

Complexity of Organizational Culture and Necessity of Change for Emerging Universities in Turkey

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Abstract

The Republic of Turkey is in addition to a developing country in economic terms, the importance given to technological developments in society with increasing the level of education which is required for this purpose is resulted in growing desire for education, especially for the universities which are post- secondary education. For that reason given by the government to respond to these requests, the opening of a university attaches all provinces mentioned and the plan which is related to opening a university in each province is fully implemented. Therefore the process of institutionalization of the newly founded university managers, perspective of academic staff from different departments to innovations which will be created in the newly-established universities, rules and the process of creating their own unique organizational culture resistors in personnel will be discussed.

KeyWords: Change, OrganizationalCulture, ResistancetoChange, New Universities, Stress

1. Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a very important tool in order to understand behaviors of people who work for an organization (Meek, 1992; Barbosa and Cardoso, 2007). Therefore definition of this term is a must for creating a successful organization. Organizational culture can be defined as set of shared values, beliefs, norms, practices and customary ways of thinking that distinguish the organizations from other organizations and doing things which shape and guide the behavior of organizational members (Louis, 1985; Schein, 1985; Robbins and Judge, 2007; Awal et al., 2006) and it has seven primary characteristics which are indicated below (Robbins and Judge, 2007; Chuang, Church and Zikic, 2004).

- a) *Innovation and risk taking:* The degree of encouraging innovative understanding of members with encouraging of taking risk and less rule- oriented.
- b) *Attention to detail:* The degree of expectation for precision analysis and attention to detail.
- c) *Outcome Orientation:* The degree to which management focuses on results rather than processes which are used for having those results or outcomes.

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- d) *People Orientation*: The degree to which management decisions take into consideration, the effect of outcomes on people within organization. In other words being tolerated and respecting people can be evaluated under this title.
- e) *Team orientation*: The degree to create teams in order to achieve a goal rather than giving importance for individualism.
- f) *Aggressiveness*: The degree for being aggressive and competitive rather than easygoing.
- g) *Stability*: The degree of maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth.

These seven characteristics are components of an organizational culture. It means that they create a composite picture for organizational culture. If these characteristics want to be grouped, three categories can be created (Rousseau, 1990). They are:

- a) Interpersonal relationship (team orientation and people orientation).
- b) The completion of work tasks (Innovativeness, attention to detail and stability).
- c) Individual Behavior (outcome orientation and aggressiveness).

Emerging universities which are a part of big universities can have some problems about these groups; because academics that come from other universities or the big universities will have different cultures and it will provide a conflict among academics. Therefore this situation creates sub- cultures in universities and at the first time, conflict level will increase (İpek and Saklı, 2012). Interpersonal relationship which encompasses team orientation and people orientation can work if members of an organization know each other as working styles and ideological perceptions; because ideological differences or different working disciplines can create clash of ideas and this is an obstacle for team working or people orientation. Interpersonal relationship is the prominent factor rather than other two groups which are called as the completion of work tasks and individual behavior. Namely, if interpersonal relationship doesn't work, all other groups and organizational culture cannot be rooted. Therefore if managers want to have a high level of organizational culture, they must know key factors in Cultural Change. These are listed below (Harvey, Brown and Peters, 2000).

- **Understanding old culture**: Managers must know their existing environment. Because if they don't know existing culture, they can't notice problems within organization.
- **Encourage change in employees**: New ideas should be indicated to organization members. Problems should define and should be mentioned about advantages of change among them. So members will be in change program; because they have got some fears about disadvantages of change. Thanks to define the necessities of change, they will understand all situations will be better for them. So manager can encourage them to change.
- **Follow outstanding units**: Some units in the organization may be incomplete so manager must recognize it and it must be a model for change.
- **Don't impose cultural change**: Coercion for change isn't a good way to emerge innovation. Employees have their own approach about change and an improved culture will emerge.
- **Lead with a vision**: Creating a vision is important to have a good principle to make change. So everything will be clear for change.
- **Large-scale change takes time**: Cultural change can be complete in 3 or 5 years for the big organization.
- **Live the new culture**: Cultural changes are completed then new culture occurs.

Organizations give importance to have effectiveness and define goals and objectives but they have members who have different characteristics, values, beliefs and personalities (Koniordos, 2009). So change applications are so hard because of diversification of members. Therefore managing change is necessary to have a good result with regards to providing both effectiveness and efficiency. On the other hand achieving

goals, employee orientation, coordinated teamwork, cultural strength are key concepts to evaluate changes (Koniordos, 2009).

2. Complexity of Organizational Culture

New universities are composed of academic members who both come from other universities and the universities who give their faculty and institution to new universities. Therefore members of organizations are not homogeny. This creates a problem among them; because universities are internalized some ideologies and violation to ideologies are not accepted by many academics.

If the term of ideology is understood, the reason for ideological conflict can be seen. Ideology is defined as *coherent set of values, beliefs, hopes (sometimes fears) about how the world does and should work* (Wines and Hamilton, 2009: 439). Actually it means that different ideologies lead to different cultural understanding for academics. So it creates complexity of organizational culture both in mind of academic and practices.

Some scholars have found some outcomes after making research on academics in their institution. For example; Dale Lick and Roger Kaufman report that inadequate planning for academic culture provides wrong cultural improvement; then changes are inevitable; but it can't be easily applied (Lick and Kaufman, 2000). This report agrees with Chaffee and Tierney (1988), who emphasize it is hard to change an organizational culture even if it provides improvement; however true strategies that are not guaranteed can create suitable understanding of change for organizations (Linn, 2008). These strategies can be created through knowing changes and change process. Even if changes generate strategies, it is not a law which promises making successful changes.

3. Change and Resistance to Change

Change is a process to create new opportunity in order to reach a high quality performance. This process can be applied with some change programs. But some implementations for these programs are inefficient. In this situation, management style which consists of ideologies is so important because the style of implementation for a program is primary factor to get across some innovation (Beer, Eisenstat, Spector, 1990); however validity for change programs should discuss for universities; because organizations have been changed through management which has some policy in order to implement change programs for institutions. Changes should provide progress and should be completed by management; but it couldn't be possible in universities because of periodic change of management.

Even if it is hard to implement a change program with regard to organizational culture of new universities which are called as emerging universities, there is a general change cycle which can be implemented exists in order to attain success. Figure 1 indicates general change cycle.

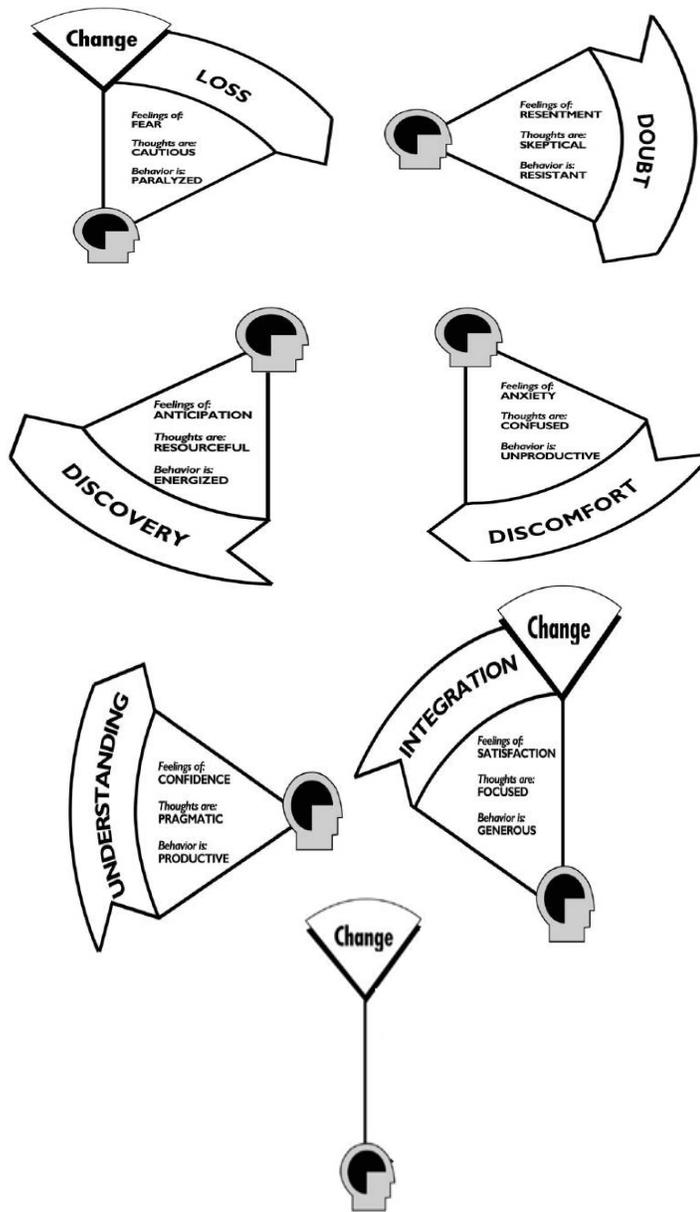


Figure 1: ChangeCycle: Adopted from Salerno and Brock, 2008

The element of every cycle indicates *feeling, thoughts and behavior*. Every stage of the cycle is mentioned as another title. Whole explanations of the cycle are adopted from the study of Salerno and Brock (2008).

Loss

The intention of change has a first effect on staff of organization; therefore feeling of fears is occurred because of unknown outcome for this change plan. Perceiving of that fears cause a cautious signal to brain; then behavior will be paralyzed which can be called as first step for resistance to change.

Doubt

Feeling of resentful will provide an evaluation of this process as inconvenient, embarrassment and insult. Therefore skeptical perception will exist for the management practice about the change process and this will create a resistant to change which is a reaction to management.

Discomfort

Relief will be felt by members of organization in this stage. Members can think resistance to change as an exaggeration. Actually this notion will cause a confused mind because of evaluation of change in details and members will spend more energy. This is a reason for unproductivity for many academics. It is obvious that academic studies are an indicator for productivity of academics.

Discovery

In this stage, there will be an expectation for change. Maybe there will be good things for organizational culture. Thoughts of resourcefully will bring an idea of overcoming problems with regard to change if there is some negative points for members of organization. This will provide energetic reaction for reaching organizational goals.

Understanding

Self- assurance is an agenda for members because of having feeling of confidence. Even if resistance to change exists in an organization, especially in the public sector people should continue their works; therefore they feel to adopt change after understanding of the logic for this change. This will be a pragmatic perception; but will provide higher productivity level.

4. Integration to Change

After understanding stage of change cycle, members will have satisfaction for the change practice. Focused on this change will bring an opportunity to have a behavior as generous.

4.1. Evaluation of Change and Change Cycle

Even if the cycle for the change process are introduced for feeling, thoughts and behavior, there shouldn't be a perception of certain result for the practices of the cycle; because logic of the change thought should be organization and members. Therefore before implementation of this cycle, management should examine the change mind. So this can be done through activity of pre- change period. After finding a change idea, assessing of the idea should be done by organizational members who are in the management level. Approve and schedule of change should prepare and implementation of change should be coordinated by members who take their authorized by management in order to provide legitimacy for change practice. At the end of this pre- change stage, implementation rules and plan should manifest to other members. So change cycle will become a part of this implementation. Every stage of change and organizational positions should be reviewed and if necessary, management should close the implementation of change (Georgeta, 2008).

4.2. Organizational Learning after Change

Organizational learning must be examined deeply in order to be absorbed changes. It will be necessary after the change and change application; so Table 1 indicates learning in organization with four processes.

Table 1: Learning/renewal in organization: four processes through three levels

Level	Process	Inputs/outcomes
	Intuiting	Experience
Individual		Images
		Metaphors
	Interpreting	Language
Group		Cognitive map
		Conversation/dialogue
	Integrating	Shared understanding
Organization		Mutual Adjustment
		Interactive systems
	Institutionalizing	Routines
		Diagnostic systems
		Rules and procedures

Crossan, Lane, and White (1999); reproduced by permission of *Academy of Management Review*

Intuiting: Experiences are important to predict interaction then you can understand there is a problem with individual. This is first process about learning in organizations (Crossan, Berdrow, 2003)

Interpreting : When passing the first process, communication change from preverbal to verbal so there will be a necessities about development both communication and language. Because explaining of an insight can be with interpreting (Crossan, Berdrow, 2003).

Integrating: It is a process to improve emotional values. The goal of this process is about development shared values and making coordinated actions through some mutual adjustment and provide interactive system to create a powerful relations between clients (Crossan, Berdrow, 2003)

Institutionalizing: This process is about systems, structures, procedures and strategies of an organization. They have got a culture and defined tasks through their routines. Of course some mistakes can be occurred but it can solve with diagnostic systems and as a result of this part, managers create some rules and producers to integrate an environment or internal tasks (Crossan, Berdrow, 2003).

5. SOOT (Special Opportunity of Tolerance)

Organizational culture and change are indispensable terms for universities; because successful universities can be created by observing these two concepts. New universities or emerging universities have some

problems both organizational culture and change processes. These problems are mentioned before as separate sections. Even if a successful culture and change processes are made by management, academics should embrace the whole processes; but the first step is to create this understanding through academics. So, **Special Opportunity of Tolerance** is applicable system for universities. It can be defined as a peace oriented view in order to provide encouragement for free thoughts, free criticize, free ideological perspective and focusing on free challenging to thoughts with two- side opinion system which can be used in regular meeting of academics with management. This term is new for management field. Actually this is a strategy proposal.

Feeling of stress in organization is main argument of SOOT. If the term of stress is well- known, pillar of the SOOT can be established easily. Stress was defined as *disaster, trouble, calamity, misery, grief, and sorrow in 17th century* (Güçlü, 2001); but *it was defined as coercion and force in 18th and 19th centuries* (Vokic and Bogdanic, 2007). At the present time, stress has defined as expectation of high performance for members of organization by management (Vokic and Bogdanic, 2007). Especially in academic world, high performance is expected by management of universities in order to attain a good academic level among universities; on the other hand clash of ideas among academics or conflict between academics and management can provide a stress on organization members; because management has authority to implement some bureaucratic procedures on organization members and this is also a reason for being stress. Therefore reducing stress is important factor to constitute a productive and peaceful workplace.

Heller and Darling (2011) have created a Stress- Reducing Guidelines and this is important to provide a base idea for SOOT. Their suggestions are:

- *Recognize and continually review the primary purpose(s) in life:* It means that a person should consider his/her own mission and having goal with regard to life or workplace.
- *Constantly review the nature of thoughts and feelings:* It means having positive perception to events which occur in the workplace.
- *Monitor potential warning signal:* It means managing of own feelings as defensive or sensitive.
- *Identify causes of potential stress:* Making observation for understanding source of stress.
- *Discipline and enhance self-worth and self- thought:* Being discipline and giving importance to own notions, feelings or studies.
- *Prioritize and manage time and activities carefully:* If time and activities are planned, there will be little stress.
- *Be concerned with that which one can do something about and eliminate worry over that which one has no control:* Acceptance of things which can be controlled or trying to provide control on works; because uncontrolled will cause stress.
- *Follow a healthy style:* Regular exercise, adequate sleep and avoidance to smoke or drink will provide less stressful feeling.
- *Learn how to relax:* Music, relaxation of muscles, deep- breathing techniques are some of methods for reducing stress.
- *Develop supportive relationships:* Healthy network between colleagues and/ or friends will provide less stressful environment.

The study of Heller and Darling (2011) has considered individual way to reduce stress; so it can be evaluated as minor role of activities, feelings and thoughts on stress. But major role should consider organization as a whole. Therefore SOOT can be an organizational strategy proposal for reducing stress. In this study, SOOT strategy is designed for emerging universities, the studies which are related to other sectors should use different perception for SOOT with regard to their workplace and job design.

5.1. SOOT Step 1: *Feeling of Special*

As it is mentioned before, management has authority to implement change program or establishment of organizational culture. In all processes, management should make some activities to create an equality understanding on academics without examination of title as assistant, assistant professor, associate professor and professor. Otherwise higher stresses can be seen through whole academics. This step is first strategy of SOOT. If management doesn't make this kind of attitude, academics can't feel special and this causes hostility for both management and organization. So members will cause an unsuccessful management; because there is interrelationship among them. The key sentence for this step is "*Authority presents treat.*"

5.2. SOOT Step 2: *Creating Expression Opportunity*

Management should give the chance to academics free expression. In general, this type of freedom is a legitimate right; but this freedom can be restricted by stressful environment. In other words, if academics don't feel a safe environment or they have some worried about management, they will keep their thoughts; so this kind of workplace doesn't have a real free expression. Therefore management should create expression opportunity for academics. The key sentence for this step is "*Management presents pure opportunity without coercion.*"

5.3. SOOT Step 3: *Two- side Opinion System*

Management should organize regular meeting once a month in academic year. General tendency of this meeting focuses on mentioning university or faculty activities as academic and administrative parts; but management generally doesn't ask opinion of academics or even if they ask, academics can avoid mentioning their negative opinions in this meeting. This is a problem to develop a university; so two- side opinion system is able to be indicated a good solution in order to attain both productive meeting and effective solutions. Two- side opinion system encompasses expression of both positive and negative opinions at the same time but as a written.

Before meeting, academics write their negative and positive opinions even if they don't have any positive one; because if a person is unknown with regard to his/her perception, it will constitute a stressless environment. Then management should read all of negative opinions and freely they should discuss what the solutions will be. So the key sentence for the step is "*Secret idea owner means free expression*".

5.4. SOOT Step 4: *Tolerance of Management*

Management of university or faculty should tolerate whole members even if they have negative perception and management should prove that they show tolerance to whole thoughts or ideas. The key sentence for this step is "*Management is not an enemy for ideas and thoughts.*"

Special Opportunity of Tolerance encompasses these four steps and if it is used in efficient way, an emerging university can develop faster than the position of both stressful environment and feeling unsafe. Therefore it is an opportunity of tolerance.

6. Conclusion

The problem of establishing organizational culture, implementation of change and change processes exist in emerging universities. This causes unproductive and ineffective working environment. On the other hand even if academic structure of these new universities doesn't take into consideration through this study, it is a reality the situation also creates problem; but it is not more important than establishing organizational culture and change; because a new university doesn't have enough academics and this can be seen a problem at the first blush. It is obvious that new universities have taken many aids from Council of Higher Education

with regard to academic staff; for that reason the universities will reach enough academics day by day; so lack of members is not a big problem.

If a university established a powerful organizational culture thanks to management, it will provide a rooted organization and academic problem will be seen less. Especially understanding of SOOT will bring a peaceful environment. Then productivity of academics can be seen in full capacity. On the other hand management should study to create regular report on stress level for organization; because if it does not reduce, new change processes or new cultural establishment can occur and this is an unwanted state for management.

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