Clan Culture in Organizational Leadership and Strategic Emphases: Expectations Among School Teachers in India

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the current and preferred organizational culture among school teachers in India is a primary requirement, particularly when the National Educational Policy (NEP) is being implemented. Measuring the competing values using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) provides information about the dominant characteristics of the organizational culture and the school teachers' preferences. We surveyed school teachers and received 273 responses. Research revealed that *clan culture* is the overall current and preferred organizational culture type. Many of the results are not a surprise. However, we found that organizational leadership is currently in the *hierarchy culture* and strategic emphasis is on *adhocracy*, whereas teachers prefer a clan culture on these dimensions. Teachers expect school leaders to be the ones who facilitate the path to achieve, provide mentoring, and are instrumental in team building. They prefer a culture that provides for the development of human capital, promotes high trust and transparency among teachers, and offers an opportunity to participate in decision-making. This study is unique as it measures schools' organizational culture that has not been done earlier in the Indian context. The results suggest implications on the leadership practices and the strategic emphasis that need to change, in order to facilitate the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP).

Keywords: *school culture, administration, dominant characteristics, competing value, leadership, strategic emphases, National Education Policy.*

An appropriate management style for educational institutions from preschool to university is required to deliver better academic service. Educational organizations align the learning experience to their vision and mission that benefits stakeholders and demonstrates credibility and impact. Mere accreditations and standards certification may not help to achieve such alignment. Organizational culture at schools is an important determinant for guiding a teacher's behavior. The right organizational culture can facilitate institutions to prosper and help top administrators to devise and implement new strategies and plan efficiently.

Educational institutions are moving away from traditional learning methods to dynamic and innovative ones. School administrators must create a pleasant environment to cater to teachers' and students' needs. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 brings about major reforms to India. The policy recommends modifying schools' current culture to ensure that teachers do their job effectively, and children learn better (MHRD, 2020 August 5). While the implementation is on the way, how school administrators prepare school members becomes imperative for researchers. To actualize the vision, there are certain shared values and practices emerging within the schools. Hence, understanding the organizational culture in India's schools becomes the focal point of this study.

We approach this study with the following questions: 1) How do school teachers perceive their current organizational culture? and 2) What is the preferred organizational culture of school teachers?

Answers to the above questions will help school administrators and policymakers to prepare a school environment that is suitable to implement the NEP. There is a need to attract able teachers and inspire them for effective delivery of experiential learning. We used the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) designed by Cameron and Quinn

(2006) to measure the current and preferred culture on six dimensions: (a) dominant characteristics, (b) organizational leadership, (c) management of employees, (d) organizational glue, and (e) strategic emphasis and criteria for success. The data was collected from school teachers. The outcome of the study highlighted the difference between the preferred culture and the prevailing culture. Among the competing values, the results throw light on the dominant culture in schools. The results are discussed in the context of future school education under the NEP and compared with the outcome of the studies in different contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational culture is recognized as a significant factor in deciding the triumph of educational institutions. Hence, organizational culture has drawn the attention of practitioners and managers, who examine culture in multiple contexts and how it can change workplaces to be more consistent and productive. Schein (1984) considers organizational culture as the pattern of basic ideas invented, discovered, or formulated by a set of people in learning to adjust with external adaptations and internal integration. The practices or ideas that have been thought of are to be treated as valid and hence, to be transferred to new members as the best way to perceive, think, and feel about a particular organizational aspect (Beytekin et al., 2010).

In academic institutions, culture is perpetuated by the socialization process of teachers when they sense an institution's common values, practices, and acceptable behaviors in schools. "An organization's culture is reflected by what is valued, the dominant leadership styles, the language and symbols, the procedures and routines, and the definitions of success that make an organization" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 17).

In evaluating organizational culture and effectiveness, many models are available. Some models emphasize an organization's dimensions such as human resources open attributes, systemic process or rational objectives, and more complex dimensions (Jung et al., 2009). One such framework is the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983), which pursues to manifest the dormant values in an organization and how they can be applied as organizational change drivers. Cameron and Quinn (2006) recognized four cultural types based on CVF that represent the basis of organizational core values.

As per Cameron and Quinn (2006), hierarchy culture is demonstrated by internally focused and stable organizations, while clan culture is expressed through flexible organizations. Market culture is also exhibited by externally focused and stable organizations, whereas adhocracy culture is through externally focused and flexible ones. Hierarchy culture is defined to be a highly formal and structured workplace. Clan culture brings in a very harmonious workplace in which there is a lot of communication at the personal level and the whole ambience is that of an extended family.

The result-oriented organization and the primary focus on getting the job done are defined as arriving at a market culture. An organization, considered as an entrepreneurial and dynamic place to work in, is thought to have an adhocracy culture.

In the 21st century, educational institutions are challenged with their constancy, sameness, or status quo, unlike in the past. Stability is no more viewed as healthy and organizations are challenged to become dynamic to stay afloat about changes and transition, which generally characterize the education system (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

The study by Van der Vyver et al. (2014) aimed to investigate the organizational culture observed in schools and its relationship with academic achievement. Using observation and ethnographic semi-structured interviews, the researchers conducted a study among school principals, students, and teachers. The research found that intangible elements such as beliefs, understanding, philosophy, mission, vision, objectives, ethos, values, and norms were important for the performance of the schools. The visible elements, such as verbally manifested behavior patterns like stories, heroes/ heroines, curriculum, rules, and regulations, created a difference between performing and poorly performing schools. Expressions through behaviors, such as rituals, celebrations, traditions, discipline, leadership orientation, style of the manager, and behavior of individuals and teams, were found to be a priority. Also, visual manifestations such as infrastructure, symbols, and school uniforms played an important role.

To gain insights into organizational culture in public and private higher education institutions in Malaysia, a study by Ramanchandran et al. (2011) found that all the universities, both private and public, had moderate culture, which is considered to be a normal culture for successful institutions. They found that market and adhocracy cultures are common in public institutions. Public and private institutions were generally high on hierarchical dimensions. Public institutions have more clan culture, whereas the private ones have market culture because they are dependent on the market for their income.

Nieman and Kotze (2006) aimed to explore the influence of some school leadership practices and organizational culture in schools against the background of the dysfunctional ones in South Africa during and after the apartheid. Secondary and primary school principals of 30 schools were the subjects of the study. The research found that principals applied five

leadership practices such as 1) challenging the process, 2) inspiring a shared vision and sociability, 3) enabling others to act, 4) modelling the way, and 5) encouraging the heart were instrumental in developing organizational culture.

Nazir and Lone (2008) attempted to validate Denison's Model of Organizational Culture and effectiveness in the Indian setting. Their study concluded that culture is linked with organizational effectiveness and that performance is related to the cultural characters of involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission.

Dedoussis (2004) took a unique approach of direct observation experience in real time and research related to the cross-cultural comparison of organizational culture in different universities in Japan and the Arab world. Basing the research on Schein's conceptualization of organizational culture at three levels of surface manifestations, values, and basic assumptions, the author found that some values are common in the universities under study. All of them showed a bureaucratic culture with aspects of stability, predictability, formality, and rule orientation. Further, in all the three universities, there were elements of clan culture, while in one university, market culture was found.

A study on the perceptions of teachers and students on instructional innovation in Chinese universities and its link to organizational culture by Zhu and Engels (2014) raised two hypotheses. One was that there is a relationship among organizational culture, teachers' and students' perceived need, and receptiveness to instructional novelties in higher education. The other said that there is a connection of organizational culture with the execution of instructional revolutions in higher education. The study, conducted in six universities, proved that educational innovations and the institutions' culture are strongly related. Goal orientation and collegial relationship aspects of organizational culture were the most significant factors for practicing instructional innovation.

The perception of vocational students and teachers in Russia, China, and Iran regarding schools' culture and the most probable employers was collected through a survey. Students and teachers from China and Russia think that their institutions have a clan culture, and they would like to strengthen it. Vocational students of Iran judge the culture of efficient businesses more effectively than teachers who seek to maintain the unquestioned pervasiveness of hierarchy and minimize innovativeness, which prevents vocational schools' organizational socialization (Zakharova et al., 2020).

Berkemeyer et al. (2015) developed an instrument OCAI-SK based on OCAI by Cameron & Quinn (2006), which assessed adhocracy, clan, hierarchy, and market as the four cultural types. The results from 40 schools showed a majority of them possessing a clan culture and very few being adhocratic. Based on this, a hypothesis was generated that schools in Germany are internal-process oriented, while they are organizationally flexible owing to their governmental embedment. The small reliability values and occurrence of the adhocracy culture could raise questions of whether educational institutions are innovative or ready to take risks.

Kheir-Faddul et al. (2019) investigated the principals' perceptions of their values and the type of organizational culture in their schools in the Druze sector in Northern Israel. The results showed that clan culture is the most dominant, followed by market culture and adhocracy culture. The principals were found to work on two kinds of values. The first one was the Druze values related to telling the truth, saving traditions, and respecting others' honor and dignity. The second involved universal values involving respect, order, loyalty, inclusion, understanding others, fairness, flexibility, commitment, consistency, forgiveness, honesty, professional ethics, responsibility, setting limits, striving for excellence, teamwork, tolerance, trust, good intention, the ability to give, the equation between giving and taking, affiliation, and the importance of the group.

Muijs (2011) researched the Delhi National Capital Region's management institutions' organizational culture and identified the gap between the present and favored organizational culture of these institutions. The study found that the internal process model is the most dominating organizational culture in the Delhi National Capital Region.

Ponnuswamy and Manohar (2014) investigated the organizational knowledge performance results based on the awareness of learning organizational culture in teachers from 20 Indian higher educational institutions. They confirmed that when an organization develops a learning culture, its performance improves at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

A study by Banerjee (2014) in central and state universities in Delhi found that bureaucratic and autocratic culture prevails in the central universities, whereas technocratic and entrepreneurial culture pervades state universities. Effectiveness was found high in both kinds of universities. It also confirms the positive connection between organizational climate and culture and effective team building.

Raj et al. (2019) found that gender and differences in school type affect the four cultures and happiness. They found a positive association between central government school teachers' clan culture and happiness, while there are negative correlations between state and private school teachers. Adhocracy was found to have a negative association with the happiness of central government and private teachers. A positive association was found among teachers of state schools. The results disclosed that school type and clan culture significantly influenced teachers' happiness of both genders.

Fralinger and Olson (2007) explored the concept of culture at the university level. OCAI was employed to find how the culture of departments influenced the student's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. The OCAI identifies the current as well as preferred future organizational culture. It helps to identify and initiate organizational cultural changes that institutions develop as they progress. A positive correlation was found among students' perceptions of departmental culture and the department and university's overall mission, goals, and objectives.

A school's organizational design, structured around empathy, was created by Roy (2020) from a study that explored the role of empathy in developing a school's organization. The study had two major objectives: (a) to create and authenticate a model of school organizational culture, which is empathy-driven and (b) to create a valid and consistent tool to quantify organizational empathy in Indian schools. The tool was further authenticated for convergent, discriminant, and simultaneous validity and led to a reliable and valid tool for measuring schools' empathy-driven cultures.

In recent years, attempts have been made to study higher educational institutions. However, there have been no attempts to study secondary schools' organizational culture. This interest focuses on understanding the phenomenon in a school environment and the performance of members of the secondary school. As educational leaders are challenged, a unique attempt is made to investigate secondary schools' organizational culture and examine how the staff can be involved in achieving clearly defined goals, encouraged by the administration. For the purpose of the study, six dimensions are interpreted in the context of secondary schools, which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Description of OCAI Dimensions in the Context of Schools

Dimensions	Description
Dominant Characteristics	Refers to the characteristic features of the environment and atmosphere prevailing across secondary schools. This will include the nature of teamwork, feeling of belonging, freedom for creativity, the potential to change, directed towards goals, facing competition, dependence upon systems and stress on efficiency.
Organizational Leadership	Refers to the perception of leadership style and approach that prevails across the secondary schools.
Management of Employees	Refers to how teachers are involved in consultation, participative decision making and consensus in major decisions. Further, it refers to the managerial style and management methods applied in secondary schools.
Organizational Glue	Refers to the methods adopted by secondary schools to build a sense of belongingness. It is a bonding mechanism created by cohesion in teamwork, flexibility, rules, policies, goal orientation among the team members. This is identified by loyalty, commitment, entrepreneurship and competitiveness.
Strategic Emphasis	Refers to what drives the secondary school's long-term strategy to build the human capital, resulting in innovation, stability, competitive advantage, goals achievement, growth and acquisition.
Criteria for Success	Refers to how teachers are rewarded in secondary schools. It refers to what defines success and who gets rewarded, promoted and recognized. The emphasis is on how success is defined in secondary schools.

Note. Source: Cameron & Quinn (2006)

METHOD

The study's purpose is to assess the organizational culture among secondary schools across certain selected institutions in India as understood by teachers and to learn about their perception of the preferred organizational culture. It is assumed that the teacher's awareness of the current and preferred culture is a prerequisite for driving organizational changes. It becomes easier to predict which measures of change will turn out to be effective. This helps the institutional leaders in deciding on

strategies for planning organized changes. This process will enable the leaders to give a participatory feel to the teachers, overcome resistance to change, and convince them about the need for it.

We used the OCAI for this study. This instrument can measure four organizational culture types formed by the competing value in the day-to-day operations of an organization's work (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). The instrument has six dimensions: 1) dominant characteristics, 2) organizational leadership, 3) management of employees, 4) organizational glue, 5) strategic emphases, and 6) criteria of success. Each of these dimensions has four statements reflecting the four types of culture: (a) clan, (b) adhocracy, (c) market, and (d) hierarchy. Respondents were requested to distribute 100 points among the four. The respondent assigned more points to the truer statement and fewer points to the statement that didn't reflect their organization. The instrument has two columns in which one will captured their current culture and the other the preferred future culture. The gap between the two indicates the direction of change expected by the teachers.

Data was collected from teachers participating in faculty development programs (FDP) conducted for India's central and southern states. Teachers from Bhopal, Bengaluru, Cochin, and Koduveli participated in workshops in Bengaluru, and others participated in the FDPs organized at Udupi, Mangalore. Teachers were invited to volunteer for the survey. Altogether 273 teachers filled the questionnaire.

RESULTS

This section examines the data using paired sample t-tests to check the significant difference between the current and preferred culture on all the dimensions and the overall scores. We used IBM SPSS 26 for the analysis. The difference between the current and preferred culture using the overall score is presented in Table 2. The table reports the aggregate of the points distributed to the four types of culture in each dimension. The same is calculated for *current* and *preferred* culture scores. The mean difference (diff) is presented along with the critical ratio (*t*-value) and its significance values (*p*). The *p*-values reveal if there is any significant difference between the now and preferred culture.

Table 2

Difference Between Current and Preferred Culture

	Current	Preferred	Diff	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Clan	28.253	30.145	-1.781	30.042	-.974	269	.331
Adhocracy	23.056	24.118	-.310	8.297	-.615	270	.539
Market	22.971	22.484	.422	11.926	.582	269	.561
Hierarchy	25.207	23.589	.548	9.859	.914	269	.362

Table 2 shows that the *t*-value is insignificant with *p*-values higher than .05 for all culture types. There is no significant difference between the current and the preferred culture reported by the school teachers. Clan culture was found to be most reported both in current and preferred ones. The market culture was reported as the least in both cases. The results also highlight that teachers prefer a lower market and hierarchy culture. The results don't surprise and are similar to previous studies, which say that schools have the clan culture, and it is also the most preferred type of culture in schools and various other organizations (Berkemeyer et al., 2015). Therefore, we further analyzed the data dimension wise

The difference between the current and preferred culture on all the six dimensions is presented in Table 3. On the dominant characteristics, clan culture is highest in both now (28.13) and preferred (30.28) culture. However, there is a significant increase in the number of respondents preferring clan culture (*t* = -3.104, *df* = 270, *p* = .02). There is a significant decrease in respondents preferring market (*t* = 2.309, *df* = 270, *p* = .022) and hierarchy culture (*t* = 3.270, *df* = 270, *p* = .001).

The results in Table 3 show a variation in organizational leadership, in which the current culture is reported to be hierarchy (28.89) and preferred culture is clan (27.54). There is a significant increase in the preferred clan (*t* = -3.253, *df* = 270, *p* = .001 and adhocracy (*t* = -2.990, *df* = 269, *p* = 0.003) cultures. Contrarily, there is a significant decrease in the preferred hierarchy culture (*t* = 3.428, *df* = 270, *p* = .001).

Clan culture is reported under the management of employees for both now and preferred culture, and there is no significant difference either (*t* = -1.815, *df* = 270, *p* = .71). Significant increase is seen in the preference of adhocracy culture (*t* = -2.212, *df* = 269, *p* = .028) and a significant decrease in the market culture (*t* = 2.743, *df* = 270, *p* = .006). The clan

culture is reported to be the now (27.42) and preferred (29.58) culture on the organizational glue dimension. However, there is a significant increase in the preference of clan ($t = -3.497$, $df = 270$, $p = .001$) and even adhocracy ($t = -4.168$, $df = 269$, $p < .000$) culture. Contrarily, there is a significant decrease in preference to hierarchy culture ($t = 4.875$, $df = 269$, $p < .000$).

Another staggering finding that was observed from the result is under the dimension of strategic emphases. The current culture is reported to be adhocracy (26.38), and the preferred one is the clan culture (28.53). However, there is no significant difference between the now and preferred cultures except for hierarchy culture. There is a significant decrease in the preference towards hierarchy culture ($t = 3.687$, $df = 270$, $p < .000$).

Clan culture is the current (30.89) and preferred (32.61) culture under the criteria of success. The results also reveal an increase in the preference towards clan culture although it is not significant ($t = -.970$, $df = 29$, $p = .331$). However, there is no change in the order of cultural values reported for now and preferred culture.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of the data indicates that secondary school teachers describe their dominant overall current and preferred culture as a *clan*. This isn't a surprise because the clan culture is the most preferred in schools (Kheir-Faddul et al., 2019). The authors of the framework themselves prescribe that the clan culture is suitable for the education sector (OCAI online, n.d.). Teachers feel a sense of belonging to schools as their own place and as the next home or an extension of their family. They share a lot with each other in the workplace. In the competing value matrix, the clan culture is the *collaborate* quadrant. The focus is mainly on human development, empowerment, and commitment (Cameron et al., 2006). Teachers prefer to work with others as if in a family environment. They perceive their leaders as mentors and perhaps even as parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty and tradition. The commitment towards the institution is high among teachers.

Contrary to the previous studies, the second most dominant current culture was found to be the *hierarchy* culture. There is an increased preference for clan and adhocracy culture and a decreased preference towards market and hierarchy culture. However, not much difference between the current and preferred cultures have been found as indicated by the studies of Maria et al. (2017).

The teachers assessed the current culture as a clan for their institution's dimensions, such as dominant characteristics, management of employees, organizational glue, and criteria of success. There was an overwhelming preference for clan culture in these dimensions. Teachers reported hierarchy culture for current organizational leadership and adhocracy culture with regard to strategic emphases. They tended to prefer clan over hierarchy in organizational leadership and clan over adhocracy under strategic emphasis.

This needs to be discussed in light of the NEP introduced by the Indian government. NEP focuses on overhauling the curriculum and adding thrust in experiential learning and critical thinking. The new policy formalizes pre-primary school education. Currently, the empowerment of teachers leading to quality and motivation is not at the desired level. There is a need to retain the existing culture and attract the best teachers to enter the profession. A better service environment and school culture are important to inspire teachers and work efficiently (MHRD, 2020).

The clan culture provides a friendly work environment, and the teachers share a lot. They feel themselves to be part of a large family and show much involvement (Cameron & Quinn 2006). This culture will be particularly required for the teachers to deliver experiential learning to the students efficiently. Teachers work as a single team and have a consensus on many aspects. Collective wisdom comes out of the relationship with minimal conflict. These factors show that clan culture can facilitate better implementation of NEP. Though the study indicates that the current culture is *clan*, the results indicate a further need to increase it.

The study found that the current leadership is hierarchical, focusing on mere managing and controlling the resource constraints through organization and coordination. Acquiring and optimizing resources is a strategic emphasis. Innovation and new challenges help to try new ways and corner opportunities for growth. Here the expected outcome is efficiency rather than effectiveness. This has put lots of pressure on teachers to perform administrative duties beyond the core teaching work, which has reduced their motivation and commitment (MHRD, 2020).

The school leaders with a clan culture behave as mentors and emphasize long-term human resource development. Teachers are empowered, and they engage with more commitment. This will address the concern that currently, there is lack of motivation among teachers. There is a need for leadership and strategic emphases to move towards clan culture to achieve the educational vision of the NEP. The organizational culture requirements for 21st-century education rely on teachers' continuous involvement. Teachers' effort for personal and professional development, focusing only on career enhancement, is insufficient. They will have to collectively contribute to the implementation and acceptance of change and

participate in decision-making for quality outcomes. For this, an overall clan culture and leadership working towards empowerment and delegation is necessary.

Table 3

Dimension Wise Differences Between Current and Preferred Culture

		Current	Pref	Diff	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Dominant Characteristics	Clan	28.13	30.28	-2.011	10.665	-3.104	270	.002
	Adhocracy	23.24	24.20	-.967	8.632	-1.840	269	.067
	Market	24.73	23.34	1.410	10.048	2.309	270	.022
	Hierarchy	23.08	21.24	1.944	9.751	3.270	268	.001
Organizational Leadership	Clan	26.08	27.54	-1.749	8.851	-3.253	270	.001
	Adhocracy	22.27	23.90	-1.522	8.366	-2.990	269	.003
	Market	21.43	21.36	.186	10.173	.300	268	.765
	Hierarchy	28.89	26.75	2.210	10.614	3.428	270	.001
Management of Employees	Clan	30.43	31.85	-1.469	13.319	-1.815	270	.071
	Adhocracy	21.59	23.01	-1.330	9.878	-2.212	269	.028
	Market	23.47	21.76	1.768	10.607	2.743	270	.006
	Hierarchy	23.87	23.77	.259	9.814	.434	269	.665
Organization Glue	Clan	27.42	29.58	-2.199	10.352	-3.497	270	.001
	Adhocracy	21.89	23.75	-1.989	7.840	-4.168	269	.000
	Market	23.44	23.38	.292	8.846	.542	270	.588
	Hierarchy	26.47	23.31	3.122	10.523	4.875	269	.000
Strategic Emphases	Clan	26.22	28.53	-2.237	24.482	-1.501	269	.134
	Adhocracy	26.38	26.60	-.191	9.406	-.335	271	.738
	Market	22.36	23.17	-.875	16.656	-.864	270	.388
	Hierarchy	24.98	22.71	2.306	10.298	3.687	270	.000
Criteria of Success	Clan	30.89	32.61	-1.781	30.042	-.974	269	.331
	Adhocracy	22.78	23.10	-.310	8.297	-.615	270	.539
	Market	21.97	21.69	.422	11.926	.582	269	.561
	Hierarchy	23.79	23.37	.548	9.859	.914	269	.362

This study highlights the need for leadership change from hierarchy to a better clan culture for driving our education beyond the 21st century. To create a proper environment for future academic institutions, nurturing human potential and developing human capital or intangible assets is necessary. The strategic emphases of the schools should be focused on such a vision. Leaders need to champion them by inspiring teachers and directing them towards common goals. The need for the right organizational culture in schools in fulfilling an institution's strategy is essential.

Future studies can investigate in-depth into leadership and the current strategies that schools follow to develop human capital and encourage innovation and growth of individuals and the organization. Such explorations may help to determine successful strategies to further improve school performance. In addition, the effect of interactions between each cultural dimension on the school's performance can be analyzed. Developing this knowledge can provide schools with the optimal strategies for their particular context.

Organizational culture has been studied in-depth in various sectors and across many countries. Such studies in academic institutions are often limited to universities. We proposed to study school culture in India, which coincides with the introduction of NEP 2020. A survey among school teachers revealed a predominance of clan culture and indicated that more of the same would continue in the future. This environment is necessary as the NEP indicates the need for inspiring teachers through empowerment and motivation.

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