

Impact of Organizational Culture and Leadership in Professional Environments

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Abstract

This paper addresses the importance of a strong organizational culture and effective leadership in a professional working environment. Leadership has been shown to profoundly impact a professional working environment's performance, productivity, mental well-being, and goal attainment. Organizational Culture is the set of values and norms a group shares. As influential organizational culture proves to be effective, leadership may come in the form of several styles, including transformational leadership, directive leadership, or empowering leadership, which also play a pivotal role in the success of a group. Ultimately, even though this paper primarily prioritizes the implications of leadership and culture on professional environments, the results carry over to all phases of life, including parenting and family life, business environments, athletic teams, and any other time in which a group of individuals comes together to work in unison towards a common goal.

Introduction

Within all group based activities, there is a sense of norms, or a “regular” behavior that occurs by members. It is commonly accepted that some groups are just inherently more successful or well achieving than others. Is it based on who is involved in the groups? Is it based on how these people collaborate together? If you were to observe a group of colleagues from one corporation as they reported for work on a Monday morning, some might be rolling in fashionably late, while in another corporation, employees are “up and at 'em” 15 minutes before employee report time. What makes one corporation's employees more committed to the cause than others? Examining an organization's culture can help one to answer these poignant questions. Organizational culture has been established as an essential component in team-based environments for a productive and well-working team. The term organizational culture

commonly has been used in many ways, with several formal definitions. Organizational culture is defined as “the environment in which people work and its influence on how they think, act, and experience work” (Warrick, 2016). Organizational cultures can have significant variety between and within organizations. What is rather interesting about organizational culture is that when there is a positive culture in place, it can effectively bring out the best in people. A positive organizational culture can be instrumental in uniting people around common goals and values. Organizational cultures also have the capability of being hostile, meaning they can be dysfunctional. Some of the many side effects of a hostile culture, in addition to dysfunctionality, include stress, tension, distrust, low morale, and a lack of support and teamwork (Warrick, 2016). Integrating a working definition of organizational culture will now become a lens through which the remainder of the study will discuss culture. With the inclusion of a definition, it can now be used to work through the potential pros and cons of a positive and hostile culture.

There has been a growing belief that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in the success and failure of organizations (Warrick, 2016). Culture impacts many workplace areas , including the ability to attract and retain talent, employee behavior, performance, and morale. Recruiting prospective employees and keeping them as a part of the organization without a high turnover rate, attracting and retaining talent, is a critical aspect of organizational culture. How people act and behave at the workplace, employee behavior, serves as a set of standards or expectations of an employee. Within each job, an employee's performance is measured to ensure they are meeting the expectations of the role. Leaders are the ones who set these expectations, which may come from the culture of an organization. There is such a large amount of research that exists, which points to the many benefits of a strong culture, however, leaders tend to fall short in their understanding and integration of said research. Conversely, creating or allowing a

hostile culture to exist within a business leads to unwanted costs and losses in revenue, (Warrick, 2016).

While organizational culture is an essential tool for shaping employee behavior, performance, attraction, and retention, many leaders assign the role of setting the standards and cultural expectations and do not understand the importance of a healthy culture.

On one hand, organizational culture is a very effective tool for organizational leaders looking to optimize and improve their organization. On the other hand, it would be naive to think that culture alone is the defining trait of a successful organization. Leadership is unquestionably an asset within a team that can impact culture. Aside from the impact of leadership on culture, it can also be a powerful tool in other aspects, including performance (Nam et al., 2019), productivity, and mental well-being (Curral et al., 2023). Culture is an essential component of a strongly functioning group however, it is not the only essential component. Leadership is another variable that must be considered.

While there are many definitions of leadership, the one that will be primarily used in this context is that of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is a leadership style in which leaders motivate their followers to perform and identify with organizational goals. Leaders who utilize this technique often motivate employees beyond self-imposed limitations, and focus on fostering empowerment and support. A fundamental aspect of transformational leadership is that leaders prioritize a longer-term relationship with subordinates by increasing their interactions with those they lead (Nam, 2019).

Although this will be the primary working definition used in this paper, other forms of leadership are impactful and should not be neglected entirely. Directive leadership, empowering

leadership, participative leadership, and transactional leadership are other leadership styles that have been effective when working with subordinates (Al-Malki, 2018).

The idea that transformational leadership and performance are variables with a relationship is of interest, as there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and performance (Dvir et al., 2004). Performance is a complex variable to define, as many fields and jobs have their own set of performance expectations. In a business context, performance can be considered as either task performance or contextual performance. Task performance related to manufacturing goods, service providing, or activities related to an organization's specific processes. Contextual performance is about the individual and their modeling of the organizational, social and psychological context, and the impact of fulfilling the tasks (Get, 2018). In both performance classes, transformational leadership has been vital in improving performance.

On top of its positive impact on performance, transformational leadership also positively impacts subordinate psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and burnout. Psychological well-being has two facets, which can include hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being. Hedonic well-being is centered around the ideas of pleasure, while eudaimonic well-being is rooted in the concept of subjective vitality. Hedonic well-being is contentment, gratification, fulfillment, and serenity, while eudaimonic well-being involves personal development, learning and liveliness as captured in the concept of thriving (Inceoglu, 2017). Subordinate psychological well-being increases through the addition of transformational leadership.

Organizational culture has great importance and impact on professional and team based environments, as well as the importance of leadership and transformational leadership in those same environments. Business experts, athletic teams, and many other fields in which teamwork

is necessary have accepted the idea that culture and leadership not only matter but can be the difference between success and failure. For the scope of this paper, a professional environment is synonymous with being a member of the workforce, including but not limited to the office setting, a healthcare environment, an academic setting, or any other area in which one is expected to behave in a professional and sophisticated manner. A team based environment refers to any group of people working together towards a common goal. The aim of this paper is to explore the relationship between organizational culture and leadership. Additionally, by reading this paper, it is the hope of the author that readers will grasp the importance of the aforementioned variables, as well as the impact they have on performance, mental well-being, and productivity.

Body

Different Types of Organizational Culture

Within the umbrella term of Organizational Culture, there are a variety of subcategories of culture that exist. These categories exist to differentiate some broad aspects of culture that stand out from the rest. Culture types have been studied due to their importance in differentiating organizations based on their particular culture. There are four well known culture types that exist, which include clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchy culture (Kargas, 2015). Each of these four unique culture types has its own set of characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses.

Clan culture is a culture type which involves the support and encouragement of teamwork. A large emphasis is placed on coworkers engaging together in unison through active participation and cohesiveness. Openness and friendliness are additional key aspects of clan culture. Ultimately, due to these core values, this form of culture results in a strong sense of

loyalty to the group. It is not unusual in this type of culture for members to form strong relationships due to the openness and sense of cohesion that is created. In a professional environment, this could include lots of group and team based projects and activities, a work environment that is open and inclusive in regards to the layout of the workplace, and after-hours outings (Pinho, 2014). While clan culture emphasizes togetherness, friendship, and a close knit community feel, it doesn't acknowledge creativity.

Adhocracy culture is rooted in the idea of creativity. This type of culture celebrates and promotes the entrepreneurial spirit of members. Traits that are often associated with this environment include innovation and risk taking. Emphasis is typically placed on achieving new, unique, and innovative ideas and ways to solve problems (Pinho, 2014). Adhocracy culture is best known for its promotion of creativity and innovation, yet one area it falls short in the traditional environment that promotes a cut throat and "dog eat dog world" where a competitive spirit is very much intact.

Market culture is more of an older school approach, where key traits include competitiveness, pursuit of excellence, and the general goal of job completion. The members of this particular group are often incredibly driven, self motivated, and goal oriented individuals. Ultimately, these individuals want to win, and they are motivated by their leaders who set the standards and expectations in order for said goals to be achieved (Kargas, 2015). Where market culture has roots in the old school approach of competitiveness and striving for greatness, it is not best for all environments. While it may be effective in a business environment where the ultimate goal and benchmark of success is monetary earnings, it likely would not be effective in an environment where strict procedure and rule following is required for success.

The final form of organizational culture is hierarchy culture. This form of culture is best known for its prioritization of following procedures, rules, and regulations. At its core, all behavior is based on these regulations in order to optimize performance (Kargas, 2015).

Ultimately, there is no ideal or perfect culture type. An organization that aims to be a high achieving and successful group needs a synthesis of all four groups in order to achieve excellence.

Organizational Culture and the Benefits it can provide for a team environment

Before addressing the benefits that organizational culture can have for professional and other team based environments, it is more important to understand how culture is established and what factors can help to enable a strong culture to take shape. The foundation must be laid in order to grasp the implications of a positive organizational culture fully.

Building high performance cultures can be a daunting task for administrators and leaders who are not well versed and unaware of the impacts of culture. One of the best ways to begin implementing the foundation of a strong culture is to use other successful organizations as models in which to emulate. Zappos is an American online shoe and clothing retailer that has implemented a culture of fun, creativity, and freedom. A case study was done that dove into the organization and spoke with high level executives to understand their belief and practices when considering culture.

After considering the many existing definitions that research has supplied, it seems most appropriate that the working definition of organizational culture is the environment in which people work and its influence on how they think, act, and experience work. Positive organizational culture can aid in invigorating people, serving as a motivational spark to help produce their best work, and uniting them around common goals and values. As powerful as

positive culture can be, hostile organizational culture can be equally ineffective, unfortunately leading to many negative side effects including stress, tension, distrust, low morale, and a lack of support and teamwork (Warrick, 2016).

Zappos believes in the idea that there are five drivers of culture, which they call the 5 Driver Model. These five drivers of strong organizational culture include committed leaders, management practices aligned with core values, practiced core values, HR practices aligned with core values, and customer-focused strategy (Warrick, 2016). Committed leaders mean involvement from executives and key leaders in an organization to create the desired culture. Practiced core values are when an organization has a code of conduct or a set of commandments and standards that are expected to be followed and upheld. A customer-focused strategy involves a commitment to serving customers, prioritizing them, and doing everything possible to give the customers the best experience possible. Human Resources practices aligned to support the culture are pivotal, and mean that recruitment and other HR initiatives carefully follow the corporation's core values to hopefully bring in employees who are ready to fit right into the Zappos mold without any bumps in the road. Lastly, management practices alignment to support culture is the effort that management puts in to ensure employees are happy and enjoying their day to day work life, as this is a core value and is critical for Zappos.

Importance of a Strong Versus Hostile Culture

To fully grasp the importance of a positive organizational culture, we need to reflect on the consequences of a hostile culture. In a hostile culture, members of an organization can be left without a sense of direction. These members are left to essentially fight for themselves, forced to decide on their own what is appropriate or inappropriate, as well as a variety of other decisions.

A well-established organizational culture of expectations and standards eliminates doubt and removes individual group members from being tasked with any ability to improvise and set their own standards of behavior and practice. Organizational culture serves as a rulebook and provides the mechanisms, norms and values that members need to follow. It also affects the way in which people consciously and subconsciously think, make decisions and ultimately how they perceive, feel and act. Organizational culture has also been shown to have significant effects on performance (Jones, 1983). Should an organization have a positive organizational culture with gratitude and recognition towards employees, the impact on motivation and performance will skyrocket (Matko, 2017).

Schein's iceberg model, demonstrates that organizational culture has both visible and hidden aspects. The model is based on the idea that an iceberg in water similarly has both visible and hidden aspects below the surface. The visible aspects are things that anyone, including outsiders can see. They are not hidden and are out in plain sight. Examples of these visible aspects include job descriptions, employee handbooks, rulebooks, posters hanging in conference or meeting rooms, disciplinary procedures, among other organizational tools. Some examples of hidden aspects or organizational identity include things that people would not know unless they were in the organization, living it every day. Past great people, stories of previous employees who have set good or bad examples of work ethic and behavior, and other factors represent hidden aspects of culture. Organizational culture consists of values, beliefs and norms. Schein's model helps demonstrate that culture is something of great importance to organizations, being a variable that can either unite or alienate individuals, however the factors that make up said culture can be either hidden or visible to outsiders (Matko, 2017).

What can not be overlooked is the fact that there is a clear relationship between the way

an organization treats its employees and the manner in which an employee will behave and perform based on this treatment. This produces a phenomenon known as organizational motivation, which is defined as the cost of the management. Motivation is a variable that management must carefully use to inspire their subordinates. Motivation increases the willingness of the workers to work, thus increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. A key component of organizational motivation is the concept of an employee's will to contribute. There has often been confusion between the term “capacity to work” and “willingness to work”. The capacity to work means that a person is physically and mentally capable of working, but they may not be willing to work. Willingness to work means a person voluntarily decides to work in their specific field or role. The feeling of motivation results in better performance. The key task of motivation is to bridge the idea that one can be physically able to work, but not desire it, being capacity to work, and the ability to voluntarily want to work, being willingness to work (Matko, 2017).

Focus and Commitment to Creating Culture

Organizational commitment has received a great deal of attention, and is seen as a unique and intriguing variable in aiding in the comprehension of workplace behavior. Organizational commitment has an important role in comprehension of organizational behavior. Organizational commitment is concerned with a person's emotional attachment to their organization. It involves how closely they identify themselves with said organization. Organizational commitment consists of organizational loyalty, organizational identification, and organizational involvement (Buchanan, 1974). Organizational loyalty revolves around a person's attachment to their organization. Feeling a sense of belongingness, or perhaps yearning to stay in the organization are classic representations of organizational loyalty. Organizational identification would be

someone who feels a sense of accomplishment and joy being a member of the organization, and part of their personality identity becomes interconnected to their membership to their organization. Organizational involvement is how engaged a person is with their work.(Pinho, 2014).

Organizational Culture and its relationship with performance

Corporate performance is the measure of how well an organization does its job, as well as an organization's capacity to generate results and reach its objectives by efficiently utilizing the resources at its disposal (Obah, 2022). An additional area of interest is how fostering a culture of commitment, loyalty, and identification impacts performance. The belief that culture affects performance is based on the notion that organizational culture has an impact on goal attainment. Although slightly different from the concept of organizational commitment, the chance of being able to reach goals is more likely in a company with a positive culture than in a company where the culture is more hostile and weak. Culture is seen as a key organizational development area and a key building block for successful organizations (Flamholtz, 2001). The way in which organizational culture and organizational performance interact has been the target of observation across a variety of fields such as the healthcare setting, financial performance, etc. Organizational culture did not have a significant impact on organizational commitment, however organizational culture had a significant impact on organizational performance (Pinho, 2014).

When considering the impact of organizational culture on performance, there is a large amount of information we must consider when identifying the relationship between the two variables. Generally, business managers have observed that positive and effective organizational culture is a strength, and it absolutely provides a potential advantage when compared to its

counterpart, being an ineffective culture. An ineffective culture may be hostile, weak, or unprofitable, which is a handicap for an organization striving for success (Flamholtz, 2011). This is a pivotal piece of research as it shines light onto the value a culture has in an organization in regards to its success. With this knowledge, leaders can prioritize the development and upkeep of a strong culture in order to avoid the costly side effects of a hostile culture. Leaders are the ones tasked with establishing said culture, however leadership is often a term that is misunderstood.

Leadership

The term leadership is one that is used in nearly every field. The word is used when describing managers, executives, coaches, athletes, teachers, and other people in similar roles. Leadership can be a resource at the disposal of an organization in order to aid subordinates in the pursuit of achieving organizational goals, as well as in the offsetting of any disorders that may be caused by stress or any other related disorder (Curral, 2023). As mentioned earlier, *transformational leadership* is a key leadership style that has been deemed effective in aiding in the cultivation of culture (Get, 2018). Additionally, there are several other forms of leadership that are effective in various other capacities which must be considered and mentioned. Two leadership styles that will be discussed include empowering leadership and directive leadership. A directive leader is a stereotypical “do as I say” type of leader, where the empowering leader places a higher level of priority and importance on the maintenance of well-being of their subordinates (Curral, 2023).

Characteristics of Effective Leadership

Leadership surrounds us in nearly every facet of life. Throughout Fortune 500 companies all the way down to the simplicity of a classroom, people look for leaders in every walk of life.

When considering real life examples of effective leadership, the business world is an easy place to turn to. Leadership increases flexibility of subordinates, helps to perceive and describe risky situations and feel more confident, which might help with facing stressful situations, and ensures well-being (Curral, et al. 2023). An important caveat to understand is that every single situation a leader is faced with is unique, and although people will always have differing opinions, sometimes only those in the weeds of the situation will truly grasp how to handle it. When a leader implements the adequate environment that supports employees and their affiliation with the organization's strategy, leaders are oftentimes most effective (Warrick, 2016). Having clear and straightforward expectations and visions for an organization is absolutely essential from a leadership perspective. Logically speaking, if a team or group leader is not fully connected or confirmed on what exactly they are looking for from their team, it is not possible for the mission or vision of the leader to be carried out into execution.

An additional key asset of leadership is the ability to develop, implement, and uphold core values within an organization. What is rather interesting and important to note about core values is that many, if not all companies have core values. An issue that arises and perhaps separates elite companies for others is that despite having core values, they are not committed to them. Oftentimes core values become a topic that is covered on day one of orientation for newly hired employees, but after that it's just a meaningless set of values that is never addressed again. As a leader, setting, upholding, and following standards and core values is of utmost importance.. Importantly, committing to core values has a range of meaning to people. Being fully committed to core values means as extreme as willingness to hire and fire based on them (Warrick, 2016).

Furthermore, when considering its impact on culture, transformational leadership was positively associated with organizational culture, organizational citizenship behavior, and both

task performance and contextual performance (Golden, 2019). Organizational citizenship behavior is the commitment a person has to their place of work, not including mandatory tasks. Examples of this may be optional or voluntary work related events. Transformational leadership is strongly correlated with organizational culture. It is reasonable to accept the idea that leaders who utilize the transformational leadership style succeed in the implementation and maintaining of a satisfactory organizational climate for employees. (Golden, 2019).

Leadership Styles Impact On Teams

Undoubtedly, effective leadership has an immense impact on a team based environment. Leaders offer a vision for subordinates, and a figure to look up to not only in moments of need but also in times of triumph. Leaders uphold standards and expectations, and give team members a role model.

When considering leadership and the implementation of leadership into real world organizations, the education system in Nigeria is an excellent place to discuss. Nigerian Universities are usually ranked outside the top 100 of universities in the world. Although there are many contributing factors, it is argued that poor leadership has contributed to the universities poor standings. The absence of effective leadership constitutes serious problems in many public universities and its outcome is poor staff attitude to work, poor performance and poor growth of the university, since the output of the university will in turn be an input not just to the university but also to the society at large. Guidance and advice could go a long way to improving the delivery of services by staff of any institution. Leaders of the institutions usually provide the necessary form of guidance needed by staff to perform their duty effectively and efficiently (Shafiu, 2020).

Transformational Leadership and its impact on Employee Commitment

Transformational Leadership, as mentioned previously, is a leadership style in which the leaders motivate followers to perform and identify with organizational goals and interests.

Transformational leadership focuses on followers' empowerment, support, and development, and it is a leadership style in which leaders pursue a longer-term relationship established between the leader and followers by increasing interactions and enhancing strategic orientation. In regards to teams, it is important to understand that there are a variety of fields in which transformational leadership will impact a team from a performance perspective, including athletic teams and work related teams.

Transformational leadership appears to be an incredibly important variable when considering the impact it has on culture, climate, citizenship behavior, task performance, and contextual performance. Organizational culture and climate are rather similar terms, where culture refers to the environment in which people work and the influence it has on how they think, act, and experience work, while climate is a set of common perceptions about policies, practices and procedures that carry the intra-organizational messages about what is rewarded, what is allowed and what is valued in the organization, being generated by social interactions that occur at group level. Among the factors that determine the climate, leadership occupies the main place, being the most influential element (Get, 2018).

A rather unique characteristic of transformational leadership is the fact that it acknowledges and respects the emotional needs of a subordinate, including in a work environment. There has been a reluctance to acknowledge emotions in a work setting. It is clear that given the basic needs of humans, every employee brings with them their own set of

emotions and feelings to work on a daily basis. Through interactions with colleagues, leaders are exposed to situations that produce emotions that can potentially influence their feelings, attitudes and behaviors. Leaders who understand emotions appear to motivate subordinates to work more effectively and efficiently (Mccoll-Kennedy, 2002).

Other Leadership Styles and its Impact on Employees

Despite the fact that a great amount of time has been spent investigating transformational leadership, there are additional leadership styles that have an impact on employees in various facets. Participative leadership is defined as a leadership style that involves subordinates in organizational decision making and management. The goal of this leadership style is to enhance employees' sense of ownership and actively integrate their personal goals into organizational goals (Wang, 2022). When considering Participative Leadership and its impact at the organizational level, Participative Leadership also improves performance and innovation. (Kahai et al., 2004).

On an individual level, Participative Leadership is positively related to employee mental health, voice behavior, and creativity (Somech, 2010). When considering the impact on employee attitude, because participative leadership makes subordinates feel psychologically empowered, it increases the organizational commitment of some employees and even shows complete emotional trust in the leader. In regards to behavior, leaders who implement participative management significantly increase employees' change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors by motivating their subordinates, such as helpfulness among employees at work (Usman et al., 2021). In addition, participative leadership has been a significant contributor to the organizational focus on employee innovation and voice building, (Xiang, 2021). Finally, in

terms of outcomes, participative leadership plays an important role in increasing employee performance and improving individual competencies.

One of the more unique leadership styles is called Laissez-Faire Leadership, which is the type of leadership that does not exercise any control over subordinates. People in these teams are meant to be highly experienced, which results in the belief that they do not need strict control or supervision. Unfortunately, these group members experience lack of communication, feedback, and may fail to meet deadlines. Laissez-faire leadership has been found to be the least effective type of leadership style. Laissez-faire leaders were also considered as the main culprits of role conflict in teams (Al-Malki, 2018). An overarching problem that has arisen when investigating Laissez-faire leadership is simply the fact that it is categorized as being passive leadership. Although some passive leaders do exist, it is an oxymoron and a complete contradiction of what we have come to expect of leadership.

Several other leadership styles have been identified in team based environments, including empowering and directive. Empowering leadership emphasizes the psychological experience of empowerment and defines it as a motivational tool to eliminate employees' internal feelings of disempowerment by raising their level of motive (Tang et al., 2012). Directive leadership supplies very specific instructions to subordinates in order to provide clarification in regards to policies, rules and procedures. Directive leadership offers clear and concise instructions, expectations, and standards regarding compliance with instructions (Li et al., 2018). This form of leadership works with subordinates on what to do through orders and instructions in order to successfully achieve organizational goals.

Leadership Style and its Impact on Well-Being

Psychological well-being can be considered in a twofold definition, being in terms of affective and cognitive processes. When observing its real world implications, these can include job engagement, job satisfaction and burnout. There are both positive and negative forms of psychological well-being that can be distinguished through leadership behaviors. Within positive forms of well-being, there is hedonic well-being, which emphasizes the subjective experience of pleasure, and eudaimonic forms of well-being, which stress subjective vitality (Gallagher et al., 2009).

When considering leadership style and its impact on well-being, a potentially vital piece of research points to the idea that certain leadership styles are most effective in different circumstances. While it is commonly assumed that leadership styles promote autonomy and relationship building, certain situations call for a different leadership style. A useful example of this exact point comes from those leading teams in emergency situations. Firefighting is recognized as an incredibly stressful and dangerous occupation. In an emergency simulation training, two groups of firefighters were led through a scenario in which stress was incredibly high and leadership was paramount for the success of the simulation. One group was led by an empowering leader, and the other was led by a directive leader. Subordinates were given well-being surveys prior to and following the training. It was hypothesized that the empowering leadership style would have resulted in overall better well-being post stressful training, as this leadership style is known for its diligence in promoting strong relationships, motivation towards task completion, and eliminating any feelings of disempowerment. Ultimately, this hypothesis did not take into account the magnitude and power of the situation. Social psychological principles aid in the results of this study. When reflecting on human behavior, we often

overestimate the power of the personality, and often underestimate the power of the situation.

The importance of the situation significantly outweighed the importance of leadership style. The art of firefighting requires incredibly quick and accurate decisions to be made to ensure control of the situation. This is necessary in order to prevent harm to the community, any material assets at risk, and themselves. Directive leadership supports a firefighters work in this emergency setting due to the fact that it supplies very specific instructions to subordinates in order to provide clarification in regards to policies, rules and procedures. Directive leadership offers clear and concise instructions, expectations, and standards regarding compliance with instructions. By making decisions in a manner that was concise and well planned out through specific guidelines, directive leaders reduce the potential waste of time and effort involved in collective decision making. Through a do-what-I-say approach, directive leaders are effective in emergencies by providing subordinates with specific guidance, they facilitate task accomplishment and ensure their well-being (Curral, et al. 2023).

Optimism and the amount of work employees expend are two variables whose relationship is rather interesting. Optimism is defined as an attitude that reflects feelings of hopefulness and a general belief in positive things happening in the future. Optimism, as an emotional variable, has been used by organizations to distinguish between high and low performers. Optimism has been cited as a predictor of sports performance and as a predictor of college grades, which aids in the belief that optimism impacts positively on sales productivity among sales people. The belief that one will succeed is the driver that inspires the effort necessary to overcome obstacles. Workers who look optimistically on the world are likely to “see adversity as a challenge, transform problems into opportunities, put in the hours to refine skills, persevere in finding solutions to difficult problems, maintain confidence, rebound quickly

after setbacks and persist” (Mccoll-Kennedy, 2002).

Change oriented leadership, which includes transformational leadership, was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to perceived job stress through relational and social-cognitive mediators. Transformational leadership also appears to aid in the decrease in irritation when the employees' professional ambition was moderate to high (Inceoglu, et al. 2018).

Self-Determination Theory

Though much of the previous research has offered insight into the central topics, which include leadership, leadership styles, organizational culture, well being, and performance, it would be shameful to not consider the importance of an essential psychological principle of motivation and decision making, Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

SDT and Leadership

When stripping the concept of SDT down to its core, SDT is a theory built on the belief that there are three basic psychological needs of all humans. Under the lens of SDT, there is the belief that every single human requires the following needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. To have the needs of autonomy met means that a person is able to feel as though they make their own decisions, or the feeling of being self-governed. In simple terms, autonomy is the ability to make your own decisions without being controlled by anyone else. To have the needs of competence met means that a person possesses the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. To have a person's need for relatedness met means that a person experiences connectedness to other people, material, and being supported through some sense of community or purpose. Satisfaction of the basic psychological needs is necessary for full functioning and

organismic wellness (Deci, 2017).

When considering SDT, leaders can use this information to help engage and allow for improved motivation and performance from subordinates. SDT specifically suggests that both employees' performance and their well-being are affected by the type of motivation they have for their job activities (Olafsen, 2017). If a leader has a clear understanding of the most basic needs of those they lead, then perhaps leadership techniques can be used which will both support and enhance the autonomy, competence, and relatedness of subordinates. Supervisors who use transformational leadership led to a stronger sense of employee autonomous motivation (Maymon, 2020). With this in mind, we can better understand what leaders can do to get the best out of their subordinates. A foundational aspect of leadership is helping the team achieve a common goal or objective (Al-Malki, 2018). Achieving a goal will often require motivation, or some sort of encouragement along the way. Educating leaders on the importance of self determination theory could have a profound effect on the ways in which leaders choose to lead. In Norway, managerial support for the employees' basic psychological needs prompted more autonomous motivation among the employees as well as fewer psychosomatic symptoms and less emotional exhaustion, turnover intentions, and absenteeism (Williams et al. 2014). If we can assume that transformational leadership improves autonomous motivation, one of the three basic human needs, perhaps this knowledge can be used by leaders to improve performance, motivation, and well-being.

SDT, Motivation, and Behavior of Team Members

As discussed previously, SDT is an essential theory that contributes to what motivates a person to do essentially anything. Without having met the three needs that are outlined in SDT, in a team based environment, leaders may struggle to get the best out of their subordinates.

Behavior is something that is unique and may be neglected when we think about some of the previously discussed topics, such as performance, well-being, and motivation. When the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are all supported, a person experiences behavioral persistence., high-quality performance, full functioning, and organismic wellness (Botnaru, 2021). Behavioral persistence is a term that describes the maintenance of behavior in the presence of behavioral disruptors (Dalal, 2023). This is an important aspect of team environments due to the fact that disruption is inevitable. There are always going to be obstacles and various other challenges that arise within a team setting that may threaten behavioral persistence and consistency. The key when these situations do come up is to recall the significance of the three psychological needs, and relying on our leaders to use this data to keep their team members functioning at peak performance.

Self Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief that they possess the ability to perform a particular task successfully, or to act in a way which will result in the ability to reach certain goals. This theory lends the foundation for motivation that a human has. Additionally, self-efficacy theory impacts a person's well-being and personal accomplishment. The greatest power that a person possesses, and the most impactful tool in their own motivational toolbox is to believe that they have the ability to achieve the results they desire. If a person is able to do this, and genuinely believe in themselves, they will gain more incentive to act or to insist on their actions in the face of difficulties and problems (Shafiq, 2016).

Self-Efficacy Theory and Organizational Culture

Self- Efficacy and Organizational Culture are two variables that may have a relationship, and in association may be valuable when considering performance. In schools, the

self efficacy of teachers has become a focal point of research, and has even been an indicator of success of faculty members. In the academic setting, high self-efficacy can be described as instructors who believe that they can perform better than their colleagues in teaching and interacting with the students. These educators demonstrate superior organizational and teaching skills, as well as can easily resolve academic difficulties and explain complex concepts (Shahzad, 2017). The impact of high self-efficacy on the performance of Jordanian educators is higher ratings in teaching performance. Self-efficacy has proven to have a noticeable impact on how Jordanian academics perform in their teaching process (Shafiq, 2016).

Additionally, organizational culture has had a direct impact on teacher performance (Akmalia, 2023). Several factors may contribute to the performance of teachers, however what appears to be most pivotal is job satisfaction. Self-efficacy directly influences job satisfaction, as the higher a person's self-efficacy, the higher the person's level of job satisfaction (Saprudin et al. 2021). If a person is not satisfied with their job, there is a reasonable belief and expectation that they will fail to perform adequately. Furthermore, the fundamental belief in being able to perform the task to the standards that are expected of them is weakened when an individual is not happy with their position.

How Culture and Leadership Work Together

Over the past several years, organizations, businesses, and teams have spent countless hours both researching and spending time and money in an attempt to better understand the relationship, if one exists, between organizational culture and leadership. An issue in addressing this relationship is that in a business context, these variables have differing influence depending on the stage of business development an organization is in. Leaders shape culture during the first stages of business creation, but later, when the business matures, it is culture that shapes

leadership characteristics(Schein, 1990). Ultimately, the dominant cultural type is identical with the dominant leadership style. Leaders are affected by culture and organizational strategy, but they also transform culture by imposing new values, trends, and behavioral norms (Kargas, 2015).

Which is more important: Organizational Culture or Leadership?

While the majority of this paper focuses on how each individual trait, leadership and organizational, impacts an organization in its pursuit of success and individuals within a group, what has not been addressed yet is which is more important. In an ideal scenario, both would be used as tools by executives and those in power; however, if only one is possible, which should be prioritized?

Unfortunately, the question of which variable is more important is a loaded question. One suggestion is that leadership impacts culture more than the other way around (Kargas, 2015), while another school of thought is that organizational culture is an influential factor enhancing positive outcomes for individual and organizational needs. Organizational culture has been shown to positively influence performance. Organizational culture can improve performance by improving employees knowledge and promoting their commitment to organizational goals (Nam, 2019). Given this information, it seems like the claim that culture matters more than leadership is clear. However, transformational leaders whose leadership is based on vision, personal recognition and support succeed in building and maintaining a satisfactory organizational climate for employees, in accordance with their needs and their desires (Get, 2018). Organizational culture also has a positive effect on the development of transformational leadership (Shivers-Blackwell, 2004). Ultimately, a strong organizational culture with ineffective leadership is meaningless. Effective leadership with a hostile or ineffective organizational culture, likewise,

is also meaningless. The true power comes from the combination of both variables working together. Organizational culture can not carry the weight of poor leadership in the same way that leaders can not carry the weight of a hostile culture. Leaders alone can not shape the culture, it takes commitment from members of the organization to buy into the goals and strategy in order to make the most of the experience.

Conclusion

Organizational culture and leadership play a pivotal role in team based environments as it impacts performance, well being, and commitment to the team. Through transformational leadership, as well as other leadership styles, subordinates can become either empowered or disempowered to perform and stay committed to the organization. Self Determination theory lends a vital hand to the issue by presenting evidence that leaders must learn to satisfy the three basic psychological needs of their subordinates, being autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Self Efficacy Theory is also a unique theory in which subordinates themselves must be leading their own journey of self belief and confidence in order to succeed. Self Efficacy Theory attacks this idea from a new perspective, being that before a leader can begin to challenge a subordinate's status quo, the subordinate themselves must have a foundation of belief in their own abilities. The information above has demonstrated the importance of these variables in a professional environment in order to achieve organizational goals and have success.

Initially, one of the ideas that fueled this research was the curiosity around what if a professional environment could not have both a strong and effective culture and a healthy organizational culture? What if only one could be chosen? Which would optimize an organization's performance more? Unfortunately, the research is very inconsistent in this particular area, and it is murky in regards to which is more important. Through analysis of all of

the information available for review, it seems that organizational culture and leadership have a symbiotic relationship- they are mutualistic. It seems rather improbable to have one without the other. A strong, effective leadership team sets the standards and expectations of the culture they want to have. They are the perfect model and uphold these standards, and ultimately inspire their subordinates to behave in the same way, and thus a healthy and strong culture emerges.

Conversely, a healthy and strong culture needs to be in place in order to ensure the leader remains effective, as they demand a certain level of leader to captain the ship. As much as it takes an effective leader to establish a healthy culture, it takes a healthy culture to accept and work for an effective leader.

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