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Correspondence: ikarkazis@aegean.gr

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: ITS GENESIS AND METAMORPHOSIS

N.A. Antivachis, V.A. Angelis

University of the Aegean
Greece

Abstract. This paper focuses on how the organizational structure gets started, evolves, and embeds itself through the different stages of the organizational life cycle and on the development of the framework for cultural transformation. It Identifies the imperative reasons for understanding organizational culture, elaborates on the role of the founder in the initiation of the organizational culture, discusses the role of organizational complexity on the cultural phenomenon, contrasts the match/mismatch between the organizational complexity levels with the corresponding cultural stages, provides a cultural paradigm on the basis of the concept "Assumptions made, result to values, which lead to behaviors", proposes a methodology for assessing the level of congruency among the prevailing organizational culture (OC), the personality disposition (PD) and the hierarchical level (H), which will allow the proactive interventions aiming at the desired cultural transformations.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Change, Learning, Organizational Development, Soft Reengineering

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are socio-technical systems that operate and perform as open systems in a particular environment. As such they do not transact solely on tangible inputs with their environment of operation, but they also receive and feed back into the environment intangible ones. Thus organizations utilize inputs and produce outputs in the context of material, financial and human resources. The last category is a source not only of the necessary skills, knowledge and information required by a particular role, but also of certain intangible ones, like values, beliefs and attitudes which manifest a particular, distinct way of feeling, thinking and acting. All these soft inputs/outputs originate from the societal value system of the space and time into which the organization operates and performs and impact upon the organization and back on the environment of operation-through the hosts of those values forming an organizational system of fundamental beliefs, values, attitudes, norms and practices; i.e, the organizational culture.

According to Kluckhohn (1951) culture in general, which may be defined in many ways, is quoted as follows: "...*Culture consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including the embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values*... ".

The extrapolation of culture between the collectivity we classify as society and its partial collectivity classified as organization is apparent. Culture is to human collectivity what personality is to an individual. Organizational culture determines and defines those shared elements that give meaning and identity (in our case shared organizational identity), like the personality determines the identity of the individual. Thus the importance of organizational culture relies on the fact that it provides all these shared beliefs, values, norms etc. that epitomize and express operationally the way(s) organizational members should think, feel and respond to different cases; i.e. provide the guidelines for behavior of organizations and in organizations. Culture attracts attention and conveys a vision of what is important by recognizing and rewording acceptable behaviors, which conform to the cultural priorities; culture over time reinforces those behaviors and identifies them as roles to emulate.

Any organization's capacity to maintain itself and grow, act effectively in the face of changing circumstances, depends upon the development of a set of commonly held assumptions that permeate the subsystems of the organization vertically and laterally and survive in spite of the fluidity of the organizational membership. So from one hand culture is considered to be the organizational ability to maintain its collective memory through experience and learning, while from the other, the culture forms the basis for the organization's capacity to learn. Compelling reasons for understanding culture in a much more specific way may be:

Firstly, the need to map out the intraorganizational cultural dynamics. The increased differentiation of organizations-on the basis of different criteria-has generated localized sub-cultures each one with its own shared language, ideology, notion of boundaries, power, status, rewards etc. Unless we understand what goes on inside the organization we will not be able to design the intergroup processes that allow communication and collaboration to flow across rigid sub-cultural boundaries. The «communication breakdown» is now understood to be a failure in intercultural communication among different groups, embodying different sub-cultures. In a sense understanding of internal sub-cultural dynamics is a prerequisite for internal integration.

Secondly, the need to understand the influence of Information Technology on the transformation of work. For a number of years now the IT applications have proliferated widely in almost every functional area of the organization. What we do not usually realize is that the occupational sub-cultures within the organization, while they do possess their own values, practices, norms etc., they are influenced by the IT applications, because IT is another occupational culture by itself. Thus with IT applications that are implemented in a particular functional area we do have an interaction of the values etc, of the functional area with the IT values; the result is a mutual transformation of both sub-cultures ; the IT transforms how the work is being done which affects the values, practices of that sub-culture, while it transforms and impacts on the technology as well. Unless we understand the cultural implications of the proliferation of IT applications on both parties, we will not be able to attain the sought after integration.

The need, thirdly, to establish international understanding. The deregulation of the markets and the resulting globalization have made the cultural understanding across national borders an imperative necessity for survival.

Fourthly, the need to understand the «Culture Paradox» between Culture and Change. Culture results to stable and consistent behaviors; apparently it's a conservative force which maintains the status quo ante. By the same token, the environment is changing rather expediently and massively imposing thus demands for constant internal integration. An integration though that requires from the organization a constant adaptability to the imposed environmental demands. Thus, from one hand we see culture trying to maintain the status quo, being a prime resistor to change, while from the other, the long-term survival of the organization requires flexibility and fluidity, which both the culture «resists». In a highly turbulent environment of operation, the challenge lies on the development of an organizational culture whose stable elements are institutionalized learning, adaptation, innovation and never ceasing change. In other words, it's necessary to embed a culture characterized by the persistency for change and innovation; both should be the constants of the culture.

The need, lastly, to understand the ways culture influences the ability of an organization to cope and control strategic change (Schwartz, H., and Davis, S, 1981). Consequently, organizational strategy can be understood and analyzed effectively, only if one appreciates the basic culture and values that influence the key strategic elements. Thus strategic changes cannot, or should not be implemented without the regard to the prevailing culture (Thompson, J., 1993)).

Our scope will be to address the issue of how organizational culture starts, evolves, embeds itself, adjusted, the factors that are crucial in its formation and diachronic perpetuation, and the development of a theoretical framework for the cultural transformation so as to align the organizational culture with the level of organizational complexity, structural, technological or geographical.

THE GENESIS OF A CULTURE AND BEYOND

According to Schein (1992), culture springs from three sources: (1) the beliefs, values and assumptions of the founding father (s), (2) the social learning of the organizational members as the organization evolves, and (3) the values, beliefs and assumptions that new members and leaders bring along as the organization grows bigger. It should be stressed the criticality of the selection process which contributes to the degree of reinforcement of the Values/ Beliefs/ Assumptions of the Founding Father (Pratt, 1993).

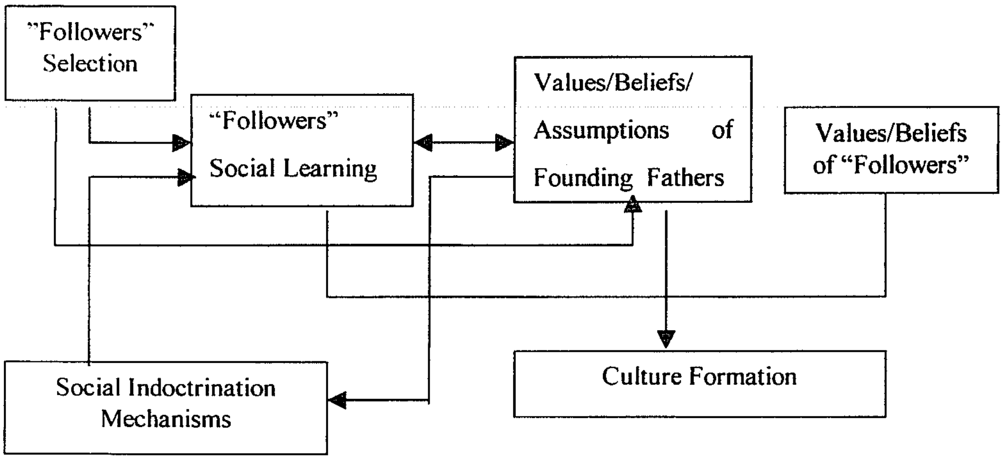

"Followers" Selection
"Followers" Social Learning
Values/Beliefs/ Assumptions of Founding Fathers
Values/Beliefs of "Followers"
Social Indoctrination Mechanisms
Culture Formation

FIGURE 1
Sources of Culture

Another factor of rather crucial importance for its impact on Culture is considered to be the level of hierarchy in the organization, which entails an organizational level of complexity, which may be high or low or anything between the two. Conclusively, the level of hierarchy impacts upon culture especially in cases where the organizational complexity is high, because then the organization is rather formal, systems bound and not dominated by who's on top; the operational details are rather institutionalized and not personalized, solely, on the basis of the values, beliefs, attitudes and practices of the following father(s).

The most critical of the three, especially during the early stages of the organizational life, is considered to be the impact of the founder. He is the one who's responsible for the overall management and direction of the organization; he is the one to choose its basic mission, environmental context, technology and organizational members. By accepting the founder's impact on culture especially at the early stages of organizational life, we in essence imply that organizations go through a number of life cycle stages, each one of which is connected with varying degrees of cultural impact by the leader. The organizational life cycle includes the stages of organizational infancy, mid-life and maturity/decline. Apparently each one of those stages of organizational development correlates differently with the potential leadership impact on culture. More specifically:

The Infancy stage

The organizational infancy stage is identified with the beginning of the organization, when the leader makes the major decisions, solves problems of integration and external adaptation, handpicks the organizational members and the psychological identification of the members with the leader is very strong.

The founder-operationally-carries with him values, beliefs and fundamental assumptions about the Cosmos (What is the human nature about, what is the truth, how is being attained, what is time, space, environment etc.), that are rather espoused by the organizational members, because at this stage they are handpicked by the founder herself, thus having been screened a priori so their values/beliefs etc. correspond with the ones of the leader; in case they do not, leader's values etc. are rather imposed through the socialization process. The leader, at this stage, is the one, who on the basis of his cognitive context, selects courses of action, tackles problems of internal integration and external adaptation. In case that the chosen, by the leader, courses of action provide valid workable solutions, those serve as a paradigm for the rest of the organizational members to follow. Thus a precedent is created as to what, when, why and how organizational members should be going about it, if the situation ever arises again; this results to a stable pattern of responses as long as that chosen course of action provides workable and valid solutions, which generates consistency, stability and predictability (Figure 2).

The above analysis implies that the infancy stage of an organization may be considered as a stage of the founder's "ownership". Organizational members monitor what the leader regularly pays attention to and to what seldom pays attention to and his corresponding actions, ways, timing, feelings and thoughts so as to be able to unveil his basic assumptions upon which his values and his resulting overt behaviors are founded. Organizational members strive for anxiety reducing means and ways; thus they monitor the consistency of leader's behavior pattern on both grounds of what he pays attention to and what he does not, so as to be able to establish a stable framework of behaviors that would lend predictability to the leader's behavior. On the contrary case, if the leader's behavior pattern is rather erratic, then the members will most likely enjoy a much wider breadth of discretion of what is important and what is not for the leader. If we now additionally consider, the interpersonal and intrapersonal perception variance, that will generate a much wider interpretation variance of the leader's beliefs, values and assumptions. The diverse interpretations of all the above will, therefore, lead to a culture which may not be as homogeneous as desired, but to one with a number of subcultures (localized value systems i.e. on the basis mainly of geographical, hierarchical, occupational etc. differentiation) within the overall culture.

In essence the what, when, why and how, refer and identify the content of the organizational culture, which should be coupled together for reasons of effectiveness and efficiency- the culture strength and pervasiveness- with its degree of homogeneity.

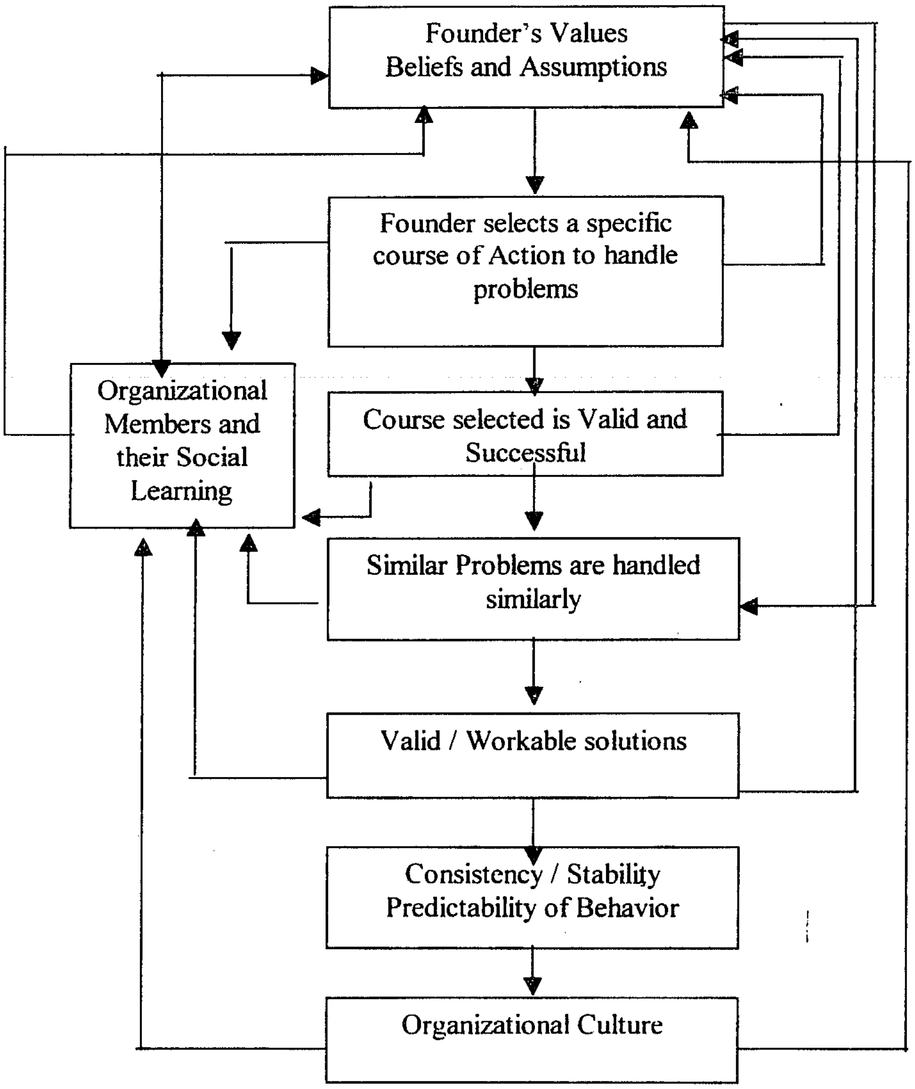

Founder's Values
Beliefs and Assumptions
Founder selects a specific course of Action to handle problems
Organizational Members and their Social Learning
Course selected is Valid and Successful
Similar Problems are handled similarly
Valid / Workable solutions
Consistency / Stability Predictability of Behavior
Organizational Culture

FIGURE 2
The Culture Formation

Thus the less the interpersonal and intrapersonal perception variance of founder's behavior becomes, among the organizational members, the more homogeneous, pervasive and stronger, ceteris paribus, the organizational culture grows and via versa. The figure 3 below indicatively illustrates the founder's overt and covert behavior patterns, which may lead to a homogeneous organizational culture or to a system of sub-cultures.

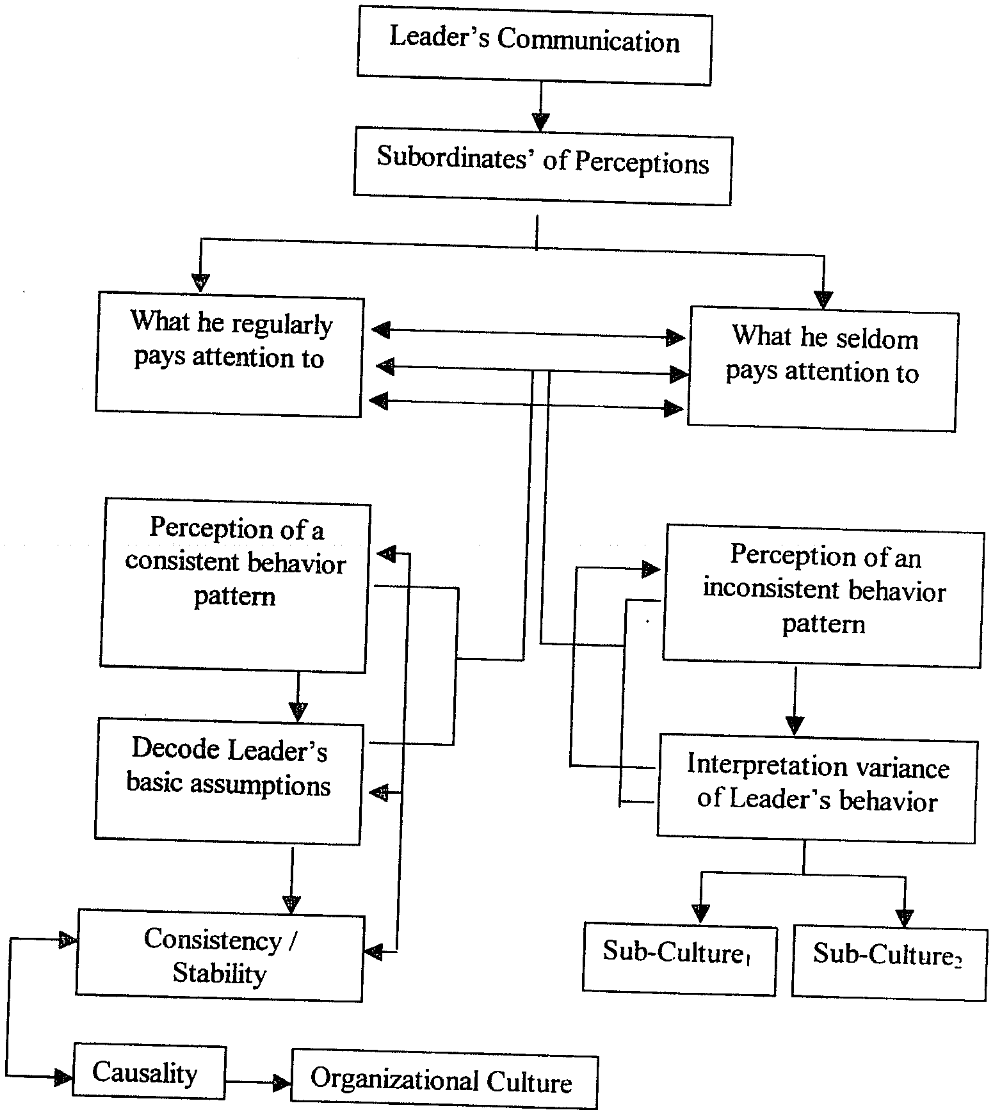

Leader's Communication
Subordinates' of Perceptions
What he regularly pays attention to
What he seldom pays attention to
Perception of a consistent behavior pattern
Perception of an inconsistent behavior pattern
Decode Leader's basic assumptions
Interpretation variance of Leader's behavior
Consistency / Stability
Sub-Culture₁
Sub-Culture₂
Causality
Organizational Culture

FIGURE 3
Homogeneity and Heterogeneity in Organizational Cultures

In order for the subordinates to perceive and interpret leader's behavior with the least possible variation, the leader should display a consistent behavior of what he pays attention to and not paying attention to, thus allowing subordinates to formulate a pattern of his responses that has the least possible intra, interpersonal and situational variance, which over time, as long as those patterns are successful in solving problems, will result to a rather homogeneous culture.

Subordinates also monitor – in order to establish the behavior pattern of the leader – the manner in which the leader handles crisis management situations. Crisis management is particularly important in the infancy stage, because there are, most likely, no manuals or SOP's that provide guidelines, precedents and prescribed actions that should be followed and applied by the leader and his team in a situation of crisis. Thus, the founder's decisions in handling, on an ad hoc basis, similar cases with the same behavior patterns, signals – according to the organizational members perception – the content of culture over time.

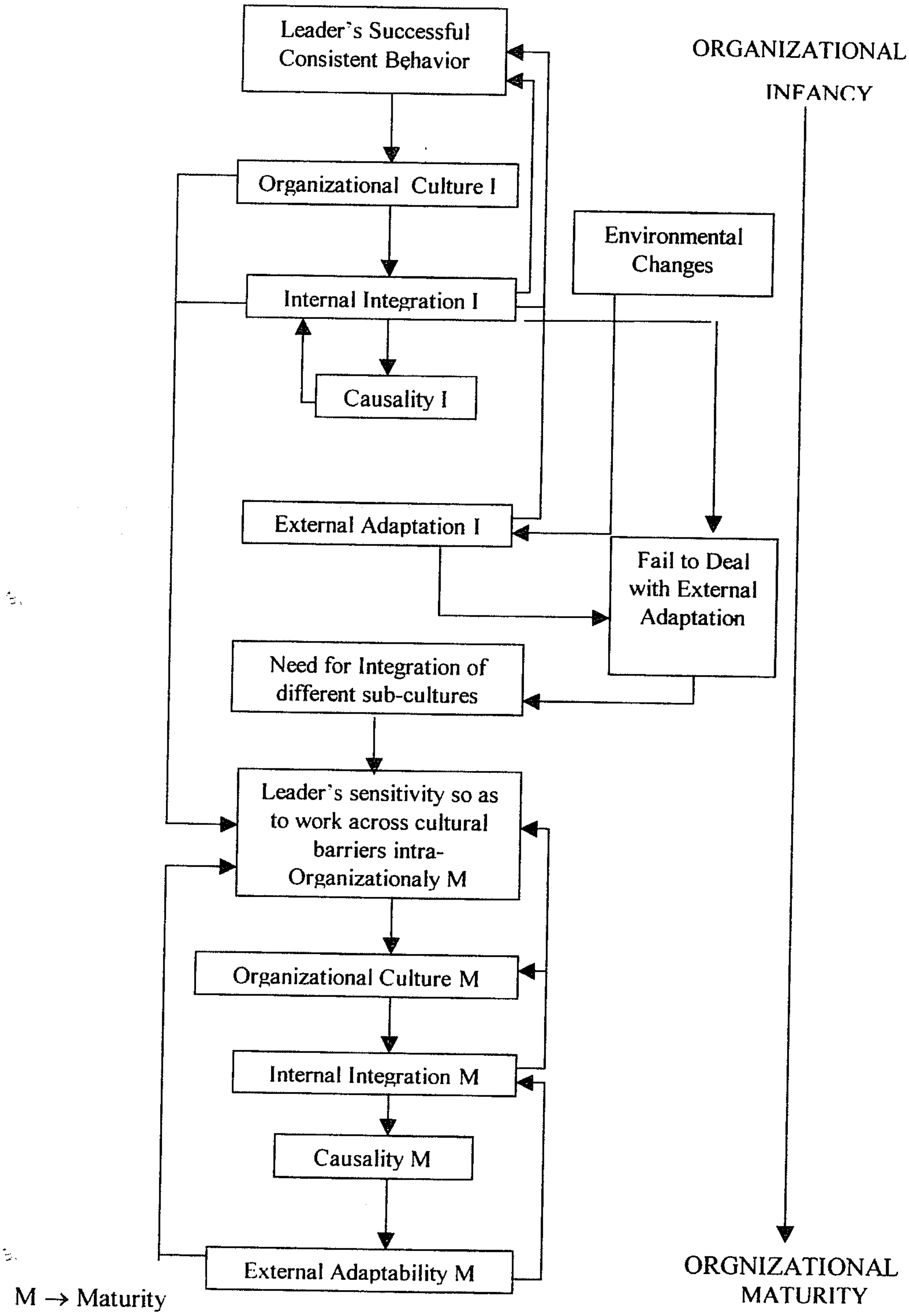
The Mid-life and Maturity/Decline Stage

During the midlife, the organization grows in terms of size and complexity, a development that makes internal integration a very crucial problem for top management. The psychological identification of the members with the leader(s) is not that strong any more. Maturity and Decline stages correspond to the institutionalization of the organization and to a very low degree of identification of the organizational members with the leader.

As the organization grows and moves away from the infancy stage, a disengagement of the management starts to develop away from the original founder(s), and a growing psychological distance to evolve away from the leader, his family and his appointed «heirs», becomes apparent. As the organization grows bigger in size and more complex, it moves away from the leader's grip and ownership (infancy stage). The stage, which the organization is moving away from, is primarily the stage of internal dynamics and integration, whose level no longer accommodates the imperatives of the environment; the organization needs to integrate itself internally, so as to be able to deal with the issue of external adaptation, thus regenerating the sine qua non condition for it, which is the internal integration. Reiman and Weiner (1998) have explicitly stated the need for cultural change in response to environmental changes. "*... The real test of the effectiveness of a corporate culture comes when the organization's environment changes...Sometimes a strong culture can be like a millstone around the neck of a firm that is trying to respond to environmental changes...* ".

Additionally, the growth of the organization, in terms of size and complexity, results to increased differentiation, which inevitably leads to a number of different sub-groups with their own distinct localized cultures (sub-cultures), that require integration and diffusion of knowledge in order to establish a common organizational identity which will lead to consistency and stability of behavior patters.

Edgar Schein (1992) provides a rather focused exposition on the subject. In case the differentiation develops stable groups, which share a common history and a sense of oneness, that distinctly differentiates them from the next, those groups will generate common sets of assumptions and values. The role of leadership now becomes how to integrate the variety of sub-cultures that co-exist within the same organization. In order to do so the leader must abandon and be sufficiently outside and above of his own hierarchical and occupational culture, in order to be able to perceive and realize the difference subcultures, values, priorities, codes and myths (Figure 7). After all, one of the fundamental problems of leadership today-especially under turbulence conditions and diversity- is how to bring together a number of groups of varying assumptions, values, languages, codes and priorities, so as to establish out of their diversity a hollon. The task of the leader is much facilitated in the case that those sub-cultures are compatible with each other, rather than being opposite to each other, or even independent from one another.


Leader's Successful Consistent Behavior
ORGANIZATIONAL INFANCY
Organizational Culture I
Environmental Changes
Internal Integration I
Causality I
External Adaptation I
Fail to Deal with External Adaptation
Need for Integration of different sub-cultures
Leader's sensitivity so as to work across cultural barriers intra-Organizationaly M
Organizational Culture M
Internal Integration M
Causality M
External Adaptability M
ORGNIZATIONAL MATURITY

M → Maturity
I → Infancy

FIGURE 4
The Leader's Role during the Infancy and Maturity Stages of Culture

On the basis of a cultural paradigm (Table 1) we may illustrate the case further by analyzing in a more detailed manner the integral parts of the culture involved and their interconnectivity.

TABLE 1

	Assumptions about	Result to	Values which lead to	Behaviors
A.	Environment	Harmony (1)	Long Term Commitment Independence Synergy	• Low Turnover • Low Tardiness • Few Grievances
		Exploitation (2)	Everything's Expendable "Survival of the Fittest"	
B.	Learning	Empirical (3)	Experimentation Doing Providing and Receiving Feedback Team Work Diversity/Pluralism	• Few doors • Open space • Much wondering around • Informality prevails
		Higher Authority (4)	Respect Hierarchy Older, more educated, higher status people "knowbest" Discipline and Lotayty	• Closed doors • Strict agendas • Work inside the Offices • "No wondering Around" • Formality prevails
C.	People	Empirical (5)	Winning's Everything Self-Benefit precedes everything else	• Autocratic • Centralized • Political
		Higher Authority (6)	Respect & Acceptance of others Synergy	• Self-sacrifice for the common good • Decentralized decision making

A notable example of differentiation is the functional one which generates functional subcultures that bring with them the diversity associated with the occupational group and technologies that underlie the functions. Those differences are based on the initial personality differences in terms of what kind of people are attracted to a particular occupation and from the particular properties of the core technology with which the occupation is concerned. (Holland, 1985). As the organization grows and succeeds, functional sub-cultures become stable and more articulated, thus developing their own shared values, language, symbols priorities ect. In some cases the communication barriers (assumptions about learning) between functional sub-cultures, are so strong and chronic, that the organization in order to mesh them together, needs to invent new boundary spanning functions to bridge the gap between sub-cultures (Figure 5). Communications barriers may be due to basic assumptions as it was stated above about learning; i.e. do we learn empirically or truth comes only from higher management? At a practical level, these issues frame assumptions about management's timeframe (short or long term), concepts of space and equity (open or private offices), beliefs as how to achieve innovation (through individuals or groups).

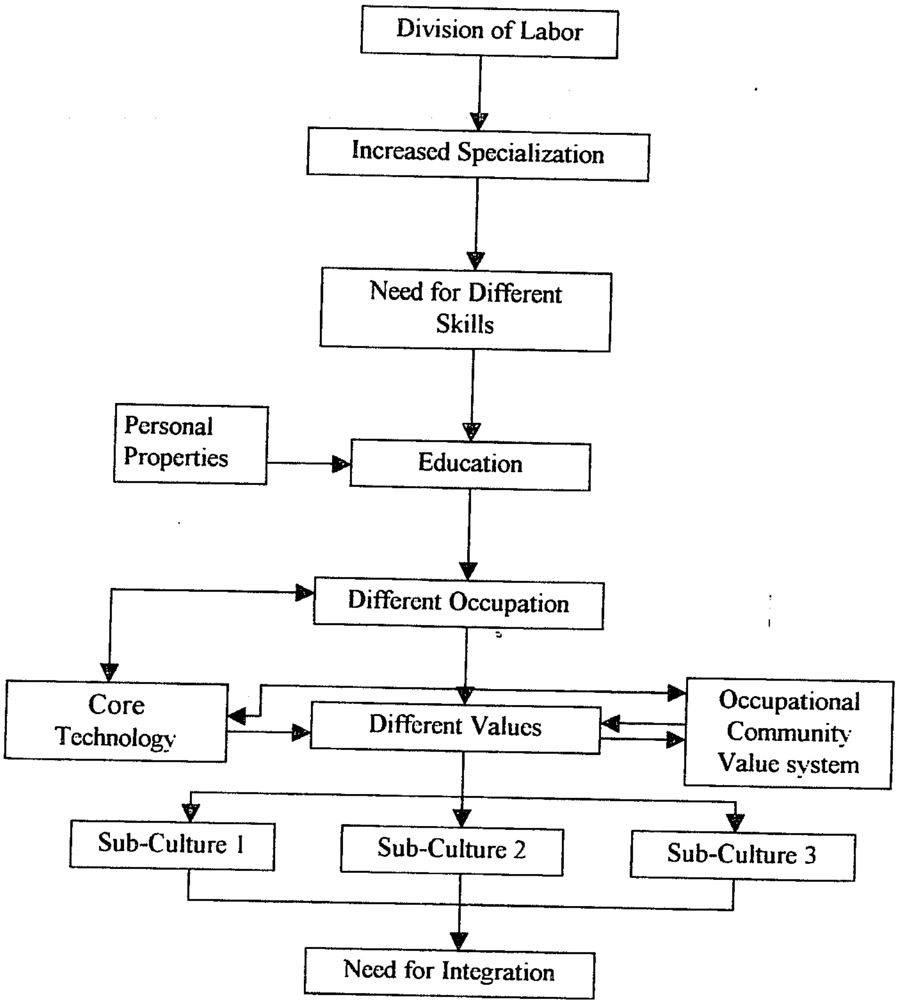

Division of Labor
Increased Specialization
Need for Different Skills
Personal Properties
Education
Different Occupation
Core Technology
Different Values
Occupational Community Value system
Sub-Culture 1
Sub-Culture 2
Sub-Culture 3
Need for Integration

FIGURE 5

The Division of Labor and the Need for Integration

The following diagram represents the generation of the different sub-cultures as a result of differentiation (Figure 6).

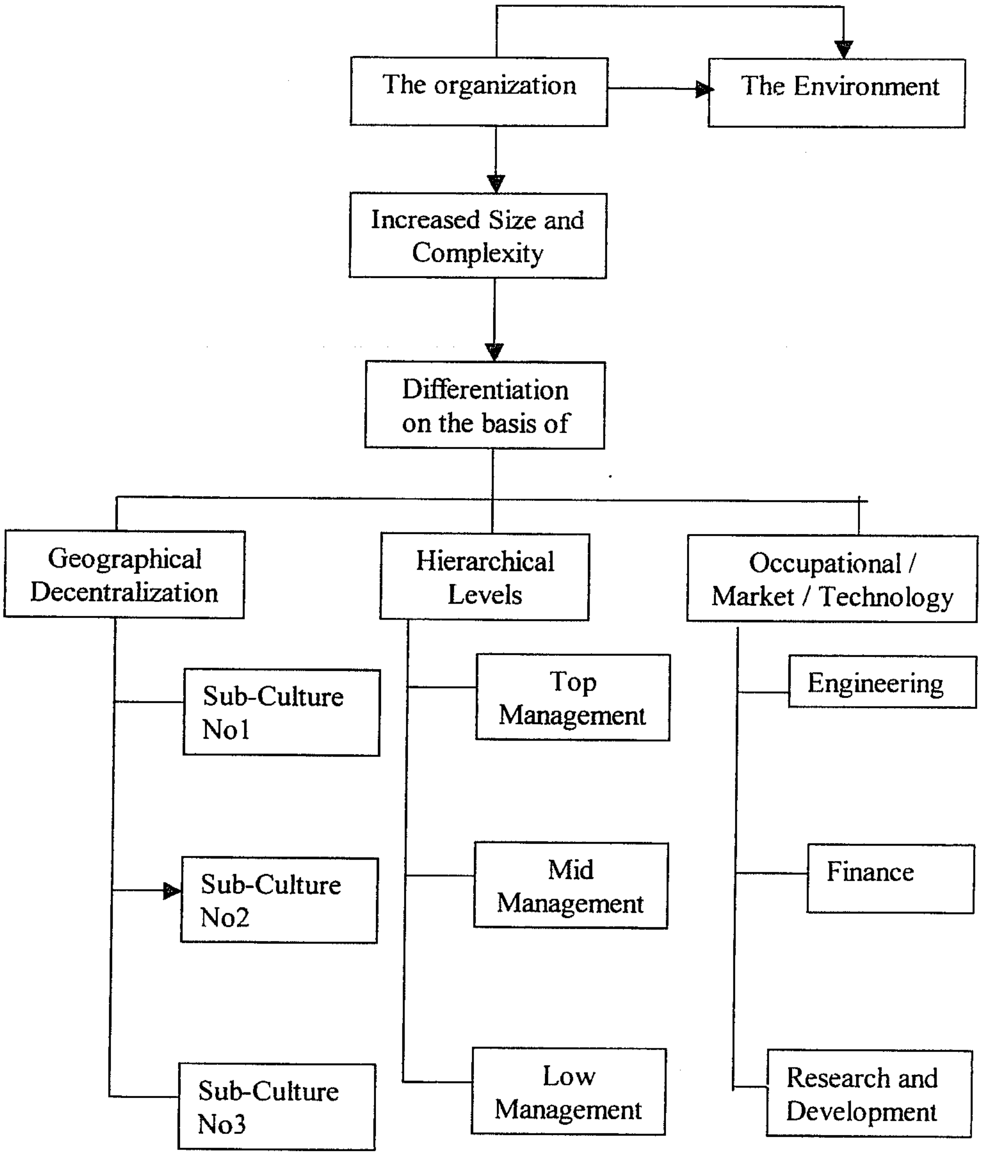

The organization
The Environment
Increased Size and Complexity
Differentiation on the basis of
Geographical Decentralization
Hierarchical Levels
Occupational / Market / Technology
Sub-Culture No1
Sub-Culture No2
Sub-Culture No3
Top Management
Mid Management
Low Management
Engineering
Finance
Research and Development

FIGURE 6

Different Sub-Cultures and Differentiation

An organization may use any number of bases of differentiation, a widely held practice that makes internal integration even more difficult. The difficulty of internal integration –which means changing the status quo- becomes very keen especially under the consideration of the rigidity that a highly homogeneous culture provides through he stability and consistency it generates.

CULTURE TRANSFORMATION CONSIDERATIONS

The question to explore is the possible incogruency between the level of internal integration and the environmental imperatives; Sine qua non condition for the external adaptation is the internal integration, i.e. the complementarily between the level of organizational complexity and the content of the prevailing cultural system, ceteris paribus the pervasiveness of the organizational structure.

More specifically, the analysis of the degree of organizational complexity in conjunction with the prevailing culture supports the following:

The organizational complexity refers to the level of differentiation applied on the structure, the technology (ies) and the territory (ies) of operation of the organization. Thus a structure of great width and depth is rather more complex than the one of lesser depth and width; an organization employing more than one of basic technologies is more complex than the one employing just a single one and the organization operating in one location rather than more than one is much simpler than the latter case. As organizations move away from a low level of complexity to a high level, they experience a transition stage of organizational midlife, which signals their transformation away from a simple, personally bound modus operandi, towards to the initiation of formal systems and their steady and gradual institutionalization. Thus, the more complex the organization becomes, the more "the jolo to be done" impacts upon and shapes the organizational culture.

The prevailing organizational culture, in terms of its developmental stages, as it has been stated above, includes the infancy, midlife and the maturity/decline stages.

The infancy stage is identified with the founder as such and it's her "ownership" with relationships rather personal and psychologically very close to the founder herself. The infancy stage is the stage, which defines the way "the job is being done". The founder's basic assumptions, values and practices define the modus operandi of organizational reality in terms of what, why, how and when. The mid life stage is the transition stage, which signals the move away from the founder and towards the initiation of a formal system, where the causality between Founder → Culture is not so definite. The maturity/decline stage is the one that is characterized by the wide institutionalization of the cultural system of organization.

The combination and the resulting relationships, in a 2x2 matrix, between the levels of organizational complexity and the different stages of organizational structure, is shown in the figure 7 below:

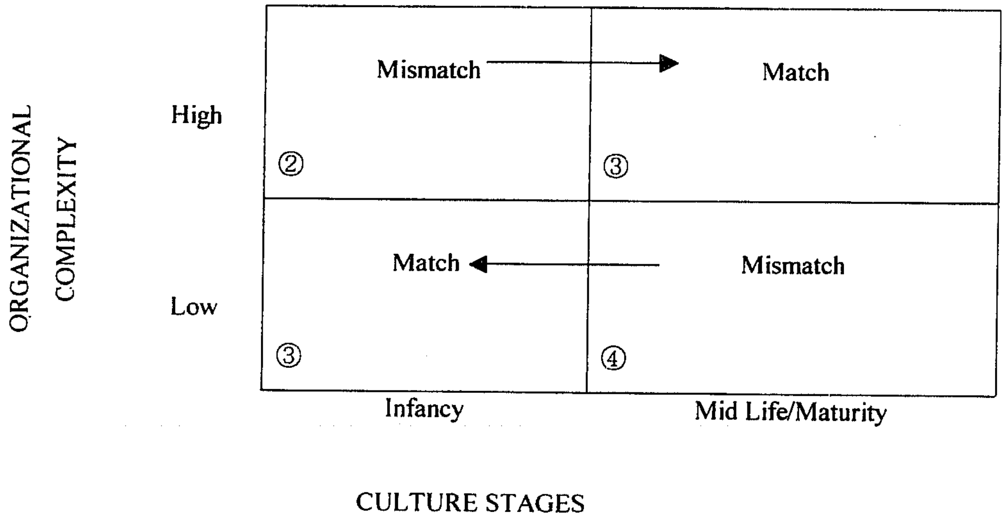


FIGURE 7

Complexity × Culture Matrix

The theoretically possible combinations 2x2 Matrix are LOC$_L$I, LOC$_L$MLM, LOC$_H$I and LOC$_H$MLM (where LOC$_L$, LOC$_H$, I and MLM stand for Low level of Organizational Complexity, High Level of Organizational Complexity, Infancy and Mid Life /Maturity Stage correspondingly).

The combination of LOC$_L$I is characterized, ceteris paribus strategic aims and technology, by a complementarity between the Level of Complexity and the Organizational Culture. Thus, in this case the organization is rather small with few formalized, impersonal rules or systems; relationships are personal and driven by the assumptions, values of the founder. Communication channels are very short and immediate, the organization is flat with a wide span, and organizational members are very close to the founder, resulting thus to a rather monolithic culture. The situation of LOC$_L$MLM – Low level of organizational complexity combined with the culture stage of Mid-Life/Maturity – is rather a non-existing case in real-life organizational conditions; from one hand we experience a level of complexity which is very low – usually identified with the existence – biological – of the founder, while from the other we "experience" a culture stage which by definition, in order to develop and evolve, requires in most cases the non-biological existence of the founder. The MLM stage is the stage of increased differentiation and the generation of a number of localized value systems whose existence would have been rather out of the question or at least problematic, unless the founder wished to see them evolve and spinn off the core assumptions and values that she espouses and enforces.

The case of LOC$_H$I – High Level of Organizational Complexity and Infancy Stage – is a clear situation of a mismatch. Organizationally the entity is very complex –

structurally, technologically and spatially – with rather elaborate requirements for internal integration which tries to cope using and following the paradigm of the founder. The internal integration will be effected as long as the founder is able to cope with the situation; the question is not whether or not she will reach her level of incompetence, but when she will reach it. Conclusively the organization operates on "borrowed time" and not at all proactively. This is a typically case of cultural a rigidity which stems from the implicit assumption that what has worked in the past, it will work in the present and the future.

The situation of LOC$_{H}$MLM – High Level of Complexity combined with Mid Life/Maturity stage – is a clear match between the two, ceteris paribus strategic aims and technology. Conclusively, in cases of mismatch, like the cases No2 and 4 of figure 7 there is a requirement for re-alignment-ceteris paribus- between the level of organizational complexity and the culture. Specifically, for the case of No2 Rectangle LOC$_{H}$I, we need to intervene so as to "move" from the culture stage of infancy to the stage of Mid Life and the Maturity; for the case of No4 Rectangle, LOC$_{L}$MLM, we need to "move" from the Stage of Mid Life/Maturity to the stage of Infancy. In other words we need to provide the successful paradigm- coming from a leader - for the rest to follow; direction and role modeling is the aim. Apparently interventions may be needed for the cases of matches as well. Notably for the case of LOC$_{L}$I - Low Level of Complexity and Infancy – we may need to act proactively and prepare the organization for a smooth transition from a founder dominated modus operandi, to a value system which is more impersonal and not so attached to the leader/founder or/and his apparent "heirs". For the case of OLC$_{H}$MLM, we may need to intervene so as to break away from the organizational rigidity and develop a rather learning organization thus coping with the cultural resistance.

The intervention and transformation needed either for matches or mismatches may be engineered through the predetermined selection and placement of the managers of the organization.

The newly hired managers bring with them, their own assumptions, values and beliefs and all things considered, their leadership is the "result" of the existing culture. They are being hired into a system of cultural orientation that has already been formed by the founding "father" and the stronger and more homogeneous the culture is, the more difficult it becomes to influence that culture. At this point we should emphasize that, ceteris paribus everything else, the influence that newly hired managers may place upon the existing organizational culture is a function of their entry point in the hierarchy, their level of commitment to the culture of the organization, which is the outcome of personality disposition ceteris paribus everything else.

Indicatively, cultural changes may be deemed necessary whenever the organizations need to:

- Break away from the rigid bureaucratic culture and become more responsive to change.
- Diminish the belief that power or policies gets things done and shift towards satisfying customers and the marketplace.
- Create an identity and a set of values for a mediocre, culturally weak organization.
- Integrate an acquisition
- Blend two cultures into one, following a merger.

In order to change the culture you need to initiate a revolution and we rather expect current leadership to change culture incrementally; a revolutionary shift typically requires a change in leadership (Rubenson, 1992).

With the new management team, new assumptions, values and practices are introduced, something that could not have been attained with the previous regime, which has associated and identified with the status quo ante.

Thus the old ways and beliefs are challenged and the employees question the cultural underpinnings of their organizations. Often there is a period of skepticism, resistance and complaining about "losing our values", the conditions that enabled growth in the first place, but do not warranty the same presently and in the future.

The possible cultural interventions that we may apply – either in the form of reinforcing or transforming the present culture – in order to attain internal integration, should take the form of placing (newly hired managers) or/and transferring already employed managers to critical, high level hierarchical positions so as to generate organizational paradigms and models in favor of or against the existing culture. According to Pratt (Pratt, 1993) selection as opposed to socialization is the dominant process in instilling the desired culture in an Organization.

The combination between the level of hierarchy-into which a newly hired manager is placed or/and he is transferred too-and the personality disposition of the same, is depicted in the following 2x2 matrix (Figure 8).

Level of Hierarchy		Individualistic	Cooperative
	High	① A likely low overall impact on culture	② A likely low overall impact on culture. Higher though Than No 1
	Low	③ A likely very low overall impact on culture	④ A likely very low overall impact on culture. Higher though than No 3.

Personality Disposition

FIGURE 8

Level of Hierarchy and Personality Disposition

The direction of the impact will depend on the match or mismatch between the agent's (Manager's) personality disposition and the prevailing character of the Organizational Culture.

The relationship between the entry point in the hierarchy of a manager and her commitment to the organization's cultural system is depicted in the 2x2 matrix below (Figure 9).

Level of hierarchy	Against	In Favor
High	Organization's culture may be changed marginally in the long run	Organization's culture will be most likely reinforced
Low	Organization's culture remains most likely unchanged	Organization's culture may be reinforced in the long run

Commitment to the organization's

Cultural system

FIGURE 9

Level of Hierarchy and Commitment to the Organizational Value System

Commitment to the Organization's cultural system may be the outcome of the match between the personality disposition of the manager, under question, and her resulting values, with the Organizational Culture character and its values. In essence we may have Individual Agents (Managers) with a personality disposition that may range from highly individualistic all the way to highly cooperative, while the prevailing cultural character of the organization may be ranging from highly individualistic all the way to highly collectivist.

As it has been stated above, ceteris paribus everything else, the hierarchical level of the manager is positively correlated with the impact exerted on the culture; the higher the hierarchical level the greater the impact, the lower the level the lower the impact on the culture.

If we now enrich our model of hierarchical level with the personality disposition of the agent and with the prevailing Organizational Culture character of the firm under question, we end up with following three axis model; the Hierarchical Level, The Personality Disposition and the Culture character (Figure 10) dimensions.

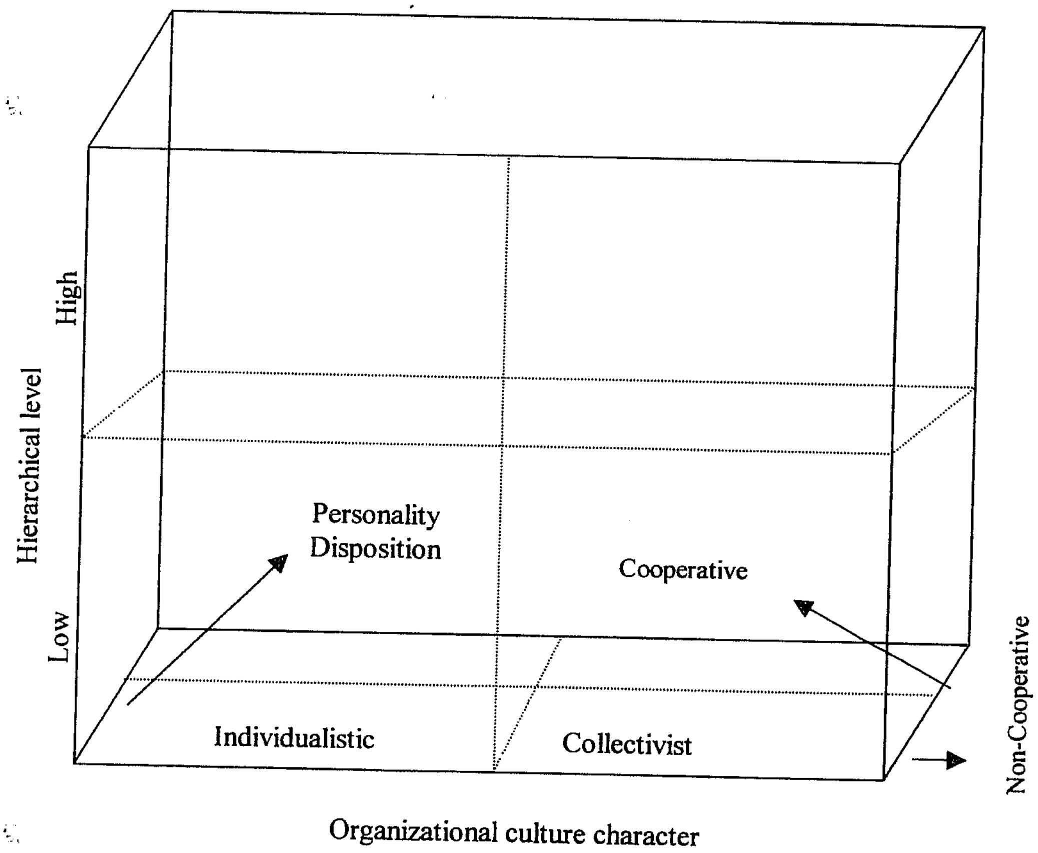

Hierarchical level
High
Low
Personality Disposition
Cooperative
Non-Cooperative
Individualistic
Collectivist
Organizational culture character

FIGURE 10

The Three Variables Model

Out of the three above stated variables, we may generate the following theoretically possible combinations:

1. $H_{\text{LOW}}\ P_{\text{NON-COOP}}\ OC_{\text{INDIVIDUALISTIC}}$
2. $H_{\text{LOW}}\ P_{\text{NON-COOP}}\ OC_{\text{COLLECTIVIST}}$
3. $H_{\text{LOW}}\ P_{\text{COOP}}\ OC_{\text{INDIVIDUALISTIC}}$
4. $H_{\text{LOW}}\ P_{\text{COOP}}\ OC_{\text{COLLECTIVIST}}$
5. $H_{\text{HIGH}}\ P_{\text{NON-COOP}}\ OC_{\text{INDIVIDUALISTIC}}$
6. $H_{\text{HIGH}}\ P_{\text{NON-COOP}}\ OC_{\text{COLLECTIVIST}}$
7. $H_{\text{HIGH}}\ P_{\text{COOP}}\ OC_{\text{INDIVIDUALISTIC}}$
8. $H_{\text{HIGH}}\ P_{\text{COOP}}\ OC_{\text{COLLECTIVIST}}$

Where: H= Hierarchical Level
P= Personality Disposition
OC= Organizational Culture Character

In the above combinations we observe the following:

TABLE 2
Combinations of H/P/OC

S/N	OC	PD	FIT	HL	B
1.	I	NC	Y	L	Individualistic. Personality disposition prevails. May reinforce the present OC in the long run, due to H_{LOW} Least Cooperative Behavior
2.	COL	NC	N	L	Individualistic. Adapts to Personality disposition. It has no impact of present OC, in the short run, due to H_{LOW}.
3.	I	COO	N	L	Adapts to the OC conditions, because of the P which is cooperative. May reinforce present OC in the long run due to H_{LOW}.
4.	COL	COO	Y	L	Cooperative. May reinforce the OC in the long run, due to H_{LOW} Most Cooperative Behavior.
5.	I	NC	Y	H	Individualistic, does not cooperate. Most likely will result to a reinforcement of present OC, due to H_{HIGH} Least Cooperative Behavior.
6.	COL	NC	N	H	Adapts to personal disposition. Individualistic. It may impact upon the present OC, due to the H_{HIGH}.
7.	I	COO	N	H	Adapts to cultural conditions, because of the P is Cooperative. It may impact upon the present OC, due to the H_{HIGH}, but to a lesser extent than No 6 situation.
8.	COL	COO	Y	H	Cooperative. Most likely will result to a reinforcement of present OC, due to H_{HIGH} Most Cooperative Behavior.

I: Individualistic
COL: Collectivist
COO: Cooperative
NC: Non – Cooperative
PD: Personality Disposition
OC: Organization Culture

HL: Hierarchical Level
B: Behavioral
Y: Yes
N: No
L: Low
H: High

The matches and mismatches between the personality disposition and culture that we get from the above table correspond to the No's 1, 4, 5, 8 and 2, 3, 6, 7 respectively. Apparently the match and mismatch predispose the individual agent to behave in a certain way; individualistically inclined people rather adjust their behavior on the basis of their personality disposition instead of the cultural situation they find themselves in. Agents of cooperative disposition are bound to behave not on the basis of their personality inclination, but on the basis of the cultural situation in which they perform and operate, exactly because they are of cooperative nature.

The inclination to behave either on the basis of personal disposition or on basis cultural situation has no practical output in terms of forming, reinforcing, embedding, perpetuating or changing and transforming the culture, unless, the Agent is in a position to make decisions that successfully solve problems and provide workable solutions to a number of organizational members, thus impacting upon the constituency of the organization. The cycle repeats itself over time, providing for the organizational members a paradigm to emulate and follow, generating as a result a set of beliefs/values/rules and norms that guide the behavior in organizations and of organizations. Organizational members who are able to make those decisions are those who belong to the upper echelons of the hierarchy, that allows them through the legitimate authority they possess, at least to attempt to create a precedence for impacting one way or the other upon the culture. Conclusively, the match or mismatch between personality disposition and culture is not enough; if we are to generate multiplicative collateral behaviors that are desired by the organization, we also need to employ change agents who are high in the hierarchical ladder of the company.

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The organizational culture is a major force impacting upon the way the organization feels, thinks and acts. Organizations consist of people who carry with them beliefs, values, attitudes and dispositions, which may or may not complement the prevailing organizational culture. In order for the organization to attain the desired level of internal efficiency is advisable to establish a minimum level of congruency between the personality disposition of the employees, their hierarchical level and the organizational culture character.

In practical terms, in case the organization wishes to intervene and apply Cultural Redesign so as to align the cultural value system with the strategic aims of the organization, it should place in critical high positions in the hierarchy change agents, who either complement and reinforce the existing culture or resent, change and transform diachronically the present culture. Sine qua non condition for the above is the high entry level in key positions in the hierarchy of the change agent.

Thus in case:

1. The present OC is individualistic and the organization wishes to reinforce it. It complements the culture with agents of non-cooperative inclinations, who though their own paradigm will impact upon the constituency of the organization and facilitate the embeddedness of the status quo.
2. The present OC is individualistic and the organization wishes to transform the culture into a less individualistic and more collectivist environment to work in. In a such case the change agent should possess a rather cooperative behavior, so as to

start the initiation of the shift towards a more collectivist culture; we realize that this attempt will be immensely more difficult to materialize than the No 1 case, due to the inclination of the cooperative individuals to define their behavior on the basis of the cultural situation in which they find themselves in; they are rather bound to adjust more to the individualistic culture in which they function, than at on the basis of their inclination.

3. The present OC is collectivist and the organization wishes to reinforce it. The reinforcement will be attained through the placement of high level agents of cooperative attitude and inclinations.
4. The present OC is collectivist and wishes to inject certain amounts of individuality into the way things are thought, felt and acted upon. In such a case the cultural agent of the transformation attempted should be rather of individualistic inclinations. Individualistic agents define their behavior on the basis of their personality disposition rather the cultural situation they find themselves in.

An area of further research would be the qualification of all the variables included in the methodology proposed for the Culture Transformation on the basis of the personality disposition, the hierarchical level of the Employees and the Organizational Culture Character.

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