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Influence of Organisation Culture on Building A Knowledge Based Army

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Abstract: Evolution of Indian Army during the last seven decades has resulted in its vibrant current form. The dynamism and the periodic modes of “Learning” has enhanced its image in the global scenario. Organisation Culture of the Army is a key dimension which has to be monitored and measured or tested. This would enabling the think tank to take action to develop effective framework and policies.

This paper focuses on the three major contributors of a Knowledge Based Army ie Organisation Culture; Learning Organisation and Knowledge Management. Organisation Culture as measured by the OCTAPACE instrument (Pareek,U,1996) has been mapped for the army as Team Work, Initiative and Autonomy (Nagendra & Morappakkam, 2016). While, Learning Organisation focuses (Senge,1994) on Personal Mastery, Mental Model, Team Learning, Shared Vision and Systems Thinking. Lastly, Knowledge Management process involves Creation, Acquisition, Retrieval, Sharing and Storing.

Analysis of the responses from 198 Officers of the army indicate that Organisation Culture has a definite correlation with the dimensions of Knowledge Management and that of Learning Organisation. Distinctively, these three converge to have a influence on each other. Findings indicate that as an organisation Army practices Knowledge Management in a unstructured manner and technology is not exploited for this purpose. While, collective learning is prevalent, individual skills development and awareness requires attention. Thus, The role of Organisation Culture is vital to nurture a Knowledge based Army.

Key Words: Learning Organisation, Knowledge Management, Closed Environment and OCTAPACE.

INTRODUCTION

A common understanding between the organisation and its employees ensures clarity of “How to go about the routine for a day to day productive outcome. This is also termed as organization culture.

Emphatically, the decorum of sharing details, behaviour at work place, values & interests of organisation are a few dimensions which contribute towards Organisation Culture.

Majority of its members, at all levels, need to accept a form of work ethics which would be the best for an organisation. However, this concept is dynamic and has to evolve.

This paper intends to study the Influence of Organisation Culture on making the Indian Army Knowledge Enabled. It uses OCTAPACE (Pareek,U,1996), profiling to gauge the internal dynamics of Indian Army. The measures needed for the organisation to learn and manage its Knowledge.

Mapping team work, initiatives and autonomy (Nagendra & Morappakkam, 2016) with existing OCTAPACE parameters of Pareek is the key facet to arrive at prevailing status. The ever changing environment in which Army functions warrants periodic measurement of the need for changes in its culture

The main objective would be to measure the impact of Army culture on its Learning and Knowledge Management Process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Appropriate literature review was undertaken to answer our objectives. We have used key words like Learning Organisation, Knowledge Management, Closed Environment and OCTAPACE, to search literature. The principle of inclusion/ exclusion based on review of abstracts was used, as very few studies reflect on the Indian Armys' Organisation Culture.

Definition: Knowledge Management. The definitions are highlighted in Table 1 below:-

Table 1
Knowledge Management Definitions

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Author</i>
Knowledge management is the process of creating, stocking, sharing and reusing organizational knowledge which enables the organization to achieve its aims and goals.	Zarei Matin et al. (2009 and 2010); Luciano. (2010); Abdulmanafi. (2010)
The most initial definition on knowledge management is to find a way to create, identify, capture, share and distribute organizational knowledge	Forcadell. (2002).
“Knowledge management is defined as a strategy which should be developed in an organization. To assure that knowledge is received by right people in needed time, it should be shared and the information should be used to improve organizational tasks).	Davenport, T.H., Prusack, L. (1998)
Knowledge management refers to the process of identifying, selecting, organizing and classifying the information in the organization which can improve the performance of employees and organizational competitive advantages	Wilson. (2002).
Another definition asserts that knowledge management includes methods of improvement and practical instruments which aid management to improve working techniques and products in any part of the organization”	O'Dell. (1998)

- KM is the renaissance of thinking, creating, sharing, leveraging and applying the knowledge, expertise and intellectual capital to retain knowledge before employees leave the organization (Bennet and Bennet, 2008).
- The definition of KM as applicable to this study is “systematic, organized, explicit and deliberate ongoing process of creating, disseminating, applying, renewing and updating the knowledge for achieving organizational objectives (Davenport, T. H., Prusack, L. (1998).

Organizations Operating in a Closed-environment

Organizations operating in a closed information environment have the requirement to maintain high security. To allow free flow of knowledge and information presents a considerable challenge. Choo Hong Telvin Goh Val Hooper, (2009).

Military transformation implies Military knowledge management ie to convert itself into a knowledge-based and network-based organization (Dariush Rahmati *et al.*, 2014). Military knowledge management plans to promote rationality of decision in all facets of national interest.

Knowledge management in the army encompasses the power of group knowledge nurtured by the processes of generating, gathering, organizing, sharing and transferring (Amini and Anami, 2010).

As Jones and Mahon (2012, p. 774) exemplify “in a military environment knowledge is sometimes needed in more mission-critical situations like a battlefield, where real-time decisions can have life or death consequences and where knowledge delivered late is useless”.

“The contributions of military organizations to societal knowledge touch nearly every aspect of human endeavors.” (Bennet.A, Bennet. D, Lee. S. L, 2010).

Although Erwin and Tiron (2002) reported that the US Army had been one of the most fervent adopters of knowledge management, very little, if any, material is available on the knowledge management practices in other national military organizations.

UK Ministry of Defence (IBM Global Business Services, 2006) and the Canadian Defence Force (Defence Research and Development Canada, 2008) report seems to be on the means rather than the content.

Definition: Learning Organisation

Learning in organizations as a multilevel process whereby members individually and collectively acquire knowledge by acting together and reflecting together. (Scott, B, B, 2011). Another concept of learning is when existing operating models and patterns of thinking must be replaced with fresh, novel ones. To do so, organizational leaders must stimulate new ways of thinking and acting amongst individuals, groups, and communities (Bontis, Crossan, & Hulland, 2002; Nonaka, 1994). An organization’s ability to learn, unlearn, and relearn has been compared to the rejuvenating properties of the “fountain of youth” (Inkpen & Crossan, 1995).

Organizational learning could be considered as the process of developing open-minded inquiry and informed interpretation. Huber (1991) distinguishes between learning and action by suggesting that an

organization has learned “if any of its units acquires knowledge that it recognizes as potentially useful to the organization”.

(Senge, 1990) describes “learning organizations” as “organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together”. The Five Disciplines (Senge, 1990) that are the keys to transforming organizations from traditional authoritarian to “learning” modes are Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Shared Vision, Team Learning and Systems Thinking. The first two address individuals, while the next two focuses on groups within the organization. Systems Thinking the “Fifth Discipline,” binding the other four disciplines together and strengthens organizations. This definition will be utilized for research in this paper.

Link Between Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation

In the past decade, more and more researchers and practitioners have begun to acknowledge the potential synergies and interrelationships between knowledge and learning. This is particularly evident in the convergence of the concepts of the learning organization (LO) and knowledge management (KM).

Senge (1990/2006) first introduced the concept of the learning organization as a set of core learning capabilities that enable an organization to innovate (i.e., to create new knowledge) and create sustainable advantage. In 1999, Senge shared that he saw KM addressing “the same critical issues [that the Society of Organizational Learning] members have been struggling with—the sustainable creation, transfer, and dissipation of organizational knowledge” (Karlensig as cited in McElroy, 2003).

Loermans (2002) defines the relationship between KM and LO by stating that the LO focuses on the learning process and generating new knowledge while KM “takes the output from the LO, manages it and ensures that an appropriate environment to perpetuate the generation and management of knowledge capital is being properly maintained”.

Loermans (2002) recommends that “a corporate architecture needs to be created to facilitate learning at the organization level and to create knowledge sharing and dissemination mechanisms across the organization”. Thus, people, cultural, and infrastructure considerations must always come first for the success of any KM.

Organizational Culture

An evolution of of beliefs, rituals, symbols, and myths, to influence employee behaviour in organization and aims to reduce individual dynamics (Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Factors such as attitudes, norms, ethos, climate, environment, do have an effect on Organizational culture (Subrahmanian, 2012).

The (Pareek, U, 1996) eight dimensions of OCTAPACE culture are Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Pro-action, Autonomy, Collaboration, and Experimentation. Any organisation scoring high on the OCTAPACE values have a greater chance of success.

Mapping the same for Indian army as undertaken by Nagendra and Morappakkam in 2016 here they define “Team Work as a combination of Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity and Collaboration. (Greater Trust implies Greater Dependability). Initiative, includes Pro-Action and Experimentation. The last factor is Autonomy.”

Organisation Culture of the Army is a key “Link” enabler between the Knowledge Management “Driver” ie Leadership and the “Dependent” enabler of Ownership (Nagendra and Morappakkam, 2016).

Research Gaps

- Details of impact of Organisation Culture on Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation in the Army is limited
- Analyse how Organisation Culture influences Learning and the part they play on the dimensions of making **Army Knowledge Enabled**.

Objectives for the Study

- To analyze the impact of dimensions of organizational culture on KM and LO in the the Army.
- To analyze the contribution of organisation culture towards Knowledge Based Army

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

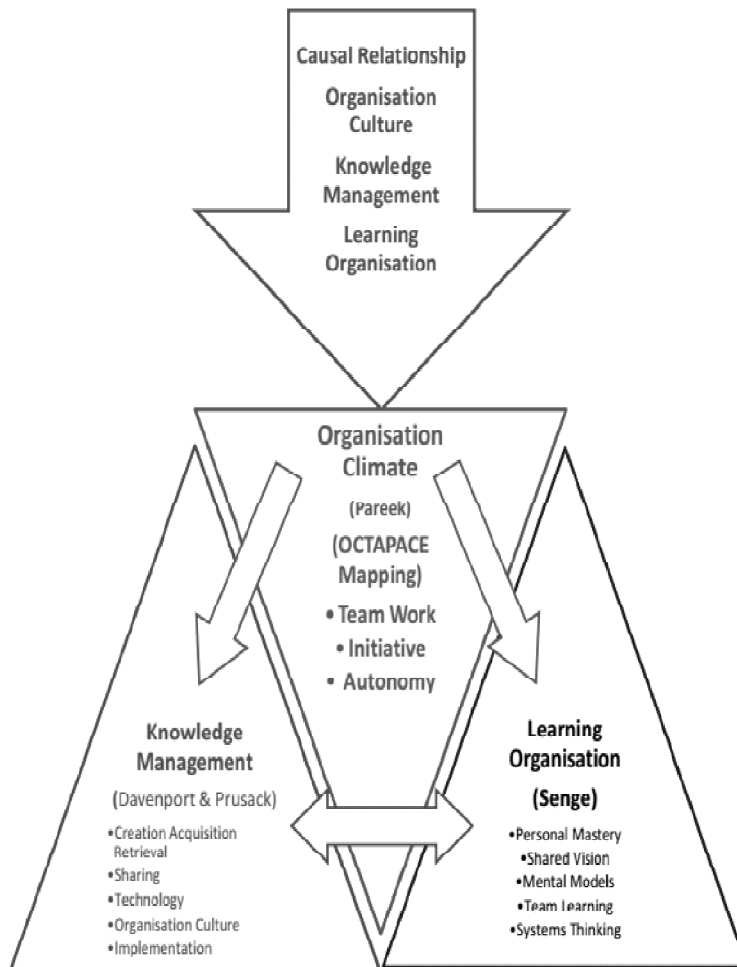


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Based on the exhaustive Literature Review the theoretical framework which has been evolved is shown as Figure 1. This will be tested for Correlation and Regression.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Design to test the above theoretical framework is discussed in the succeeding paragraph.

Experts Opinion: Instruments relevant to corporate had to be adapted for the closed environment of the army. Thus, senior officers of the Army who have been associated with the establishment for over 25 years were involved in mapping of the questionnaire.

Respondents: To assess activities at levels and the perception of Organisation Culture on Knowledge Management the primary source of data were from officers of the Army.

Samples. Random sampling technique has been used, wherein we selected a group of subjects (a sample) for study from a larger group (a population). In the context of the subject, respondents were appropriately identified. To reduce the non-response bias, the team physically issued the questionnaire, held a cross dialogue and retrieved the necessary inputs from the respondents for primary data. In addition, conducting validation studies and other data quality control measures were considered as alternative to reduce inadvertent errors. **A Sample Size of 198 Army Officers was utilised.**

Questionnaire Design. Survey on status of KM and LO in the Army was undertaken. It consisted of five parts and 32 questions as(Part 1:Information Capture, Retention & Access-4 Questions; Part 2:Information Sharing-7 Questions; Part 3: Role of Technology-5 Questions; Part 4: Organisation Culture and Practises -8 Questions; Part 5: Implementation of KM-8 Questions).

Method of Investigation. Research was performed with the aim to ascertain the causal relationship between the factors of Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation in the context of Army Culture. The data have been analyzed using “SPSS” Version 19.0.

DATA COLLATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Reliability Statistics. Table 2 below gives the measure of internal consistency & reliability Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.910 indicates highly levels of data consistency & reliability

Table 2
Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach’s Alpha</i>	<i>Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items</i>	<i>N of Items</i>
0.911	0.910	10

Correlation Analysis. The relationship between the dimensions of Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation is shown in Table 3 below :

Table 3
Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	<i>KM Information-Capture, Retention & Access</i>	<i>KM Information Sharing</i>	<i>KM Technology as an enabler</i>	<i>KM Organisation Culture & Practice of KM</i>	<i>KM Implementation</i>	<i>LO Team Learning</i>	<i>LO Shared Vision</i>	<i>LO Mental Models</i>	<i>LO Personal Mastery</i>	<i>LO Systems Thinking</i>
KM Information-Capture, Retention & Access	1.000	.726	.337	.688	.254	.736	.898	.829	.348	.371
KM Information Sharing	.726	1.000	.363	.694	.155	.940	.852	.736	.238	.446
KM Technology as an enabler	.337	.363	1.000	.247	.298	.321	.339	.585	.696	.289
KM Organisation Culture & Practice	.688	.694	.247	1.000	.090	.746	.786	.693	.166	.661
KM Implementation	.254	.155	.298	.090	1.000	.115	.223	.485	.712	.543
LO Team Learning	.736	.940	.321	.746	.115	1.000	.804	.704	.199	.426
LO Shared Vision	.898	.852	.339	.786	.223	.804	1.000	.780	.310	.463
LO Mental Models	.829	.736	.585	.693	.485	.704	.780	1.000	.504	.498
LO Personal Mastery	.348	.238	.696	.166	.712	.199	.310	.504	1.000	.385
LO Systems Thinking	.371	.446	.289	.661	.543	.426	.463	.498	.385	1.000

Note: Pearson Correlation tabulated above is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Data in Table 3 above enables us to analyse the degree of correlation and the relationship between the dimensions of Organisation Culture and that of Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation.

Between Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation

Correlations between Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR) and Team Learning(TL) ($r=0.736$), Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR) and Shared Vision (SV) ($r=0.898$), Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR) and Mental Models(MM) ($r=0.829$).

Correlations between Information Sharing (SH) and Team Learning(TL) ($r=0.940$), Information Sharing (SH) and Shared Vision (SV) ($r=0.852$), Information Sharing (SH) and Mental Models(MM) ($r=0.736$); while Information Sharing (SH) & Personal Mastery (**$r=0.238$**).

Correlation between Technology (Tech) & Personal Mastery(PM) ($r= 0.696$); while Technology (Tech) & Systems Thinking (**$r=0.289$**)

Correlations between Knowledge Management Implementation (Imp) and Personal Mastery(PM) ($r=0.712$), while Knowledge Management Implementation (Imp) and Shared Vision (SV) (**$r=0.223$**)

Between Organisation Culture and dimensions of Knowledge Management

Correlations between Organisation Culture (OC) and Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR) ($r=0.688$), Organisation Culture (OC) and Information Sharing (SH) ($r=0.694$), while Organisation Culture (OC) and Technology(Tech) is (**$r=0.247$**), Organisation Culture (OC) and Implementation(Imp) (**$r=0.090$**).

Between Organisation Culture and dimensions of Learning Organisation

Correlations between Organisation Culture (OC) and Team Learning(TL) ($r=0.746$), Organisation Culture (OC) and Shared Vision(SV) ($r=0.786$), Organisation Culture (OC) and Mental Models(MM) ($r=0.693$), Organisation Culture (OC) and Systems Thinking(ST) ($r=0.661$); while Organisation Culture (OC) and Personal Mastery(PM) is (**$r=0.166$**).

SUMMARY & IMPLICATIONS

High Correlation between major dimensions of Knowledge Management process Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR) and Knowledge Sharing(KSH) with Shared Vision, Team Learning and Mental Models; indicate that systems are conducive for Learning.

Low Correlation of Information Sharing (KSH), Technology (Tech) with Personal Mastery indicate that skills development contributing to individual growth and awareness have to be addressed.

Low Correlation between Technology (Tech) & Systems Thinking reveals that technology needs to be exploited for the overall decision making process, planning for contingencies and forecasting.

High Correlation between Organisation Culture and Information Capture Retention Access (ICAR), Information Sharing (SH) indicates that the organisation unconsciously utilises prevalent procedures for Knowledge proliferation. However, structured methods for implementation and use of technological advancements have not been exploited.

High Correlation between Organisation Culture and Team learning (TL), Shared Vision(SV) , Mental Models(MM) and Systems Thinking(ST) indicates that group learning in the organisation is extensively practised resulting in reasonable Learning Organisation. However, Organisation Culture effect on Personal Mastery requires attention.

Recommendations. From the findings it is evident that in the context of the requirement of the army and the opportunity for evolving into a Knowledge Based Army, Organisation Culture measures well. Issues which require attention are:

- Structured measures to be undertaken for Knowledge Management.
- Individual growth must be nurtured. Increase in awareness, developed skill sets and empowerment of individuals will contribute towards informed and effective decision making.

ANALYSIS FOR A KNOWLEDGE BASED ARMY

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression to determine the overall fit (variance explained) of the model and the relative contribution of each of the predictors to the total variance explained. The need to know how much of the variation in Knowledge Management Process and Learning Organisation can be explained by Organisation Culture “as a whole”, also the “relative contribution” of each independent variable in explaining the variance.

The Table 4 below is Model Summary table. This table provides the R, R², adjusted R², and the standard error of the estimate, which can be used to determine how well a regression model fits the data:

Table 4
Model Summary^b

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
1	.807 ^a	.652	.650	8.404

a. Predictors: (Constant), KM Organisation Culture & Practice of KM

b. Dependent Variable: Knowledge Management & Learning Organisation

The “R” column represents the value of R, the multiple correlation coefficient. R can be considered to be one measure of the quality of the prediction of the dependent variable; in this case: Knowledge Management & Learning Organisation. A value of 0.807, indicates a good level of prediction.

The “R Square” column represents the R² value (also called the coefficient of determination), which is the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables (technically, it is the proportion of variation accounted for by the regression model above and beyond the mean model). You can see from our value of 0.652 that our independent variables explain 65.2% of the variability of our dependent variable, (Knowledge Management & Learning Organisation).

Statistical significance. The F-ratio in the ANOVA Table 5 (see below) tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(1,196)=366.699$, $p<.0005$ (i.e., the regression model is a good fit of the data).

Table 5
ANOVA^b

<i>Model</i>		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	Regression	25897.267	1	25897.267	366.699	.000 ^a
	Residual	13842.051	196	70.623		
	Total	39739.318	197			

a. Predictors: (Constant), KM Organisation Culture & Practice of KM

b. Dependent Variable: Total Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation

Estimated model coefficients

The general form of the equation to predict Total Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation from Organisation Culture ie Total Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation predicted = 2.492 x Organisation Culture & Practice This is obtained from the Coefficients Table 6, as shown below:

Unstandardized coefficients indicate how much the dependent variable varies with an independent variable when all other independent variables are held constant. This means that for each times the Organisation Culture increases, there is a 2.492 times increase in KM and LO. To summarise the regression:-

“A multiple regression was run to predict Knowledge Management and Learning Organisation from Organisation Culture. These variables statistically significantly predicted dependant variable as $F(1,196)=366.699$, $p<.0005$, $R^2 = .652$. The variable added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$ ” .

Table 6
Coefficients^a

<i>Model</i>		<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>		<i>95.0% Confidence Interval for B</i>		<i>Collinearity Statistics</i>		
		<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>	<i>VIF</i>
1	(Constant)	49.618	3.507		14.147	.000	42.701	56.536		
	KM Organisation Culture & Practice	2.492	.130	.807	19.149	.000	2.235	2.748	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Total Knowledge Management & Learning Organisation

Pearson’s Correlation : Organisation Culture & Practice and Knowledge Based Army

Pearson’s correlation coefficient is .807, Refer Table 6 below; which signifies a high positive linear correlation. The predicted a linear relationship between the combined values of KM & LO with Organisation Culture is confirmed

Table 7
Pearson Correlation between Organisation Culture & Practice Correlations and Knowledge Based Army

		<i>Total KM & LO</i>	<i>KM Organisation Culture & Practice</i>
Pearson Correlation	Total KM & LO	1.000	.807
	KM Organisation Culture & Prctice	.807	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Total KM & LO	.	.000
	KM Organisation Culture & Practice	.000	.
N	Total KM & LO	198	198
	KM Organisation Culture & Practice	198	198

CONCLUSIONS

Team work, Initiative and Autonomy together constitute the Organisation Culture. Knowledge Sharing being a dominant part of KM Process is promoted by the constituents of Team Work ie Openness, Trust, Collaboration, Authenticity and Confrontation. This has the synergic effect for successful decision making. In turn the issues related to Initiative (Proaction and Expetimentation) form the bed rock for Mental Models, and Systems Thinking.

In an institution like the army group dynamics is dominant and knowledge sharing and consequent learning is essential. Ingrediants of organisation culture which foster these aspects have to be imbibed.

The role of Organisation Culture is vital to nurture a Knowledge based Army Limitations of the Study & Way Ahead

This is an analysis of survey conducted in-house of officers of the army. The ideal method for such complex relationship could be Structural Equation Modelling. Reviewing Organisation culture periodically requires a wise mind and judgment.

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