International Journal of Academic Management Science Research (IJAMSR)
ISSN: 2643-900X
Vol. 8 Issue 10 October - 2024, Pages: 61-66

The Cultural Trinity Of Organization: Unpacking The Intersection Of The Individual, Organizational And Chief Executive Officer Culture

Blessing Darius, PhD, Ebiasuode Awu, PhD, Etitinwo Olileanya Juliet

Ignatius Ajuru University Of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
Dariusblessing@Gmail.Com
Ignatius Ajuru University Of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
Ebiawu@Gmail.Com
Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Abstract: *The concept of culture is pivotal in organizational discourse, significantly influencing employee engagement, turnover, and overall performance. This study investigates the cultural trinity within organizations, elucidating the interplay among individual, organizational, and CEO culture. This intersection, termed the cultural trinity, has substantial implications for organizational success. The study analyzes each cultural facet, including individual culture, which is influenced by personal upbringing and experiences, and organizational culture, characterized by a system of shared values, norms, and behaviors that define the organization's identity. Additionally, the CEO's personality and leadership style are instrumental in shaping organizational culture. Comprehending the complex interrelations among these three cultures is vital for fostering a cohesive and high-performing organizational culture.*

Keywords: Chief Executive Officer Culture, Individual Culture and Organizational Culture

INTRODUCTION

The concept of culture is typically at the center of organizational conversations, with leaders and managers attempting to create a work environment that supports innovation, cooperation, and employee engagement. However, the cultural landscape is complicated and varied, including not just one but three separate cultures: individual, corporate, and CEO culture. The junction of these three cultures, frequently referred to as the cultural trinity, has important consequences for organizational performance and success. According to a recent study by Harvard Business Review, CEO culture is a key predictor of employee engagement and turnover, whereas organizational culture can either enhance or diminish the impact of CEO culture (HBR, 2020). Meanwhile, individual culture has a key impact in determining employee behavior and attitudes. The interplay between these three cultures may be both dynamic and complex, with leaders having the arduous task of handling the tensions and synergies that come from their junction. As organizations seek to negotiate the challenges of modern business, knowing the cultural trinity and its intricate relationships is vital for developing a unified and high-performing culture. As stated by Schein (2000), culture is the most difficult organizational trait to change, outlasting organizational goods, services, founders and leadership, and all other physical attributes of the organization.

According to Donovan (2006), culture defines the rules of the game. Culture by definition is elusive, subtle, implicit, and taken for granted. But every company creates a core set of assumptions, understandings, and tacit norms that govern day-to-day behavior in the workplace; until newcomers learn the rules, they are not acknowledged as full-fledged members of the organization (Handy, 2009). Anoa (2010) feels that a strong culture displays great agreement among members about what the organization stands for. Such symmetry of purpose creates cohesiveness, loyalty, and corporate commitment. These attributes, in turn, diminish employees' propensity to leave the firm (Hill & Jones, 2001).

Nimran (2004) defines culture or cultures taken from Backer et al. (2002): culture is the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and norms that knit a community together, or culture is a set of philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and shared norms that bind a society. An organization's existing conventions, traditions, and overall style of doing things are primarily related to what it has done before and the degree of success it had with those initiatives. So the ultimate source of an organization's culture is its founders. The founders of an organization generally have a substantial role in defining the early culture. They have a vision of what the organization should be (Oparanma, 2015). Chatman & Jehn (2004) opined that they are unfettered by previous customs for doing things or by previous philosophies. The tiny size that normally characterizes any new company further enables the founders' imposing their vision on all organizational members. Because the founders have the initial idea, they also generally have biases about how to get the notion fulfilled. The organization's culture arises from the interaction between the founders' prejudices and assumptions and what the original members learn subsequently from their own experiences (Hofstede, 2012). According to Hodge, Anthony, William, and Gales (2003), culture is there to help individuals cope with ambiguity and complexity. Culture is an abstract and complex concept. Culture can provide power to the conduct of members of the company because it can create consistency and predictability, inventiveness, and manage difficulties in the organization (Hodge et al., 2003).

However, our point of departure is examining the cultural trinity of the organization: Unpacking the intersection of the individual, organizational, and chief executive officer cultures.

Individual Culture

Individual culture refers to the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors of the employees within an organization. Each individual brings their own unique cultural background and experiences which can influence how they perceive and engage with organizational culture. Employees with diverse cultural backgrounds can bring different perspectives and ideas to the table, leading to innovation and creativity within the organization.

Individual culture is a personal construct that is shaped by an individual's upbringing, experiences, and social surroundings (Triandis, 2018). It is separate from group culture, which refers to the shared cultural norms and values of a particular group or community (Hofstede, 2010). Individual culture is characterized by its unique combination of cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors that are influenced by an individual's personal experiences, education, and socialization (Schwartz & Bardi, 2017). Individual culture has a huge impact on human behavior. Research has indicated that persons who possess a strong sense of cultural identification are likely to demonstrate culturally appropriate behaviors (Triandis, 2018). Additionally, persons who are more culturally sensitive tend to be more compassionate and tolerant towards others from different cultural origins (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 2017). Individual culture is directly related to an individual's self-concept. Research has revealed that persons who possess a strong sense of cultural identification tend to have a more positive self-concept (Phinney & Ong, 2017). Furthermore, persons who are able to integrate their cultural identity into their self-concept tend to enjoy better levels of psychological well-being (Waters et al., 2017). Individual culture can also influence the way individuals interact with others from diverse cultural origins. Research has revealed that persons who are able to merge their cultural identification with that of another culture are likely to experience higher levels of psychological well-being (Kim & Lee, 2018). Additionally, those who are able to adjust to a new culture tend to enjoy better levels of life satisfaction (Berry et al., 2017). Individual culture can also influence an individual's emotional intelligence. Research has revealed that persons who exhibit a high level of cultural intelligence are likely to be more emotionally intelligent (Earley & Ang, 2018). Persons who are able to understand and accept the cultural distinctions between themselves and others are likely to be more emotionally intelligent (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2018).

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture comprises the attitudes, experience, beliefs, and values of an organization. Black (2003) described organizational culture as a specific collection of values and norms that are held by people and groups in an organization and that regulate the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the business. Organizational values are beliefs and ideas about the kind of aims members of an organization should seek and thoughts about the proper kind or standards of behavior organizational members should use to attain these goals. An organization's culture incorporates all the life experiences each employer brings to the organization. Culture is mainly influenced by the organization's founder, executives, and other managerial staff because of their role in decision-making and strategic direction. Organizational culture, according to Donovan (2006), is represented in a group such as language, decision-making, symbols, stories and legends, and daily work routines. A company's bulletin board material, the company's newsletter, the interaction of employees in meetings, and the method in which individuals collaborate speak volumes about an organization's culture. The type of organizational culture put in place will undoubtedly affect the performance of the organization. This organizational culture will undoubtedly affect the performance of the corporation.

Organizational culture is a form of rules and norms in an organization. This organizational culture is affecting all personnel in the organization. Organizational culture already exists in the organization and becomes their guide to work; therefore, every employee is needed to adapt to the culture. As a professionally managed organization, that organizational culture is anticipated to boost the performance of employees so that employees will not have problems in their careers. The establishment of the corporate culture needed every employee to accept and cooperate in a full, meaningful culture imposed a strong culture. Scotter (2000) believes that a strong organizational culture will be able to encourage and direct the behavior of employees working for the fulfillment of the organizational goals and individual. With the diversity of the ethnic groups, religion, and culture, what the employee will receive is defined by the company culture. Cultures evolve spontaneously when humans get together to form a group. A group of members of formal organizations encounter ambiguity and bewilderment about their existence as a social system. A growing company with numerous diverse cultures needs a system to manage different settings. Organizational culture is a system of values, ideas, and behavior patterns that subconsciously motivates people in the organization to make each choice and decision (Ortega-Parra & Sastre-Castillo, 2013). Schneider et al. (2013) identified organizational culture as the norms that members of an organization see as their work environment, and these norms impact how members behave and adapt to meet organizational goals. Organizational culture is the manner in which organizational members engage with one another and other stakeholders (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2014). Yirdaw

International Journal of Academic Management Science Research (IJAMSR)
ISSN: 2643-900X
Vol. 8 Issue 10 October - 2024, Pages: 61-66

(2016) identified organizational culture as the glue that binds the non-human resources to the human resources in a company to build teamwork and good performance.

Flamholtz and Randle (2011) highlighted that an effective organizational culture is an advantage, while an ineffective culture is a liability for organizational performance. Corporate managers with an effective organizational culture foster an innovative corporate environment (Givens, 2012). Engelen et al. (2014) suggested that a good corporate culture preserves employee-focused leadership, sound interpersonal relationships, and an ethical decision-making process. Low employee turnover and high employee satisfaction are markers of an effective company culture (Hartnell et al., 2011). An effective organizational culture is vital to encourage and retain competent and trustworthy individuals in the organization (Berg & Wilderom, 2012; Eaton & Kilby, 2015).

According to Mobley (2005), organizational culture is a less tangible aspect that defines the source of competition beyond quality, pricing, technology, consumer service brand, etc. Organizational culture is introduced to all employees once they are recruited; this enables them to become acquainted with the company and the happenings in the system (Fakhar et al., 2012). Organizational culture refers to a system of common meanings held by members of an organization that distinguishes them from others (Robbins, 2001). According to Weeks (2010), organizational cultures are the enduring force and natural emerging living system that injects structure and stability in any organization, especially as concerns the organizational network of human interactions and activities. For Imran et al. (2010), organizational cultures are determinants of employees's performance as well as organizational successes because they bring about individual employees' innovativeness. Organizational culture is the system of values that employees from different backgrounds and at different levels within similar organizations have (Robbin & Sanghi, 2007). Organizational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by given a group as they learn to cope with problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well and they believe it is valuable and could be taught to new members (Edgar Schein cited in Luthans (1995).

Organizational culture is either unitarian in approach where emphasis is on consensus and equilibrium or radical humanism perspective that lays emphasis on control (Furham, 1997). Organizations are regarded as having common cultures; Schein (1985) stated that it is more accurate to handle organizations as if they have common cultures. This is because organizational culture comprises three elements, which are the values, artifacts, and assumptions. The assumptions are the ingrained subconscious beliefs of human nature and social relationships that are taken for granted, while values are preferences, results, and means of obtaining the outcomes, and lastly, the artifacts are the solid or physical embodiment of culture. According to Frost et al. (1985), organizational culture is a uniting and homogenous value that may be managed to attain organizational-wide consensus and share values. This perspective is related to the writings of Peters and Waterman (1982) that reported culture as a quick remedy for managers.

Organizational culture on the other hand, refers to the shared values, norms, beliefs, and practices that define the identity of the organization. It shapes the way employees interact with each other, make decisions and conduct business. A strong organizational culture can create a sense of belonging and purpose among employees, leading to higher levels of engagement and productivity.

Chief Executive Officer Culture

The CEO's personality can influence the entire decision process dynamic and how this impacts the firm's performance, notably in terms of sales growth and returns on investment and assets (Peterson, Smith, & Martorana, 2003). The CEO culture refers to the values, beliefs, and leadership style of the CEO or senior executives within the firm. The CEO has a significant role in defining the organizational culture through their words and actions. Their leadership style, communication techniques, and decision-making processes can have a considerable impact on the culture of the organization as a whole.

CEO culture refers to the collection of beliefs, conventions, and behaviors that are advocated by the CEO and shape the organization's culture (Collins, 2011). It is generally characterized by the CEO's leadership style, decision-making procedures, and communication patterns (Kotter & Heskett, 2011). According to Collins (2011), CEO culture can be categorized into three types: Level 5 leaders, who prioritize building a strong team and delegating responsibility; Level 3 leaders, who focus on their own success and prioritize their own interests; and Level 1 leaders, who are primarily concerned with their own power and status. Numerous studies have demonstrated that CEO culture has a substantial impact on organizational success. Research by Hambrick and Mason (1984) indicated that CEOs who are more autonomous and less constrained by external pressures tend to manage firms that are more inventive and successful. Similarly, a study by Collins (2011) indicated that firms headed by Level 5 leaders tend to outperform those managed by Level 3 leaders. More recent research has also demonstrated the positive impact of CEO culture on organizational performance. For example, a study by Nielsen et al. (2020) indicated that CEOs who value diversity and inclusion tend to manage firms that are more innovative and successful. Another study by Singh et al. (2020) indicated that CEOs who create a favorable organizational culture tend to run firms that have greater employee engagement and retention rates. CEO culture has also been demonstrated to have a substantial impact on employee engagement. A study by Gallup (2013) indicated that employees that are highly interested in their work tend to be more productive, efficient, and innovative. Another study by Nielsen et al. (2020) indicated that CEOs who prioritize employee engagement tend to manage firms that have higher levels of employee satisfaction and commitment.

Unpacking the Intersection of Individual, Organizational and CEO Culture

The intersection of individual, organizational and CEO cultures is where the cultural trinity comes into play. When these three elements align and complement each other, it can lead to a harmonious and successful organization. However, when there is a misalignment or conflict between these cultures, it can lead to dysfunction, disengagement and efficiency within the organization. By unpacking the trinity in organizations, leaders can gain a deeper understanding of how culture influences the behaviors and outcomes within their organization. They can identify areas of strength and weakness in their cultural ecosystem and take proactive steps to align and strengthen these cultural elements for the benefit of the organization as a whole. Ultimately, understanding and leveraging the cultural trinity can lead to a more cohesive and successful organization.

Conclusion

Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the identity and actions of organizations. The cultural trinity in organizations refers to the intersection of the three main cultural elements, which are individual culture, organizational culture, and CEO culture. Understanding these three aspects and how they interact can provide valuable insights into the dynamics and functioning of an organization. The findings of this study demonstrate that individual culture, shaped by personal experiences, education, and socialization, has a profound impact on employee behavior and attitudes. Organizational culture, a shared system of values, norms, and behaviors that define the identity of the organization, also plays a critical role in shaping employee behavior and influencing decision-making. Moreover, CEO culture, shaped by the values, beliefs, and leadership style of the CEO or top executives, has a significant impact on the overall organizational culture and can either reinforce or contradict the organizational culture. The study's results highlight the importance of understanding the interplay between individual, organizational, and CEO culture in shaping organizational performance. A cohesive culture that aligns with the organization's mission and values can lead to increased employee engagement, productivity, and competitiveness in the marketplace. On the other hand, a fragmented or contradictory culture can lead to decreased employee morale, turnover, and ultimately, organizational failure.

The study's findings have significant implications for organizational leaders and practitioners. First and foremost, leaders must recognize the importance of culture in shaping organizational performance and take steps to understand and shape their organization's culture. This involves developing a deep understanding of individual, organizational, and CEO cultures and identifying areas where these may be conflicting or misaligned. To achieve this goal, organizations can implement various strategies such as cultural assessments, team-building exercises, and leadership development programs. These initiatives can foster a sense of community and shared values among employees and align individual behaviors with organizational goals.

Moreover, organizations must prioritize diversity and inclusion initiatives to ensure that all employees feel valued and respected. This includes creating a workplace that is free from discrimination and bias and providing opportunities for employees to develop their skills and advance their careers. In addition to these strategies, organizations must also prioritize leadership development programs that focus on developing effective leadership skills. This includes developing leaders who are able to inspire and motivate employees, build trust with stakeholders, and make informed decisions that align with the organization's mission and values. However, understanding and shaping culture is a critical component of organizational success. By recognizing the interplay between individual, organizational, and CEO cultures, organizations can create a cohesive culture that aligns with their missions and values. This requires a commitment to cultural assessments, diversity and inclusion initiatives, leadership development programs, and ongoing cultural development efforts. By prioritizing cultural development efforts, organizations can reap numerous benefits, including increased employee engagement, productivity, retention rates, customer satisfaction rates, and ultimately, business success. In today's complex business environment, where competition is fierce and change is constant, organizations must be proactive in understanding and shaping their culture to stay ahead of the curve.

REFERENCE

Anoa, A. J. (2010). *Survival of Business Firms*. Management Nigeria (July).

Black, F. (2003). *Organizational Culture*: Creating the Influence Needed for Strategic Success, London UK, ISBN 1-58112-211 - X.

Berg, P., & Wilderom, C. (2012). A longitudinal study of the effects of charismatic leadership and organizational culture on objective and perceived corporate performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*, 835-848.

Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2017). Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation processes and adaptation outcomes. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *48*(1), 1-22.

Baker, & Kathryn A. (2002). Organizational Culture. *Journal of Organizational Culture, 20,* 1-11.

Collins, J. C. (2011). Level 5 leadership: The triumph of humility and fierce resolve. Harvard Business Review.

Chatman, A., & Jehn, U. (2004). Accessing relationship between industry characteristics and organizational culture: *Academy of Management Journal,* 37, 522-533.

Donovan, J. (2006). *The Corporate Culture Handbook*: How to Plan, Implement and Measure a Successful Culture Change Programme. The Liffey ISBN.

Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. (2018). CQ: The art of international leadership. Sage Publications.

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (2017). The psychology of attitudes. Routledge.

Engelen, A., Flatten, T., Thalmann, J., & Brettel, M. (2014). The effect of organizational culture on entrepreneurial orientation: A comparison between Germany and Thailand. *Journal of Small Business Management, 52*, 732-752.

Eaton, D., & Kilby, G. (2015). Does your organizational culture support your business strategy. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, *37*(4), 4-7.

Fakhar et al (2012). Impact of Organizational Culture on Organizational Performance: An over View. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, *3*(9), 975-985.

Frost, P., Moore, L., Louis, M., Lundberg, C. and Martin, J. (1985). Organizational Culture, Beverley Hills/London Sage.

Furham, A. (1997), *The Psychology of Behaviour at Work, The Individual in the Organization*, Hove, Psychology Press.

Flamholtz, E., & Randle, Y. (2011). *Corporate culture: The ultimate strategic asset.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Goleman, D., & Boyatzis, R. E. (2018). Social intelligence: The new science of human relationships. Bantam Books.

Gudykunst, W. B., & Ting-Toomey, S. (2017). Culture and interpersonal communication. Sage Publications.

Gallup. (2013). State of the American Workplace. Report.

Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. Academy of Management Review.

Hofstede, G., & Hofstede-Barnards, C. J. (2010). Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. McGraw-Hill Education.

Hartnell, C. A., Ou, A. Y., & Kinicki, A. (2011). Organizational culture and organizational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the competing values framework's theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *96*(4), 677-694.

Handy, A, K. (2009). *Understanding Organizations* (3rd Ed.), Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.

Hofstede, L. (2012): *Culture's Consequences*: International Differences in Work Related Values, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage Publications.

Hodge, B. J., Anthony, William P., & Gales, L. (2003). *Organization Theory* (6th Edition). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Pearson Education, LTD.

Hill .B, & Jones, A. M. (2001). *Strategic Management*: Hougton Mifflin.

Harvard Business Review. (2020). The CEO's Culture: A New Frontier for Leaders. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2020/07/the-ceos-culture-a-new-frontier-for-leaders

Imran R, Saeed T, Anis-Ul-Haq M & Fatima A. 2010. Organisational climate as a predictor of innovative work behavior. *African Journal of Business Management, 4(*15), 3337-3343.

Kim, U., & Lee, E. (2018). Cultural differences in conflict resolution: A cross-cultural study of Korea and the United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 34,* 34-45.

Kotter, J. P., & Heskett, J. L. (2011). *Corporate culture and performance*. Simon & Schuster.

Luthan, S. (1995). *Organizational Behaviour.* (3rd Ed.) NewYork, McGraw Hill.

Nimran, U. (2004). Perilaku Organisasi. Surabaya: Penerbit Citramedia.

Nielsen, K., Larsen, H., & Ybema, S. (2020). The impact of CEO leadership style on organizational innovation: A systematic review. *Journal of Business Research, 44,* 47-50.

Oparanma, A. O. (2015). Organizational Culture: Creating the Influence Needed for Strategic Success in Health Care Organizations in Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies, 5*(7), 15-19.

Ortega-Parra, A., & Sastre-Castillo, M., (2013). Impact of perceived corporate culture on organizational commitment. *Management Decision*, *51*, 1071-1083.

Peterson, R. S., Smith, D. B., & Martorana, P. V. O. (2003). The impact of chief executive officer personality on top management team dynamics: One mechanism by which leadership affects organizational performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*, 795-808.

Robbins, S. (2001). *Organisational Behaviour*: Prentice Hall: International Edition.

Robbins S. P., & Sanghi S. (2007). Organizational Behaviour. Pearson Education, New Delhi.

Schneider, B., Ehrhart, M. G., & Macey, W. H. (2013). Organizational climate and culture. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *64*, 361-388.

Singh, J., Sharma, S., & Kumaraswamy, A. (2020). CEO leadership style and organizational performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management & Organization*, *6*, 67-78.

Simoneaux, S., & Stroud, C. (2014). A strong corporate culture is key to success. *Journal of Pension Benefits*, *22*(1), 51-53.

Scotter, J. R .V. (2000). Relationships of task performance and contextual performance with turnover, job satisfaction, and affective commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 10*(I), 76-95.

Schein, Z. I. (2O00). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*: (3rd Ed), Jossey - Bass.

Weeks R.V. (2010). Organizational Culture: A Contemporary Perspective. ACTA Commercii. http//www.actacommercii.co.za%findex.php%, downloaded 214-6-12.

Yirdaw, A. (2016). Quality of Education in Private Higher Institutions in Ethiopia: The Role of Governance. *SAGE Open*, *6*(1), 1-12.