Title: A Critical Review of "Matching Team Management Strategy With The Organizational Culture"

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Abstract: A paper titled "Matching Team Management Strategy With The Organizational Culture" is critically reviewed in this individual report.

A Critical Review of "Matching Team Management Strategy With The Organizational Culture"

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A critical evaluation of:

Matching Team Management Strategy With The Organizational Culture

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Two dimensions define cultural types. The first dimension is the need of the environment, which is change/flexibility vs. stability/direction. The second dimension is the strategic emphasis that is external vs. internal. This paper presents four cultural types commonly present in organizations: The *adaptability culture* characterized by focus on the environment through flexibility and change to meet the customer needs; the *mission culture* reflecting the values and norms associated with a shared vision of organization purpose, but without need for rapid change; the *involvement culture* emphasizing the involvement and participation of the organization's members; and the *consistency culture* based on norms and values associated with an internal focus and a consistency orientation for a stable direction and environment.

This presents the bases for the authors' hypothesis: "Different organizational culture types will exhibit different team management strategies."

The instrument used to gather the information for this paper was a questionnaire presented to twenty-nine team leaders. These twenty-nine team leaders were part of organizations with the following makeup; seventeen had markets internationally, five had regional markets, and seven had local markets. The mean annual gross revenue of the

organizations was $37 million with a range of $5-50 million. The mean number of years each participant had in team leadership was 6.3 years with a range of one to twenty-six years.

Each participant was asked to answer a mailed questionnaire. Before the final questionnaire was issued, three team leaders with substantial experience were interviewed to test the validity and the item wording of the questionnaire. In this questionnaire, each of the twenty-nine the team leaders were asked to pick on of the four culture types that best described their organization. The respondent rated the importance of each culture type has to the operation of their team. The culture types were rated on a scale of one to five, with five being the lowest and one being the highest rating. The program ANOVA was used to quantify the data.

This paper contributes to literature by providing a scientific measurement of the beliefs those team leaders have about the significance a culture has in their business environment. It offers some raw data that may help future researchers in the study of organizational cultures.

Mostly other publications found that there is a relationship between an organization's culture and a team's management strategy in that organization. However, I could not find any other research that studied the relationship using the same tactic of surveying team leaders on the four cultural types as did Daim and Milosevic. This research supports what other publications have stated, although it seems these other authors based their opinions on first hand experience with different organizations. Again, this paper does not differ from or discredit other research in the field.

The strength of this paper lay in its scientific approach to the study of organizational cultures, which is itself a very subjective topic. The notion of four differing cultures is very fitting and accurate to be used in a survey such as this. The definitions of cultures presented,

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adequately narrowed the focus for the respondents, while still being precise enough to allow each respondent to find a cultural set with which they could identify. The weakness this paper has is that it missed an opportunity to expand its investigation of the team leaders' commitment to their organization's culture. Although the responses were well quantified, I believe there should be a follow-up interview with each respondent. In this interview, the question should be asked, "How does your organization's culture effect the success of the teams." With this question asked, we would all gain some insight into the merits of each culture. This would allow us, potentially, to see the pitfalls of our own organization's culture and to choose the most beneficial path to take as we manage our organizations.

The conclusion of this paper addresses and validates the authors' hypothesis. The authors returned to the comparison of the four culture types and related them to their findings. These findings are; in the planning and control area, the involvement culture had the highest rating among the team leaders. However, in the consistency culture, the functional organization was preferred.

For the scope of this study, the conclusions are adequately validated. To go further, two very good questions were asked. 1) "Do subcultures in an organizational culture exhibit different team management strategies?" and 2) "Do teams whose management strategies are more culturally compatible, exhibit higher team success?"

The references cited in this paper are indeed adequate for the development of cultural types and their relationship with organizational types. As a group, the references listed map out some options companies have to understand the usefulness of an organizational culture that compliments a team's strategy.

An additional publication should be incorporated into this study. This publication is a book by Robert Lee and Peter Lawrence titled *Organizational Behavior: Politics at Work* [1]. In this book, there is a chapter called Organizational Culture, Structure and Climate. While not exactly referring to each culture presented in this paper, this chapter does in fact define each culture very well. It explains how each culture is formed, what type of organization/team most commonly adopts each culture, and what operational characteristics each culture brings to the organization.

For further study, an interesting research topic would be to answer the following question. Do different disciplines within an organization prescribe to different cultures? For example, one would assume that a research and development team would have a culture much different from a sales team.

REFERENCES

[1] Lee, R.A. and Lawerence, P.A., *Organizational Behavior: Politics at Work*, London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1985