

Cultural Diagnosis: An Empirical Investigation of Cellular Industry of Pakistan

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Abstract: This study describes research in five cellular companies operating in Pakistan, aimed at identifying their current and preferred organizational culture. Using Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) competing values framework, the overall cultural profiles and dominant characteristics of the organizations and industry are determined through a personally administered survey employing the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI). The results indicate that hierarchy culture is dominating in cellular industry, whereas the clan is found to be the most preferred cultural archetype in majority of cellular companies. This indicates a misalignment between what employees think is needed and what is perceived to exist.

Key words: Competing values framework, existing culture, organizational culture, organizational culture assessment instrument, perceived culture

INTRODUCTION

Diagnosing and changing organizational culture is becoming more and more critical for the overall effectiveness and development of organizations (Cameron and Ettington, 1988). Most of the corporate reengineering, downsizing, and total quality initiatives, of late 20th century, ended up in little or no improvements, mainly due to poor understanding about the culture as a root metaphor and the life blood of all Organizational Development (OD) interventions (Kim and Quinn, 1999). The notion of corporate culture is an outgrowth of the basic assumption that organizations are culture-producing phenomena as much as they are goods and services producing entities. The identity and image, which an organization produces of itself and the way it is positioned in the minds of its internal members and its external environment, is commonly referred to as its corporate culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). The empirical investigation into the nature of corporate culture has been conducted across industries and countries in the context of quality management, leadership styles, productivity, management processes, employee behavior and so forth (Al-Khalifa and Aspinwall, 2001; Igo and Skitmore, 2006). However, no prior research has been conducted, particularly in Pakistan, to diagnose the corporate culture and the way members of organizations perceive and prefer it to be in cellular companies.

This study describes research within cellular industry of Pakistan, aimed at diagnosing the forms of prevailing cultures in different organizations and the extent to which people within these organizations perceive these cultures to be appropriate.

Using Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) based on Competing Values Framework established by (Cameron and Quinn, 1999; Kimberly and Quinn, 1984; Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983); Kimberly and Quinn (1984) Cameron and Quinn, (1999) it is found that cellular industry of Pakistan is dominated by Hierarchy culture which is quite relevant to Hofstede analysis of Pakistani culture, whereas, the respondents prefer to see the industry possessing a Clan oriented culture.

Currently, most of the individual organizations are dominated by hierarchy culture whereas market and clan cultures are having dominance in one organization each. Moreover Clan is a preferred culture in most of the individual organizations as well.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organization theory scholars started paying attention to the concept of culture in the early 1980s (Ouchi, 1980). Different concepts of culture led organizational scholars to absolutely different research directions and themes. The view that organizations are cultures, a metaphoric representation of culture in organization theory, led researchers to inquire about the phenomenon of meaning creation and modes of expression and the construction of social reality in organizations. On the other side the view of culture as an internal variable in organizations led researchers to an entirely different direction to investigate into the phenomenon of social order and patterning in organizations (Smircich, 1983). Culture is considered to be a root metaphor in one type of organization theory discourses like organization cognition, organizational

symbolism, and organizational unconscious, and it is considered to be an independent and internal variable in other discourses like comparative management and corporate culture respectively (Smircich, 1983). Taking culture as a variable within organizations, researchers further established that different belief and value systems within and or among organizations tend to produce differing levels of performance and productivity (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982). Organizations are taken as culture producing entities at the same time where they are considered to be embedded in wider national or regional cultural contexts. This type of view about culture is called corporate culture. Corporate culture is usually described as social or normative glue that holds an organization together. It is the value and belief systems prevailing among the workforce. Myths, rituals, stories, legends and jargons are some of the symbolic representations of culture within organizations (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Louis, 1980; Martin and Siehl, 1989). As put by Cameron and Quinn (1999):

“Organizational culture..... refers to the taken for granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations and definitions present in an organization.....of course there are many kinds or levels of culture ...at a broader level the global culture .. at a less general level the national culture or subgroup culture such as gender-based culture, ethnic group cultures, occupational cultures, socioeconomic group cultures....still less broad is a culture of a single organization...”

Researchers have identified various types of organizational culture, depending on the nature and form of relevant industry, and size of the organization (Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992). Classifications of different cultures into different forms have been proposed by many researchers (Cameron and Quinn, 1999; De Vries and Miller, 1988; Hofstede, 1983).

Culture is a very strong metaphor about organizations as it is deep rooted into the day to day routines of a particular organization and it is the way the organizational reality is being shaped. The nature of organizational symbols has much more deep rooted implications on the way an organization is performing and its members are behaving. The nature of organizational culture is sometimes too subtle and all pervasive that it goes beyond the level of slogans and it becomes very hard to clearly understand that how exactly the reality is being shaped at a particular workplace (Morgan, 1998). This subtleness and all-pervasiveness of the nature of organizational culture calls for an equally all-pervasive framework of study to diagnose it within organizations and moreover to investigate into the fact that to what extent the prevailing culture equals the one desired by its members. Various

quantitative and qualitative approaches have been proposed so far to investigate this phenomenon (Igo and Skitmore, 2006).

It is widely believed today that the corporate culture provides managers with the basic framework to implement different strategic options; hence managers need to be very conscious about the nature of culture and how it can potentially hinder different change efforts (Recklies, 2001). It is, however, realized that the corporate culture is normally very hard to successfully change and it is confirmed from the notion of congruence between espoused and observed values (Schein, 1992). Therefore, organizations ought to focus not only on the current but also the preferred culture within the organization so as to understand the level of congruence between observed and espoused values (Fyock, 1999).

Taking into consideration the above discussion of subtleness of culture, and the problem of congruency it is required to adopt a very comprehensive frame to study culture in organizations. Competing value framework of organizational culture diagnosis is one of the most commonly used and validated frameworks for this type of research.

Competing Value Framework: the Competing Value Framework (CVF) (Cameron and Quinn, 1999; Kimberly and Quinn, 1984; Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983) tends to provide a validated, reliable, and concentrated method which, by considering the cultural values and comparing them to those values which are preferred, allows a comparison of desired with the actual state of an organization's culture. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) and Cameron and Quinn (1999) project the CVF as a framework which provides the linkage of cultural characteristics of an organization with its effectiveness and success. According to CVF, organizations can depict one or more or any combination of four prominent organizational cultural types which are:

- A) Clan
- B) Adhocracy
- C) Market
- D) Hierarchy

Before exploring these four cultural types in further details, it is necessary to briefly explain the premises for the definition and development of these cultural types. CVF was developed initially by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) by using thirty indices of measurement of organizations clearly based on literature. Then these prominent criteria were located graphically on a three dimensional spatial model, resulting in three dimensions of organizational effectiveness which provide the basis for finally describing the four cultural types.

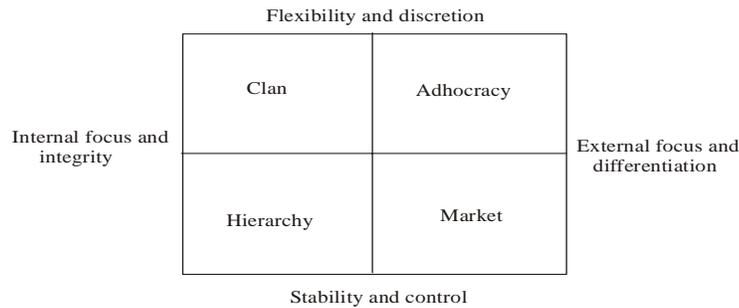


Fig. 1: Competing Value Framework; effectiveness indicators adopted from Cameron and Quinn (2006)

The very first dimension of organizational effectiveness describes the extremes of flexibility-that emphasize discretion and dynamism, and control-that emphasize order and stability. Second dimension reflects the extremes of internal orientation, integration and unity and external orientation, differentiation, and rivalry while the third dimension encapsulate the extremes of organizational focus on means versus ends. These dimensions of organizational analysis are reflective of the fact that some organizations are effective while they are flexible and the others are effective while they are controlled, some are effective with internal orientation and others are effective with external orientation, and some are effective while focusing on means at the same time others are effective while focusing on the ends.

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was then developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999), based on these three dimensions, to diagnose six key facets of cultural subsystems of organizations. CVF amalgamate these subsystems to establish four theoretical cultural types noted above. These cultural types are briefly described in Fig. 1.

- **Clan:** Oriented organization looks like a very personal place, employee relations are shaped around mentoring and nurturing, workplace looks like an extended form of family, a general encouragement of participation is the building block of day to day routines of organization, and work is designed around flexibility and self sufficiency. Human development with high trust and openness is the basic agenda of clan oriented organizations.
- **Adhocracy:** Represents the dynamic and entrepreneurial side of organization where people take risks and they value innovation and creativity. Organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new opportunities. Striving for new ways and rushing for opportunities are valued in this cultural archetype. Leaders are visionary and innovative. Creating unique and original products and services determines the success in this type of culture.

- **Market:** is a result oriented organizational culture which emphasis on getting the job done. Key attributes of this cultural archetype are achievement orientation and competitiveness of employees. The term market here is not to be confused with the marketing function rather it represents the transactional focus of organization in this type of cultural archetype (Igo and Skitmore, 2006).
- **Hierarchy:** archetype of organizational culture favors structure, control, coordination, and efficiency. Stability and internal maintenance, through clear tasks setting and enforcement of strict rules, are key determinants of success in this culture. The domination of this cultural facet in any organization ensures high value of economy, formality, rationality, order, and obedience (Igo and Skitmore, 2006).

Organizational culture assessment instrument (OCAI): The criteria used in OCAI to distinguish four culture types result in a useful organizational contour based on perceptions and preferences related to six cultural subsystems. These cultural subsystems are briefly described below:

Dominant organizational characteristics: This subsystem investigates whether an organization is:

- An extension of family
- A dynamic and entrepreneurial place
- Very result oriented
- Controlled and structured

Organizational leadership: This identifies whether leadership style is:

- Mentoring and nurturing
- Entrepreneurial innovative and risk taking
- Aggressive and result oriented
- Coordinating, organizing and smooth running

Table 1: Response rate

| Organization | No of questionnaires sent | No of questionnaires Completed and Returned | Response rate (%) |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Mobilink | 20 | 20 | 100 |
| Telenor | 20 | 19 | 95 |
| U-Fone | 20 | 15 | 75 |
| Warid | 20 | 20 | 100 |
| Zong | 20 | 20 | 100 |
| Total | 100 | 94 | 94 |

Management of employees: whether employees are being managed through:

- Teamwork and participation
- Individual risk taking, freedom and uniqueness
- Hard-driving competitiveness and high demands and achievement
- Security, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships

Organizational glue: It identifies what holds the Organization together:

- Loyalty and mutual trust
- Commitment to innovation and development
- Achievement and goal accomplishment
- Formal rules and policies

Strategic emphasis: This is to identify whether organization emphasizes:

- Human development, high trust and openness
- Acquiring new resources and creating new challenges
- Competitive actions and achievement
- Permanence, stability and control

Criteria of success: Determinant of success are:

- Development of human resources, teamwork, and concern for people
- Having most unique or newest products and being product leader and innovator
- Winning in the marketplace and outperforming the competition
- Efficiency, dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low cost

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research method is used to facilitate the description of the prevailing cultural type of five different cellular companies operating in Pakistan. The overall culture of cellular industry is also described by using the data from five individual organizations. Since the data consisted of the perceptions of respondents,

gathered through personally administered survey questionnaire, it seems more logical to adopt descriptive methodology of research.

Sample: The sample was composed of the managerial level employees of five cellular companies (Mobilink, Telenor, U-fone, Warid, and Zong) available in Lahore region. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to five different organization using quota sampling method. The division of sample along with response rate is described in Table 1.

Instrument and data analysis: For the purpose of this study, researchers personally administered Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) to managerial level employees of five cellular companies. OCAI is an established tool used to provide data to identify cultural types and leadership roles within the Competing Values Framework (CVF) model. OCAI is based on four classifications of culture (Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy) proposed by Cameron and Quinn (1999).

OCAI consists of twenty four declarative statements arranged in six sections that solicit responses for the following content dimensions: dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organizational glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria for success (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). Each of the six areas consist of four questions in which respondents were asked to describe their perception of current and desired organizational culture for a total of twenty four responses.

OCAI used constant sum scale to collect data. The respondents were asked to spend 100 points among four alternatives for each cultural dimension described above. The intent was to identify the organization's current culture. The respondents were then asked to use same method and give their responses on same instrument about their desired organizational culture. Scores by the respondents were recorded and the averages were computed for different alternatives representing the respective culture type of their organization both for current and future situations. The same procedure was adopted to identify the culture of the industry as a whole.

These averages for different organizations and industry as a whole were then plotted on a radar graph consisting of four quadrants with a scale of 0-100 with intervals of 10. The four quadrants represented the clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy culture types

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients

| | Overall instrument (48 Items) | Culture (6 Items Each) | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Clan | | Adhocracy | | Market | | Hierarchy | |
| | | Current | Preferred | Current | Preferred | Current | Preferred | Current | Preferred |
| Industry | 0.704 | 0.691 | 0.632 | 0.702 | 0.630 | 0.693 | 0.717 | 0.640 | 0.763 |
| Mobilink | 0.713 | 0.681 | 0.722 | 0.733 | 0.819 | 0.601 | 0.604 | 0.612 | 0.614 |
| Telenor | 0.736 | 0.640 | 0.704 | 0.651 | 0.670 | 0.722 | 0.645 | 0.749 | 0.758 |
| U-Fone | 0.728 | 0.693 | 0.701 | 0.636 | 0.719 | 0.605 | 0.743 | 0.791 | 0.634 |
| Warid | 0.771 | 0.612 | 0.823 | 0.728 | 0.739 | 0.622 | 0.633 | 0.724 | 0.795 |
| Zong | 0.732 | 0.683 | 0.791 | 0.640 | 0.716 | 0.631 | 0.715 | 0.647 | 0.713 |

Table 3: Dominant culture of cellular companies

| Organization | Culture type | Current situation | | Preferred situation | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | | Mean | Dominant culture | Mean | Dominant culture |
| Industry | Clan | 23.56 | | 27.11 | Clan |
| | Adhocracy | 22.91 | | 25.87 | |
| | Market | 26.64 | | 23.85 | |
| Mobilink | Hierarchy | 27.95 | Hierarchy | 23.39 | |
| | Clan | 21.63 | | 27.54 | |
| | Adhocracy | 23.96 | | 28.04 | Adhocracy |
| Telenor | Market | 26.00 | | 24.29 | |
| | Hierarchy | 28.25 | Hierarchy | 20.21 | |
| | Clan | 23.86 | | 25.83 | Clan |
| U-Fone | Adhocracy | 23.14 | | 23.24 | |
| | Market | 26.26 | | 25.34 | |
| | Hierarchy | 30.32 | Hierarchy | 25.23 | |
| Warid | Clan | 28.13 | Clan | 25.82 | |
| | Adhocracy | 23.68 | | 24.20 | |
| | Market | 25.04 | | 27.09 | Market |
| Zong | Hierarchy | 24.80 | | 24.51 | |
| | Clan | 20.33 | | 28.67 | Clan |
| | Adhocracy | 19.38 | | 26.67 | |
| Zong | Market | 30.38 | Market | 20.50 | |
| | Hierarchy | 29.92 | | 23.79 | |
| | Clan | 23.88 | | 27.29 | Clan |
| Zong | Adhocracy | 24.46 | | 26.83 | |
| | Market | 25.42 | | 22.58 | |
| | Hierarchy | 26.13 | Hierarchy | 23.58 | |

respectively. The scores plotted in each quadrant represent the strength of culture type for the present and future situations exhibited by each organization and the industry.

The reliability of the instrument was tested. To assess the reliability of the scales used in the questionnaire, a coefficient of internal consistency was calculated both for current and preferred situations using Cronbach's Alpha methodology (Santos, 1999). The Cronbach's Alpha score for statements relating to each culture type on the OCAI was calculated for each organization and then for the whole industry. The alpha score was also calculated for all 48 statements for cellular industry and individual organizations separately. The results are shown above in Table 2. These results are consistent with those provided by Cameron and Quinn (1999) and prove the reliability of the instrument.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 indicates the current and preferred dominant culture types for each organization and industry as

perceived by their respective employees. The prevailing dominant culture, of overall cellular industry, happens to be hierarchy culture, according to the highest mean score analysis given in Table 3. However, the difference between mean scores of hierarchy (27.95) and market culture (26.64) is very low. The difference between the standard deviations of hierarchy and market cultures suggests that responses are more consistent in favor of market culture than that of hierarchy culture.

These results are very interesting in terms of their relevance with the Hofstede's analysis of Pakistani culture given in Hofstede culture dimensions study of different nations. The following abstract is taken from Hofstede's website (www.geert-hofstede.com).

"The combination of these two high scores, Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) and Power Distance Index (PDI) create societies that are highly rule-oriented with laws, rules, regulations, and controls in order to reduce the amount of uncertainty,"

Table 4: Strength of organization culture dimensions

| Organization | Organizational culture's dimensions* | Current situation | | Preferred situation | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | | Mean | Dominant culture | Mean | Dominant culture |
| Industry | D C | 26.98 | Market | 28.59 | Market |
| | O L | 29.06 | Hierarchy | 26.48 | Clan |
| | M E | 27.66 | Market | 29.60 | Clan |
| | O G | 31.06 | Hierarchy | 28.29 | Clan |
| | S E | 28.94 | Hierarchy | 26.43 | Adhocracy |
| Mobilink | C S | 27.17 | Market | 27.89 | Clan |
| | D C | 28.00 | Hierarchy | 29.50 | Clan |
| | O L | 29.50 | Hierarchy | 30.25 | Adhocracy |
| | M E | 29.00 | Hierarchy | 30.00 | Clan |
| | O G | 30.00 | Hierarchy | 30.00 | Clan |
| Telenor | S E | 29.00 | Hierarchy | 32.75 | Adhocracy |
| | C S | 27.25 | Adhocracy | 28.75 | Clan |
| | D C | 32.68 | Market | 31.84 | Market |
| | O L | 27.16 | Market | 33.00 | Hierarchy |
| | M E | 26.79 | Clan | 27.53 | Hierarchy |
| U-Fone | O G | 48.16 | Hierarchy | 25.84 | Adhocracy |
| | S E | 28.16 | Hierarchy | 28.16 | Market |
| | C S | 27.63 | Market | 27.11 | Clan |
| | D C | 27.25 | Market | 30.29 | Market |
| | O L | 29.21 | Hierarchy | 30.88 | Hierarchy |
| Warid | M E | 37.75 | Clan | 29.94 | Clan |
| | O G | 29.75 | Adhocracy | 27.47 | Clan |
| | S E | 29.75 | Market | 32.94 | Market |
| | C S | 28.50 | Clan | 29.82 | Clan |
| | D C | 28.25 | Hierarchy | 33.50 | Adhocracy |
| Zong | O L | 31.25 | Market | 32.75 | Clan |
| | M E | 33.50 | Market | 32.50 | Clan |
| | O G | 38.50 | Market | 33.00 | Adhocracy |
| | S E | 37.50 | Hierarchy | 34.00 | Hierarchy |
| | C S | 35.00 | Hierarchy | 27.00 | Clan |
| Zong | D C | 26.00 | Market | 27.50 | Adhocracy |
| | O L | 33.75 | Hierarchy | 29.00 | Clan |
| | M E | 30.25 | Market | 29.25 | Clan |
| | O G | 28.75 | Hierarchy | 28.75 | Clan |
| | S E | 28.25 | Market | 27.75 | Adhocracy |
| | C S | 27.50 | Adhocracy | 29.00 | Adhocracy |

*DC: Dominant Characteristics; OL: Organizational Leadership; ME: Management of Employees; OG: Organizational Glue; SE: Strategic Emphasis; CS: Criteria for Success

As discussed above, the hierarchy culture is based on the implementation of formal rules and regulations, and the successful maintenance of control mechanisms to reduce uncertainty and to bring order. As the characteristics of hierarchy culture resemble with the cultural type explained by Hofstede about Pakistan as a nation, it reinforces that the organizational culture is most of the times a manifestation of the national cultural values.

Another interesting dimension of these results is the prevailing lack of congruence between practiced and desired values. Since, most of the respondents favored clan culture when asked about their preference but the practicing culture is hierarchy, therefore, there exists a huge dissimilarity as these two cultural archetypes are exact opposites of each other.

Analysis of the highest mean values of individual organizations suggests that Hierarchy culture is dominant in three (Mobilink, Telenor and Zong) out of five

organizations in industry, whereas Clan culture is dominant in only one organization i.e. Ufone, as is Market culture dominant in Warid Telecom only, where the average score of hierarchy culture is very close to the score of Market culture.

Since, these results of individual organizations suggest that majority of organizations have Hierarchy culture dominance, the only organization having a substantially different cultural orientation, to be singled out, is U-Fone, which is a public sector organization.

People find their jobs more secure in public sector, moreover the workload and timings of job are much relaxed mostly in public sector organizations. These might be some of the reasons why U-Fone is perceived to practicing culture is hierarchy, therefore, there exists a huge dissimilarity as these two cultural archetypes are exact opposites of each other.

Analysis of the highest mean values of individual organizations suggests that Hierarchy culture is dominant

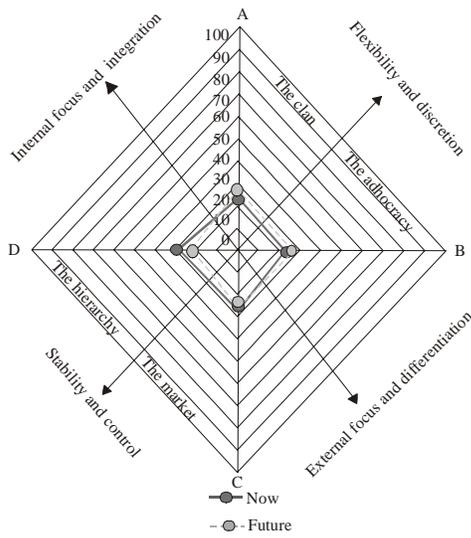


Fig. 2: OCAI dominant culture graph for cellular industry

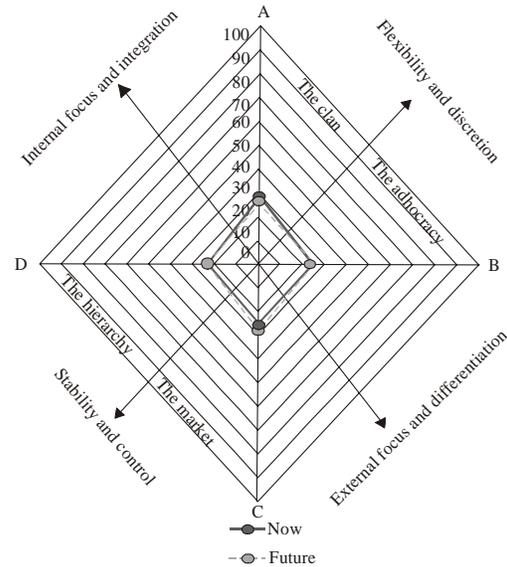


Fig. 4: OCAI dominant culture graph for Telenor

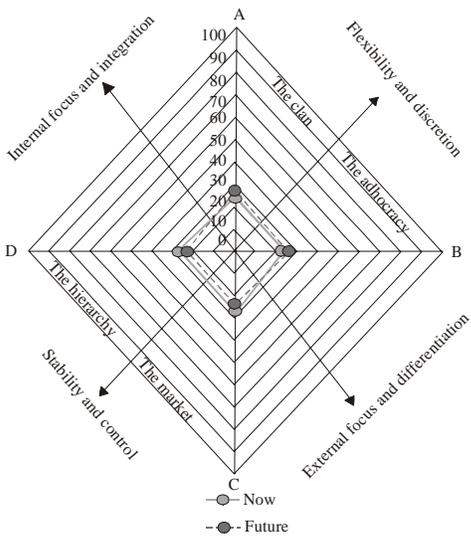


Fig. 3: OCAI dominant culture graph for Mobilink.

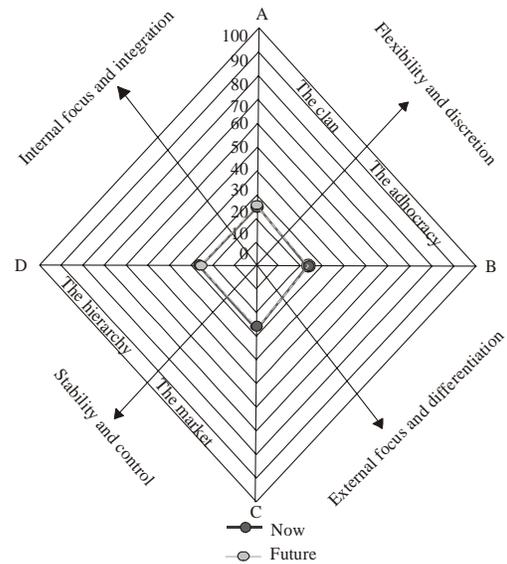


Fig. 5: OCAI dominant culture graph for U-fone

Hierarchy culture dominance, the only organization having a substantially different cultural orientation, to be singled out, is U-Fone, which is a public sector organization. People find their jobs more secure in public sector, moreover the workload and timings of job are much relaxed mostly in public sector organizations. These might be some of the reasons why U-Fone is perceived to be a Clan oriented organization by its employees. The disparity in the current and preferred culture is prevalent in individual organizations and industry as well. Clan is the preferred culture by most of the organizations, leading towards an industry preference as well. Figure 2-7 present

a graphical description of current and preferred dominant cultures of cellular industry as a whole, Mobilink, Telenor, U-Fone, Warid and Zong respectively.

Table 4 indicates the highest mean scores of the organizational culture dimensions both for current and preferred situations. In the present situation, the highest average score exhibited by cellular industry is in the organizational glue dimension (31.06), while the lowest average score is in the dominant characteristics dimension (26.98). In preferred situations, the highest average is recorded in the management of employees dimension

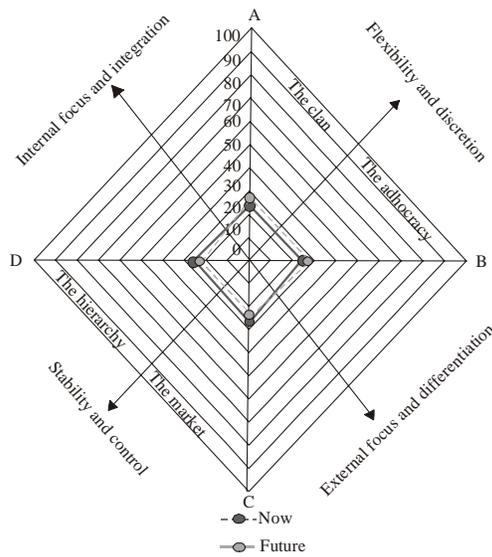


Fig. 6: OCAI Dominant Culture Graph for Warid

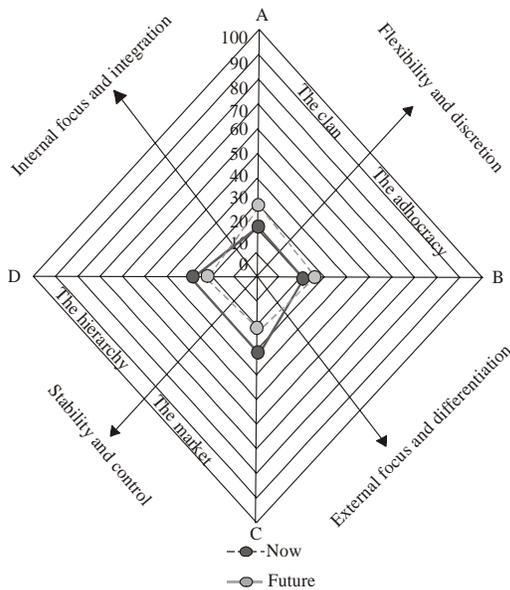


Fig. 7: OCAI Dominant Culture Graph for Zong

(29.60) and the lowest average is in strategic emphasis (26.43). Similarly the dimensional strength of organizational culture is assessed for individual organizations as well.

CONCLUSION

This study is an empirical investigation into the cellular industry of Pakistan, primarily aimed at identifying the form of its prevailing corporate culture and the extent to which people, involved in this industry,

perceive it to be appropriate. Overall cultural profile of the industry and the organizations operating within industry along with dominant archetypes of culture is determined through a personally administered survey employing OCAI based on competing values framework. Although OCAI does not proclaim to comprehensively cover all the cultural phenomena within organizations yet it is most commonly used instrument to diagnose organizational culture because of its strong validity and reliability (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

The results indicate the industry, as well as most of the organizations, to have a dominant hierarchy culture. In contrast, the most desirable cultural archetype, according to the respondents, is an employee focused-Clan culture-indicating a misalignment between what is perceived to exist and what is desired. Results are very much in line with the Hofstede's analysis of Pakistani culture, hence reinforcing the notion that national culture has a strong influence on organizational culture.

Further research into this area can reveal the reasons behind this type of misalignment of existing and desired cultures prevailing within the cellular industry of Pakistan.

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