Organizational Culture Towards Culture of Excellence

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Abstract
This study examined the organizational culture of the College of Education of Polytechnic University of the Philippines. An institution's organizational culture determines the faculty members' attitudes, values, characters, goals, and aspirations. It identifies their nature and how they act or perform their duties and responsibilities no matter what their position is. Adopting a positive culture in an institution produced a positive outcome, promoting success in the organization. Loyalty to the organization is one of the greatest assets of the faculty members working in the College. Unity amidst the diversity exists in the College of Education that makes the organization continue to succeed and strive for excellence.   According to Edgar Schein (1985), "organizations do not adopt a culture in a single day. Instead, it is formed in due course of time as the employees go through various changes, adapt to the external environment, and solve problems. The researcher used Qualitative Descriptive Design as a comprehensive summarization of specific events and phenomena experienced by individuals or groups of individuals using interview methods both online and offline platforms.

Keywords: *Organizational Culture, Beliefs, Values, Character, Service, Loyalty, and Excellence.*

INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is conventionally defined as the ensemble of beliefs, assumptions, values, norms, artefacts, symbols, actions, and language patterns shared by all members of an organization. In this view, culture is thought to be an acquired body of knowledge whose interpretation and understanding provide the identity of the organization and a sense of shared identity among its members (Huff,2014). Organizational culture has been recognized as essential in analyzing organizations in various contexts. For example, it is important to establish competitive advantages (e.g., Barney, 1986; Cameron & Quinn, 2005) or its impact on organizational performance (e.g., Gordon & DiTomaso, 1992; Marcoulides & Heck, 1993; Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983) has engaged scholars for many years.

In the academic setting, culture can be referred to as the values leaders try to incorporate into their members and organizations. At the university level, culture can be

defined as the values and beliefs of university stakeholders (i.e., administrators, faculty, students, board members, and support staff) based on tradition and communicated verbally and nonverbally (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Bartell, 2003). Values and beliefs are thought to greatly influence university decision-making processes (Tierney, 1988; Bartell, 2003) and shape individual and organizational behaviours. Behaviours based on underlying assumptions and beliefs are conveyed through stories, special language, and institutional norms (Bartell, 2003; Bartell, 1984; Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Sporn, 1996). From University culture, it will boil down to college culture, which can also be considered an organization's personality. College administrative officials or leaders are increasingly becoming more aware of the concept of culture and its significant role in the academe's change and development.

Individuals from different socio-cultural backgrounds and varied interests join together on a common platform called the organization to achieve goals and objectives. The behaviour of the government employees, to a large extent, depends on the culture of the workplace. How people interact amongst themselves and outsiders also depends on the organization's culture. The policies, practices, and principles of an organization form its culture. A government employee must understand the culture and adjust to it well to deliver his level best and win management's appreciation. According to Daoruwan Thawinkan (2009), organizational culture is the main factor that helps organizational members to understand their work and choose the right approach to solve problems. When working together, organizational members must understand the importance of organizational culture that relates to the way of thinking, belief, and conduct which will result in the successful management of the organization. For Hofstede (1999), culture is holistic in that it refers to a whole that is more than the sum of its parts; it is historically determined by reflecting the history of the organization; it is socially constructed because it is created and preserved by the group of people that form the organization; it is difficult to change; it is related to objects of study from cultural anthropology, such as myths, rituals, and symbols; it is fundamentally a program, in the computing sense attributed to the term (Cameron & Quinn, 1999).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Edgar Schein Model of Organization Culture

According to Edgar Schein (1985), "organizations do not adopt a culture in a single day. Instead, it is formed in due course of time as the employees go through various changes,

adapt to the external environment, and solve problemsi.."(Schein, 2010). He further stated that they gain from their past experiences and start practising it every day, thus forming the culture of the workplace. The new employees also strive hard to adjust to the new culture and enjoy a stress-free life. Schein believed that there are three levels in organizational culture. Schein's (1985) model of organizational culture is one of the most cited culture models but also one that serves a high degree of abstraction and complexity reduction. It mainly consists of three domains: (a) basic underlying assumptions, (b) espoused values, and (c) artefacts. In addition, Schein (1985) distinguishes between observable and unobservable elements of culture (Dauber et.al., 2012).

Organizational culture is described by Robbins & Coulter as the shared values, beliefs, or perceptions held by employees within an organization or organizational unit. Because organizational culture reflects the values, beliefs, and behavioural norms that employees use in an organization to give meaning to the situations that they encounter, it can influence the attitudes and behaviour of the staff. Understanding the organization's core values can prevent possible internal conflict, which is the main reason for our research into these cultural issues. In other management fields, empirical research of organizational culture has involved the functionalist perspective, providing impressive evidence of the role of organizational culture in improving performance. An organizational culture's pervasiveness requires management to recognize its underpinning dimensions and impact on employee-related variables, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance (Tsai, 2011).

As Schein (1997) and Seihl (1985) note in their seminal article on organizational culture, organizational culture is a product of the experience of social groups'. Furthermore, Prosser (1999:11) identifies 'organizational culture' as 'a collection of theories that attempt to explain and predict how organizations and people act in different circumstances and as a way of looking at and thinking about the behaviour of and in organizations and offers a useful perspective for understanding what is occurring in school and other kinds of educational institutions....' Therefore, organizational culture is: 'the interweaving of the individual into a community and the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one known group from another. It is the values, norms, beliefs, and customs an individual holds in common with members of the social unit or groups' (Ogbonna,1993:42).

"Organizational culture is a system of shared meaning and beliefs held by organizational members that determine, to a large degree, how they act toward each other and outsiders" (Robbins & Coulter, 2007, p. 52). Tosi et al. (1994) consider culture as a patterned way of thinking, feeling, and reacting in an organization or its sub-sectors. It refers to the attitudes, values, beliefs, norms, and customs which distinguish an organization from others (Carnall, 1995). According to Jacques (1952), organizational culture refers to customary and traditional ways of thinking and doing things noting that new employees must learn to adapt them sufficiently to gain acceptance in the organization (Msoroka, 2011).

The organizational culture in school affects the degrees of motivation, coordination, and integration (D.N. Hugler, 1987). Members of a culture shape one another, and the culture, in turn, will evolve into a unique group of individuals who share certain characteristics and take some pride in being set apart from outside the group. Members of the faculty influence one another, other agrees to fulfil a certain role within the group, adopt certain characteristics and attitude, and others try to learn the psyche of the organization for them to work harmoniously and productively. Other faculty members have a strong motivation and character to influence the group, which is why commonly, within the organization, we have what we call a majority bloc and a minority bloc. As Hofstede mentions, members want to fulfil a certain role within the organization, "put it as a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organization from one another" (1997,p.180). An organization's culture is one of the main factors in motivating the actions and attitudes of employees. The culture of an organization is what brings people together for a common purpose. This is true in the academe, wherein culture greatly contributes to the organization's success.

The College of Education of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines is one of the flagship colleges of the University. It is the first vertically articulated College in the University. It has become a college that fosters competitiveness, critical thinking, innovation, and creativity – striving to be a pillar of continued excellence in teaching and research. It offers undergraduate courses that prepare future teachers of this country to become competent professionals who are imbued with the needed skills and competencies to become excellent future educators of the nation. It also offers graduate programs that develop a culture of excellence to equip educators who are productive and committed to instituting change in

their environment and who value state-of-art instruction, competency in research, community services, leadership qualities, and effective supervision.

The ever-changing educational landscape at the College of Education is the result of the conscientious efforts of the University and the college officials, faculty, and staff to respond to the increasing need for quality education for College of Education's graduates and other stakeholders. Thus, College shall remain steadfast in upholding a legacy of excellence and a commitment to service (PUP.edu.ph, n.d). In addition, the faculty's organizational culture greatly affects the organization's performance.

This study examined the organizational culture of the College of Education of Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The researcher studied and analyzed the experiences and commitment of the faculty and officials of the College. Their attitudes, behaviour, and commitment were given a deeper analysis of the organizational culture.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
1. To describe the organizational culture of the College of Education.
2. To examine how the teachers adopted the organizational culture of the College.
3. To identify the organizational culture, what do they want to improve and what to eliminate?
4. To determine why they still want to serve the College despite their hardships even during the pandemic.

RESEARCH METHOD
Qualitative descriptive design is a comprehensive summarization of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals using the interview method and focuses on group discussion. According to Sandelowski, qualitative descriptive research: should be seen as a categorical, as opposed to a non-categorical, alternative for inquiry; it is less interpretive than an 'interpretive description' approach because it does not require the researcher to move as far from or into the data; and, does not require a conceptual or highly abstract rendering of the data, compared to other qualitative designs (Lambert, 2012).

The presentation of data from a qualitative descriptive design involves a straightforward descriptive summary of the informational contents of the data that is organized logically. How the data are organized depends upon the researcher and how the

data were rendered. Data collection of qualitative descriptive studies focuses on discovering the nature of the specific events under study. Thus, data collection involves minimal to moderate, structured, open-ended, and one-on-one interviews. The researcher interviewed five (5) faculty members of the College, four of them are officials, and one is an ordinary faculty member. The researcher used a structured questionnaire to interview the informants online and offline.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Organizational Culture of the College of Education

An institution's organizational culture determines the faculty members' attitudes, values, characters, goals, and aspirations. It identifies their nature and how they act or perform their duties and responsibilities no matter what their position is.

According to Informant D, Culture is determined by the leadership of an organization. Therefore, the College's culture, motivations, and movements are expected to depend on the management and leadership qualities of those seated in the position. For now, since the COED administration is composed of new designees, it is obvious that they are groping in the dark, which affects the entire College. Consistency of decisions and decision-making ability is still to be learned and strengthened. Organizational culture requires strong leadership because it affects the entire College. A culture of excellence will always be there as regards the common attitude exhibited by the faculty members, students, and staff. This compensates for the weaknesses that are exhibited in certain aspects of the administration. There is a continuous balancing act. We are fortunate that the faculty of COED have a professional attitude. Although it is evident that politics gets in the way of development and progress, at the end of the day, the faculty, employees, and students will continue to do their part because it is for the name of the College." Informant M mentioned that "The College has competent people designated to perform the duties and responsibilities. Everyone is working towards achieving the College's directions. Work situations change due to the pandemic. Work from home and online mode of work become the culture of everyone in performing the tasks which sometimes lead to some inconveniences."

Informant MM said that "the organizational culture of the College is that they work as a team, the harmonious relationship is visible/evident among our peers. This was true during the accreditation system, where everybody worked tirelessly. That is why most of our program reached the level 4 status.' On the other hand, Informant, NN justified that "we are

different from other units/colleges, because we follow the formal structure, protocols, directives, meaning from top to bottom. As a result, the work function goes smoothly, there is proper information and documentation, and I can say that our organization is well organized."

Strong leadership in the College of Education makes the culture more relevant and responsive. As mentioned by one of the informants, the culture of excellence is embedded, and throughout the years, their code makes the College continue to reap success. The top-to-the-bottom approach of the management is in effect, but respect for the authority is present, wherein one can suggest for the betterment of the programs and projects. The professional attitude is strong even though the age group comprises young and seasoned faculty. Teamwork provides an environment of collaboration and cooperation; well-organized planning, execution, documentation, and evaluation is a good marks of the culture of the College.

Even during the pandemic, the College of Education continues to work as a team, with a good direction towards the common goal. The faculty club members either "work from home" or in the "skeletal force" showed their dedication and unity in their duties and responsibilities.

Prosser (1999:11) identifies organizational culture as "a collection of theories that attempt to explain and predict how organizations and people in the act in different circumstances and as a way of looking at and thinking about the behaviour of and in organizations, and offers a useful perspective for understanding what is occurring in school and other kinds of educational institutions…." Therefore, organizational culture is: 'the interweaving of the individual into a community and the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one known group from another. It is the values, norms, beliefs, and customs an individual holds in common with members of the social unit or groups' (Ogbonna,1993:42). Teachers are indeed working in educational institutions driven by organizational culture. Kluckhohn and Kelly (1972) defined culture in an organization as a model or a way of living that makes the organization unique and different from the others. If the organizational behaviour can be affected by organizational culture, then the organizational culture would also influence the individual learning of the personnel in the organization. A good teacher example in the learning process would affect the learners' capability to learn more effectively and achieve better academic results.

Adoption of the organizational culture of the College

Adopting a positive culture in an institution produced a positive outcome, promoting success in the organization. As the new faculty member warmly adopts the culture of excellence of the College, this is now his creed and way of life to help the organization become another "centre of excellence in the field of education."

Informant D stated, "I am still adapting to the new culture, like the "new normal," everybody is still learning, relearning and unlearning." Informant M said, "I need to adopt the organizational culture to meet the expectations of the University, the College, and the clientele. Then, through experience, training, and orientation, I could go with the organizational culture's expectations in the new normal."

According to Informant L, "there are processes and surveys done for the acceptability of a college structure. In the case of COED, like other organizational structures, it depicts the general and common foundations of a college, and that is why it is accepted and adopted." Informant MM also said that "not necessarily I adopted the culture of our organization, but mostly I learned from it. I worked hard with the pioneers of the College who belong mostly to the senior citizen's group. I learned a lot from them, though they are old or seniors in the organization." Informant NN mentioned, "I believed that it is used as a benchmark of the colleges, everything is well- managed, and well disseminated…everyone cooperates."

Most of the informants answered that they accepted and adopted the culture of the College to show their support not only in the College but also for the University. They believe in the organizational culture, and those new faculty are ready to learn and embrace the culture. This shows they are willing to learn and ready to adjust to the organizational culture. Most of the new faculty learned from the seniors. They are their mentors, which is important in continuing the organizational culture of excellence and service.

Daft's (2002) concept that clan organizational culture tends to have a more social learning process. Good management of human resources makes teachers feel a sense of ownership and loyalty to the organization. They are also proud to be a part of the organization, voluntarily enjoy learning on their own, support each other, and are happy to work together to enhance and develop the organization. DaoruwanThawinkan (2009) stated that organizational culture is the main factor that helps organizational members to

understand their work and choose the right approach to solve problems. When working together, organizational members must understand the importance of organizational culture that relates to the way of thinking, belief, and conduct which will result in the successful management of the organization.

The organizational culture should be improved and eliminated

An organization is like a big family comprising different ages, intellectual abilities, specialized skills, and economic, political, and socio-cultural backgrounds. Each member can influence people in the organization. Behaviour can be changed for the better or even for worse, but as a professional organization, it goes around for better development to attain success for the institution's good.

Informant D stated that "each person has certain "sensitivities." Therefore, the organization's psychology must be studied further so that each person can work easily using open communication lines, receptive attitude, and exercise of democracy."

"On the other hand, I would like to focus on the best practices of the College. Many of the previous practices which placed the College on the map are still being practised, like excellence in instruction, student engagement, faculty professional development, international visibility and engagement, licensure exam ratings, etc. The discipline of the students and faculty is unquestionable. The professionalism of the faculty and staff is undeniable."

According to Informant M, "the standards and processes of doing the tasks should be discussed. In addition, organizational culture in terms of leadership and management and the relationship among people in the organization need to be improved. Nothing to eliminate, but I think it is more of looking into how each employee should be motivated and inspired to work successfully in the organization considering how the tasks are now performed."

Informant MM argues that "there is nothing to improve because the College is well organized, there is a clear division of work per department, and the tasking is feasible. In my early years in the College, there was a synchronization in the working environment, there was no labelling, and we were cohesive, but now because of the entry of the young generations, the College is bigger in terms of faculty population structure was revised. A concrete example is the faculty association. The founders and the senior citizens were mostly dedicated to serving the club, and they had many programs that benefited the members. The willingness

of the old faculty at that time was not measurable, but now in the entry of the young faculty, and most of them are designees, they do not want to become an officer because of too much workload. As I analyzed, this generation of members is self-serving individuals. For them being an officer is another workload that hampers their productivity."

On the other hand, Informant, NN defended that "to improve the clarity of the functions of the COED faculty and administration, the COED Faculty Club….there is sometimes conflict between the officers and members." However, she also added that "to eliminate or change?". I think there is none. All are OK. Both admin. And teachers."

The improvement of organizational culture in terms of leadership and management and relationships among people in the organization is very important, specifically on how each employee should be motivated and inspired to work successfully in the organization considering the shift of how the tasks are now performed. An institution is made up of different people and different cultures. It is best when the administration can manage these groups for efficiency and productivity. For every improvement, there are changes because culture is changing. If you change one aspect of the culture, there is a corresponding response. For example, a faculty club in the College has an important role in changing and adapting the culture. Other administrative officials recognize the importance of the faculty club as an organization that should work hand in hand with the administration but still, other factors make the culture of the two groups make or look different. For example, the culture of the faculty club as a group of people working in a government institution is economics which is always working or fighting for its benefits and privileges. While on the other hand, the group of faculty members working as part of the administration like college officials and people in the middle management, works to preserve the "status quo."

According to Chinnaphat (2009), teachers need to have a teaching spirit, love their teaching profession, have self-discipline, set a good example to their students, and be a person of learning to excel in their teaching profession. With these characteristics and attitudes, the preservation of culture will be realized. For Cameron (2008), organizational culture is a set of values that help people in an organization understand which actions are considered acceptable and which are considered unacceptable. These are a specific collection of values and norms shared by people and groups in the organization and control how they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization. He further stated that organizational culture comprises the attitudes, experiences, beliefs, and values of an

organization which are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Hartnell, Ou, & Kinicki, 2011).

The reason why they still want to serve the College despite the hardships they encountered even during the time of the pandemic

Loyalty to an organization is one of the greatest assets of people working in an organization. Service with passion is part of the Filipino culture that transcends the workplace. Unity amidst diversity is prevalent in an organization working collaboratively.

According to Informant D, "COED is my mother's College. Serving it will always be a part of my function as a faculty member." While Informant M justified that, "as an official, we are privileged to be given a chance to be designated and serve the College, but we believe this post is temporary.   I would always look into giving focus to my major assignment, which is teaching. As a faculty, whatever culture we have in the College and despite the pandemic, we stay to serve our students, give hope and bring out the best to each of them."

Informant L argues that "the College needs true people who can support its foundation towards catering professional services and promoting quality education. Aside from imparting knowledge to our students, the College should be its finest homage in shaping one's personal and professional development. I want to partake in that despite everything."

Informant MM noted, "I believe serving the College is of great value. Whatever the situation we have today, it is still the same. Whatever the circumstances we experience, we have to finish our tasks because it is service. The thing that really changed or happened now is the digital platform. Before the pandemic, we work the same, accomplish our tasks, and comply with the set schedule." According to Informant NN, "being the mother unit, I need to serve, if in time I will have no designation, I will go back. The position is temporary, as faculty is my function until my retirement, and whomever the Dean is, I will serve. Whomever the administration, it is part of my function to do my part, to be productive and useful for the College. We also need to enhance the policy being implemented in the College."

Based on the informants' answers, they were dedicated to both the senior and novice faculty. Loyalty and dedication are the very foundation of the organizational culture of the College. Faithfulness in the service makes the College attain its vision and mission, resulting in quality education for the students. Being faithful in the service requires more than loyalty to the institution and the leaders who guided the College. The senior faculty's moral values,

dedication, and hard work are good characteristics shared with the young faculty member of the College. In addition, this culture was being learned and embraced by the young generation of teachers, making culture constantly change for the better. Collaboration in every program, project, and activity was evident, making the College look up to other colleges and serve as a model for efficiency and productivity.

According to (Young, 2007), "There is probably no sphere of life in which collaboration is more necessary than in the field of education…Education is most successful when all stakeholders work together toward a common end."

CONCLUSION
Conclusion

An institution's organizational culture determines the faculty members' attitudes, values, characters, goals, and aspirations. It identifies their nature and how they act or perform their duties and responsibilities no matter what their position is. Adopting a positive culture in an institution produced a positive outcome, promoting success in the organization. Loyalty to the organization is one of the greatest assets of the faculty members working in the College. The active participation of all the organization's members is a great factor in achieving its goals and objectives. Unity amidst the diversity exists in the College of Education that makes the organization continue to succeed and strive for excellence.

Suggestions

For the College to continuously achieve a culture of excellence, the educational leaders should always look for the welfare of its members, advance their interests, provide relevant training and faculty development, and constantly provide programs for team building and socialization.

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