THE DESIGN OF A PRAGMATIC AND USER FRIENDLY ORGANISATION CULTURE DIAGNOSES FRAMEWORK

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Opsomming

Die doelwit van die studie is primêr om ‘n leemte te vul wat bestaan vir ‘n organisasiekultuur-diagnostiekraamwerk wat pragmaties, sowel as gebruikervriendelik is. Min bestuurders ondernem dan om ‘n onderneming se kultuur die diagnoseer of ontrafel, omdat hulle nie weet hoe om ‘n onderneming se kultuur te diagnoseer nie. Ander bestuurders voel dat ‘n onderneming se kultuur van geen belang is nie. Bestuurders faal gevolglik daarin om die verband tussen ‘n onderneming se dominante kultuur en verandering wat verlang word, raak te sien. So ‘n onderneming word dan dikwels getipeer deur destruktiese sirkels van gedrag.

Die fokus van die studie is eerstens teoreties. Verskillende perspektiewe op kultuur word ondersoek. Sterk-en swakpunte, sowel as die gebruikervriendelikheid van die analitiese kultuurraamwerk word bespreek.

Die raamwerk wat voortgekom het word sluit meer as een teoretiese perspektief in. Dit word ook beklemtoon dat kultuur geskep word op ‘n kollektiewe basis. Die raamwerk is gevolglik gegrond in simboliek, sowel as die kultuurbetekenisse wat lede van die onderneming heg aan simboliese aspekte en hoe hulle kollektief leer. Die leerproses wat gevolg word, word verder afgebreek in vier stappe. Generering van kultuurinligting, integreering van kultuur inligting, binne die onderneming konteks, die interpretasie van die inligting, en die neem van verantwoordelike aksie, gebaseer op die interpretasies van organisasielede. Die laaslaatste stap, naamlik aksie wat geneem word, toets dan die geldigheid van die interpretasies wat lede van die onderneming maak.

Die interpretasie van kultuurinligting is egter nie ‘n maklike taak nie. ‘n Generiese kultuurkaart word gevolglik voorgestel as ‘n tegniek om ‘n nuwe ondernemingskultuurkaart te skep wat meer konteksspesifiek is. Ondernemingslede skep ‘n kultuurkaart deur simboliese betekenisse kollektief te identifiseer, kultuurkennis uit te lig en “skakels” tussen simboliese aspekte te vind. Oor ‘n tydperk kan ‘n onderneming
kultuurkaarte skep wat meer kompleks en volledig is. 'n Onderneming se kultuur-
verandering kan dan visueel oor 'n tydperk voorgestel word, en meer fokus kan geplaas
word op kulturele aspekte wat beskou word as belangrik.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The concept of an organisation culture has emerged in the last decade due to theorist recognizing that organisations are more than mechanistic, rational goal driven systems with formal structures. Beyond formal structures are the hidden social frameworks people take for granted (Schultz, 1995: 5). Within these frameworks lies the unconscious life of an organisation, where beliefs, values and meanings are created, develop and influence the more visible life of the organisation.

A perspective of the study of an organisation's culture could therefore be seen as a study of the meanings and beliefs which people attach to organisational life and how these meanings we have created for ourselves influence the way we behave (Schultz, 1995: 7).

The study of organisation culture has also been of considerable interest since the 1980's due to a number of reasons. Schultz (1995: 6) writes that Japan's phenomenal economic growth during this period focused more attention on Eastern driven management techniques and structures, such as quality circles and corporate philosophies. Furthermore Schultz comments that writers such as Peters and Waterman's in, In Search of Excellence (1982), Clark (1977), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Hofstede (1991), Pondy et al (1983), Kotter and Heskett (1992) and Denyson (1990) have all contributed to highlighting the relationships between strong and weak cultures and organisation efficiency and survival.

Such rationalist writers points of view might have lead managers to interpret culture as a very powerful tool for achieving goals effectively and enhancing the performance of the organisation.
A question that is however raised in this study is why so few managers assess or try to diagnose the organisation culture they operate within?

Possible reasons could be that culture frameworks that are fairly usable and insightful, tend only to be usable for individuals who have the skill to do the deciphering. Furthermore deciphering requires considerable investment in time, resources and requires the cooperation from many individuals throughout an organisation. Searching, ultimately for the few shared deep rooted values, beliefs or assumptions that might exist. A last possible reason is that with extensive literature written on the concept of organisation culture to date, they are few similarities between perspectives. View points are rather opposing than supportive.

With no general accepted framework for understanding the concept of organisation culture no general accepted way for defining culture has emerged. There are also fewer examples how organisation culture can be diagnosed and understood. Furthermore the task of translating theoretical concepts of culture into practical diagnoses seems to be a far harder task than attempting to understand frameworks developed for the concept of culture.

Given such difficulties managers face how possible is it for managers to decipher an organisations culture?

Fillmore (1990: 140) writes that diagnoses and understanding of organisation culture depends on the theoretical perspective which is used:

"In general theorist who define culture in a somewhat more superficial ways give the impression that culture can be deciphered with greater ease. Those who define culture more profoundly apparently see it as a more difficult and complex undertaking."

(Fillmore, 1990:140).
A manager trying to decipher a culture has either the option to choose a relative uncomplicated questionnaire type of approach, such as a standardized norm survey. Fillmore (1990: 141) however writes that theorist such as Schein (1985) wholly reject the notion that questionnaires and formalized tests can decipher unconscious assumptions. Alternatively the manager has to recruit an expert to assist in deciphering or use a fairly complex methodology. In the subsequent chapters of the study a third alternative is suggested, a user friendly culture diagnoses framework to aid managers in deciphering organisations culture.

Within the chapters a culture diagnoses framework is presented in a theoretical and practical way. Theoretically a comparison is made between culture perspectives, the strengths, weaknesses and user friendliness of each culture perspective. The position on culture typologies within organisational behaviour is also investigated, as well as the major debates and controversies surrounding organisation culture. Finally based on the field research done, a pragmatic framework for conducting a culture diagnosis is presented, as well as comments on the user friendliness of the framework.

1.2 Motivation

The primary motivation behind the study is the need that exists for a culture diagnoses framework that is pragmatic and user friendly. An approach to culture diagnoses which is neither a oversimplification of the concept of organisation culture nor an elaborate, complex process which needs be facilitated by an expert. Furthermore a need also exists to look forward, developing strategies, as well as finding fit with the organisations culture, which is rooted in the past. Likewise diagnoses of culture aids managers to grasp whether values, beliefs or assumptions are in conflict, support or simple create a situation of uncertainty, meaning cultures either does or does not find fit with the strategic path chosen.
Finally deciphering organisation culture has been branded to be somewhat of a black art (Fillmore, 1990: 140). The study is an endeavor reduce the pessimism or inflated expectations managers might have when attempting to decipher an organisations culture.

1.3 Problem Statement

On a daily basis the media is globally portraying a world of radical change. Symptomatic of dealing with change is also to buy or buy into solutions, whether it be a technology or philosophy. Not surprisingly for the technological or new philosophically unstrung a considerable amount of literature is being written on how to deal with new technologies or philosophies. Meaning keeping pace with radical change.

Within the South African context a path of reconstruction and reconciliation has been presented as a solution of grand proportions. Organisations whether state driven or privately owned all are seemingly trying to transform or taking measures to be seen to be transforming. It is also apparent that transformation is not meeting the expectations it initially created. Moreover the baggage of the past is daily dragged out and branded as self-defeating, even addictive. Alternatively the culture of the times is criticized as self-defeating and the reason for poor performances.

Managers and leaders who are confronted with change are therefore seemingly apt at planning for change, but inapt at the accompanying diagnoses and understanding of their organisations culture change needed. In similar manner Want (1995: 89) writes that leaders who are forced to understand and manage their corporate cultures fall in one of three categories:

"I don't know, I don't know how and I don't care."

(Want, 1995: 89)
Cultural misconception and ignorance is part of the way how we manage organisations. Managers and leaders blunder around the dominant culture they operate within. Making it difficult, if not impossible to find a departure point in bringing about the change they seek. Furthermore managers who attempt being more culture conscious might be discouraged from trying to decipher or understand their organisations culture because of the cynicism surrounding culture deciphering.

"Anybody who tries to decipher an organisation's culture, much less change it, is in for a very rough time."
(Weeks, 1988: 3-109).

"Managers who try to manage the culture of their organisation should tread carefully and do so with modest expectations".
(Weeks, 1988: 3-109).

Yet there is considerable consensus amongst writers that an organisation's culture must develop and be adaptive enough for the organisation to perform and survive in a radical changing environment.

Translating the situation managers face into a problem statement:

Managers at various levels of organisations are on a daily basis expected to bring about change, even radical change, with a measure of instant success. Managers however fail to diagnose and understand the link between their internal dominant culture and the change which is demanded by the organisation's stakeholders. Being unable to understand the cultural landscape they operate within, they either choose to ignore it, fall back into familiar patterns of behaviour and even engage in self-defeating behaviour.
1.4 Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study is to design an organisation culture diagnoses framework for managers that is pragmatic and user friendly. A tool that will assist managers to conceptually a departure point between their organisations dominant culture and the change demanded by its stakeholders.

The following objectives are set to achieve the overall objective:

1.4.1 Attain a clear understanding of the theoretical position of the concept of organisation culture within organisational theory.

1.4.2 Given the broad nature of the concept of culture investigate the questions and controversies which is found in the organisational behaviour. The objective being to sketch the setting against which the framework is developed.

1.4.3 Attain a clear understanding of the different perspectives of the concept of culture and the accompanying analysis used. The objective being to compare various theoretical views and highlight strengths, weaknesses and user friendliness of each framework.

1.4.4 Furthermore attain a clearer understanding of the typologies drawn within the various culture perspectives.

1.4.5 Based on the various culture perspectives investigated fuse one or more perspectives into a new user friendly culture diagnoses framework.

1.4.6 Finally present the analytical results of the frameworks and evaluate how practical and user friendly the framework is.
1.5 Methodology of the study

The aim being to gain more insight into diagnoses and understanding of organisations' cultures leads the study to be analytical and descriptive in nature.

It should however be noted that each culture perspective has its own theoretical and methodological differences. A specific perspective will have its individual analytical framework, analytical mode, analytical method and analytical results. Within the study fusing perspectives to form a new framework will lead to a fusing of methodology and as well as the form of results and insights. Once the final framework is presented the methodology is described in detail.

To illustrate methodology differences between a functional and symbolic perspective is briefly highlighted. If a functional perspective is used, meaning that the key analytical question is; What are the functions of culture for organisational survival? (Schultz, 1995: 150). The framework proposes that culture develops in relation to specific tasks and functional areas and additionally can be studied along the lines of universal levels of awareness. The analytical mode would hence involve a listing of cultural elements, categorizing each element and vertically map the relations between each of the culture elements or categories (Schultz, 1995: 152). The analytical method would involve a clinical approach of categorizing artifacts and values, discovering basic assumptions and deciphering of the relationship between levels of culture. The study either being conducted by an individual researcher or facilitated by a consultant and conducted by a motivated group of insiders (Schultz, 1995: 153). Finally the analytical results would specify the contents of each level, their interrelationship and emphasize basic assumptions.

If a symbolic perspective is used, meaning that the key analytical question is; What is the meaning of the organisation to its members? (Schultz, 1995: 150). The framework proposes that a range of symbolic opportunities can be studied, which is more open-ended, rather than predefined as in the case of a functional approach. Verbal or
behavioural symbols could be interpreted as symbolic opportunities. Culture is furthermore seen as a web of meanings, constructed by its members, which is context and organisation specific. The analytical mode is associative, reading meanings and exploring the association between them. The analytical method is ethnographic, meaning an individual researcher chooses an organisation for his/her own research reasons and collects data by wandering around, observe in settings and conducting interviews. The analytical results are narrative text exploring the uniqueness qualities of the organisation culture (Schultz, 1995: 154).

Therefore a mix of analytical modes, methods, results and insights will emerge, based on the framework developed.

Methodology within the phases of the study can be clarified and be seen as having three dimensions. The first dimension is the literature study. Drawing comparisons between various culture perspective. Fusing of perspectives and the construction of a diagnoses frameworks in order to construct a culture diagnoses framework.

The following set of principles are used as suggested by Fillmore (1990: 142) in the design of a pragmatic framework are used in the design of the framework:

1. The diagnostic framework should be explicitly linked to the corporate culture definition.

2. The diagnostic method should hold some promise of penetrating corporate culture at some depth, minimally at the level of behaviour patterns.

3. The approach should be triangulated, that is to say, it should allow for penetration from at least two different perspectives and involve multiple approaches.
* The approach should be relative user friendly, that is, is should not be prohibitive in terms of time, cost and ease of use.

* The approach should have enough built-in flexibility so that the situational adjustments can be accommodated without doing injustice to its integrity."

The second dimension of the study would involve the choosing the mode, methods and ways of presenting the results. Selecting precisely each of the above mentioned would as mentioned depend on the theoretical framework developed. It should however be noted that similarities between perspectives exist. For example the notion of patternning, meaning regular and repetitive aspect of organisational life exist (Schultz, 1995: 162). The second is culture as relations between depth of manifestation, meaning that cultural patterns are at deeper levels of the organisation (Schultz, 1990: 163). The deepest level of manifestation being basic assumptions.

Given similarities it allows a number of diagnostic methods to be used which are mentioned in differing perspectives of culture. Fillmore (1990: 146) list diagnostic methods ranging from; review of strategy, archival searches, historic reviews, group interviews, content analysis of speeches and documents, custom designed surveys, exit interviews, examining physical environment to systematic observation and analysis of stories and myths. Choosing a method would however depend on the purpose and the timeframe available to produce results (Fillmore, 1990: 146).

The second dimension, initial diagnoses, is conducted within a State subsidised College context which offers vocational geared courses to its students. The reason for conducting the initial diagnoses in one organisation only is the considerable time and data required to do in depth deciphering. Secondly using a organisation which one has access and familiarity with makes the process of collecting data easier.
The third dimension of the study involves assessing the logic, practicality and ease of use. Finally the framework, its ease of use and usefulness is finally assessed by conducting interviews with group members.

1.6 Barriers of the study

On assessment of culture there seems to be consensus that more than one type of diagnostic method needs to used in order to gain a comprehensive view of an organisations culture. A superficial investigation would only reveal a fragmented or sub cultural type of perspective. However it is difficult to specify that specific methods are universally applicable to all organisations. The alternative is to try and provide a fairly comprehensive list of methods which can chosen from. It would therefore allow a person who is involved in the process of diagnoses to choose a analytical method for its purpose and timeframe available to conduct the diagnoses.

Secondly only a limited number of the methods can be introduced as structured questions within survey, which hampers a efficient or comprehensive way of conducting a diagnoses.

Using structured and unstructured interviews, surveys or observation methods would allow one to triangulate results, meaning one could check parts of information against each other, which could ultimately defeat the objective of designing a user friendliness framework.

Thirdly because of the sensitive nature of the study one would have to consider how motivated, open and honest individuals are in giving responses. A person conducting the diagnoses would be trying to uncover values, beliefs, assumptions which is often hidden, unspoken and which individuals are often reluctant or even fearful of commenting on.
From a design perspective it is very difficult to broaden the study to more than a few organisations. The reason being that a probing diagnoses requires considerable time and cooperation.

1.7 Chapter division

The study is demarcated into five chapters:

1.7.1 Chapter one

Chapter one will include an introduction, motivation for the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, methodology of the study, barriers of the study and the division of chapters.

1.7.2 Chapter two: Literature topics

Chapter two will focus on the following literature topics:

1.7.2.1 The position of the concept of organisation culture within organisational theory.

As a departure point in the study the position of organisation culture within organisation theory is investigated. Meaning how the concept of culture is understood within contemporary organisation theory. Weeks (1989: 3-74) for example writes that culture can be understood as a set of solutions that groups devise, culture is therefore seen as a problem we commonly share. Morgan alternatively (Schultz, 1995: 8) views culture in terms of metaphors we create, meaning many aspect of organisation life is seen as being metaphorical and elements of experiences is understood one in terms of another.
A diversity of interpretations therefore exist; metaphorical, variable, integrated, differentiated, ambiguous and others. The objective is to firstly highlight the diversity of interpretations and secondly indicate which interpretations are used in the design of the diagnoses framework.

1.7.2.2 Questions and controversies which is found in the organisational culture debate.

The study is not only a debate on how the concept of culture is understood from different perspectives but also a study about the debates and controversies surround the concept culture. As an example a debate which has been ongoing is whether a distinction can be drawn between organisation culture and organisation climate.

Weeks (1988: 2-63) writes that either culture is the same entity or culture is two separate entities:

"Climate measures whether expectation are met, while culture is concerned with the nature of these expectation."

(Weeks, 1988: 2-64)

Drawing clearer distinctions between surrounding concepts and debates will assists to clarify how the concept of culture is understood in relations to other concepts.

1.7.2.3 A comparison of theoretical frameworks drawn between the various culture perspectives.

Firstly there are far fewer examples of how culture assessment or diagnoses can be done in real life than attempts to clarify the concepts of culture (Schultz, 1995: 6). The focus will be to compare different perspectives and to evaluate which perspectives is probing.
Furthermore it allows one to compare the strengths, weaknesses and user friendliness of each form of deciphering.

1.7.2.4 Culture typologies

Within each perspective culture is also often typified in a number of ways. As an example if culture is understood to be variable, culture is outlined in comparison to some scale. Schultz (1995: 11) refers to:

"1. Strong and weak cultures (e.g. Deal and Kennedy, 1982: Kotter and Heskett, 1992) which evaluate the culture's internal consistence and impact on the organisations members:

2. Efficient and inefficient cultures (Peters and Waterman, 1982: Denyson, 1990), which evaluate cultures in relation to fulfillment of goals, ability to innovate and strategic capacity."

Nixon (1987: 99) refers to four types of cultures; power, role, task and person cultures. More contemporary is Want (1995: 93) who suggest a hierarchy of cultures; predatory, frozen, chaotic, political, bureaucratic, service and new age.

Finally the question that is being asked, given various typologies. Can culture be typified or not? If yes, then which ways. Therefore clarifying which ways of typifying explain the concept culture better and produces better analytical results.

1.7.3 Chapter three: Diagnoses framework

Chapter three will focus on fusing theoretical perspectives and the design of a diagnoses framework. Whether diagnoses is seen as possible or not depends on the perspective. However by fusing one or more perspectives limits the chances of a superficial type of
deciphering being done. Secondly writers such as Fillmore (1990: 142), Seashore (1983) agree that diagnoses requires that more than one perspective or assessment method is used to triangulate results.

Chapter three would then serve as the starting point in deciding on the methodology of the field research.

1.7.4 Chapter four: Methodology

Chapter four will focus on the methodology used in the field research; the analytical mode, analytical method and analytical results. Within the chapter the analytical results and insight of the framework is also discussed, as well as how pragmatic and user friendly users found the framework.

1.7.5 Chapter five: Conclusions and recommendations

In chapter five a summary of the study is presented, as well conclusions and recommendation about the diagnoses framework as a whole.
CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ORGANISATION CULTURE

2.1 Introduction

The study of construct organisation culture can be characterized since the 1930's as conflicting, confusing and diverse. In order to gain a clearer sense of what is meant by the construct culture the literature study firstly aims to trace the anthropological roots of organisation culture and highlighting the diversity of anthropological perspectives that organisation culture theorist have borrowed from. Part of the literature study is therefore also to draw clearer “lines” between the various perspectives on culture and related constructs such as climate. The various perspectives are classified on the basis of the basic assumption that theorist have made within each of the perspectives, namely: culture as independent variable, culture as internal variable, functionalist perspective, cognitive perspective, symbolic perspective and psycho-dynamic perspective. Instances where related construct create confusion, such as climate, groupthink, metaphors and social structure, it is stated why these construct should not be confused with organisation culture.

Furthermore within each of the perspective discussed only the most recognized analytical frameworks and supporting methodology is discussed. In some instances theorist have only outline an abstract framework of organisation culture and not a diagnoses methodology that can be used to deciphering organisation culture. However within those perspectives where theorist provide a methodology, critiques are given of what is seen as the best and what is the worst aspects of the analytical framework and methodology. Furthermore within each of the frameworks the main phenomena that is studied is briefly outlined, which gives an impression of the types and diversity of phenomena that can be studied within the construct organisation culture. Also highlighting those that are
commonly seen as significant phenomena, which implies that they are "shorter pathways" that can be taken to decipher organisation culture. In the concluding section a number of cultural typologies are discussed, but these typologies are seen only as a starting point to understanding culture, not neat "pigeonholes" into which organisations cultures can be slotted. A detailed list of culture typologies is therefore not compiled, and neither is it a detailed study of those typologies.

2.2 The position of the concept organisation culture within organisational theory

2.2.1. Anthropological roots of organisation culture

The use of the of term culture can be dated as far back as 1690 (Sackmann, 1993: 8). Sackmann (1993) suggests that John Lockes "Essay on Human understanding" set the foundation for the development of the concept, which was later explored in the late eighteenth by Edward B. Taylor. Taylor's writings is thought to be the first to introduce the term culture to the English language. In 1871 Taylor defined culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Sackmann, 1993: 8). From those first writings, anthropologist have since not reach any kind of clear cut consensus as to how culture can be defined. Stapley (1996: 6) writes that Kroeber and Kluckholms identified 164 different definition of culture by 1952. Furthermore it seems that little consensus has been reached as to what cultures characteristics are, what it is composed of, what it does, or how it should be studied. What is clear, as Stapley (1996: 6) writes, is that the study of the concept of organisational culture has been borrowed from anthropology. Organisation culture in general is seen as being more indigenous to anthropology than to psychology (Schneider, 1997: 19).

Organisation behavioral theorist thus started studying organisational culture by borrowing from the various anthropological perspectives on culture. These various anthropological perspectives from which theorist borrowed can be outline as evolutionary, historical
particulism, "superorganic", functionalism, cultural materialism and cultural idealism. The evolutionary perspective is the earliest of perspectives. It implied that degrees of cultivation exist, meaning that societies progressed from being primitive societies to being more cultured. Evolutionary theorist thus argued that the human conditions could consciously be improved or cultivated and that more primitive societies where less cultured. In reaction to the evolutionary perspective, historical particularism developed, the focus being on the nature of culture, its artifacts, rituals, traits and other elements. The elements however having no unifying tread amongst them. In order to understand culture meant a detailed observations of customs, particularly to their context. The super-organic viewpoint in contrast sought to unravel patterns or configurations. These configurations forming an integrated and consistent whole, which represents the unique property of a particular culture. The functionalist however sought to discover the structure of a natural system and to understand the interaction between the parts of the system rather than the whole, trying to discover a set of rules for a natural system. Attempting also to understand the influence of various parts on the whole of the system. Cultural materialism focus shifted to study more observable elements of culture. Culture is seen to be influenced by technological-environmental influences and that people are the carriers of culture (Sackmann, 1991: 13).

An important aspect to highlight is that the above perspectives mentioned view culture as a social phenomena, meaning it manifests itself through transmitted social behavior. Culture is seen as component separate from of a social system and that the social and cultural realms grow and change over time, each influencing the other. Stapley (1996: 7) is however critical of the notion that members of a social system are passive recipients of culture. Stapley (1996: 7) points to the theories of Piaget (1951), Bion (1967) and Bateson (1973) that suggest culture, being learnt behavior, is not passively received. People are rather active participants that both learn and influence culture. Culture is therefore seen as distinct from a social system, but interrelated. It also implies that culture is rather located in the minds of people, which is more in keeping with the cultural idealism perspective.
Cultural idealism, the most recent of perspectives, the focus is primarily on the cognitive constructions in the minds of people or the products of peoples minds that form shared meanings. Cultural idealism views culture as a system of knowledge that is learnt as standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting (Stapley, 1996: 7). Within this "cognitive school" four directions have developed; psychological anthropology, ethnography, structuralism and symbolic anthropology.

Psychological anthropology a psychoanalytical based approach views culture as a determinant of peoples personality, whilst it also represents the personalities of its members of a society. The main assumption is that culture is a consistent pattern of thought and action that forms an integrated whole. Part of how we internalize and perceive this whole is the language we use.

Ethnography searches for this link between culture and language, describing culture and our perception of the world as being language based (Sackmann, 1991: 14).

The Levis-Strauss, the main proponent of the "structuralist school" views culture as a shared symbolic system that is a cumulative or collective unconscious, which underlies cultural manifestations (Stapley, 1996: 8). The main assumption is that history is alive in the minds of people. The search is therefore for deeper meanings within a system of symbols used by people.

The "symbolic" or "semiotic" school viewpoint is that culture is a system of symbols, the main assumption being that symbols are involved in social processes, which become associated with the human interest, ends and means. The ethnographer does not search for culture within the minds of people, but rather the meanings and thinking where social interaction takes place (Stapley, 1996: 8). Both emic and etic perspectives are used, meaning both insiders and outsiders points of view is used (Sackmann, 1991: 14).
Stapley (1996: 8) viewpoint is that all of the perspective can be considered to be "correct". Culture is both conceived in the mind, but also an intersubjective phenomena, develops from interrelated symbols, as well as being conscious and subconscious. All of the perspective make valuable contributions in understanding culture and explains to some degree why organisation culture have been studied from such a diversity of perspectives.

2.2.2 Development of the organisation culture construct

The first theorists that studied organisation culture as a construct can be dated to the early 1930's, within the Hawtorne studies at Western Electric Company in Chicago, Illinois (Beyer, 1993: 23). The now well known studies aimed to experiment with the relationships between productivity and the physical environment. The results of the study where however somewhat puzzling as productivity results could not be explained in purely technical terms, which later called for the help of behavioral scientist to take the study further. From 1931 to 1932 Mayo, a consultant for Western Electric during the Hawtorne studies and W. Loyd Warner an anthropologist took the study of cultural influences in the workplace further (Beyer, 1993: 24). Observations of a bank wiring room and interviews where used to describe three kinds of social relationships: the technical, social and ideological. Technical meaning the study of the flow of work, socially the formal and informal structure that influenced relationships and thirdly ideological, the culture of the organisation (Beyer, 1993: 26).

The 1940’s, 1950’s and 1960’s research on organisation culture was a scattered effort. Beyer (1993: 26) notes of Whyte who during 1943 did an ethnographic study of the restaurant industry, analysing informal social structures and organisational symbols. During the 1950’s and 1960’s a number of American researchers continued studying culture with anthropological based approaches. Most noticed work during this period was Melville Dalton who wrote *Men Who Manage* (1959). Dalton studied the sub-cultural, informal aspects of organisational life. Arguing that the rules, titles and formal structures is only the back drop to the true dynamics that occur within an organisation. Only late in
During the 1970’s Pettigrew (1979) wrote a fairly influential article, in the *Administrative Science Quarterly* on the relationship between symbolism, myth, rituals and how these concepts could be used in organisational analysis (Schneiders, 1990:193). Another important study during this period was that of Burton Clark, *The Distinctive College* (1970), in which he made use of a saga to show the importance of founders and tradition in Colleges. Quantitative research was however the norm during this period, whereas both of the above mentioned studies where unique, they rather made use of qualitative approaches (Beyer, 1993: 28).

By the beginning of the 1980’s research in organisation culture had a boom period. Mainly due to the popular writings of Peters and Waterman’s *In Search of Excellence* (1982) and Ouchi’s *Theory Z* (1981), which suggested that a strong link could be found between organisation culture, productivity and adaptability (Beyer, 1993: 29). Furthermore Japanese companies during this period had phenomenal growth which lead theorist to try and find a link between Eastern management techniques and productivity. Furthermore theorist such as Clark (1977), Deal and Kennedy (1982) and more recently Hofstede (1991) Kotter and Heskett (1992) have explored the notion that a strong or adaptive culture can be instrumental in an organisation success. Also implying that strong and adaptive cultures can be created, managed and directed in some way.

Beyer (1993: 31) is however critical of rationalist theorist, because culture is portrayed by rationalist as the “quick fix” of the 90’s organisation. Many theorist are critical about whether culture can be made a effectiveness issue (Schneiders, 1997: 20). Furthermore Schneiders (1997) notes that the study of culture has never been an effectiveness issue in anthropology, either to discover, or make comparisons between which cultures are more effective than others.
The 1990's has not brought any real innovative perspective on organisation culture, that has not already been conceptualized in some way already during the 1980's. Schein (1996: 229) who is mainly a functionalist theorist writes that culture in the 1990's the culture concept has somehow gone missing. Schein (1996: 229) furthermore attributes part of the problem why culture has not been taken so seriously is that our methods of inquiry has put a greater emphasis on abstraction, rather than focus on ethnographic observation or clinical observation of an organisation. Some exceptions do however exists, Sackmann (1991) formulated from a cognitive perspective both a theoretical and analytical frameworks for understanding cultural knowledge.

The majority of the 1990's researchers however that have written on organisation culture or culture related aspects have given mainly theoretical, abstract explanations of culture. Most of their writings do not provide any kind of reproducible methodology and real observations of organisation culture.

Not all of the theory is grounded in anthropology, Stapley (1996) for example provides a fairly comprehensive explanation of organisation culture from a psycho-dynamic perspective, but most of the theory is drawn from established psycho-analytical theory that is simple transplanted to an organisation setting. There also seems to be a growing number of theorist that are touching on peripheral aspects of culture, but they are not pulling any their notions through to a comprehensive analytical model of culture. Morgan (1997) for example writes on metaphors, and culture as a metaphor. However most culture theorist agree that organisation culture is not a metaphor, but his notion of culture as metaphor does provide a way to view an organisation from a different perspectives, and to grasp the complexity and many "truths" that can exist in any one organisation. Similarly Dixon (1994) writes on how an organisation learns collectively, but Dixon (1994) does not integrate any of her theoretical explanations into a culture model or methodology to decipher organisation culture.
2.3 Questions and controversies found in the organisational culture debate

One of the dangers in studying organisation culture is that everything is considered to be culture or culturally based. Within this section the objective is to draw a distinction between the constructs climate and culture, as well as clarify what some theorist argue culture is not. The aim being to reduce some of the confusion around the concept culture and highlight some of the debates theorist are having.

2.3.1 Climate and culture constructs

Climate and culture constructs have developed separately, yet parallel to each other (Schneider, 1990: 6). The difference in development of the constructs can in a large measure be attributed to climate being more indigenous to fields of industrial and organisational psychology and organisational behavior, whereas culture is more indigenous to anthropology (Schneider, 1990: 19). Yet the constructs climate and culture is sometimes confused as being the same. The reason why both constructs might seem the same or overlapping is because both climate and culture is learnt and both involve socializing processes and interaction with other group members. Furthermore both constructs are multidimensional and both attempt to identify the environment that affect the behavior of people in an organisation (Schneider, 1990: 29).

Climate has however progressed much further as a construct. The main reasons being that climate researchers have not debated to length the definitions of culture or elaborated on small differences. Schneider (1990: 14) writes that researchers of organisation climate mainly have had psychology backgrounds. Furthermore they have focused on gathering data fairly quickly to assess the validity of the construct. Whereas culture theorist are still in the first stage of defining and deciding what is, what is not part of culture. The climate constructs has also been exposed to many critiques and reviews. Schneider (1990: 21) writes that during the 1970's theorist such as, Hellriegel and Slocum (1974), James and Jones (1974), and Payne and Pugh (1976) wrote critical reviews on climate literature and
even reconceptualise organisation climate, as well as approaches to measuring climate. In response to these critiques Johnston (1976), LaFollette and Sims (1975), Powell and Butterfield (1978), Schneider and Snyder (1975) set out to challenge these reviews and reconceptualise the construct again (Schneider, 1990: 21). The culture construct culture in comparison has had very few critiques or reviews written. Schneider (1990: 21) writes that he could only find one critique of the concept by Martin and Siehl (1983).

The most apparent difference between climate and culture studies that has emerged is that climate studies focus on individuals perception of their environment, where culture studies rather focus on shared beliefs, values, norms shared by a group of people. In climate studies peoples perception is measured by making use of a wide variety of variables in a questionnaire format, the focus of these questionnaires being to measure peoples perceptions of “the way things are” (Beyer, 1993: 19). Furthermore climate studies use etic techniques, which means that the researcher can put forward his own point of view, rather than uncover truly shared experiences. Beyer (1993: 19) concludes that it is very unlikely attitudes reflect culture at all, if they do, then at a very superficial level. Allevesson and Olof Berg (1992 : 88) supports Beyer’s (1993) that climate is very close to the experiences people have and is “superficial and readily accessible”.

Cultural research can therefore be distinguished as being at a higher much higher level of abstraction than climate. Culture research involves intensive data collection over a longer period of time, using etic and emic methods. Beyer (1990: 19) also notes that the climate construct does not have any clear distinguishing indicators, it overlaps with organisational constructs such as structure, technology, formalization and effectiveness (Beyer, 1993: 20). Whereas culture studies have many unique indicators such as myths, symbols, rites and stories. Theorist in general conclude that climate and culture are separate constructs (Schneider, 1990: 30). Schneider (1990: 31) argues that the two constructs have remained separated because of different scientific backgrounds and the career mindedness of researchers who have aimed at developing a separate constructs, focusing on finding small differences and trying to have newly defined terminology associated with them. Schneider
(1990: 31) however suggests that the culture construct can benefit by the development and even marriage with climate methodology and terminology. Furthermore Schneider (1990:31) argues that their is even some evidence of the two concepts are drawing closer to each other and that over time the separation is likely to diminish.

2.3.2 What culture is not!

2.3.2.1 Not groupthink

Groupthink might be confused with cultures or subcultures, but groupthink is described as “a collective pattern of defensive avoidance, lack of vigilance, unwarranted optimism, sloganistic thinking, suppression of worrisome defects, and reliance of on shared rationalisations” (Beyer, 1993: 20). The term groupthink is often used when referring to small face-to-face groups, whereas culture in more historically based, characterised by symbolism, dynamism and fuzziness (Beyer, 1993: 20). The groupthink construct therefore does not reflect the ongoigness and inclusiveness of the culture construct.

2.3.2.2. Not social structure

Most theorist conclude that social structures and culture is “distinct but interrelated: neither a reflection of the other, each considered in its own right” (Beyer, 1993: 21). Social structure consist of tangible elements and specify the way people order their life’s, such an organisation, indicating the ways in which people relate to each other in an observable way. Yet social structure is not the same as culture. Culture is rather abstract, often emotionally charged that creates beliefs and assumptions that assist us to manage and maintain the social structures we create. Culture in time also becomes an identity on its own, that is separate of an organisations strategy, structure and rewards system (Kilmann, 1985: 18). Furthermore culture because it is not integrated into social structure it can be thought of as a reality that it has created independently (Schultz, 1995: 78.) To illustrate the formal structure that an organisation creates and uses to define hierarchy may
not be the same as the hierarchy defined by the organisations culture. An organisation thus may a cultural defined hierarchy which is radically different from its formal structure.

2.3.2.3. **Not a Metaphor**

"Objectivity is as much part of the observer as of the object observed".

Beyer (1993: 21) writes that some theorist viewpoint is an organisation is *like* culture. This perspective implies that an organisation *has* culture. Culture is assumed to be something that is imported from outside of the organisation and that it can be manipulated by management. (Smircich, 1983). This perspective ignores the idea that culture is a system of ideas in the minds of people, where social actors play an important role in the development of culture (Stapley, 1996: 9). The second perspective is that organisations *is* culture, culture is not merely a metaphor, but that culture is real product of social interactions, systems of thought, emotions and behaviors that people exhibit (Beyer, 1993: 21). Both Beyer (1993: 21) and Stapley (1996: 9) argue that the latter point of view is the more valuable of the two perspectives.

Morgan (1997: 4) writes that "... all theories of organisation and management are based on implicit images and metaphors that lead us to see, understand, and manage organisations in distinctive yet partial ways".

Even though many theorist reject the notion that culture is a metaphor. Metaphors are still very powerful images that allows an observer to see organisational life in a new light. Furthermore metaphors tend to be used in all of the perspectives on culture, for example within the symbolic perspective metaphors are used as a pathway to uncover a web of meanings.
Metaphors therefore can shape what we see, but by using a certain kind of metaphor we also tend to find what it is that we are looking for. Morgan (1997: 350) writes that Einstein once noted that it is the theory through which we observe a situation that decides what we can observe. It implies that no one metaphor can encapsulate an entire organisations complexities. A metaphor is never complete, it is often biased, potentially misleading and paradoxical in that it can create powerful insights, but at the same time distortions (Morgan, 1997: 3).

The value of using metaphors therefore lies in viewing organisations from different perspectives, such as machines, organisms, brains, politics, psychic prisons, instruments of domination or as cultures. Each metaphor contributing towards a newness with which we can see the complexities of organisation life.

2.3.2.4 Not necessarily the key to success

Beyer (1993: 21) writes that a considerable number of researchers have been preoccupied since the 1980’s with how culture can improve organisational performance. Beyer notes four different perspectives on this issue have emerged.

Within the first perspective Peters and Waterman (1982) have been instrumental in suggesting that certain cultural configuration are recipes for success. However a number of academics have fairly quickly showed that “less excellent” companies have done just as well, as excellent companies. Some of the “excellent” companies identified by Peters and Waterman (1982) have not been that successful a few years on. An apparent flaw is that a certain cultural configurations in time becomes “outdated”. Furthermore the perspective that certain cultural components can be imported or transplanted, such as quality circles or other Japanese management philosophies seems to have been a mixed bag of successes and failures. Morgan (1997: 124) writes that managers tend to overestimate the ease with which a technique can be transplanted. It rather seems that the context makes all the difference between success and failure when transplanting a technique.
The second perspective, suggested by Deal and Kennedy (1982: 18) is that a strong culture leads to success. Deal and Kennedy does however not elaborate or clarify what constitutes a strong or weak culture (Beyer, 1993: 22). Morgan (1997: 16) perspective is that a cultures strength relates to three aspects. The first is goal alignment. Which means that employees tend to march to the same “drummer”. Secondly strong culture tend to make work intrinsically rewarding, which could involve recognising achievements or involving employees in decision making. The third is that a strong culture provides needed structure and controls. Meaning a well ordered set of management beliefs and practices give people a clear indication in which direction to “march”, without being bureaucratic. Strong culture can however be dysfunctional, discourage change and can lead organisations to take rapid action, implementing poor strategies quickly.

Other critical comments made by theorists on strong cultures are that; “... They can also lead intelligent people to walk, in concert, over a cliff”. Morgan (1997: 8). “The brainwashed members of an extremist political sect are no more conformist in their central beliefs than are people in some of their excellent companies” (Morgan, 1997: 18). Furthermore Morgan (1997: 21) concludes that the statement that “... strong cultures create excellent companies appear to be just plain wrong”.

The third perspective on performance is that some cultures are “sick” or “neurotic”. Stemming from the psychopathological problem of the directors. Implying that strong cultures are not always “healthy” and that is unlikely that “neurotic” organisations will be financially successful in the long run (Beyer, 1993: 22).

The fourth perspective is that certain conditions need to be fulfilled, before an organisations culture is influential. Wilkens and Ouchi (1983: 478) for example write that cultures are more efficient when; “... transactions occur under conditions of ambiguity, complexity, and interdependence; enough people share the same set of ideas that set fourth appropriate orientations; the cost of maintaining the culture are not to high; and
subunits do not develop culture that operate to the detriment of a larger organisation lacking in culture”. Barney (1986: 658) alternatively suggests that by meeting three basic conditions, culture can be a source of competitive advantage. The three conditions being “... culture must be valuable in the sense that it leads to the firm to behave in ways that lead to high sales, low costs, high margins, and other factors adding value to the firm; secondly that it must be rare in the sense that other firms do not have the same or very similar cultures and it must not be easy to imitate so that competitors cannot readily change their cultures to include the same advantageous characteristics” (Beyer, 1993: 22).

Beyer (1993: 23) concludes that if we continue with any of the four the above mentioned perspectives that organisation culture and organisation performance is implicitly or explicitly linked, we are bound to overlook the full potential of studying culture. Beyer (1993) rather views culture studies as a way of liberating us from the old paradigms we hold on organisations and management, and rather sees cultural studies as a way to suggest and explore new paradigms.

2.4 Perspectives on organisation culture

Part of the confusion in understanding culture is that too many of the theorist writing on corporate culture have not put forward the theoretical support their perspectives need. The result is that no clear cut framework has emerged to structure the various perspectives on organisation culture in a sensible way. Alvesson & Olof Berg (1992 53) write that in order to try and systemize various perspectives a number of foundations have been used. The simplest is the listing of cultural behaviors, which Alvesson & Olof Berg (1992: 52) is critical about as theorist list these behaviors on a fairly haphazard basis, without linking behaviors to any theoretical framework. A second approach is to define culture in relation to a supporting model, however the large number of variations in definitions makes it difficult to create sensible categories. Other theorist have made use of scientific disciplines to distinguish between perspective, such as sociological,
Alvesson (199: 53) however does not regard it as a way to gain any theoretical clarity for the reader, because of the diversity of scientific fields involved. Using basic epistemological criteria is another possibility, but Alvesson (199: 54) regards the approach to be too generalized. A fourth approach is to use intellectual traditions, such as traditional anthropological schools of thought, but Alvesson (199: 54) argues that some theorist arrive at their own individual paradigm or add on their own constructions to existing theoretical foundations which the author has never heard of himself/herself.

The approach that seems to draw "clearer lines" between perspectives without getting the reader caught in a web of theoretical fields, definitions or traditions is to use the basic assumptions or paradigm used by the researcher. Smircich (1983: 342) combining the various conceptions of "organisation" and "culture", arrived at five basic perspectives from which cultures can be studied: a comparative perspective, structural-functionalism perspective, cognitive perspective, symbolic perspective and psycho-dynamic perspective (Refer to figure 2.1). These five perspectives form the basic framework for further discussing the "organisation-culture" construct.

Within the first two perspectives culture is conceived by theorist as either an independent variable or internal variable. In the last three perspectives culture is not viewed as a variable, but is rather conceived as a root metaphor.

It should however be noted that only a few researchers have developed both a theoretical framework as well as a methodology that can be followed or duplicated by practitioners wanting to decipher an organisations culture. The focus is firstly also to highlight the most influential theorist within each of these perspectives. However some of the theorist approaches are very new and have not gained a great deal of acceptance and more established theorist tend to be very critical of any competing perspective.
Figure 2.1 Intersections of culture theory and organization theory.

Source: Smirich (1983: 342)
2.4.1 Culture and comparative management: culture as an independent variable

Within the comparative management perspective culture is considered to be an independent variable, meaning culture is a background factor which is imported through its members into the organisation (Refer to figure 2.2). Culture can be viewed as broad framework that influences the development and reinforcement of beliefs (Smircich, 1983: 343). The literature that has dealt with the independent variable perspective can be further divided into a macro and micro perspective. Macro focus, examining the relationship between culture and the organisation structure and the micro focus examines the similarities and differences in attitudes of managers of different cultures. The main assumption is also that people have a certain predisposition to work, certain values, beliefs and authority (Thompson, 199: 321). These predisposition may vary from country and nationalities, but the assumption is still that the organisation is passively shaped by peoples predisposition.

Figure 2.2 Culture and comparative management

Source: Smircich (1983: 343)

Researchers focus within the comparative research is therefore to chart the differences amongst cultures, locate clusters of similarities and then draw effectiveness implications for the organisation (Smircich, 1983: 343). A strong link that can for example be found in
Japanese national culture and organisations concern for the welfare of people (Morgan, 1997: 122). In the traditional Japanese culture strong solidarity values exist, drawn from the values that exists in a long tradition of rice growing and the Samurai spirit of serving, protecting others. Rice growing has always been a collaborative affair in Japan, due to the scarcity of land and considerable odds that has to be face in planting, transplanting and harvesting in a short period of time. Teamwork is therefore essential, there is no individual winners or losers. If the crop fails the entire group fails or suffers. Under these conditions conformity and tradition is favored, rather than opportunism and individuality. The role of the Samurai is to protect the rice growers for a share of the crop. This tradition of collaboration and protecting ones employees and accepting ones place in the overall system to the benefit of the larger whole is a characteristics shared by Japanese businesses.

In contrast Western countries a greater emphasis is placed on the achievements of the individual, or the individual against the larger system. Within the Japanese way, the individual can achieve respect within the system, even if they find some aspect to their dislike (Morgan, 1997:123). Morgan (1997: 123) also notes that the overall accomplishments of the group is praised, rather than individual, and they have a greater capacity to ignore the less pleasant aspects of work. Such as arriving early, staying late, volunteering for activities such as quality circles and greater acceptance of the burdens involved in factory type of work. The difference that is therefore suggested between Western and Japanese factory workers is that the Japanese have a greater capacity to “grin and bear it” (Morgan 1997: 123).

Morgan (1997) furthermore argues that transplanting managerial techniques from other cultural settings, such as quality circles is less likely to succeed. The reason for cautioning managers is that they ignore cultural historical differences. The success or failure of transplanting a technique or policy is often determined by the context, not just the technique. It is therefore also debated whether theorist can hold any Japanese management techniques as an ideal. Many of the Japanese management technique in all likelihood
merely reflects the traditional feudal nature of a system and that most of their system is on the brink of undergoing a major transformation, as more of their youth is exposed to Western culture (Morgan, 1997: 124). Which would imply that many of their tradition bound techniques will become less acceptable to workers as norms and values change within the broader society.

2.4.2 Corporate Culture (Structural-functionalism): Culture as an internal variable

The second way in which culture and organisation concepts are linked is that organisation are culture producing themselves (Refer to figure 2.3). The organisation is still embedded in the wider cultural context, but the social-cultural aspects that researchers are interested in are produced within the organisation. The cultural “by-products” that is of interest for researchers is mainly rituals, legends, and ceremonies created by the top management or the founders of the organisation (Thompson, 1999: 321). The degree to which researchers are interested in the link between internal aspects and the wider cultural context does however vary greatly.

Figure 2.3  Culture and the systems theory framework.

The research done within this perspective is in general based on system theory. Meaning that researchers are concerned with "articulated patterns or contingent relationships" amongst a number of variables that appear in an organization (Smircich, 1983: 344). The most common variables that have been investigated by researchers is structure, size, technology and leadership patterns. The latest variable of interest is symbolic processes that occur in organisations. Meaning investigating the symbolic ways that leaders act in an organization, which could contribute towards the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

Smircich (1983, 344) also notes that researchers (Siehl and Martin, 1981; Tichy, 1982) who view culture as variable often define culture, as the "glue" that holds everything together. "Glue" encompasses culture phenomena such as values, beliefs, myths, rituals, stories, legends and specialized language used by the organisation. By investigating these phenomena, researchers and practitioners can question the values and assumptions that organisation members make and seek ways to make the culture more "receptive" to strategic and other kinds of changes that are made.

Considerable research has been done on both normative and symbolic aspects, because of the influence it has on organization adaptability (Smircich, 1983: 345). Examples of such research done is, Schall (1981) on the impact of espoused corporate sagas, Meyer (1981) on organisation ideologies and organisational stories which serves as a structuring function, Kreps (1981) investigating folklore as a socializing tool, Martin and Powers (1983) the symbolic power of information and Pfeffer (1981)on the management being considered as symbolic action (Smircich, 1983: 345).

The overall assumption within the variable perspective is that culture as a variable can be consciously changed, molded or be managed to be consistent with the direction that management has in mind. Some researcher however do not view culture as manageable. Smircich (1983: 346) and Thompson (1990: 322) note that a good likelihood exists that multiple organisation subculture exist, or even counter culture. These subculture also
competing in defining the boundaries of the organization. It also raises such questions as to whether a dominant culture exists? Are there conflicting cultures, as opposed to a unified harmonious one? and various subcultures influence each other. Sub-cultural views may even become the dominant view in the organization (Thompson, 1990: 322). A final concern that Smircich (1983) raises is that some skeptics view the term corporate culture as nothing more than ideology, which management uses to control and legitimize activities.

Is it of importance that managers culture should be able to mold and managed culture? Smircich (1983: 346) argues that culture has a number of important functions in directing the course of an organisation. “First, it conveys a sense of identity for organisation members (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Secondly, it facilitates general commitment to something larger than themselves (Schall, 198; Siehl and Martin, 1981; Peters and Waterman, 1982). Third, culture enhances social system stability (Louis, 1980; Kreps, 1981). And fourth, culture serves as a sense making device that can guide and shape behavior (Louis, 1980; Meyer, 1981, Pfeffer, 1981; Siehl and Martin, 1981).” Smircich (1983: 346). The challenge that emerges from culture as a lever or variable for influencing the direction a organisation takes is to find ways to make real use of cultural levers such as stories, legends and other forms of symbolism to bring about the change managers seek.

2.4.3 Functional perspective: A theoretical framework: Edgar, H. Schein.

The functionalist point of view is drawn from the variable perspective, but also from the idea of an organisation as an organism. Meaning that the organisation that has to perform several functions in order to adapt and survive in an environment. Schein (1992) in his book Organisational Culture and Leadership (1992) based on the assumption that organisational members solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration presents the most useful and coherent of culture diagnoses framework from a functionalist point of view (Schultz, 1995: 21).
Schein (1992: 12) defines organisation culture as “… a pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group has learned as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way and to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems”. Schein’s definition of culture and model for diagnosing culture is drawn from the theory that all social systems have to perform some basic functions in order to survive (Schultz, 1995: 23). Adaptation is the first, meaning to solve the problem of acquiring enough resources. Secondly goal attainment, the problem of setting and implementing goals. Thirdly integration amongst of all the sub-units and latency, the problem of creating, maintaining and transmitting the distinctive culture and values. Schein (1992) drawing on these basic four functions proposed that for an organisation to survive it needs to solve two very crucial problems. The first is surviving and adapting to the external environment and secondly integrating all of its internal processes to ensure that it builds the capacity to survive and adapt as needed (Schultz, 1995: 23). These two functions are divided further into more specific internal and external functions. Internal functions proposed by Schein (1992) is the development of a mission and strategy, goals, means, measurement and correction and externally the organization has to adapt by developing a common language and conceptual categories, setting boundaries for inclusion or exclusion, determining power and status, intimacy, friendship and love, rewards and punishment and ideology and religion. These functions that need to be performed and discussed by members also forms the basis on which members engage in a learning-survival process.

Furthermore Schein (1992) proposes that as members interact and share patterns of thought, feeling and emotions they develop a sense of identity. Which results in a pattern of assumptions being shared. Therefore culture is seen as the shared and collective property of an organization. However to find such as shared set of assumptions is not an easy task. Often what is observed seems confusing contradictory and complex. The explanation proposed by Schein (1992) why culture artifacts observed might seem confusing is simple because there is too much detail to be observed. Getting lost in a
Artifacts therefore seems to be a common problem for anyone attempting to decipher an organisation's culture.

The solution that Schein (1985) proposes is that organisation culture can be analyzed at three different analytical levels. An artifact level, which includes the visible structures, processes and products that members of the organisation produce. A values level and at the deepest level lies an interpretive framework of basic assumptions (Refer to figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4 Levels of Culture and their interaction

Artifacts can be thought of as the visible products of the members of the organisation, such as the architecture of the organisation, its language, technology, products, artistic creations, its style embodied in clothing, manners, emotional displays, myths and stories told about the organisation, published values, observable rituals and ceremonies. Therefore
any observable aspect which lies within the structures and processes of the organisation. Artifacts however are hard to decipher (Schein, 1992:17). Artifacts tend to create multiple meanings and lend themselves to prejudices and stereotypes. Which also means that one could get trapped in the detail of artifacts. Schein (1992) addressed this problem by creating five categories of artifacts, namely physical manifestation, language, stories, technology and visible traditions. By creating these categories it assists in systematically dealing with artifacts, creating less confusion (Schultz, 1995: 27).

2.4.3.2 Values

Values is seen by Schein (1992) as the values that an individual holds. Meaning that when a group makes a decision the solution is driven by the values of individuals as to what is seen as right and what is considered to be wrong, what will or wont work (Schultz, 1995: 2) Values therefore define whether an outcome is desirable or not. Leaders also play a very important role in shaping and changing organisational values. Changes in values can for example be brought about by clearly articulating certain values or including values in mission statements. However that few organisations explicitly formulate guiding values (Schultz, 1995: 29). The level of value analysis is then often just the listing of values and most values don’t form a coherent whole. Some are even opposing in nature or contrary to behavior observed.

2.4.3.3 Basic assumptions

The patterns of assumptions that members of an organization hold forms a core paradigm. The main analytical task is to decipher a cultural paradigm, consisting of a basic set of assumptions. A set assumption is distinct from the artifact and value levels and exist at a much deeper level of abstraction. Yet the paradigm creates a coherent understanding of values and artifacts, which might seem isolated or confusing on their own (Schultz, 1995: 30). Schein (1992: 94) also suggests that six basic assumptions exists from which paradigms can be created. Assumptions about the nature of truth and reality, nature of
time, nature of space, nature of human nature, nature of human activity and the nature of human relationships.

Formulating the cultural paradigm is a crucial phase of cultural deciphering. Unless a pattern is sought amongst assumptions the members of an organization cannot claim to truly understand the culture (Schein, 1992: 33). The degree to which assumptions can be structured into a coherent paradigm can however vary. Meaning that a strong culture that is deeply entrenched and perpetuated will have clearer connections and weak culture would rather seem fragmented and even inconsistent. Schein (1992) however does not provide a detailed full scale study using his own model, but rather provides more concrete examples of basic assumptions he discovered within companies.

2.4.3.4 A methodology for the functional perspective: The Funnel model

Figure 2.6 The Funnel Model

Source: Schultz (1995: 34)
Schultz (1995: 34) using the basic analytical model of Schein presents the “funnel model”. It is as a way of operationalize cultural analysis (Refer to Figure 2.6). The funnel model involves systematically mapping cultural phenomena in such a way that it leads to understanding the connection between cultural elements in a sensible way. Artifact and values' data are gathered and sorted into various internal and external functions, such as mission, means, leadership, power and other functions. Once values and artifacts are mapped it presents a starting point to developing a cultural paradigm. The mapped paradigm can then be used to explain and decipher artifacts and value elements. A kind of circular process is followed, reaffirming artifact and value data collected earlier is in some way is connected, as opposed to being fragmented bits of culture data observed.

The methodology used involves observations and conversations with “willing insiders”. Artifacts examples that Schultz (1995) provides from a study of a Government department is the bureaucratic structure and the size of spaces distributed amongst units that reflects power and status, the use of expressions or code, files coded with colors and stories told by informant about changes in work methods. Amongst the most popular stories are those about the various section heads. The main themes being good and bad bosses, their power and status and how much contact they have with their employees. Values are predominantly collected through interviews and conversations, but there are also instances where values have been formulated as statements as to how things should be.

Formulating the cultural paradigm, involves a similar process of extracting information from interviews, observations and impression of informants (Schultz, 1995: 54). Once the paradigm is formulated, the relationship between the paradigm values and artifacts can be clarified.

Within this process of tracking back from cognitive elements to values, values are either consistent, meaning that basic assumptions supports the content of values. Alternatively inconsistent, meaning basic assumptions are in conflict with values and may cause tension.
In the instance of artifacts the aim is to determine whether artifacts are functional or not. Meaning they have an integrating effect or are dysfunctional, which means that they rather create conflict or tension. The down-side of such an approach is that a process of self-fulfilling tracking back may take place (Schultz, 1995: 63).

The value the funnel model suggested by Schultz (1995) is that distinct analytical levels are created. One can move from one analytical level to the next depending on the reason why one is analyzing the organisation. With tracking back managers can find consistent, inconsistent, functional and dysfunctional elements. If the objective is to manage cultural elements of tension or conflict managers can consciously try to "unfreeze" the culture. "Unfreezing" involves a process of consciously changing an artifact element, which then could be pulled through to the value level and ultimately have a significant effect on an assumption that is made (Schultz, 1995: 72). The implication is that small changes in artifacts may effect significant changes overall, whether it is consciously made or not.

2.4.4 Culture as root metaphor for conceptualizing organization.

Culture as root metaphor is different from the previous perspectives in that culture is seen as something an organisation is, as opposed to something it has (Smircich, 1983: 347). Culture as root metaphor does not draw on the idea that organisation are like machines or organisms, as in the previous perspectives. Culture as root metaphor rather draws on the idea that organisations culture is similar to idealism. Meaning that organisation culture, like cultural idealism in anthropology, can be conceived in at least four ways, a cognitive perspective, symbolic perspective and psycho-dynamic perspective.

2.4.4.1 Cognitive perspective

The main assumption within the cognitive perspective is that culture is a knowledge systems or organized knowledge that people have in their minds, that people collectively use to make sense of their social and physical world. Cognitive organisation theorist think
of organisations as systems of thought. These systems of thought form networks of meanings, or shared frames of references that members of an organisation share to varying degrees, which to an external observer would seem to operate in a rule like way (Smircich, 1983: 349).

The interest of researchers is therefore to try and chart rules or understandings that organisation members have and how these rule coordinate their actions. In the field of communications peoples social interactions is similarly studied under name of “rules theory”. Smircich (183: 349). also notes that Harris and Cohen (1979) using rules theory argued that in an organisation setting “master contract” develop out of ongoing interpersonal relationships, which then form the context within which future interaction will take place. These patterns of thought, master contracts or paradigms are mainly of interest for researchers because people get trapped in their assumptions, beliefs, values and norms. Which ultimately develop into counterproductive cycles of behavior (Smircich, 1983: 349).

2.4.4.1.1 Analytical cognitive framework: Exploring the collective mind

Sonja Sackmann in her book Cultural Knowledge in Organisations: Exploring the Collective mind (1991) adopts the approach that despite all other perspectives that have emerged the focus has always remained on cognitive aspects, such as assumptions, values, cultural paradigms, collective will, collective unconscious or beliefs. Furthermore cognitive aspects remain at the core of most of the analytical models, and the starting point from which artifact phenomena can be triangulated, tracked back and explained.

The focus of Sackmann framework is therefore cultural cognition’s which is collectively held by members of the organisation. Cognition’s become collective because they are repeatedly applied, as well as become emotionally charged and assigned with degrees of importance (Sackmann, 1991: 141). Over time cognition’s then accumulate into varying
kinds of cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge is then also integrated into a culture
cognitive map.

Sackmann (1991: 142) defines four kinds of knowledge that form the core or culture
cognitive map: dictionary knowledge, directory knowledge, recipe knowledge and
axiomatic knowledge.

2.4.4.1.2 Dictionary knowledge

Dictionary knowledge refers to the “what is” of situations Sackmann (1992: 142). It is the
descriptions, labels or sets of words that are used in a particular organisation. Sackmann
(1991: 35) provides the example of the term innovation being used in one organisation and
predominantly being interpreted as product innovation, whereas the same term might be
interpreted in another setting, such a service-based organisation, as process innovation.

2.4.4.1.3 Directory knowledge

Directory knowledge refers to information on “how to” do something. It is information
that would describe how people should interact “properly” with each other or how a
problem is usually solved (Sackmann, 1991:36). Dictionary knowledge is therefore more
descriptive, describing the “how” to of things, events and processes, rather than being
evaluative.

2.4.4.1.4 Recipe knowledge

Recipe knowledge refers to what “should” or should not be done when faced with a
specific situation. Which means recommendations, “wisdom” as how one should improve
something or what one should do differently to improve (Sackmann, 1991: 36). Dictionary
knowledge is therefore recipes for success and survival. Sackmann (1991: 36) provides
some typical recipes that are recommended “to survive in this firm, one has to duck the boss at the right moment”, “never challenge the boss”.

2.4.4.1.5 Axiomatic knowledge

Axiomatic knowledge refers to the “why” of things and events. It is based on fundamental beliefs or “philosophical discussions” Sackmann (1991: 38). Axiomatic knowledge are explanations why “a certain strategy is chosen, why a certain organisation structure is preferred over another, why it is important to hire and promote certain people, why a specific way of interaction and dealing with each other is considered important, or what kind of people are preferred as employees” Sackmann (1991: 38). Axiomatic knowledge can thus be thought of as being similar to basic assumptions within Schein’s functionalist framework. However within Sackmann’s model all four kinds of knowledge form a core paradigm.

2.4.4.1.6 Culture cognitive map

Sackmann (1991: 142) proposes that the four kinds of knowledge integrate to form a cognitive map (Refer to figure 2.6). Which means that members of an organisation on a daily basis in a particular cultural setting will make use of a cognitive map to orientated and guide their actions. Cultural maps are therefore about sense-making, making sense of things and events, which also influences the way we think, feel and act.

In order to structure the various kinds of knowledge Sackmann (1991) suggested that different content might emerge; depending on the organisation that is being studied (Refer to figure 2.6). Eight of the content areas Sackmann identified in the study of a company she calls BIND where; commonly held beliefs about the organisations purpose, structure, strategy, organizational members, task accomplishments, adaptation and change, relations among people and learning mechanisms. These eight areas where used because they where perceived as useful to analyze and interpret data, as well as integrate data into the four
kinds of knowledge. It does however not imply that organisation culture consists of a certain set of dimension or areas only. Rather it is suggested that the type of cultural that is investigated will determine the dimensions that are relevant (Sackmann, 1991: 148). Sackmann (1991: 48) also acknowledges that the analytical framework she proposes is only but one of many possible conceptualizations of culture.

Figure 2.6 A Cultural Knowledge Map in Organizational Settings

2.4.4.1.7 Studying cultural knowledge

Sackmann’s (1991: 181) methodology used to study cultural knowledge involves *successive comparisons* and the development of *issue focused interviewing technique* as a focal method for collecting data based on a *phenomenological approach*. Issue focused interviewing means that issues are discussed which are considered relevant by organisations members, which is also sensitive to culture specific interpretations and avoids systematic biases in data collection (Sackmann, 1991: 182). Successive comparisons are made in a series of interviews which are taped as well as observations which are made during the interviewing process. Making successive comparisons involves five stages, namely; generating insider knowledge, extracting themes from the data, further pursue these themes, probe the validity of an emerging hypothesis, and analyzing and reanalyze all data collected (Sackmann, 1991: 185).

Schein (1994: 342-343) is however critical of Sackmann’s methodology followed. The use of tape recorder to collect data is problematic as people are careful what they say, and secondly there is lack of tension or conflict in the data collected. Indicating to a degree the same kind of biases in various types of data collected. Schein (1994: 343) writes that conflicting data cannot be ignored, is must be collected. If not, it will be difficult to discover conflicts in the organisation, missing out on “idealizations, half-truths, and lies” (Schein, 1994: 343).

2.4.4.2 Symbolic perspective

Within the symbolic paradigm it is assumed that organisation members create their own reality, they do not simple react to objects around them. Organisation members reality is socially constructed, in which members turn objects, events and interactions into meaningful symbols. The study of organisation culture from a symbolic perspective is however not only about how members of organisation come to assign those meanings, but also finding interrelated patterns amongst meanings. Which means a researcher tries to
discover "webs of meaning" between the various symbols members use. Furthermore these patterns or webs evolve and are maintained through such symbols as rituals, sagas, stories, myths, metaphors and physical symbols.

The main assumption of the symbolic perspective is that organisational members are devoted to assign meanings and very often meaningful order to organisational behavior upon which they react. (Schultz, 1995: 16). Within this perspective the cultural analyst "reads" social life as if it is a living document and tries to crystallize a pattern of meaning. Which means trying to understanding how symbols relate to each other and how they relate to the activities of the people in a setting and how these experiences become meaningful in a setting (Schultz, 1995: 16).

How does a thing or action then become a symbol ? Things or action becomes a symbol when it starts to represents something more than itself (Schultz, 1995: 76). To illustrate, a large desk is not viewed as a space needed for a lot of paperwork, but rather a symbol of status, power and influence. This process of assigning meanings is also ongoing process in any organisation, meaning that old symbols might over time loose their significance and new symbols emerge. The process of creating new symbols may also be subconscious and conscious.

Members of an organisation therefore deliberately place new symbols to "signify" what members desire. Such deliberate attempts could range from product design to architectural design, use of logos and brands names, the environment where meetings are held or any other sense making aspects (Schultz, 1995:76).

It should however be kept in mind that when such deliberate attempts are made to manage a culture that culture is not a social system and that a symbol can lead to a multiplicity of interpretations. Culture is not part of the formal or informal social structures that exist within an organisation. Symbolism views culture as an independent system of any social system and that a system of culture creates it own meanings that could be very different.
from any other social structure that exists in an organisation. Secondly because culture is a kind of reality that is created independently, it is subjective. The symbolic view therefore destroys our image that a single truth exists in an organization (Schultz, 1995: 80). Symbolism highlights that an object, act, relationship or linguistic formations can lead to a multiplicity of meanings being created, evoking varying emotions and leading people to take different kinds of actions. Which implies that many “truths” or “realities” can exist for any one organisation.

Organisation culture from a symbolic perspective involves however more than just the various meanings created by the members of the organization. Organisation culture also includes how these meanings are perceived as a pattern of interrelated symbolic expression. Researchers therefore seek to understand the links between these symbolic expression. Smircich (1983) aptly refers to these interrelated patterns as “webs of meaning”. Schultz (1995: 82) notes however that a distinct relationship need not exist between symbols, as in the functionalist view where predefined relationships and levels exist between artifacts, values and assumptions. Schultz (1995: 82) rather suggest that any of the key symbols can relate to each other in any number of ways or combinations. Any pattern that emerges can be further distinguished as either a world view or ethos view. World view meaning a picture or concept of how things really are of nature, of self or of society and a ethos view is the character and quality of that life, its moral and aesthetic style (Schultz, 1995: 89).

2.4.4.2.1 Symbols as entry points or pathways

Within functionalism the search is for a variety of artifacts whereas symbolism has the advantage that the interpreter within the symbolic perspective only selects few significant symbols (Schultz, 1995: 93). Ultimately all of these “entry points” or symbols are integrated to build an elaborate web of meanings to form a complete picture of an organisations culture. Within the symbolic perspective a number of different types of symbols are seen as key symbols or pathways to understanding an organisations culture.
Schultz (1995: 82) draws a distinction between physical symbols, behavioral symbols and verbal symbols. Physical symbols are physical in nature such as architecture, attire and other graphic design or any other medium of correspondence. Behavioral symbols include acts, rituals and ceremonies that are performed. Verbal symbols are linguistic based aspects such as myths, stories, metaphors special phrases, jokes, slogans and jargon.

2.4.4.2.2 Physical symbols

Physical symbols have always been of interest because they represent "condensed expressions" of patterns of meanings (Schultz, 1995:83). Gragliardi (1992:21) view is that physical symbols are powerful means or pathways to understanding an organisation's culture. Gragliardi (1992:21) also notes physical symbols tend to be shift much more than any other symbolic aspect. The reason physical symbols tend to shift more is because one might be able to engage in a ritual long after it has lost significance and one might even send out false images or messages, but it is very difficult to live in physical setting which is inconsistent with your culture. Furthermore physical symbols are not only an expression of a certain meaning, but also influences how we interpret events. As an example, if a meeting is held in an unattractive uncomfortable setting as opposed to more pleasing setting, the same event may be interpreted or perceived in a totally different way (Schultz, 1995: 84). Physical symbols are therefore often used to deliberately shape the identity of an organisation using logos, architecture and brands.

2.4.4.2.3 Behavioral symbols: Rites and Rituals

Beyer and Trice (1989: 5) defines rites as elaborate, dramatic, planned set of activities that can take many cultural forms of expressions and have both practical and expressive consequences. Rituals is defined by Beyer and Trice (1989: 5) as a standardized, detailed set of techniques and behaviors that manages anxiety but seldom produces practical consequences of any importance.
Beyers and Trice (1989: 5) focus on rites is driven by the notion that all organisations activities are a mixture of practical and expressive consequences. Meaning that actions have a technical side, to do something and a expressive side, to say things. To ignore or overlook the expressive consequences of events means that one in blind to the significance of what really is happening in an organisation. Training, recruitment and selection and evaluation programs are examples of such events that have much greater expressive consequences than technical consequences. Training program for example is more likely to have a greater effect in reducing anxiety about an intended change, than it will have on any technical dimension (Beyers and Trice, 1989: 14).

Rites are therefore viewed as entry points for understanding, managing and changing an organisations culture (Beyers and Trice, 1989: 14). Six types of rites are highlighted by Beyers and Trice (1989) namely; rites of passage, rites of degradation, rites of enhancement, rites of renewal, rites of conflict reduction and rites of integration. Each rite is capable of carrying a message its members of the organisation, which may have an intended or unintended consequence. Continuing a rite may also help to maintain a cultural system, or assisting or impeding change. Furthermore removing a “tired” rite may evoke old sentiments and popular rite may be so strong that it can not be suppressed and one may have to try and “domesticate” it. Meaning one tries to shape a rite so that its impact is minimized.

Beyers and Trice (1985) notes that it is very likely that new rites are also being created, as they are needed. Beyers and Trice (1989: 15) suggest for example the possibility of “rites of creation”. Rites that are needed when radical change is intended, which requires the invention of new scripts and roles being written for individuals who have to fulfill new roles. Beyers and Trice (1989: 15) writes that we intuitively may have already invented rites of creation, because we intuitively recognize the importance of ceremonies when introducing people to new roles. In the final analysis whether managers are modifying old rites, removing old rites or creating new rites managers need to be aware of the expressive consequences that rites can have.
2.4.4.2.4 Verbal symbols: Myths, Sagas and Stories

Schultz (1995: 87) writes that the most significant kinds of verbal expression are myths, sagas and stories, but platitudes, labels, jokes, pet names and slang may also be considered to be significant cultural expressions.

2.4.4.2.5 Myths

Beyers and Trice (1998: 5) defines myths as dramatic narrative of imagined events, usually to explain the origin or transformations of something. Also it is an unquestionable belief about the practical benefits of certain techniques and behaviors that is not supported by demonstrated facts.

Myths are thus everyday explanations which serves as a norm for decision making, but myths are not derived from the actual organisation reality. Myths are rooted in the history of the organisation and transferred from historical events to actual reality. Myths perform two important functions; firstly they legitimize a choice of action and secondly explain how culture structure individual and social acts. Schultz, 1995: 87). Which means that as myths are told by “elders”, the world view of the organisation is revealed to its new members.

2.4.4.2.6 Sagas and stories

Sagas differ from myths in that they are linked to actual historical events and real characters. A saga can be distinguished from myths in that sagas have a historical narrative that describes the unique accomplishments of a group of leaders (Schultz, 1995: 88). Members of the organisation are thus often depicted as the heroes and heroines of sagas.

Stories differ from sagas in that they rather describe day to day events. Stories also tend to reflect some kind of theme and evokes more emotions. Furthermore, Martin et al (1983:
438-453) for example made use of themes in stories to show that organisation cultures are characterized by paradoxes. Meaning that organisation cannot really claim to have unique cultures, because common themes tend to repeated in stories in quite different types of organisations. Common themes that Martin (1983) emerged after the non essential details where stripped away from stories where; Is the big boss human? Can the little person rise to the top? Will I get fired? Will the organisation help me when I have to move? How will my boss react to mistakes? How will the organisation deal with obstacles?.

Why then common themes? Martin (1983: 447) explains that duality's exist between the organisations and the values of individual employees that cannot be resolved easily, ultimately causing tension. Equality versus inequality is an example such a duality. Equality is a basic value generally accepted within broader society, but not necessarily in an organisation where a hierarchy might dominate. In the positive version of stories equality does emerge, but in the negative versions of stories, if equality does not emerge it reinforces assumptions that inequality dominates in the organisation.

The utility of searching for a narrative pattern or story line is that it helps to systemize experiences within the organization. It does not mean that a person or phenomena might not change during the course of a story line, but if a fairly tale like the ugly duckling is used, where the ugly is transformed into a swan and rewarded with the princess and half the kingdom. It can reveal much about; who is the subjects of significance? What is viewed as an obstacle and potential force for and against? Who are the recipient? or any other abstract notion that the group may have. Themes thus act as linkages in members interpretation of how things are, and allows people to mentally order events, objects and relationships.

2.4.4.2.7 Metaphors and Metonyms

Schultz (1995: 90) views metaphors as meanings derived through similarity and analogy. Metaphors are also effective and simple to use. Overall metaphors are often used because
metaphors provide a mental image or basic framework from which people can make meaningful interpretations of everyday organisation life. However metaphors need to be carefully chosen, because any one metaphor will highlight aspects one did not see before and at the same time not reveal other aspects. Metonyms in contrast is an aspect or thing, that stands for the whole. The crown of king that represents his power is an example of a metonym (Schultz, 1995: 90).

2.4.4.2.8 A methodology for the symbolic perspective: The spiral

Figure 2.7 Spiral Model

The spiral model (Refer to figure 2.7) methodology involves an interpreter entering into direct active dialogue or ongoing dialogue with the members of the organisation, trying to become as familiar as possible with the culture. The interpreter then chooses key symbolic expressions to focus on, on a completely random basis. The process of analyzing these key elements is neither a mechanistic or metaphysical, but rather an interpretive process of
trying to follow the associations members of the organisation makes between symbolic expressions (Schultz, 1995: 95). The interpreter is involved in his/her own inner dialogue of trying to follow members interpretations and associations (Schultz, 1995: 95-96). However a danger in this approach is that the interpretation of the organisation culture is more reflective of the interpreters reality, rather than that of the members reality.

Part of methodological approach to collect data is to get members to recall critical incidents as “running commentary” (Schultz, 1995: 97). The reason for making use of running commentary is to develop what Geertz (1973) terms “thick descriptions” of the organisations culture. Without thick descriptions it would be very difficult to build a complete picture of the organisation culture. It is seen as key to find the uniqueness of an organisations culture. Within the spiral model thick descriptions are used to map the associations between cultural expressions. Moving from ritual to story to myth to metaphor and ultimately to a cultural image of the organisation.

For a comprehensive picture of an organisation a number of spirals may emerge (Schultz, 1995: 99). Each spiral with its own associations, but with possible intersecting aspects amongst spirals. In a cohesive, strong culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture it is assumed that a wide range of shared patterns will emerge, whereas a fragmented culture will create more confusing or individualized views. Whether views are integrated or fragmented the symbolic approach does not presupposes as in the functional model that member of the organisation will attribute the same meaning to the same phenomena (Schultz, 1995: 99).

2.4.4.3 Structural and psycho-dynamic perspectives

The main assumption of psycho-dynamic approaches is that culture is an expression of unconscious psychological processes. Meaning that organization forms and practices are understood as projections of unconscious processes (Smircich, 1983: 351). Researcher therefore seek to understand the relationships between the unconscious, that which is tacit within our minds and their conscious manifestations.
Some examples of psycho-dynamic research that has been undertaken since the 1970's is; Turner (1977) who tried to analyze complex organisations, the difference between bureaucratic and industrial arrangements, and cases of organisational conflict (Smircich, 1983: 354). Smircich (1983: 352) also notes Mitroff (1982) who sought to discover links between the unconscious mind and “overt manifestations of social arrangements”, and McSwain and White (1982) and Walter (1982) aiming to understand organisational practices and unconscious energy that is put into forms such as lying, cheating, stealing and conflict.

Most of the theorist who make use of psycho-dynamic theory believe that deep within our unconscious exists a structure that orders the mind, and it is within this capability to order our minds that culture exists. Smircich (1983: 352) views it as the ‘psychic unity that mankind’ possesses.

2.4.4.3.1 A psycho-dynamic explanation of organisation culture: Lionel Stapley

Stapley’s (1996) explanation of organisation culture is grounded in a psycho-analytical approach. Stapley writes that psycho-dynamic theory is a truly paradigmatic revolution in explaining human behavior. Furthermore Stapley (1996: 24) believes that the true value of psycho-analysis in the long term is therapeutic, rather than a process of “curing” ills. Which implies that an organisation like any individual has to strive towards psychological “well being”. Stapley (1996) uses this basic theme throughout his book The Personality of the Organisation: As psycho-dynamic explanation of organisation culture (1996), that the culture of an organisation is like the “personality” of an individual, meaning that it has its own unique characteristics and problems.
2.4.3.2 Personality development

Central to the development of an organisation’s “personality”, is the notion of a holding environment (Stapley, 1996: 29). Stapley (1996) explains that as we develop and grow, as individuals we have varying experiences of being “held”. As an infant held by a mother’s womb and later as a young child held in a mother’s arms. Within this “holding” relationship, a symbiotic relationship exits, the infant is being held and the infant influences the mother’s holding world. Which is for infant still a undifferentiated world, meaning that everything is seen as an extension of himself/herself. Furthermore for the infant to develop basic trust is needed, which means that the holding world is “good enough” (Stapley, 1996: 31). However as we mentally develop we develop the ability to make use of transitional objects to distinguish between what is of “me” and of “not me”. Differentiation of external objects is therefore the beginnings of self-concept. We also learn to make use of symbols, language and language as symbols. During this stage our holding world “splits” into a internalized psychological part and an external social and physical part. A differentiated world emerges.

As adults we become part of a succession of holding world, such as the family, school, university and the world of work. It is also very likely that we can be part of a number holding world at any point in time Stapley (1996: 35). Similar to our adult holding world, the organisational holding world also has two parts; an external holding environment and internalized holding environment. The external holding world is basically sociological in nature, consisting of formal structures and strategies, leaders, organisational tasks and roles that need to be fulfilled. The internalized holding world is the psychological world, the internal objects that is our self, which sets the character of the individual. It is also through these objects that we reach into society (Stapley, 1996: 38).

From the interrelatedness between the individual and the organization holding world develops organisation culture. Members of an organisation in effect will adopt behavior which they think is appropriate within their perceived holding world (Stapley, 1996: 40).
Implying that an organisation's culture develops like the personality of an individual. Furthermore, just as trust is needed for the development of self-esteem, the organisation members need to experience basic trust within the organisation holding world. If basic trust is experienced, the culture is likely to be task supportive, whereas if the holding environment is not seen "as good enough" there is likely to be an anti-task culture (Stapley, 1996: 43).

2.5 Culture typologies

Typologies imply that researchers have made use of etic methods, trying to find cultural properties that cut across various organisational settings. However, as with the various perspectives on culture, there is no consensus on the methodology that should be used in arriving at a cultural typology. Furthermore, researchers at times overlap on the content or aspects being addressed, within different typologies. Beyer (1993: 16) concludes that if culture do have universal properties it has not been proven or demonstrated convincingly.

Sutherland (1997: 239) is also not convinced that any organisation can fit neatly into the kinds of cultural typologies that have been drawn. It seems simple too convenient to "pigeonhole" organisations. Sutherland (1997: 239) concludes that typologies at best are point of departure to study organisation culture.

A few of more well known typologies drawn by organisation culture theorists are discuss, but the aim of the next section not to provide a comprehensive list of the typologies that have been developed to date, or discuss how researchers have arrived at typologies.
2.5.1. Beyer and Handy’s classification (Power, Role, Task and Person cultures)

2.5.1.1 Power-orientated culture

Power culture can be characterized as cultures where leaders have a management style where expectations are clearly stated and people know the consequences of complying or not complying. Power orientated organisation are places where leaders are strong and charismatic, act swiftly and decisively. Leader in general are demanding, but fair and rewards compliance, but also only those that are loyal followers (Beyer, 1993: 32).

What is less attractive of power culture is that organisation and leader wishes is given the highest priority. People are afraid to give bad news, they don’t question leaders, information is a source of power and unfortunately the less competent get promoted by being loyal. Which tends to lead to a high staff turnover rate (Sutherland, 1997:234).

2.5.1.2 Role-orientated culture

A role culture can be characterised as being very bureaucratic. The systems and processes are driven by logical and rational rules and procedures. People are also assessed against written description of their jobs and rewarded for playing by the rules and being reliable. Most role-orientated culture are stable. Confusion and inefficiencies are reduced by rules and procedures (Beyer, 1993: 34). Role-orientated cultures are therefore inherently not very innovative, changes are incremental.

Furthermore because people within follow rules and the norms, they do not deviate from doing the “right thing”. People tend to exploit less of their creative abilities, simply because being creative and challenging the norm is a “sin” (Beyer, 1993: 35).
2.5.1.3 Task-orientated cultures

Task-orientated cultures are be characterised as being driven by innovation, ideas and creativity. There is an overall sense of urgency that task need to be completed. People feel as if they work towards something much bigger than themselves. Rules and regulations are not allowed to be constraints, flexibility is valued. People within task cultures however can become obsessed with the end that is in mind, people may even sacrifice family, social life and health (Beyer, 1993: 37). People within the organisation can therefore become isolated from reality.

2.5.1.4 Person-orientated cultures

Person-orientated cultures can be characterized as being participative, people tend to make decision on a collective basis. People value harmony, cooperation and everyone is involved in resolving conflicts. People are therefore also valued for their expertise and each others contributions. An overall sense of belonging is present. However because there is focus on people and relationships, work might not get done, difficult personal decisions may be avoided, disagreement may be avoided, changes might involve a lengthy buy-in process. Furthermore people who contribute to varying degrees may be rewarded in a similar manner, which may be frustrating for the more ambitious (Beyer, 1993: 39).

2.5.2 Deal and Kennedy’s culture typologies

Deal and Kennedy identifies four main types of cultures, but they do not suggest that any organisation will fit neatly into nay of the four kinds of typologies(Sutherland 1993: 236).

2.5.2.1 Macho cultures

Macho culture are characterized by a tough attitudes towards its employees. Within the organization speed and fast decision making is valued. Decision making is rather of a
short term nature. The type of environment the organization operates within is usually of very risky nature. Strategic decision making is therefore less enjoyable for the majority of people. Furthermore with a short term view cooperation is low and staff turnover is high.

2.5.2.2 Work hard/play hard cultures

Work hard/play hard cultures are mostly associated with sales, but team driven sales. Individual are recognized, but only to the extent that the individual cumulative sales are relatively more than other individuals within the team. Sales are often of a repetitive nature, rather than one large sale. Volume over a longer period is thus valued and success is seen to be a mutual affair.

2.5.2.3 Company culture

Company cultures are characterized by a risky operating environment, and long term decision making. The majority of decision are made by top management. Organisations with company culture tend also to invest large sums in projects and returns are expected over a longer period of time. However if a technological breakthrough is required the level of risk can be great. Which means success or failure may depend on decision made in the distant past.

2.5.2.4 Process cultures

A process cultures is characterized by a low-risk, slow feedback environment. Sutherland (1993: 236) writes that employees are encourage to think about how things are done, rather than what is done. Therefore aspects within the environment is repetitive, procedures and systems dominate. An understanding and investigation into detail is valued and meetings tend to be used to legitimize decisions made. However with fairly rigid structures, clearly defined hierarchy, individuals decision making power is tends to be
clearly understood. Overall the organisation operates within a relatively predictable environment and is to be slow to react.

2.5.3 Quinn and McGrath’s culture typologies

The four cultural types identified by Quinn and McGrath are based on the notion that people exchange ideas and facts (Sutherland, 1993: 239).

2.5.3.1 Rational cultures

Rational culture are characterized as result driven, the emphasis is on productivity and efficiency. The organisation tends to be very decisive and focused on tangible performances, which means that individuals are rewarded on the basis of achievements.

2.5.3.2 Adhocracy cultures

Adhocracy cultures are characterized by charismatic leadership and risk taking. The organisation tends to be adaptive, creative and autonomous by nature.

2.5.3.3 Consensual cultures

Consensual or clan cultures is characterized by equality, integrity and fairness. Collective decision making is valued, and cooperation, consensus and high levels of morale is valued. In general people are also extremely loyal towards the organisation.

2.5.3.4 Hierarchical cultures

Hierarchical cultures by nature clearly define tasks, rules and procedures tend to dominate. Managers also tend to be conservative and cautious. All of the controls implemented are
designed to create a more predictable environment in which people are obedient and decision making is based upon "logic".

2.5.4 Other culture typologies


Most of cultural typologies outlined tend to overlap in some way, whether it be in terms of decision making power, risks inherent in the environment or emphasis being placed on organisations operations, the customer or workers. Furthermore to suggest that any one typology is more useful than another will most likely result in a process of trying to identifying variations of the same themes, rather than finding distinctly different themes.

The most problematic aspects of assessing the validity and usefulness culture typologies is however that theorist do not to give detailed explanations of how they arrive at the typologies they draw. Theorist therefore do not convincingly demonstrate that their typologies culture have universal properties or dimensions and that any one organisation can be slotted neatly into any of the typologies drawn.

2.6 Summary

It has been argued that cultures has its roots in anthropology, rather than in organisation psychology or organisation behavior. Also by borrowing from anthropological perspectives and related concepts has lead to considerable confusion in defining organisation culture. Furthermore the construct climate is used interchangeable with the construct culture, but most theorist agree that they are distinct, yet interrelated. The main
reason why a distinction is made is because of different scientific backgrounds. However the possibility that the two constructs will draw closer and even merge is not discounted.

The phenomenal growth in interest of the construct culture has unfortunately produced few theoretical analytical model and methodologies that can be duplicated with ease. However each of the perspectives discussed have unique insights as to how organisation culture can be studied, but also bring their own limitations to the study of organisation culture.

Culture as independent variable value lies in that it explain how the broader societal culture setting influences the behavior of people within an organisation setting. The independent variable perspective also serves as a warning sign to managers who want to transplant management techniques, without considering the historical setting it originated from. However within this perspective theorist fail to recognize organisations as culture producing themselves. The internal variable perspective recognizes this concern and hints that organisation cultures have distinctive phenomena that can be molded and shaped to achieve the kind of change that managers seek.

The notion that organisations can be molded, shaped and managed is derived from organism metaphor. Schein (1992) has drawn both on the variable perspective and organism metaphor and has related it to the functions that an organisation has to perform in order to survive. Schein (1992) functionalist perspective is valuable in that it systemizes the way in which cultural phenomena are studied. Distinct analytical levels are created, which means that cultural phenomena can be studied in a more sensible way. Furthermore artifact and value levels can be “tracked” back to the core paradigm, which allows practitioners to find conflicting, supportive, functional and dysfunctional elements and manage an organisation culture in a calculated way. The functionalist perspective limitation is that the anyone who wants to decipher an organisations culture has to become almost a “native” of the organisation, which involves a lengthy process of observation and data collection.
The cognitive perspective focus shifts to the notion that cognition's have always emerged as the center of most perspectives. Sackmann's types of knowledge (1991) framework draws on this notion and provides practitioners with an analytical framework to integrating the various kinds of cultural knowledge into a cognitive map of culture. The strength of the model is that it lays a theoretical foundation for the kinds of cultural knowledge that accumulates in an organisation, but the process followed collecting the knowledge data is somewhat problematic. Sackmann's (1992) data tends to lack any kind of tension or conflict, which in general needs to be uncovered in order to understand an organisations culture fully.

The symbolic perspective value lies in that distinctive and “significant” phenomena, such as physical symbols, behavioral symbols and verbal symbols are studied. Cultural phenomena which are considered as key symbols can also be studied at a random basis, and “webs of meanings” or “spirals” can be created. The strength of the “webs of meanings” approach is that it is not assumed that predefined relationships or combination of relationship must exist. However inherent in this strength lies the weakness of symbolism, meaning that the interpretations of symbolic phenomena might be more reflective of the interpreters reality, rather than that the reality of the organisation.

The psycho-dynamic explanation of culture strength lies in that it can draw on a wealth of psycho-analytical theory and learning theory. This perspective also breaks the mold that culture analysis is about “curing” organisation “ills”. Its focus is rather on organisation culture analysis as necessary therapy. An organisation is thus seen as if it has a personality, like individuals and that organisations should strive towards psychological “well being”. A major problem with a psycho-analytical approach to deciphering organisation culture is that few business managers will ever have any kind of basic understanding or grounding in psycho-analysis. Which means that psycho-analytical approaches will ultimately become the domain of the few that are knowledgeable and skilled in psycho-analysis.
Culture typologies that are discussed in the final section reflect yet again the lack of clarity and theoretical support that is needed to give credence to typologies. Overall typologies tend to arrive at the same kind of themes, rather than distinctive themes, which again leads to a blurring of theoretical lines between typologies. Overall typologies main contribution is that they provide a starting point to understanding whether the culture you are investigating is similar or not similar to those typologies you are aware of.

With such a diversity and conflicting number of perspective on culture it is not surprising that few managers attempt to decipher organisation culture. Within the next section a diagnoses frameworks is suggested that draws from more than one perspective, yet is pragmatic and user. The framework suggests that diagnoses of culture needs to actively involve more members of an organisation. Furthermore that understanding an organisation’s culture is an ongoing learning process, rather than a periodic passive assessment of an organisation’s culture. Meaning that most members of organisation should get involved in collecting cultural data, integrating that data into the organisation context, making interpretations and acting on interpretations made.
CHAPTER 3

A PRAGMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR DIAGNOSING ORGANISATION CULTURE

3.1 Introduction

Is it possible to reach consensus on what is meant the term culture and how it should studied? If one had to consider the diverse perspectives or interpretations presented in the previous chapter, the answer is that it is very unlikely consensus will ever be reached. The approach that is therefore taken in this chapter is first to ask, what are the characteristics of organisation culture theorist agreed upon? Secondly what is meant by diagnose? And what is meant by a pragmatic approach? Based on this background information and the various theoretical perspectives already discussed pragmatic culture diagnoses framework is presented. Within this framework it is highlighted that an individual cannot create a culture on his/her own. Individuals collectively create, understand and learn culture. The framework is thus derived from the notion that cultural knowledge is collectively acquired, interpreted and acted upon. Organisation learning or collective learning is therefore used as an approach to access the collective meaning structure of an organisation. The framework presented differs significantly from other diagnoses frameworks and methodologies in that it requires active participation by all members of the organisation. Whereas in many of the other approaches followed by theorists only a few pre-selected members are involved. Members’ level of involvement is often restricted to collecting cultural data and interpreting that information, but overall they don’t get an opportunity to act on interpretations. Furthermore methodologies used by researchers often rely on interviews and observation. The majority of organisation members, which are not “culturally knowledgeable”, is thus excluded. Which means that cultural data might be acquired and even interpreted, but the process is driven by individual interpretations. Whether it is interpretations of individual organisation members or a researcher’s interpretations.
Accessing collective meanings involves however much more and is far more complex. Accessing collective meaning structures means that members of an organisation have to collectively gather cultural data, make interpretations and act on interpretations made. Without a greater level of involvement organisations as a whole will never fully grasp the complexity of culture. It therefore implies that better understanding of organisation culture involves a process of continues collective learning.

3.2 What are the common characteristics of culture?

Despite theorist varying interpretation of culture common themes or aspects are repeated. They are that culture is collective, emotionally charged, historically based, inherently symbolic, dynamic and inherently fuzzy (Harrison, 1993: 5). These characteristics are therefore what makes culture different from other constructs and captures the essence of culture.

* Collective

Individually we try to make sense of organisational life, using our existing knowledge, trying to solve complexities of our daily life. We in turn influence actions, perceptions, judgments and thinking of others. However as individuals we do not create culture, culture is created collective.

Cognitions are therefore only cultural if they are created collectively and agreed upon collectively (Sackmann, 1991: 38). Belonging to a cultural group involves believing in the ways things are done, or the way things are. Which means that we collectively accept, endorse and reinforce beliefs, values and norms.

* Emotionally charged
"Conventions and institutions originate as group expedients which have some social value at some time, but they remain the objects of passionate adoration long after they have outlived their usefulness. Men fight and die for them." (Source: Harrison, 1993:6).

Without a sense of culture most of us will feel lost. Culture in general creates boundaries and hints that life is predictable. Culture is thus like one gigantic effort to mask life's insecurities. We mask for example these insecurities by performing rites and rituals. Which also heightens our awareness of shared sentiments. However the reason why we endorse some rites and rituals even though they might be very outdated notions, is emotionally charged reasons, as opposed to rational considerations.

* Historically based

Culture takes time to develop, as people interact they come to share common ideas and cultural practices. These cultural practices then start to have a life of their own and even persist beyond the lives of those who instituted those cultural practices. Practices can also persist to have a strong influence on the behavior of people, who are unaware that current outdated practices and notions have originated in the past. When diagnosing culture fragments of such past notions, ideas and practices of the past are most likely to be uncovered. Which could have little bearing on dealing with the current reality.

* Inherently symbolic

"Symbols are created and recreated wherever human beings vest elements of their world with a pattern of meaning and significance which extends beyond the its intrinsic content. Any object, action, event, utterance, concept or image offers itself as raw material for symbol creation, at any place, at any time." (Jones, 1996: 3).

Symbolism is the most basic form of cultural expressions (Harrison, 1993: 7). We make use of symbolism to communicate cultural ideas and practices. We are dependent on symbolism to shape our understanding of our surroundings, as well as shape the
understanding of others. Symbolism is therefore viewed as the most apparent, observable aspect of organisational life. Yet it is also the most subtle and illusive aspect of organisational life to grasp, because multiple meanings can be attached to objects, acts or words (Jones, 1996: 1).

**Dynamic**

Culture is about dealing with change, it is interwoven with how deal with change and uncertainties. It is hard not to talk about change as either being culture driven or culturally held back.

Cultural change is also inevitable; it can be attributed to a number of reasons. Communication is imperfect; we do not communicate and interpret culture expectations the same (Jones, 1996: 1). We also transmit so many cultural aspects at a subconscious level that multiple meanings are bound to arise. Even if we try to live up to those cultural expectations, we still as creative individuals create varying cultural interpretations. Multiple meanings can partly also be attributed to the symbolic nature of culture.

**Inherently fuzzy**

"The appropriate image ... of cultural organisation is neither the spider web nor the pile of sand; is it rather more the octopus, whose tentacles are in large part separately integrated, neurally quite poorly connected with one another and with what in the octopus passes for a brain, and yet who nonetheless manages to get around and to preserve himself, for while anyway, as a viable, if somewhat ungainly entity."(Geertz, 1996: 66 quoted in Harrison (1993: 7)

The octopus metaphor illustrates the paradoxical, multiple, confusing and fuzzy nature of culture. If we view the world as infinitely complex and intricate, we perceive culture as
being infinitely complex and intricate. Culture thus mirrors the complexities of life (Harrison, 1993: 8).

However not all of culture is fuzzy. It has a core and peripheral elements. The peripherals are more likely to be vague, whereas the core is clearer. At core level deeper levels of agreement are reached and assumptions are made, which allows members to form a cultural identity.

3.3 What is meant by diagnoses of culture?

The stages followed in diagnoses in general are scouting, contracting, study design, data gathering, analysis and feedback. The focus of diagnoses does however shift as an organisation goes through stages of diagnoses. Stages are also analogous to the stages of the development of an organisation.

3.4 Why pragmatism as a primary approach in research practice when dealing with organization psychology and organisation culture?

Pragmatism has its roots in a psycho-dynamic approach to understanding organisations. Meaning that certain kinds of organisation knowledge is acquired, interpreted and acted upon. The process of how organisation learn collectively is mainly derived from psychological models of learning. The process of leaning as proposed by Kolb (1974) for human learning starts with the concrete experiences, which do not match our existing understanding or knowledge. We may then observe and even reflect on why a deviation exists between what we know and might even reflect on the how it may have come about. If we are motivated enough we might even develop a hypothesis that may explain the event and other similar events. Therefore we start to make abstract explanation of events. We can then experiment or test our hypothesis against our concrete experiences until our knowledge becomes more refined (Payne, 1982: 38).
From the learning model of Kolb (1974) one can move to the kinds of knowledge produced by the process. Payne (1982: 40) notes three kinds of knowledge: knowledge-that, knowledge-of and knowledge-how, which can be seen as the products of inquiry. Knowledge-that is factual knowledge rooted in the past, although it is still operative in the present. To be aware of knowledge-that we need to compare our present awareness with a similar experience or situation. Knowledge-of is seen as acquaintance knowledge, personal knowledge or intrapersonal knowledge. From knowledge-that and knowledge-of we begin to build ideas or abstract reasoning. We therefore develop propositional knowledge. Propositional knowledge is then tested, which also involves our methodological skills. This represents for the experimenter knowledge-how, which explains how things are done (Refer to figure 3.1). Once knowledge-how is acquired one returns to the present and applies knowledge-how to existing problems. Meaning practical application. Furthermore Payne (1982: 46) notes that knowledge-of lies within the individual, whereas knowledge-that and knowledge-how are extra-individual.

![Figure 3.1 Forms of knowledge and the learning cycle](image)

Source: Payne (1982: 43)

Payne (1982: 47) notes that Pepper's (1942) finest contributions to corroborate the existence of various kinds of knowledge and how we acquire knowledge is the notion that knowledge is ultimately rooted in "common sense". The search for knowledge therefore
begins with our “common sense knowledge” and then branch into a more pragmatic understanding of a situation.

Furthermore because knowledge exists within each of as individuals and outside of ourselves we learn both as individuals as well as collectively. Dixon (1994: 36) notes that sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934) once said that “The mind can never find expression, and can never come into existence at all, except in terms of a social environment”. How we collective learn is therefore dependent on how we learn individually and how we individually learn is dependent on how we collective learn. Similarly Stapley (199: 60) writes that because there is interdependence between individuals and a group, or as Bion (1961) writes that we are group animals, the individual must be looked at from the position of group and the group from the position of the individual.

Pragmatism also has contextualism as its world hypothesis and its root metaphor is historic events (Payne, 1982: 51). Meaning an act or event must be seen within their context. Consequently the truth is “qualitative” in nature when tries to understand culture. Payne (1982: 52) also argues that is not an event that is seen as true or false, but rather any hypothesis about the event that is can be seen as true or false. Events that take place are also intrinsically complex, interrelated and continuously changing. Therefore unlike other world views that view the world as static, pragmatism or contextualism view rather view hypothesis that are developed as being dependent on the space-time they are developed. Within a pragmatic approach one also tries to limit the degree to which particular an aspect is studied. It therefore means that one has to decide where the boundaries lies of a system or problem that is studied and limit analysis to the degree that a sufficient “quality” is reached to understand the aspect being studied. In the instance of culture diagnoses the motive for the study would set a boundary and the degree of detail a “culture cognitive map” is developed would represent the “degree of quality” required. Overall the process of understanding culture is analogous to how we acquire knowledge and learn.
Payne (1982: 43) also argues that Kolb's (1974) model of learning is consistent with pragmatism as a guiding epistemology. Learning is however not only about acquiring knowledge; it is fundamentally about making meaning out of the experiences that others and we have of the world. Learning can be intentional or by chance, in the instance of acquiring cultural knowledge, much of it is at a subconscious level. In most instances collective learning is part of survival. Schein's (1992: 12) functionalist definition of culture is based fundamentally on the notion that a group collectively learns to solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration. The underlying collective cultural meanings that we create are a product of a collective learning process.

Can culture then be discovered? Fillmore (1990: 103) writes that the ultimate truth of a concept like culture cannot be found or discovered in such a way that a grand theory or law emerges. Natural laws for example can be discovered or observed, such as the boiling point of water (Payne, 1982: 39). Culture is rather constructions conceived in the minds of individuals; therefore we need to test hypothesis that we develop, against the understanding of the collective mind.

3.5 Individual meaning structure

In order to understand the collective we need to first need to understand our own, individual understanding of organisation culture, which is analogous to the process of individual learning. It has also been noted that individual learning process, as proposed by Kolb (1947) is a process of learning from concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. A product derived from inquiring in the process of learning is knowledge. Likewise culture understanding involves a process of learning, and the accumulation of different kinds of cultural knowledge into a cultural cognitive map.
It has been proposed that individual learning is dependent on the collective learning and collective learning is dependent on individual learning. To understand the difference between individual learning and organisation learning Dixon (1994: 36) proposed that one needs to look at organisation members as having meaning structures that can be categorized as: private, accessible and collective (Refer to figures 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Types of meaning structure

Private meaning structures can be thought of as that part of a person’s cognitive map that is withheld from other members of the organisation. Possible reasons why members might withhold some aspects of their understanding of a situation is that, information has been given to them in confidence or that they fear mistakes made may be revealed. They may also fear punishment, feel embarrassment or think that others will find what they think uninteresting or irrelevant.

Accessible meaning structure is that part of a person’s cognitive map he or she is willing to give access to. The degree to which individuals are willing to, or be able to access, will depend on several factors; such as time available, space, political, intellectual abilities, individuals ability to describe things that happen and the organisation’s culture itself.
Dixon (1994: 17) for example writes that a key process issues in studying organisation symbolism is seeking star performers or informants. Jones (1994: 17) also notes that in cultural studies some members are more skillful in reflecting on issues and offer interpretations and even advice. They can be thought of as “active culture bearers”, “better informants” or “natural storytellers”. Overall information although it may be available or reside in many places, understanding still resides in people and nothing has been learnt until people construct meaning (Dixon, 1994: 39).

The third kind of meaning structure individuals hold is collective meaning structures, meaning those cognition’s that people jointly hold, such as assumptions. It does however not mean that individual meaning structures are the same in each individual, but rather that agreement is close enough between members of an organisation. Individual cognition’s overlap to some degree and collective meaning structures are most likely tacit. “Truth” thus depends on who is collectively holding cognitions. Collective meaning structures do however change over time, as members reaffirm their meaning structures against each other’s structures.

3.6 Organisation learning as an approach to access collective meaning structures, meaning organisation culture

Dixon (1994: 44) argues that in order for members to access and exchange other members meaning structures, organisation must actively promote organisational learning. The organisation learning cycle as outlined by Dixon (1994: 45) involves four steps, namely generating, integrating and acting on information. The process as whole is not radically new for any organisation. However phases often involves different role players, who take responsibility for various phases, as opposed to individuals as being involved in the entire process. Dixon (1994: 45) proposes that if phases are disconnected organisational learning does not take place and that it is necessary for members of an organisation to engage in all phases before organisational learning takes place. Which implies that more than just individual learning takes place, but also collective learning and understanding.
How does organisational learning process differ from individual learning? At an individual learning level individuals have concrete experiences, at a collective level members of an organisation need to be involved in organisation practices to gather information and actively experiment to generate new information. The second phase at an individual level is reflective observation. Meaning individuals reflect on their experience and mainly engaging in dialogue with others. At a collective level each individual needs to have access to the information everyone else has in order to integrate newly generated information into the organisation context. During the abstract conceptualization stage individuals draw conclusions, whereas at a collective level interpretation is collective. Each individual might have variations in their perspectives and interpretation, which is seen as crucial for organisation learning, without noticeable differences learning does not take place. In the final phase individuals test interpretation by actively experimenting. At collective level members must be able to act on interpretation. Action not only test interpretations, but also leads to new information being generated (Refer to figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 The organisational learning cycle

Source: Dixon (1994: 45)
3.7 A pragmatic framework for diagnosing and understanding organisation culture.

In order to access the collective meaning structures, meaning organisation culture, a process needs to be followed that promotes collective learning (Dixon, 1994: 44). The process of organisation learning therefore forms the basic framework, which is used to diagnose or decipher organisation culture. Within the framework four steps is described. The four steps can be outlined as widespread generation of information, integration of new/local information into the organisational context, collective interpretation of information and having the authority to take responsible action based on the interpreted meaning. The steps are also circular in that taking action, the fourth steps, would lead to the generation of new information.

Furthermore the steps in the process need to be seen as connected, meaning that those who generate information must also be involved in the process of integrating new information, interpreting and acting on the new information. If those who interpret organisation culture, do not get an opportunity to test and act on the interpretations that they make, it becomes senseless to involve them at all in the process. Simple because no real learning and understanding takes place.

3.7.1 Step 1: Scanning (widespread generation of information)

Generating information involves collecting information from both external as well as internal sources. External information is generated as an organisation interacts with its external environment. Whereas internal information is generated within the boundaries of the organisation (Dixon, 1994: 69). Cultural is similarly within the perspectives that have been discussed, seen as either an independent or dependant variable. Independent variable meaning organisation culture is shaped by cultural knowledge that is imported from broader society by its members and dependant variable organisation culture is shaped by its members who are culture producing themselves.
Widespread information implies that the generation of information is not the tasks of a selected few. In the case of cultural studies the task is often left to a specialist consultant and a few “insiders”. Which is most likely one of the prime reasons why we fail to fully understand organisation culture. The sensitivity factor associated with cultural studies is another possible reasons why we don’t generate cultural information throughout an organisation. Organisation members are not always willing to allow other members of an organisation or consultants to access their individual meaning structures when it comes to organisation culture. We are often only willing to allow access and share our own meaning in the right kind of settings or if we are motivated enough to try understand the impact of organisation culture. Jones (1996: 21) for example argues that choosing the right settings and events when studying organisation culture is an important first step when diagnosing an organisation culture. Jones (1996: 21) suggests “natural settings” as places to study organisation culture, such as observing formal and informal meetings. Often also during informal meetings, such as chats in halls, parties and during work-breaks, researchers manage to gain the most insight into the culture of an organisation.

Data should preferably be collected by the primary users, meaning those that will act on the information Dixon (1994: 71). Dixon (1994: 71) uses the example of hospital workers that visit other hospitals during their holidays, which allows workers to improve on the quality of service they deliver. Thus creating a culture driven by an awareness of quality.

Learning and becoming aware of one's own cultural setting is therefore just as much a function of being aware of other cultural settings and noticing differences. Researchers for example find that new employees tend to be more aware of cultural significant objects, verbal expressions and activities. As opposed to employees that have worked for longer periods in an organisation, who are less conscious of cultural phenomena. Furthermore the more closed organisations are to outside information; the more tacit its overall understanding of the organisation's culture becomes. Organisation culture is thus for most members of an organisation tacit within their mental frameworks.
Overall the more closed an organisation is to external cultural information, the less it learns about itself and less likely it is to change. The more open an organisation is as a cultural system, the more it will learn about itself and the more likely it is to change.

Information must also be generated from within an organisation. Both Dixon (1994: 73) and Daft (1996: 73) argue that organisations must design processes that enable them to collect data, make interpretations and act on those interpretations. Dixon (1994: 72) for example quotes Revans (1983) as saying “Any system that is to learn ... must regularly receive and interpret inputs about its own outputs”. Furthermore Daft (1996: 71) argues that interpretations (when data is given meaning) is the critical element that distinguishes human organisations from other low-level systems.

The implication in terms of cultural studies is that any organisation needs to design processes that collect cultural data, make interpretations and act on those interpretations in a more conscious way. Without structured processes an organisation that wants to understand its culture has to learn by chance by interacting with other organisation cultures or rely those processes that have been created informally by organisation members, such as lunch break talks. Researchers for example also rely mainly on interviews and observations in order make sense of their cultural settings. Which means that the cultural data that is collected does not truly reflect the ongoingness of organisation culture.

3.7.2 Step 2. Integrating new/local information into the organisation context

If one is to make sense of information generated externally or within an organisation it needs to be understood within the organisation context that it stands. Within cultural studies the context that cultural phenomena stand is of paramount importance. Meaning that the same phenomena observed in different settings, most likely will have very different meanings attached to them.
Information in an organisation is however not always distributed and disseminated throughout an organisation. Different parts of an organisation have access to information that other parts do not have, which leads to an inability to perceive an organisation as a whole. Therefore only examining a piece of the puzzle. Dixon (1994: 73) refers to the phenomena as the silo effect.

Similarly when deciding on the level of analysis of organisation culture the issue of where cultural knowledge is located becomes particularly problematic. Alvesson (1992: 63-73) for example notes that there is a tendency to think of organisation culture as the founder’s beliefs, which is too simplistic. Secondly studies at individual level is only of interest if individuals are directly related to the collective. Another tendency is to think of organisations as communities or closed societies, as in anthropological studies, but the idea that organisations are communities lacks the reality of the business world (Alvesson, 1992: 62). Meaning that organisations focus is often directed at efficiency and performance. Furthermore organisation culture should not be thought of as one unitary culture that exist within an organisation. Alvesson (1992: 68) notes that there are more authors that claim that it is very unlikely that a single culture exists. Which is readily identifiable. It is more likely that functional culture and occupational cultures exist. Schein (1996: 236) for example notes that based on the larger occupational communities he has observed three kinds of cultures of management have emerged. Meaning these groupings more or less hold the same kind of assumptions. Schein (1996: 236-237) refers to them as the operators, engineers and executives.

The level of analysis issue also highlights that culture is about creating and maintaining boundaries. Meaning that cultural information in organisations is sometimes purposefully not always disseminated across organisation boundaries. Dixon (1994: 74) however notes unless individuals share information across organisation boundaries, it will be unlikely that shared understanding will take place.
Assuming members have access to all the information across organisation boundaries, can they then truly disseminate or make sense of all this information? Stapley (1996: 67) writes that making sense of our experiences is never simply, because our experiences are kaleidoscopic. Meaning that every organisation experience is unique and unrepeatable. Stapley (1996: 67) uses the analogy of a river to illustrate the ongoingness of culture “you cannot swim in the same river twice”.

Is it then possible to make sense of our world if every moment of our life seems infinitely complex and even totally chaotic? Stapley (1996: 68) argues that we make sense of our world by classifying and categorizing experiences. Life thus becomes more bearable, because the infinitely variability is reduced to a manageable mass. The process of categorizing or naming is however somewhat selective, as we choose to perceive certain aspect and ignore others. Implying that we ignore the uniqueness of each situation. Even though we are very capable of perceiving differences amongst objects and experiences.

Anthropologists argue that in this process of naming we primarily make use of symbols to categorize objects and experiences (Stapley, 1996: 68). Verbal symbols are seen as the most pervasive means of classifying experiences. It also implies that we create boundaries by feelings, assumptions and fantasies, which in reality have no dimensions. Boundaries such as time, space, social structure and culture are thus nothing more than boundaries we create to mask our own uncertainty.

Why study organisation symbolism as opposed to other cultural phenomena? When studying organisation culture, cultural phenomena are not always apparent and observable. Symbolism is the most observable and apparent aspects of organisation life. As a member of an organisation or researcher we are not going to not notice symbolic aspects such as the titles that members of an organisation use, the size of offices, dress codes, parking assignment, slogans or rituals that are practiced. There are less obvious symbolism used in organisation, such as storytelling and jargon, however we still experience and make use of symbolism daily to shape interaction that we have. Whether it be conscious or not.
3.7.3 Step 3: Collectively interpreting the information

It has also been proposed that individuals learn by selectively examining information. Within aspects selected we look for recognized patterns, compare patterns to our existing understanding stored in our long term memory and then only once we have incubated that information we develop new relationships in our long term memory. Which implies that we have learnt something. Within organisations we tend to think in individual terms, meaning that we think that if we distribute information widely individuals are learning or that "...they know it". Making sense of cultural information is however more than just distributing and integrating data at an individual level. Organisation learning involves much more. To learn collectively means that we must engage in a similar sequence of events as described at individual level but whilst we are interacting with other members of an organisation. Meaning to be part of organisation dialogue. It therefore means that organisation dialogue involves more than two people who are involved in a conversation (Dixon, 1994: 83).

Dixon (199: 83-88) furthermore suggest that in order for organisation dialogue to take place participant need the skills to:

3.7.3.1 Provide others with complete and accurate information that bears upon the issue

Part of uncovering and struggling with culture issues is to reveal all information relevant information, both good and bad. We also tend to withhold information that might make us look bad, or try to avoid situations where others correct us if the information that we hold is incorrect. It means that we fear others might be intolerant of our perspective and thus prevent others who are tolerant and willing to correct us from doing so.
3.7.3.2 Challenge the errors in others reasoning or data

By challenging others errors one becomes uncertain about the correctness of one's own view. Uncertainty, conflict or disequilibrium leads to search for more information, new experiences and a more complete understanding of a situation. By accommodating the points of views of others we reconceptualise our conclusion. New or novel solution and better decision making also emerge because we have a clearer understanding of situations.

3.7.3.3 Confirm others personal competence when disagreeing with the their ideas

When challenging the reasoning of other, might end up concluding that our own view is wrong or that other members lack the openness, experience and honesty to perceive what we perceive as being the obvious. Rather than assuming that someone else is wrong, suspend your judgement and rather try to take have a look from other members' perspectives.

3.7.3.4 Make the reasoning that supports one's own position explicit

We tend to treat our statements as self-evident and try not to bore others with the detail. We also might for example speak of abstract concepts but not provide any concrete example. Therefore we need not only to say what we think, but also why we think it. It therefore means that we not only must say what the cultural phenomena is that we experience, but also describe in detail what it means to us, the assumption is that we make and the effects it has on our behavior.

3.7.3.5 Change position when others offer convincing data and rationale

Changing position means being willing to change one's position when others provide "valid", more logical and commonsense explanations. It does not mean that you give in or
that you have lost an argument. It simple means that you say another persons position makes more sense than yours.

3.7.3.6 **Regard assertions, our own and others', as hypothesis to be tested**

To hold the others assertions as hypothesis that still need to be tested is not that difficult, however our own assertions are very difficult to hold. In order to cope with the uncertainty of our own assertions, we often ask others if our thinking is flawed or whether our assertions are incomplete (Dixon, 1994: 87). Dixon (1994: 87) also notes that our "... ideas must be vulnerable". Meaning that we must have enough faith in our own perspectives to be able to shape them, but they can never be final grand solutions.

These skills that participant need when getting involved in organisation dialogue are likewise useful as ground-rules when involving members in dialogue about organisation culture. Also by interacting with others shapes our own understanding. Dixon (1994: 78) suggests that the process of interpretation should fall just short of agreeing on the meaning of others. It involves a process whereby each individual understands the reasoning involved as to how an individual arrives at a particular meaning, based on the information that an individual as available. Individuals therefore understand each other's meanings better, but it does not mean that individual arrive at the same understanding. It rather means that members have a better understanding of the parameters of problem they collectively want to solve (Dixon, 1994: 78). In terms of cultural assumptions, we should grasp better the kinds of assumptions that other individual make. It however does not mean that we all make the same kinds of assumptions.

The degree to which information can be translated into shared knowledge and understanding depends on two aspects: equivocality of reduction and assembly rules (Daft, 1996: 82). Equivocality of reduction, simple means the extent to which data is unclear and suggests multiple meanings to members. Typically when symbolic aspects are used to explain an organisation's culture the meanings that members may arrive at for the same
symbolic phenomena may be varied. Furthermore Jones (1996: 4) notes that symbolism not only affects how we perceive events or objects, but also our actions. Jones (1996: 4) uses the example of people who enter into churches who are not religious, yet acting in religious ways. Likewise when organisations change symbolic conditions it affects members' behavior. An example would be cleaner restrooms could elicit tidier behavior amongst the users (Jones, 1996: 4).

How are differences in understanding of data reduced? Members of an organisation may observe and discuss symbolic aspects until they reach a "common language" and common action. By enacting, meaning to take action they can see what works and what does not. Reducing the kinds of interpretations members make of events. Assembly rules furthermore are the procedures that guide how data is processed into collective interpretation. Daft (1996: 82) argues that the more rules there are to arrive at interpretations the smaller the equivocality in the data and conversely if there are less rules the greater the equivocality.

Developing shared understanding therefore means that events and objects are introduced into a collective cognitive map of the organisation. Weick (1996: 212) also notes that mapping can essentially be through as naming. If mapping is the same as naming, why make use of cognitive mapping to arrive at collective meanings? Weick (1996: 212) argues that maps largely indicate or summarize the differences in territory. Which implies that you already have to know something in order to see something different. Which is a recurring theme throughout cognitive mapping. It may however be problematic if everything that organisation members observe is different to their own experiences. It becomes very difficult to map because nothing looks familiar. In effect your lost. We therefore need patterns in between differences in order to construct collective cognitive maps.

What kind of map does one then need if you're lost? Weick (1996: 21) tells the story of a small Hungarian detachment on maneuvers in the Alps "..... Yes we considered ourselves
lost and waited for the end, but then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we found our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant looked a good look at this map and discovered that, to his astonishment that it was a map of the Pyreness.” The moral of story is that if you lost any old map will do, simply because maps provide points of reference. Accuracy of a map is therefore not a prime concern. Weick (1996: 214) uses another example of Grenada that was invaded using an old tourist map and information of separate sources. The final detailed map was in reality only drawn after the invasion had taken place. Likewise in cultural studies ethnographers are not always entirely sure as to how accurate “collective cognitive maps” are that they draw, they only really start to understand cultural aspects once members start to act the cultural interpretations made.

Maps therefore hold information in a coded form. Meaning that a cognitive map is a framework that contains “prime descriptors”. “Propositions” or “arrows” also link prime descriptors (Refer to figure 3.4). These propositions can be thought of as statements that explain the links. A map thus proposes what can be seen, but it is metaphorical. Meaning that the map alerts one to differences between the map and your current experience.

Figure 3.4 Prime descriptors and propositions

Cultural studies researcher likewise provide members beforehand with reference points, even though researchers might not always think of these reference points within the context of cognitive maps. Examples of such maps are metaphors, themes within stories; is the boss good or bad, or fairly tales containing well known themes. Even though the maps provided might be flawed and even simplistic, they are at least points of references to create a new map. As Weick (1996: 215) comments “.. it takes a map to make a map because one points out differences that are mapped into the other one”.

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Maps are therefore about sense making and maps need not be complex. Weick (1996: 217) points out that in the example of the soldiers that got lost, the fact that the map was a simplification, was one of the reasons they survived. Common features where on the map, but it was far from accurate. The map served a more important function. It presented a way to categorize aspects observed. Weick (1996:217-218) notes that a map capitalizes on what one knows which means that you use the past to fill in the gaps in the present. Meaning that one pulls the past into the present. Likewise in cultural studies researchers try pull experiences that members had in the past into the present.

Overall it means that if one has taken previous similar journeys then new journeys are not that frightening for people. However maps are crucial if you have never taken similar journeys and the kinds of experiences that you have each time are unpredictable and unique.

Most of the issues addressed within this section on interpretation in some way suggest that collective interpretation is active participation, rather than passively receiving interpretations from others. As Dixon (1994: 91) notes it is not just about individuals that need to learn, but rather that without others learning, our own learning is hampered. Dixon (1994: 91) therefore views knowledge and understanding as if it is a commodity that grows as we use more of it.

### 3.7.4 Step 4: Authority to take responsible action based on the interpreted meaning

Dixon (1994: 91) argues that individuals are often driven to resolve issues because they are knowledgeable about a situation. Furthermore when people get involved in generating information, distributes that information throughout the organisation and then collectively interprets that information, but is not allowed to act on that information learning is lost. Members of an organisation therefore understand what needs to be done, but cannot act on it. It is understandable why members then become frustrated, feel despair and even get
involve in acts of sabotage. Frustration might also be function that members simple do get being involved in collective learning at all, they have not collected information, not shared information and not interpreted information. How can they then act? In effect members of an organisation are resisting change because a shift has not occurred in members collective cognitive map.

However if we gain a better understanding of the cultural context we stand within, we feel compelled to act and try to actively find better ways of doing our work.

3.8 Summary

Fully understanding an organisation culture requires more that just individual passive involvement. A cultural diagnosis that fully explores an organisation culture rather requires an active and collective effort from a cross-section of organisation members. Many of the perspectives investigated and the frameworks developed from these perspectives eliminate most organisational members because it is assumed that they will not make good “insiders”. Furthermore the kinds of collective cognitive maps that are drawn are supposedly collective cognitive maps, but is ultimately created by the researchers themselves. As opposed to being created collectively by the members of the organisation. The true value of culture research thus seems to have gone lost, because the members of the organisation who ultimately have to act on culture interpretations, do not get to collect cultural data or interpret cultural data. Learning and true understanding of culture therefore is withheld from organisation members.

The diagnosis framework that is suggested tries to resolves this problem that members are disconnected from diagnoses. Within the framework is also proposed that members of an organisation should be involved in continues collective learning. Which hopefully will result in a better understanding of an organisation culture. Therefore the steps proposed within the framework are also based on how we collectively learn. Meaning that members need to get involved in widespread generation of information, integrate new information
into the organisation context, collectively interpret the information and take responsible action based on the interpreted information.

Within the steps it is also emphasized that symbolism is the most observable aspect in organisation life. Symbolism furthermore names or classifies cultural data. However making sense of cultural data named or classified requires collective cognitive mapping. Collective cognitive mapping is thus proposed as the cornerstone for gaining access to the collective meaning structure of an organisation. Mapping furthermore is useful in diagnosing culture because when members are unable to find some reference point, they need a map to create a new map. Even if it is simplistic and inaccurate. Members of the organisation that have mapped the culture of an organisation should also be able to act on the interpretations made. It seems senseless that an organisation tries to decipher its culture and not allow members of an organisation to act on cultural interpretations. Acting test interpretations, which in turn leads to learning and understanding.

Overall it should be emphasized that the framework in itself can have a cultural impact. An organisation might find inconsistencies in its own thinking and reassess its thinking about cultural assumptions being made. Which in the longer term could result is a significant shift in the cultural paradigm that the organisation holds.

Within the next section the methodology that is used to operationalise the diagnoses will be dealt with, as well as the analytical results and insights derived from the framework. In the final section of chapter four it is discussed how user friendly the framework is, and other uses that can flow from the framework.
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Overall the aim of the diagnoses framework is to gain better insight and understanding of an organization's culture, which means that the methodology used is more analytical and descriptive in nature. It has also been proposed that the framework will have its own individual analytical question, analytical assumptions, analytical mode, analytical method and analytical results. Within the framework aspects from perspectives such as independent variable, dependent variable, symbolic and psycho-dynamic has also been "fused" into a learning based approach to diagnosing organisation culture. The methodology that is followed is therefore not only analytical, but also relies on symbolic interpretivism and collective cognitive mapping.

Symbolic interpretivism meaning that methodologically one seeks to find firsthand knowledge of everyday life. However within the model interpretations are not the interpretations of the researcher, but rather the symbolic interpretations of organisation members that will act on the cultural data that is collected.

Collective cognitive mapping means that individual interpretations that are shared to some degree is mapped or visually represented as collective cognition's. Mapping thus assists members to visually capture symbolic expressions and meanings attached to symbolic expressions. It also makes it easier for organisation members to articulate why they view certain symbolic aspects as significant and why they have assigned specific meanings. A collective cognitive culture map is therefore a tool used to capture organisation members thinking in a visual way and allows organisation members to collectively build more complex culture maps. Meaning that on an ongoing basis is, as needed, organisation members collectively add to their cultural knowledge and understanding.

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The analytical results and insights is therefore derived from the collective cognitive cultural map that the members had drawn. From the map that has emerged the kinds of knowledge that members hold, as well as the insights and expressive consequences of the cultural symbols is discussed.

Furthermore members comments on how user friendly the framework is, and the main aspects that contributes towards making the framework user friendly is discussed. From the mapping process a number of uses have emerged, which is briefly elaborated on. However it is also highlighted that within the framework some problems and limitation exist when trying to implement the framework.

4.2 Key analytical question

The key analytical question that is derived from the framework is; what is the collective meaning held by organisation members. It does however not assumed that a fixed set of meanings exist, but rather that certain meanings are held about an organisation, at a certain point in time. Furthermore all members need not arrive at the same meanings. It is more likely that individual interpretations will be ambiguous. Meaning that symbolic expressions observed by members for some will be confusing, others will clearly understand them and some will disagree on the interpretation made. Also within the range is visible and less visible symbolic expressions. Some expression will gain significance and others will loose significance, as the organisation’s culture evolves.

4.3 Analytical assumption

The main assumption made is that culture is inherently symbolic, created on an ongoing basis and is held as collective cognition’s in the minds of organisation members. These cognition’s can furthermore be viewed as different kinds of cultural knowledge, which accumulates into a collective cognitive culture map. The kinds of knowledge being; dictionary, directory, recipe and axiomatic knowledge.
4.4 Analytical framework

The analytical framework, which forms part of the interpretation phase of the proposed framework, is context specific and learning based, but a range of symbolic expressions is defined and described beforehand. The range of symbolic expression thus act as prime descriptors in an open-ended cognitive map (Refer to figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Analytical framework for collective cognitive mapping

In order to make use of an open-ended map members would at least within the initial stage first have to gain a basic understanding of what the motive is for diagnosing the organization's culture? what is meant by the concept organisation culture? what is meant by symbolic expressions? and what is meant by cultural types of knowledge? The reason why organisation members will need a basic level of knowledge and understanding is because members first need to know something about organisation culture before they can propose something new. The more knowledgeable members are about what is meant by the organisation culture and the kinds of cultural expression that can be studied the better
their understanding of their own cultural context will be. Furthermore this first phase needs to be initially facilitated by someone that is fairly knowledgeable about organisation culture. Once organisation members have been involved in the process once, and a collective map has emerged it will easier to recall a collective map. Therefore it would be unnecessary to repeat the first phase, unless new organisation members join the process.

Within the second phase, which is at an individual level, individuals will use the open-ended map to create identify and describe their own symbolic expressions which is more context specific and reflective of the organizations culture. The generic map is therefore a map used to create a more context specific map. A range of symbolic expressions is provided that members can use to describe their own cultural context, but the expressions that they choose is open-ended. They need not systematically address all of the symbolic expression provided in the generic map. Organisation members only choose those symbolic expressions that have significant meaning for them. The meanings attached to these expression therefore represents individual’s culture knowledge held.

The third phase involves collectively sharing the significant symbolic expressions and the meanings attached, with other organisation members. “Active dialogue” takes place between members and they try to reach an acceptable degree of consensus on meanings attached to cultural expressions. Furthermore members propose what kinds of culture knowledge these meanings represent. The kinds of knowledge being; dictionary, directory, recipe and axiomatic knowledge (Sackmann, 1992: 39).

During the fourth phase members create a collective cognitive culture map, based on the kinds of knowledge identified. The map will not only indicate the kinds of cultural knowledge collectively held by members, but also the relationship between types of knowledge. It is thus a visual representation of members culture cognition’s and the relationships between cognition’s. Some of these expression will be more observable and others less visible, implying some cognition’s are more tacit.
A collective cognitive culture map therefore emerges over time as members identify significant culture expressions, assign meaning, collectively interpret those meanings and accumulate culture knowledge into a collective cognitive map. Furthermore members will over an extended period of time act on their collective cognitive map, thus testing the map. By acting and testing the collective map, members will furthermore collect new cultural data and move closer to more accurate understanding of the organizations collectively held meanings. However the phase of acting on cultural map interpretation does not fall within the scope of this study. The study is limited to the initial interpretation phase.

4.4.1 Sample size and data collection

Which members will be involved in the mapping process? and how many organisation members are needed to create a cultural map that is "rich" enough in descriptions? The basic framework from which the methodology is derived involves a learning process. Therefore the members that will act on the cultural data, need to be involved from the beginning in collecting the data and subsequently collectively interpreting the data. It does not make sense involve organisation members who ultimately will not act on the interpretations made from the collective cognitive culture map. However the number of individual that need to be involved depends on a number of aspects. Firstly the motive of the study, meaning the motive for the study will set the boundary for the cultural study. For example, if the boundary of the study is limited to a specific functional area of an organisation then only those members who have a direct interest in that functional area will be involved. However as members construct a collective cognitive map and realize that their cultural cognitive map is incomplete, more members could get involved. As the collective cognitive map emerges and organisation members subsequently develop more complete and complex maps, is it very likely that most organisation members will be involved.
The decision as to how many members of the organisation need to be involved and when to end the collection of data, is therefore determined largely by "richness" of the cultural map required. Furthermore because of the ongoingness of culture there is no expectation that a final understanding will ever be reached. It is a never ending process. There is also no universal prescriptions that need to be adhered to and it is therefore possible to start by conducting diagnoses with a small group, which is still relatively insightful. Expanding on the number of members that is involved, as a greater degree of richness is required. Within the study that was conducted six organisation members out of a possible twenty members, of the Business Studies Department was involved. The focus of this study therefore to demonstrate and limited to how an initial cultural collective cognitive map could be drawn.

4.4.2 Mapping process

The mapping process can be thought as "free range" or open-ended mapping. Meaning a facilitator provides a list of descriptors (a list of symbolic expressions). Members are then "free" to link any similar or contrasting symbolic expression to their specific cultural context. Generating their own symbolic expressions. Individuals symbolic expressions are written on cards. Each card will also have a specific meaning attached to it, which represent the cultural knowledge that members hold. During the second phase of the analytical framework members interpret each others cards and assign their own individual meanings.

Cards are then group into various kinds of culture knowledge types (this phase is done on a collective basis, involving members in dialogue). Cards that are less related are place further from each other. Those that are more related are place closer to together. Placing card relative to each other will indicate whether propositions are more or less related to each other. Where strong relationships are found between culture knowledge "links" are drawn.
Once links are drawn, members should be able to elaborate on the links drawn. Meaning whether they clearly understand relationships between kinds of knowledge. Once cognition's have been mapped members can add to and elaborate on their collective cultural cognition's, asserting whether or not members have reach the desired degree of consensus and "richness" needed.

4.4.3 What is the aim of an open-ended culture map?

An open-ended map describes the kinds of symbolic expression that are typically found in an organisation. Examples of such expression are therefore more "generic" than context specific. An open-ended map is therefore used to create a new map with expressions that are more relevant to the organisation cultural context being studied. The map is also designed to be "easy to read”.

Furthermore as members of an organisation find that certain kinds of expressions are more significant within their context, members can focus on those expression in more detail as they develop more complex collective cultural cognitive maps. An open-ended map is therefore a way to find point of departure, when everything seems unfamiliar and members of an organisation feel “lost” in understanding their culture.

4.4.4 How is an open-ended map used?

A symbolic expression in the open-ended map is firstly used as a starting point to recognize similar or dissimilar symbolic expressions found in the context being studied. Secondly meaning is attached to the expression, at an individually and collectively level. A multiplicity of expression may however be attached to a single expression. Meanings attached therefore represent the cultural knowledge that members of an organisation holds. The relationships that members of the organizations draw between the types of knowledge forms a collective cognitive map.
4.4.5 Types of cultural expressions within an open-ended map

It should however be noted that the list symbolic expressions that have been provided within the next section is not an exhaustive list. They merely represent the kinds of symbolic expressions that are typical studied. Examples provided with each symbolic expression are also not related to any specific context and should rather be seen as a departure point to understanding your own organisation cultural context. Furthermore individuals should rather “work” with those expressions that have significant meaning for them, within their own organisation cultural context.

4.4.5.1 Verbal expressions.

Verbal symbols are the most pervasive means of classifying experiences.

4.4.5.1.1 Myth

A dramatic narrative of imagined events, usually used to explain origins or transformations of something. Also involves an unquestioned belief about the practical benefit of certain techniques and behaviors that is not supported by demonstrated facts.

4.4.5.1.2 Saga’s

A historical narrative of some describing(usually in heroic terms) the unique accomplishments of a group and its leaders.

4.4.5.1.3 Stories

A narrative based on a true events-often a combination of truth and fiction. Often describing day to day events. Evoking often a theme or emotion(for example “numskull" stories).
Common themes found within stories are; Is the big boss human? Can the little person rise to the top? Will I get fired? Will the organisation help me when I have to move? How will my boss react to mistakes? How will the organisation deal with obstacles? (Often stories reflect a duality; equality versus inequality).

4.4.5.1.4 Folktale

A completely fictional narrative.

4.4.5.1.5 Metaphors

Metaphors meaning is derived from similarity or analogy. For example an organisation is like a machine. Efficient, impersonal and consists of interlocking parts, meaning mechanistic. Typical kinds of metaphors used in an organisation's context are; brains (organizations as learning organism), psychic prison (people trapped by their own thoughts, ideas and beliefs or by the unconscious mind), political arena (conflict and power play), organizations as flux and transformation (metaphor for studying change).

4.4.5.1.6 Metonyms

An aspect or thing that stands for a whole. A crown of a king that represents for example a position of power.

4.4.5.1.7 Traditional sayings

Saying that are well know and often used in organizational contexts are; "Attack the problem, not the person", "If you want people to tell you the truth, then don't shoot the messenger", "If you want to get to know someone, walk a mile in their shoes".
4.4.5.1.8 Other examples of verbal symbols

Other examples of verbal symbols are proverbs, slogans, pet phrases, slang, humorous anecdotes, jests, nicknames for people, legends, cautionary tales, personal experience narratives, beliefs, superstitions, rumors, rhymes, poetry, songs, ceremonial speeches and oratory.

4.4.5.2. Activities

Typical examples of symbolic activities are rites and rituals. Usually they contain a mixture of expressive and practical consequences. Expressive, to say something and practical, do something.

4.4.5.2.1 Rites

A relative elaborate, dramatic, planned set of activities that combines various forms of cultural expressions and that has both practical and expressive consequences.

4.4.5.2.2 Rites of passages

Induction and basic training (learning to march, salute, fire a gun, hours of marching and parades). Japanese companies trainees for example dress in a uniform, display the company logo and sing the company song. A typical induction rite within most organisations is the elaborate testing and interviewing of applicants.

4.4.5.2.3 Rites of degradation

Usually associated with firing and replacing employees. Degradation talk is also common. Degrading for example a person by discussing his private life, problems or failures. Getting discredited by a so-called objective report that is written. "Drumming out" a person,
making life difficult, for example removing someone’s furniture around without the person being informed. A person can further be degraded by "wooing" the new successor to show how important the job is.

4.4.5.2.4 Rites of enhancement

Enhance social identities and their power. Awards, titles, golden pins awarded, which could be in front of a cheering audience. This rite also enables other individuals to take a share of the credit.

4.4.5.2.5 Rites of renewal

Usually associated with organizational development activities. Job redesign, team building exercises, quality-of-life programs, quality circles and so forth. Artifacts common in renewal rites are: questionnaires, organizational charts and other diagrams, blackboards, flip charts and closed-circuit television systems. Also the use of vocabulary such as; 'feedback”, “behavior modification” and “confrontation” is used to described this activity.

4.4.5.2.6 Rites of conflict reduction

A common example of this rite is collective bargaining. Rite can begin with a list of demands. Each side prepares its artifacts.

Other common conflict reducing rites in organizations are agendas, minutes and motions that provide acceptable ways of proceed. Symbolically, being a membership, could for example place people on equal footing, reducing conflict.

4.4.5.2.7 Rites of integration

An office Christmas party is commonly used a rite of integration. Often very public and
inclusive. Drinking more than usual is often seen as acceptable and a closeness achieved that is not normally achieved in business setting.

Conventions with group pictures, tours of the factory, awards, songs of praise and visits by distinguish guests is also examples of rites of integration.

4.4.5.2.8 Other symbolic activities

Other rites that are commonly found are; play, recreation, games, practical jokes, initiation pranks, celebration, gestures, food sharing, staff meetings, retreats, ceremonies, customs, social routines and conventionalized techniques for doing a job.

Some direct questions that you could ask yourself that may yield information about behaviors, experiences and activities are: When I first joined the organisation what did I notice as to how things is done differently? If I was reading a newspaper and suddenly I discover a big headline about my organisation. How would this headline read? Imagine that I must communicate a story to a friend and I want my friend to get a feeling of the place where I work. What story would I tell him/her?

4.4.5.3 Physical symbols.

Physical expressions represent "condensed expressions" and are difficult to ignore.

4.4.5.3.1 Architecture

Spiral stair case for example might signify or encouraging ambition and provides a visual image of an organisation's structure. Open-plan or see-through glass could signify equality and transparency.
A church is a good example of how architecture might elicit religious behavior, when a person might not be religious at all. Similarly a clean rest-rooms could elicit tidier behavior.

4.4.5.3.2 Photocopier lore

Paperwork, red tape and files is for example a dominant symbol in a bureaucratic organisations.

4.4.5.3.3 Design of physical work spaces

The size and shape of work settings, its normal use, location within the building, adornment or lack of it (pictures, awards, plaques), lighting, temperature, unusual sound, noise and odors. A person can also think of design, or workplace decor as the organisation style. Also includes personal decoration.

4.4.5.3.4 Posters, photographs, memorabilia on display

Photo’s may communicate certain beliefs. They also can tell a story about meanings and assumptions shared by organisation members.

4.4.5.3.5 Decoration of one’s workspace and equipment

A hospital for example might communicate the feelings of a clinical, sterile and impersonal space. Observe also how equipment often fits the client that is served. A bank may have computers, steel like colors, signifying an efficient and secure environment.
4.4.5.3.6 Other examples of physical symbols

Office furnishings, the quality and allocation of equipment, organizational charts, manuals, newsletters, bulletin boards, costume, company uniforms, standard attire, personal items made at work, graffiti, logo’s and brands.

4.5 Analytical mode

The analytical mode is associative; members collectively interpreting associated meanings and exploring associations between them. Therefore “webs of meanings emerge” within a collective cognitive map. These meanings are not expected to be predefined in any way, meanings are rather emergent. Meanings are therefore constructed and reconstructed within a unique organization culture context on an ongoing basis.

4.6 Analytical method

Analytical methods tend to be either clinical or ethnographic. If an ethnographic approach is used the researcher tries to gain access to an organisation, preferring to collect data (wandering around, observe in settings, conduct interviews) trying to create as little disturbance as possible. In true ethnographic studies a researchers would try to become as familiar as possible with events and actions to gain a better understanding. Which would usually take place over a long period of time.

However within the framework presented a more clinical approach is used. Meaning that organisation members endeavor to discover their organization culture themselves. Diagnoses therefore has more of a therapeutic value. Furthermore actions taken, based on the diagnoses of their culture may in itself bring about a “shift” in the cultural paradigm that members hold. Members understanding of their own culture is thus interwoven with actions that they take, which in turn allows members to evaluate the validity of their cultural interpretation.
4.7 Analytical results and insights

The analytical results of the cultural expressions studied is images of "webs of meanings", rather than a model. Furthermore once these images have been mapped, they can be recalled and reconceptualised as needed. However it is not assumed that all organisation members will share the same images.

The analytical results, meaning the collective cognitive culture map, forms the basis for taking action. True insight is therefore only gained once action is taken, based on the kinds of interpretations made within the collective cognitive map.

The framework presented aims to gain knowledge about the organisation culture, which in turns leads to a better understanding of the organisation culture. The analytical insight which is gained is therefore understanding. As members collective interpret and reinterpret the cognitive map they hold. They might also discover strengths and weaknesses within their culture, which might lead members to reassess how valid the cultural knowledge they hold. This understanding may in itself might create changes due to members responses and reactions. Insight is therefore, the collective wisdom that organisation members hold.

The cognitive map drawn by organisation members is used as a basic departure point in discussing the analytical results and insights of the diagnoses framework (Refer to figure 4.2).

4.7.1 Core knowledge within collective cognitive map

The core knowledge within the map is derived from the cultural expressions identified. The core meanings being; what is?, should do? how to ..? and why?. Within, what is? the significant expressions identified where; "that table" and "un-professionals". Different cultural verbal expression therefore had similar meanings attached, which meant pieces of
Figure 4.2 Collective cognitive map
the cultural puzzle could be checked against each other. Members collectively agreed that “that table” and “un-professionals” means groupings with differed levels of status exists, but these groupings are not necessarily as defined in the formal structure of the organisation. Being part of certain groupings means that members are either included or excluded from decision making about important and critical aspects. The expressive consequence is that some members feel that they are not treated as equals. This notion of inequality is linked to, and reinforced by how meetings are held. Therefore groupings with higher status act in a “secretive way”, withholding information. Which has lead other members to perceived that they hold a lesser status.

Furthermore the notion of being excluded, is perceived as a way to control the behaviour of organisation members. Members therefore feel that their efforts and initiatives are stifled, and they cannot make a significant contribute overall. Withdrawal from initiatives is therefore proposed as a survival recipe. As some member commented“... we are not up to it”.

The second core aspect relates to how members interact with each other? Members agreed that they do not interact properly at all. The norm of how to act is that groupings with a higher status should act in a secretive way, and often their actions are met with suspicion. Meaning “higher status” groupings actions are seen as a way of controlling and exercising power. Morning meetings is mentioned as a significant example, a ritual that has very little practical value to inform members about activities. Meetings are rather seen as rituals to control when organisation members arrive and leave work. Therefore members feel that little of importance is ever communicated during meetings. Furthermore decision made by management in other forums are usually met with suspicion, because these forums are perceived to be held in a “secretive way”. Non-members therefore do not trust decisions made within forums, held in a secretive way. Members also often think that hidden agenda are discussed and pursued. Important issued are therefore perceived to be reserved for these forums.
In response to these "secretive forums", "excluded groupings" members suggest as a recipe for survival that one should not reveal one's "true" feelings, thoughts and understanding of situations. As "informants" would reveal within "secretive situations" information disclosed, as well as thoughts and feelings that members have. Furthermore it is perceived that if members are honest, they are punished for telling the truth. It is therefore argued that it is simple better not to speak out.

The why of things and events?, can also be linked to the perceived systems of grouping. A very significant symbolic phenomena is the strategic planning effort of the organisation. It may also be significant because it is a fairly recent event in the minds of members and one of the primary motives for studying the organisation's culture. Meaning to find which cultural aspects either promote or hinder the organisation moving from its current state to a more desired state, as defined in its strategic plan.

The why?, of strategic planning is perceived mainly as a rite of renewal. Meaning that strategic plans are drawn to firstly show what has been achieved. To "tick" off things done. Secondly it is perceived as a way to mask uncertainties and a way to respond to uncertain situations. Thirdly only "higher status" members are involved in strategic planning. "Non-members" perceive that they cannot be trusted to make sound decisions.

The theme of distrust and secrecy is therefore found throughout members cognition's. Stories that members tell typically reflect the theme of inequality and distrust. For example stories about members that have left the organisation, because they felt that no basic-trust existed and that they had personally been degraded in some way, or that they had not been treated as an equal.

The cultural picture that is painted by the members might seem very one dimensional, but is very likely to reflective of, firstly a climate of pessimism and secondly that a complete cultural image has not yet emerged, that truly reflects all perspectives within the organisation's culture. Meaning that the map members created is not "culturally rich"
enough to explain all points of view. However as more members become involved in mapping the organisation’s culture, perspectives of, the why of things and events occur, will most likely emerge? and a more “complete” image will be revealed.

A positive aspect about the mapping process is that the map reveals a degree of tension, which is more of a true reflection of cultural feelings. Members also admitted very early on in the mapping process that their insight into things and events could only be enhanced by involving a larger cross section of the organisation members. This can however only be done over a period of time, maybe even years. Therefore this endeavor falls outside the scope of this study.

The cultural map does however contain functional, or supportive aspect of its strategic efforts. Members proposed that its prize giving ceremony efforts promoted a very positive image of the organisation, and that most members endorsed it as a way of enhancing students achievements. However members suggested that it should not approached as it currently was approached. The ceremonies focus should rather shift, to be about giving credit, as opposed to being a way to share in the achievements of students. Members therefore indirectly have drawn insight from the mapping process. Proposing a way as to how to do things better.

Overall members that where involved in the process of mapping the organisation’s culture recognize that the map they had drawn is simple a starting point and that they where only holding a few pieces of the cultural puzzle. Furthermore it seemed certain pieces of the cultural puzzle at this point in time was not very “clear” to them. They needed to have their notions “incubate”, and that within the period that the study was conducted they did not get the opportunity to incubate their cultural notions fully.

Furthermore outside of the scope of this study is the opportunity to act on interpretations. By acting on interpretations new cultural information is generated and the validity of the cultural map is tested. Therefore to fully understand and benefit from the mapping
process, successive cultural maps need to be drawn over time. Furthermore where “gaps” in cultural understanding emerge, more focus would need to be placed in “filling” in the cultural “gap” in understanding.

4.7.2 Symbolic expressions

Within the interpretation phase different expression were identified, but with similar meanings and conversely, an expression with multiple meanings attached. It was therefore possible to use different expression and reduce it to a single meaning. Such as “that table” and “un-professionals”. Meaning, groupings of members. Whereas strategic planning had multiple meanings attached, but reinforced the interpretation of other symbolic interpretations (Refer to figure 4.2).

Varying richness of descriptions is therefore evident, but also indicate tension in the kinds of assumptions made. Furthermore there is a realization that a true understanding would only emerge once members listen to other members interpretations of symbolic expressions. “Symbolic blindness” therefore seems to be a problem with the mapping process. Expressions that members choose gave valuable insight into meaning they attach and the expressive consequences thereof. However they were blind to the perspectives of “others”, not involved in the mapping process. Other members can possible attach a very different meanings to symbolic expressions or even add to the core cultural knowledge. Insight is therefore only partial and contingent on all organisation members being involved. It is also a process of members realizing that “gaps” in understanding exists. Learning and understanding is therefore shaped by all organisation members.

4.7.3. Expressive consequences attached to symbolic expressions

The main duality found in the cultural map is a sense of inequality, which could be pulled through to a number of objects, expressions and events. Members for example perceived vehicles being searched as having an hidden agenda, which has not revealed itself.
Searching vehicles on entry or exit would seem valid for most people, but is met with resistance, within the cultural context of the organisation. Members perceive the searching of vehicles as being treated as less than equals, whereas students do not seem to get searched. What seems as a valid action for most organisations, and which would be endorsed wholeheartedly by its members, is rather therefore met with a great deal of resistance. There is therefore an overriding sense that anything that is designed to protect the organisation, could be misinterpreted as a something to control and manipulate.

Similarly when meetings are held everything that is communicated is not accepted immediately as valid or as the “truth”. Only once members have established the “truth” for themselves, either by fact finding or testing the validity of the information. Purposefully acting on it, “truth” can be established.

Overall the examples of cultural expressions identified and the interpretation made by members suggest that in order to develop a “complete” picture of an organisation’s culture, all sides of the “cultural coin” should be investigated. By all its members, in order to reveal the true cultural complexity.

4.7.4 Analytical insights

The quantity and quality of cultural expressions and insight that could be generated is affected by the period that members have been employed at the organisation. “Older” members description where more “rich” and they had more distinct interpretations of events, expressions and objects. Cultural fragments of the past for example is evident in older members stories, which newer members are unaware of. “Younger” members also generated fewer significant expressions and found it more difficult to elaborate on other members interpretations.
However most members could developed a basic understudying of what is? how to do interact properly and how things should be done, or preferable needs to be done. Furthermore members could find an acceptable level of agreement fairly quickly.

Once the cultural map had emerged, members added collectively to the interpretations and found multiple “links” between expressions. Which meant that members could not only elaborate on their own cognition's, but they could also make suggestions about ways how the organisation should do things better. An example is member suggestion about how prize giving can be improved.

4.8 User friendliness of framework

4.8.1 Open-ended map

Overall members felt that the open-ended culture map made the most significant contribution towards making the mapping process user friendly. The only concern that one could have, as a researcher, is how truly open-ended can culture mapping be? Including or portraying too many dysfunctional cultural expressions examples in your open-end map, as opposed to functional, could lead members to recognize only the dysfunctional and aspects which is not supportive in their own culture.

4.8.2 Other uses that can flow from mapping

A number of uses can flow from the mapping process. Which makes is not only user friendly, but also attractive to use when diagnosing an organisation’s culture. The first is that mapping facilitates an ordering or structuring of not only cultural data, but also the minds of members that are involved in the mapping process. Mapping cultural data is also inherently motivational. Most members where interested to hear the meanings and interpretations made by other members. Furthermore once a cultural map has emerged it can be a useful tool to reflect on previous actions. Meaning that over a period of time
cultural change can be established and visually represented. Cultural expressions can also be ranked in terms of significance. As some cultural expressions gain significance and other loose significance. Mapping, once done, also is a way to focus on specific cultural expressions and elaborate on those expressions, as well as find links between other expressions.

4.9 Limitations and problems within the framework

4.9.1 Learning curve

Members early on in the mapping process realized that members had a partial understanding or insight into the culture of the organisation. Members felt that a larger cross section of members of "other" groups would create a more complete cultural map.

Many of the symbolic aspect were also emotionally charged. However members could not always elaborate fully on why they felt so strongly about these symbolic expressions. It therefore might indicate that the framework needs to be implemented over a period of time, not only for cognition's to incubate, but also allow members to elaborate on their understanding, as clarity is gained. It represents in some way an ordering of the cultural minds of members. Ordering of our cultural cognition's is most certainly not something that we do consciously, it is rather tacit. We rather act on interpretations and then add to our cultural knowledge over an extended period of time. Furthermore all of the cultural cognition's that we have can never be fully integrated into a collective cultural cognitive map at any one point in time.

4.9.2 Problems experienced with implementing the framework

A lesson learnt from diagnosing the organisation's culture is that preparing members to engage in the process of mapping and getting members motivated enough is critical within the initial stages of implementing the framework. Any member or members that withdraw
from the overall process of sharing cultural knowledge will ultimately hamper the understanding of other members. Furthermore within a context where basic trust is lacking, it is very likely that the framework will not only be met with a fair degree of resistance, but also be less effective.

A second barrier was the initial fear of being revealed as an “informant”. Therefore members where initially cautious about revealing their thoughts, challenging the notions of others and to act in a open way.

Aside from members initial fears, the third barrier within the framework is the time required to do all the groundwork or “basics”. Basics meaning, explaining what the concept culture means, how to use an open-ended map and how members should try to interact when engaging in active dialogue. However once the initial map had emerged it was easier to add on, elaborate and elicit the reasoning of members.

Therefore it was easier to establish whether most members perceived their collective interpretation as a “true” or valid. However to truly test whether the cultural map drawn is a “true” reflection of the organisation culture, “truth” can only be established once members take action. Only over an extended period of time can members reflect on their cognition’s and actions, and integrate new information into the cultural map they have drawn. Which is not within the boundaries of this study.

4.9.3 Limitations within the framework

The first limitation within mapping is the group dynamics that occurs between members. If there is a more dominant individual, the group as a whole might be influenced to follow or construct a cognitive map similar to the dominant role player. Furthermore aspects such as the number of people that can draw a collective cognitive map at any one time is a significant limitation. In a relatively small organisation the problem can be dealt with fairly easily, but to expand collective mapping to a few hundred people involves constructing
smaller groups. Larger groups in general also do not function as well as groups sized to, two to five people, and is not that productive in generating, integrating and interpreting data.

However if smaller groups are used, in successive rounds, it may work to the advantage of the researcher in that maps of different groups can be checked against each other reveal information or interpretations that other groups have ignored.

4.10 Summary

Methodologically the collection and interpretation of cultural data is part of the analytical framework. Within the context of the diagnoses framework, which is learning based, the key analytical question is; what is the collective meaning held by organisation members? The main assumption made is that culture is inherently symbolic, created on an ongoing basis and is held as collective cognition's in the minds of organisation members. The analytical framework consisting of a process of mapping cultural knowledge, derived from symbolic expressions, which is unique to the organisation context being diagnosed. The analytical mode is associative; members collectively interpreting associated meanings and exploring associations between them. The analytical method is clinical. The analytical results of the cultural expressions studied is images of “webs of meanings” and the insight gained is cultural knowledge. Which is collectively held in the minds of organisation members.

Analytical results and insights was mainly presented as a collective cognitive map. Futhermore it was discussed whether organisation members found the framework user friendly, meaning the shortcomings of the framework. However the collective map that was drawn should be seen as a starting point to deciphering the organisation’s culture. It is not a complete and “true” reflection of the organisation’s culture. The map that was constructed, even though it may have been very rudimentary, has revealed some basic assumptions members hold about the organisation. As well as points of tension.
Furthermore members that were involved in the mapping process recognized the importance of involving a larger cross section of the organisation in sharing cultural information. Some valuable insight has also been gained into how members of the organisation interact, and members overall realized that better ways need to be found as to how they interact.

Overall constructing a cultural map is an ongoing process, and the degree of "richness" that is required will mainly be derived from the motivation level and willingness of members to uncover the organisation's culture.

Within the next chapter a summary of the study is presented. Conclusions derived from the study is also presented and some recommendations are made about the framework.
5.1 Summary of the motive of the study, theoretical perspectives, diagnoses framework and methodology used

The primary motivation for this study is that a need exists for a culture diagnoses framework that is both pragmatic and user friendly. In the first chapter it highlighted that few managers attempt to diagnose their organisation’s culture because they do not understand how to diagnose their organisation’s culture and some simply do not care whether they understand the cultural context they stand within. Furthermore managers who fail to understand the link between the dominant culture and the change they seek, often engage in self-defeating behaviour.

Within chapter two the position of the culture construct within organisation theory is discussed. Six broad perspectives are identified, based on the basic assumption or paradigm used by researchers. The perspectives being independent variable, dependent variable, functional, cognitive, symbolic and psycho-dynamic. Each perspective has its own unique insights and limitations, but overall theorist have not produced an analytical culture model and methodology that can be used or duplicated with ease.

A number of aspects also has contributed to the culture construct taking the “abstract route”. The first is that most organisation culture theorist borrow their ideas and notions about organisation culture from anthropology. Furthermore most culture theorist are still in the a stage of fighting about small differences and trying to have newly defined terminology associated with them. Whereas it is argued that the climate construct, which has its roots in organisational psychology and organisational behaviour has progressed much further, due to climate theorist who have focused on how to gather climate data and have even gone as far as assessing the validity of the climate construct.
Secondly it is argued that the culture construct has not progressed as much as the climate construct due to the culture construct being at a much higher level of abstraction. Which leads culture studies to take place over an extended period of time, and intensive data collection. Which makes it less than an attractive endeavor.

It is therefore argued that the culture and climate constructs are separate constructs, but it is likely that culture studies in the future could benefit from a marriage of methodology and terminology, as the two constructs are likely to draw closer to each other over time.

In order to reduce the confusion surrounding the culture construct, it is briefly outlined what theorists agree culture is not. Most theorist agree that culture is not groupthink, not social structure, not a metaphor and not necessarily the key to success. Furthermore a primary motive for undertaking a cultural study is often managers who believe that a link can be found between organisation culture and performance. Meaning they are trying to find the “quick fix” or they believe that a strong cultures leads to better performance. It is however argued that the main benefit derived from cultural studies, is that cultural studies liberate us from the old paradigms we hold of organisation and management. Cultural studies allow us to see the complexity of organisation with a newness. Meaning cultural studies allows organisation members to suggest and explore new paradigms.

In the concluding part of chapter two culture typologies are discussed. Typologies however are not recommended as a way to neatly “pigeonhole” an organisation’s culture. Typologies are rather suggested as a starting point, as to understand how one’s own culture is similar or dissimilar to the typologies one is aware of.

In chapter three is it suggested that by “fusing” a number of the theoretical perspective, into a learning based framework, an organisation should be able to address cultural diagnoses in a pragmatic way. Overall the framework that is suggested, shifts the focus towards how we collectively learn.
Why is a collective learning based approach used? Most theorist agree organisation culture is firstly collective. Furthermore emotionally charged, historically based, inherently symbolic, dynamic and inherently fuzzy. It is however emphasized that as individuals we do not create culture, collectively we create, learn and understand culture.

It is therefore proposed that the cultural diagnoses framework should be about accessing the collective meaning structure of organisation members, preferable based on how organisations collectively learn. Collective learning is also argued to be much more complex than individual learning.

Within the framework it is proposed that organisation members follow four steps. The four steps can be outlined as; Widespread generation of cultural data, collectively integrate new information into the organisation context, collectively interpret the information and taking action based on the interpreted meaning. The steps are also circular, meaning that taking action will lead to generation new information. Members therefore test the interpretations they have made by acting on their interpretations.

The first steps of widespread generation involves collecting information from both internal and external sources, but those who collect the data should preferable be those who act on the cultural information. In contrast other analytical framework make use of a few “insiders”, observation and interviews. Which means that a “complete” cultural picture rarely emerges, because individuals do not learn and understand their culture through the collective cognition’s of organisation members.

Secondly a complete cultural image does not always emerge due to a silo effect. Members do not have access to all the cultural information, across organisation boundaries. Which explains to some degree functional and occupational cultures. The silo effect also highlights that unless we share cultural information across organisation boundaries, it will be very unlikely that a shared understanding or an organisation’s will ever emerge.
Disseminating information across organisation boundaries does however not mean that information makes sense to organisation members. Organisation members must firstly be able to reduce a world that is infinitely complex and unique every moment, into the current uniqueness of the organisation's culture. By a process of naming and categorizing, meaning making use of symbolism, organisation members can reduce the complexity of organisation life to a manageable mass.

However cultural understanding is more than just naming of things and events. It also involves acting dialogue with other organisation members. By interacting with other members, we shape our own understanding. The third step therefore involves a process of trying to understand the reasoning of other organisation members. Which implies that members interpretations just fall short of agreeing to each others meanings attached to symbolic expressions. These meanings attached can also be thought of as the collective cultural knowledge that members hold. Cultural knowledge is furthermore classified into dictionary, directory, recipe and axiomatic knowledge. Which means that the cultural knowledge that members hold explains, the what is of situations, how to do or not do of situations, the what should or should not of situations and the why of things and events. Overall it represents the cultural knowledge "...as to how things are done around here".

Likewise to naming, is cognitive mapping. Why then make use of mapping? Mapping has the added advantage that maps hold knowledge in a coded form. Meaning that if organisation members are only unable to perceive similarities and differences between their cultural context and other cultural contexts they are aware of, members will find it very difficult to recognize the uniqueness of their own cultural context. Mapping solves this problem in that it suggest to members both similarities and difference. An open ended culture map provides points of departure, such metaphors, stories, myths and so forth. Open-ended cultural mapping is therefore proposed as a way to map the uniqueness of an organisation's culture.
Collective mapping furthermore allows members to share their meanings and to represent interpretations made by organisation members in a visual way. It also makes it easier for organisation members to articulate why they attached a certain degree of significance to a symbolic expression. As well as why they draw certain "links" between cultural knowledge held. Furthermore once a collective cognitive map has emerged members can add to and elaborate onto their understanding, as their cultural cognition's become more "clear".

An organisation's cultural map can start as a rudimentary map and over a period of time be expanded into more complex maps, as the organisation requires a better understanding of its cultural context. The "richness" of a cultural mapping therefore depend on the motivation level and the willingness of organisation members to uncover the organisation's culture.

In the final step of the diagnose framework members should be able to take responsible action on the interpretations made. If members cannot act on the interpretations they have made, the likelihood is that they will become frustrated and even feel despair. Acting on interpretations will allow members to test their interpretations and reconceptualise the cultural paradigm that they hold. Collective mapping however does not mean that a complete, accurate and truthful image ever emerges, because of the ongoingness of culture. A map would only represent the understanding of organisation members at that point in time that the collective map was drawn.

A more accurate and complete understanding of an organisation's culture does however require active involvement from a large cross-section of organisation members. Without active involvement the true value of cultural research is lost, and only a few pieces of the "cultural puzzle" emerges. Overall the framework therefore tries to resolve the problem that organisation members are disconnected from collecting, disseminating, interpreting and ultimately acting on cultural information.
5.2 Conclusions

Conclusions that can be drawn from the various theoretical perspectives and the diagnoses framework are that:

* Despite the diversity of theoretical cultural interpretations that have emerged, cultural studies always have reverted to symbolism, to as a way to gain insight into an organisation’s culture. Furthermore cultural cognition’s, such as assumptions, cultural paradigms, collective will and so forth, has remained at the core of most analytical models.

* Methodologically a gradual shift is taking place towards analytical models that are more qualitative in nature. It is also being recommended more by theorists that the interpretation of cultural expressions should rather be the interpretation of “insiders”, as opposed to the interpretations of “outsiders”.

* Some members are better cultural bearers than others, but cultural cognition’s and knowledge resides in all organisation members. A more “complete” cultural understanding therefore relies on all organisation being involved in the collecting, disseminating, interpreting and acting on cultural information.

* Organisation members that have resided for longer periods within a specific organisation context is capable of producing more rich and clearer cultural descriptions of an organisation’s culture, even though their cognition’s might be more taken for granted. Whereas “newer” organisation members are less capable of providing rich descriptions.

* Cultural mapping is better facilitated by providing an open-ended culture map, as it provides points of reference. An open-ended should also preferable be more “generic” in nature and it need not be accurate.
Cultural mapping need not start as complex and intricate maps to gain reasonable insight into an organisation's culture. Cultural mapping most likely can to start off as a rudimentary map and expand as organisation become more motivated and willing to uncover their organisation’s culture.

Cultural mapping not only facilitates the ordering of cultural data, but also the minds of organisation members involved in the mapping process. The ordering of members' cognition is however likely to take place over an extended period of time.

Whether a collective cultural cognitive map is valid or “true” reflection of an organisation culture can most likely only be established once members have taken action on the cultural interpretations they have made. Which implies that collective cultural maps are reconceptualised on an ongoing basis.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendations that can be made about the implementation and uses of the diagnoses framework are:

As an initial measure an organisation should work towards members buying-in to the framework. The reasons why a buy-in process is suggested, is that most organisation members ultimately will be required to be part of cultural diagnoses. Furthermore those members that withdraw from the process in effect will hamper the process of gaining “complete” insight into the overall cultural context. A brief training course about what culture is, what is meant is by symbolism and what is collective cognitive mapping, is suggested as an action within the initial stage. Training therefore would assist in overcoming resistance that may exists towards cultural diagnoses.
It is crucial that members who will act on cultural data is the beginning involved in generating cultural data, disseminating data and interpreting data. If the process is disconnected, meaning different organisation members are involved at different stages of the framework, members will not only feel frustrated, but real learning and understanding will go lost.

Aside from the time that is required to initially train members in the process, sufficient time should be allowed for members to draw a collective cognitive map. Successive round may be required to arrive at a “rich” enough cultural map. Successive rounds of mapping is also suggested because members cognition’s might not be very clear, when meaning are attached. Furthermore allowing more time, allows members to incubate ideas and elaborate better on their own thinking.

If a large number of organisation members are involved in the mapping process, it would be advisable to conduct mapping in smaller groups of two to five people. It would firstly create a more productive environment, in which mapping can take place and the results of various groups can be checked against each other. Which means that a researcher would be able to triangulate results from more than just one group’s perspective.

When an open-ended cultural map is drawn and presented as point of departure it is suggested that not too many dysfunctional examples are included in an open-ended map. Emphasizing the dysfunctional might lead organisation members to only recognize the dysfunctional in their organisation’s culture.

Overall within mapping process a researcher should try to promote the benefits derived from mapping. It is also more likely that motivated members will produce more “rich” and “complete” the cultural maps.
Establish basic rules at the initial stages, as to how active dialogue should take place between organisation members, when interpreting cultural data. Moreover establish a basic level of trust that allows members to interact in an open and honest manner.

5.4 Summary

Within the boundaries of this study the framework has only been used as a starting point to diagnosing an organisations culture. The study has not been expanded to included mapping over an extended period of time or exploring the type of results and insights that might be drawn from cultural mapping over an extended period of time. Therefore the kinds of unanswered questions that one can pose now, and which could be taken up in future studies are numerous.

Some of the questions could be, do organisation become more culturally responsive when using mapping? and will organisations become more adaptable to their external, by being more aware of inconsistencies within their own cultural environment and the external environment? can mapping be used as a tool to break destructive cultural paradigms that organisations repeatedly are using?

Overall these unanswered questions related to the main benefit derived from cultural studies and accompanying diagnoses. Meaning, cultural studies allow organisation members to see the complexity of organisation life with a newness. Allowing organisation members to suggest and explore alternative paradigms about cultural, organisation and management.


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