The Relationship between Organizational Culture and Knowledge Management

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Definitions of Organizational Culture

A variety of definitions of organizational culture have been proposed by different researchers over the years but no commonly accepted definition presently exists [14-16]. There is but some similarities among the different perspectives on organizational culture found in the literature. According to Pettigrew [17] the unitary notion of culture “lacks analytical bite” and he prefers to rather observe culture as “the source of… symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual and myth”. Brinkman (1999) appears to build on this concept by putting promote a knowledge based definition of organizational culture as a substance that “evolves using the economic process” and is intertwined with company technology. Seel [18] favors an increasing vision of organizational culture and defines it as the developing outcome of ongoing discussions regarding values, meanings and proprieties between the members of that organization and with its condition. In terms of the a variety of definitions reviewed in this research, four common themes were identified and have been summarized in Figure 2.1 namely that culture is (1) a set of shared values, beliefs and assumptions (2) visible behavior patterns, symbols and language (3) based on technology (4) emergent, evolving with learning gained from crises. Some overlap does exist between the various author’s perspectives and definitions.