & stokes, 1992**). This orientation can be represented by a matrix, some disadvantages of this type is that employees may become disillusioned if results are not continued or may experience burn out due to the pressure.

Support culture orientation:

This orientation can be associated with the enjoyment of the activity as well as respect for the need and values of other persons involved. It is defined as being based on mutual trust between the individual and the organisation (**Harrison and Stokes,1992**). Its mode of operating is characterized as low in formalisation and centralisation. The relationship exists to serve the needs of member, and it is served also to replace management control with consensus decision making. Subsequently, decisions making occurs through informal communication network.

Brown (1998) states that this type of culture exists solely for the individuals who compromise it. A good manager is the leader who is concerned and responsive to the personal need and values of others, and he uses his position to provide satisfying and grow stimulating work opportunities for subordinates (**Pheysey, 2003**). Communication is often verbal or informal, and usually flows in all directions. Some disadvantages of this culture is that people focus on relationships and neglect the work and when consensus cannot be reached, the group may become indecisive, and decisions may take a long time as they would require everyone's approval (**Harrison, 1993**)

Method:

Participants:

Data for the present study were collected from samples in five companies. We distributed research questionnaires to people working in companies of electricity production. Data were collected from 134 managers (89, 56% males, 10, 44% females, and 14% missing data). Their ages ranged from 28 to 57 years (29% under 35years old) .We noted a considerable variation in the period of work of these managers in the electricity production company: 23,13% worked for less than 5 years, 23,88% worked for 6 to 10 years, 17,91% worked for 15 to 24 years, 11,94% worked for 16 to 20 years and 15, 67% for over 21 years.

Materials:

The questionnaire contains demographic questions and a measure of organisational culture that we have developed on the basis of Harrison and Stokes questionnaire (2002)**.** This instrument contains 16 scales that represent different aspects of organisational culture such as management expectations, making decisions, motivation and conflict... Each of the scales contains four statements; and respondents are asked to rank the choices in degree of relevance from 1 to 4, which they would prefer to work.Each of the statements corresponds to one of the four cultures(power, role, achievement and support), so that lower scores on the statements indicate greater relevance.

Procedures:

Data collection:

We distributed and retrieved questionnaires from 134 managers after asking human resource managers departments. While distributing the surveys, researchers assured participants at no point will their manager see their responses. To further maintain the confidentiality of all employees' identities, i the only identifying this procedure also ensured that no information requested within the questionnaire was the last question about the position that you occupied. This procedure also ensured that no employee name would be associated with any answer.

Translation procedure:

A formal, cross translation procedure was employed to ensure maximum commonality among survey questions written in different

languages. Survey questions were written in different languages. Survey questions were first written in English and translated into Arabic by a hired translator (   ). The foreign-language versions were improved if any slight discrepancies surfaced in order to create maximum equivalence across the various versions.

Results:

Ratings on the four cultural factors (Power, role, Achievement and support) were considered first in terms of organisations where respondents currently worked. Table 1 represents descriptive statistics for three ratings by region represented in the company.

Table 1: Results about current organisational culture by region

Region	N	Power M SD	Role M SD	Achievement M SD	Support M SD
Jijel	49	32,00 7,85	34,81 4,57	45,16 5,26	48,02 6,20
Bejaia	17	34,94 8,99	35,82 6,15	44,23 6,59	44,94 6,43
Skikda	19	33,21 9,90	37,57 5,72	41,89 6,53	47,31 6,74
Algiers	34	33,61 9,03	34,47 4,77	43,20 8,46	49,70 6,45
Annaba	15	35,93 12,55	34,46 5,00	43,86 6,65	45,73 7,73
Total	134	33,14 9,16	35,20 5,16	43,96 6,36	47,70 6,64

According to table 1, respondents believed that they worked mainly in power (mean range 32 to 37), role (mean range 34 to 37) or Achievement cultures (mean range 41to 45) rather than support culture (man range 44 to 49). A within-subjects analysis of variance test showed significant differences on mean ratings for the four cultures (F= 132, 43; P< .001). Paired comparisons of means indicated power culture to be more prominent than role, achievement and support cultures. Role culture was more prominent than achievement and support cultures; and achievement culture was more prominent than support culture. Mean differences on ratings of organisational prominent culture shown first were: Power: Support (14, 46, t (134) = -14, 88, p< .01); Role: Support (12, 50, t (134) = -17, 18, p< .01);

Power: Achievement (10, 80, t (134) = -11, 20, p< .01); Role: Achievement (8,74, t (134) = -12,30, p< .01); Achievement: Support (3,76, t (134) = -4,72, p< .01) and Power: Role (2,06, t (134) = -2,27, p< .01).

Respondents also ranked cultural factors in terms of preferred organisational cultures; preferred ratings on the four different kinds of organisational cultures are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Results about preferred organisational culture by region

Region	N	Power M SD	Role M SD	Achievement M SD	Support M SD
Jijel	49	49,12 8,90	36,30 5,40	32,44 7,39	42,53 7,55
Bejaia	17	50,17 7,50	33,17 4,72	31,94 5,87	44,70 5,02
Skikda	19	47,78 11,00	35,94 3,76	34,00 8,78	44,00 8,00
Algiers	34	51,32 8,60	36,47 4,85	30,76 5,95	42,41 7,48
Annaba	15	49,93 10,82	38,60 4,27	30,06 5,37	41,40 9,89
Total	134	49,71 8,15	36,15 4,97	31,91 6,90	42,85 7,58

According to table 2, Respondents tended to rate preferred cultures in terms of achievement (mean range 30 to 34), Role (mean range 33 to 38), Support (mean range 41 to 44) rather than power culture (mean range 47 to 51). A within-subjects analysis of variance test found significant differences on mean ratings for the four preferred cultures, (F= 152, 77, P< .001). Paired comparison of means of the preferred over cultures indicated that achievement culture was preferred over Power, Support, and role cultures; and Support culture was preferred over Power culture. Mean difference on ratings of preferred organisational culture in descending order, with preferred culture shown first, were: Achievement: Power (17, 80, t (134) = -17, 97, p< .01; Role: Power (13,56, t (134) = -15,06, p< .01); Achievement: Support (10,94,t (134) = -12,36, p< .01); Support: Power (6,68,t (134) = -

6,67, p< .01); Role: Support (6,70, t (134) = -8,55, p< .01); Achievement: Role (4,24, t (134) = -5,77, p< .01)

Paired t-tests were used to compare ratings of current organisational cultural factors and preferred cultural factors. Mean scores for current and preferred ratings are shown in table **3**.

Table 3: Results on current and preferred organisational cultures

		Power	Role	Achievement	Support
	N	M SD	M SD	M SD	M SD
Current	134	33,14 9,16	35,20 5,16	43,94 6,36	47,70 6,64
Preferred	134	49,68 9,15	36,15 4,97	31,91 6,90	42,85 7,85

Significant differences were found between current and preferred ratings for three types of cultures. Organisations were rated as having greater power culture than desired achievement culture, t (134) = - 14, 73, p< .01. In contrast, organisations were rated as having less achievement culture than desired achievement culture, t (134) = 14, 82, p< .01 and less support culture than desired support culture, t (134) = 5, 56. However, organisations were rated as having no significant differences between current and preferred ratings on role culture.

Discussion:

According to the main objective of this research, the results indicate that there exist some differences between the existing types of organizational cultures. These findings clarified a need to consider organisational cultures as a result of regional and situational factors. As the present research concludes, managers work in different organisational cultures. Of these, the most prevalent culture by far is power, followed next by role and

achievement cultures. Few managers see themselves as working in support culture.

It is also to be noted that managers working in Algiers and JIJEL companies keep high rates of power culture than those engaged in the other companies, especially ANNABA company. Also, managers in Skikda company tend to rate their organisation more highly on achievement culture than managers working in other companies, notably JIJEL.

These results give more evidence for challenging the notion of a generic culture within organisation, and that change programs need to consider culture as a function of region where the organisation works.

Another important result concerns the preferred types of cultures. In order, these cultures were found to be achievement, role and support, with power last. Significant differences were also found for these desired cultures, such strength of preference cuts across all regions where companies work including JIJEL, BEJAIA, ALGIERS and ANNABA, including the pervasive nature of these preferences.

Also, it is important to present the most important result revealed from the comparison between the existing and preferred cultures; important differences were found on other aspects of organisational culture. The result showed that power culture was rated as being more spread than preferred; achievement and support cultures were less prevalent than desired. While role culture show a non-significant differences between current and preferred culture.

Limitations of study:

While the present study afforded substantial advantages in clarifying the research questions of interests, three limitations merit consideration in the context of future research. Managers in the present sample do not represent all members of the organisations. Also, studying six companies working in one public sector may create a problem of generalisation. Further studies may want to further analyse organisational culture using more managers in different industries and sectors of activity across different regions, and broad the study to take the other professional categories.

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