



Organizational Culture and the Core Value of the Professional Mentality among Students of Russian and Iranian Colleges: A Pilot Study

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Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the Organizational culture and the core value of the professional mentality among students of Russian and Iranian colleges in the organizational conditions of a modern enterprise. The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) developed by Cameron and Quinn was used for the purpose of this study. Two hundred students from Iranian and Russian colleges were chosen as research samples. Besides the OCAI, the participants were asked to answer five questions concerns the perceptions of the organizational culture (OC) of colleges, the specifics of their ideas about the OC of an effective enterprise and the characteristics of their desired job. Data were analyzed by using the U Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon. These results showed the professional mentality of college students in a modern enterprise require to change. Therefore, organizational socialization for Russian and Iranian colleges remains necessary in the typical educational process.

Keywords: *Students; Core Values; Organization Culture; Professional Mentality*

1. Introduction

At the present time, achieving sustainable development is one of the ideals of human society. World organizations such as UNESCO have explored ways to achieve this development (regardless of specific countries and climatic conditions) and presented common solutions for public opinion. One important factor in achieving development - with the focus of international organizations - is the focus on technical and vocational education [UNESCO, 2009]. Improving the conditions of enterprises in different countries is an important factor in accelerating their economic growth. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the business environment in different countries requires improving their business environment. Iran's domestic laws, including the Constitution, the Third and Fourth Micro- and Macro-level Development Plans, focus on technical and vocational education. Iran's 20-year economic

perspective on "development" and building a society of "advanced knowledge with a high proportion of human resources", "rapid and sustainable economic growth", "relative income growth" and "full employment" has actually focused on the development and expansion of these goals [Office of the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Planning Management of the Organization].

Despite the attention of the Iranian authorities and legislators to the importance of this part of education, for many reasons, including: the lack of a comprehensive understanding of these goals, the lack of modern training, the lack of interaction and proportionality between the labor market and education, the lack of centralized education policy formation, and the failure to implement laws, ignoring the teaching staff, lack of appropriate equipment, inability to reform the working pyramid and etc. we're not successful and require major reform. In any country that is on the verge of transition from a traditional economy to a knowledge-based economy, education is one of the most effective tools for dealing with future challenges. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), as one of a country's education subsystems, will be able to serve as a reliable tool to connect education and society, and between education and the labor market. This is explained by the fact that the nature of economic development imposes certain requirements on the personnel, who by their work either support the necessary changes or inhibit them. It is known that over the last 25 years' market transformations have been taking place in Russia, as a result of which the management of enterprises should achieve significant growth in labor productivity and take enterprises on the innovative way of development [Putin, 2019]. The management of a significant number of enterprises fails to meet these challenges, which are identified at the highest levels of government. The staffs of Russian enterprises have yet to take up the innovation barrier [Khachaturian, 2015]. The duration and contradictions of the transit period in the Russian economy have their psychological reasons. Studies show that throughout the entire period of market transformations, the staffs of enterprises have consistently demonstrated their adherence to pre-reform values of hierarchy and relations, while the requirements of economic development are based on an understanding of the need for transition to market and innovation values [Zakharova, 2010, 2017].

It is known that values are the predictors of behavior and without value changes, it is impossible to achieve the set goals [Schwartz, 2012]. Competitiveness is a key criterion for assessing the degree of success of countries, industries and enterprises in the areas of economic, business and political competition. Iran's economy, on the one hand, is under strong international pressure to liberalize trade, and on the other hand, for the sake of sustainable development, it is necessary to significantly expand non-oil exports and increase its own share in the country's total exports. [Holsapple & Singh, 2001]. One of the characteristics of successful enterprises is their ability to compete, yet the most striking feature of unsuccessful enterprises is the lack of competition in this system. Open economies are more innovative and their markets more competitive. The World Economic Forum (WEF) considers this to be one of the key findings of its Competitiveness Report 2018. This report evaluated the world's countries and rated Iran as 89th out of 140 countries. Iran is ranked 65th in innovation. The most developed countries are rated below 40. An appropriate organizational culture (OC) can increase creativity and innovation in the workforce. Organizational culture in Denmark, Sweden and other Scandinavian countries is at least hierarchical and mainly based on mutual cooperation. However, Asian patriarchal societies such as Korea and China have a more hierarchical organizational culture [Schwab, 2018]. Organizational culture also influences educational organizations in the same way as business organizations. Technical and vocational training prepares people for work [Chase, 1997, Fox, 2013; George, Jones & Sharbrough 2005; Serpa, 2016; Schein, 2004]. Vocational education and training can provide the skills and competences needed to meet the changing needs of the labor market and equal opportunities for all in the public and non-governmental sectors, and can significantly reduce production costs and build capacity for knowledge-based competitiveness in global markets [Okolocha, 2013].

Values are not only predictors of behavior, including organizational behavior, but also the core of professional mentality [Popova, 2010; Pozdnyakov, 2018; Yurevich, 2013]. Among the basic socio-psychological characteristics of the mentality, many authors attribute features of the psychological

attitude of representatives of social groups to the phenomena of the surrounding world, including the conditions and results of their economic activity [Pozdnyakov, 2018 p.212] And of course, to the economic transformations taking place in the country. At the heart of the relationship are the values or semantic motives [Leontief, 1973]. The revealed relations allow forecasting economic development in that part which depends on professional mentality of enterprise personnel. It would seem that the system of personnel training, as a state social institution, should solve the tasks, especially since the society understands the need for accelerated economic development. Therefore, this research aimed to identify the core value of the professional mentality of students in vocational and technical college in Russia and Iran.

2. Methodology

The present study is an applied research in terms of its objectives, and it is quantitative in terms of data collection and it is a descriptive survey in nature. This study was carried out between September 2018 and February 2019 in Iranian (Tehran) and also in Russian (Nizhny Novgorod) TVET colleges. Two hundred students from Iranian (n=100) and Russian (n=100) colleges participated in this survey. For selecting subjects simple random sampling method was used. The tool used for data collection was the Organizational Culture Assessment Inventory (OCAI) by Cameron and Quinn to assess the organizational culture. The students also had to answer the OCAI based on five questions: 1) which enterprise they are most likely going to work for? 2) Which enterprise they would like to work for after graduation? 3) Which type of enterprise would be the most effective in this modern economy, according to them? 4) How do they see their college? 5) How would they like to see their college? The OCAI questionnaire is a multi-dimensional construct and the four OCAI factors are confirmed to be as cultural profiles: Clan (6 items), Adhocracy (6 items), Market (6 items) and Hierarchy (6 items). Participants were asked to divide 100 points among these four alternatives depending on the extent to which each alternative was similar to the culture of their organization. Some questions were labeled preferred and the others were labeled now [Cameron & Quinn, 2011]. The OCAI reliability suitability by computing internal consistency through Cronbach & alpha test (in table 1).

Table 1: Reliability Test Result or Cronbach's Alpha

Culture type	Reliability coefficients for Current Situation	Reliability coefficients for Preferred Situation	Comparison Reliability Coefficient*
Clan	0.7	0.66	0.82
Adhocracy	0.64	0.72	0.83
Market	0.59	0.58	0.67
Hierarchy	0.52	0.63	0.78

*Reliability coefficients reported by Cameron & Quinn (1999) from Berrio (2003).

Considering the confirmation of psychometric properties of OCAI, organizational culture assessment instrument (OCAI) based on the competing values framework model (CVF) seems to be an appropriate instrument and theoretical framework for assessing the organizational culture.

3. Results

The data obtained are presented in Tables 2 and 3. The data obtained is given in the table. The data were analyzed using Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney U. The data in Table 2 shows that OC of colleges (as measured by students) varies significantly. While for Russian colleges the dominant component is clan (34%) and the remaining components are presented in approximately different proportions, the hierarchical component dominates in Iranian colleges, reaching 40%. The second place is occupied by the clan component (32%), while the business and innovation components are represented by a large gap, with the adhocracy (innovation) component being particularly poorly represented. This is the absolute minimum. It means that the Russian college is dominated by the values of relationships, and students can quite easily agree both among themselves and with teachers on issues that are important to them. It is not formal rules and regulations that regulate the educational process, but agreements that suit all participants, allowing them to maintain a quite comfortable psychological climate in an educational institution. Other indicators of OC, presented in almost equal proportions, can hardly be trusted, because their action can always be minimized due to the dominant clan component. It is clear that this contributes to weakening requirements and control over the educational process and its results. And what do Russian students want in their colleges? It is desirable for them to weaken the hierarchical component of OC, which will naturally further reduce the demands of the administration and teachers on students' achievements.

The organizational culture in Iranian educational institutions is fundamentally different. The hierarchical component clearly dominates. As a rule, it manifests itself in strict requirements to discipline, class attendance, the performance of study tasks, submission to teachers' requirements and strict reporting. This, in the opinion of students, significantly reduces creativity and does not contribute to a real business environment where the order should be maintained not by administrative pressure, but by understanding the need and correct algorithms for the implementation of educational activities. Students are looking for compensation in maintaining the clan component of the OC. Perhaps, as is often the case, the rigidity of claims is compensated for by the optionality of their implementation. However, students are determined to change this situation. They believe that the existing level of maintaining relations should be maintained, that the adhocracy component should be strengthened in principle: from 10% to 29%, that the presence of the market component should be reduced from a low level (19%) that it is (much lower than in Russia) to 11% and that the presence of the hierarchical component should be significantly reduced from 40% to 27%. Most likely, this data reveals the fatigue of students from excessive bureaucratization of the educational process. They can feel the creativity that is so necessary in the conditions of the need to master new technologies, accelerated economic development and reduced dependence on extractive industries. This emotional reaction, which may result in a significant deterioration of the business climate in the educational process, as it is perceived as an extension and embodiment of the hierarchy.

Table2. Organizational culture in Iranian and Russian colleges and organizational-cultural preferences of student

Countries	College Organizational Culture											
	Clan			Adhocracy			Market			Hierarchy		
	now	Preferred	W	now	Preferred	W	now	Preferred	W	now	Preferred	W
Russia	34	36	-	23	24	-	21	22	-	22	18	*
Iran	32	33	-	10	29	**	19	11	**	40	27	**
U Russia-Iran	-	T		*	*		-	*		*	*	

W– Wilcoxon, U– Mann-Whitney U, *– $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$, T– the differences are not statistically significant

The data in Table 3 show that how the learning outcomes achieved on the basis of specific OC values are manifested in students' desires regarding the preferred organizational conditions of their future place of work and their ideas about the organizational conditions of an effective modern enterprise. It can be seen that Russian students would like to work in the same clan organizational conditions as in their colleges. Iranian students would like to work in the clan-hierarchical model of OC with a pronounced hierarchical component, which means that as far as labor activity is concerned, they no longer support the idea of the priority of innovativeness, but want the stability characteristic of the hierarchy and psychological comfort provided by the priority of relations. But do the students understand the requirements of an efficient modern company, and what do they see as the real company they will come to as employees? So, we can see that students are characterized by a value-based willingness to rely on relationships rather than on innovations and compliance with production regulations. In this situation, innovativeness turns pseudo-innovativeness, and success is often exaggerated. In their opinion, they will not start their labor activity at an efficient modern enterprise at all. They are waiting for them in companies with a high level of hierarchy and a rigid business atmosphere, devoid of the advantages of a positive psychological climate. In an efficient organization, they see even more hierarchy, but less business, more innovation and the value of relationships. On the one hand, it is easy to understand, based on the peculiarities of social and economic situation in Iran, but it is also clear that such peculiarities of organizational situation hinder development, which finds a certain understanding in the student environment. Thus, the organizational socialization for Russian and Iranian colleges remains relevant in their typical educational process.

Table3. The views of college students in Russia and Iran on the organizational conditions of modern enterprises

Country	Organizational culture of the enterprise															
	Desirable OC				Representation of a real and effective enterprise											
					Clan			Adhocracy			Market			Hierarchy		
	Clan	Adhocracy	Market	Hierarchy	real	effective	U	real	effective	U	real	effective	U	real	effective	U
Russia	36	23	23	18	32	32	-	22	23	-	23	26	*	24	19	**
Iran	30	28	18	25	19	22	*	24	28	*	27	16	**	31	35	*
U Russia-Iran	*	*	-	*	*	*		-	*		*	*		*	**	

U- Mann-Whitney U, * - $p \leq 0.05$; ** - $p \leq 0.01$

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to identify the core values of the professional mentality of Russian and Iranian college students. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the core values of the professional mentality of Russian and Iranian college students in most components. Moreover, this research has shown the productivity of the approach to the study of readiness of college students to work in conditions of the modern enterprise through the organizational culture. It was possible to show that there is certain dependence between the socio-economic state of society and the readiness of students to work in the organizational culture of specific types. As the college as an educational institution is a social institution, its concept of the educational process can not only follow the tasks of

economic development, but also put the tasks ahead of time. This fully applies to the tasks of organizational socialization, aimed at forming psychological readiness for the organizational conditions of innovative enterprises. The experience of educational system of Iran shows those problems which can arise and naturally arise if there is a strengthening of hierarchical component at the decision of tasks of transition in an innovative format of development. In the Russian colleges organizational culture with the expressed clan component, comfortable for participants of educational process, but interfering modern organizational socialization of students is often kept.

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