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DIAGNOSIS AND ASSIMILATION OF CORPORATE CULTURE IN THE NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE: VALIDATING GOFFEE AND JONES (1998)'S CULTURAL TYPOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Studies have prevailed examining culture in the civil service in terms of group characteristics rather than individual characteristics which is typical with common definitions of organisational culture. Meanwhile, the typology of studying organisational culture from the group perspective seems more encompassing. The study emphasizes the relevance of assimilating organisational culture in terms of solidarity and sociability captured as the Double S Cube conception by Goffee and Jones (1998) as a diagnostic framework for understanding organisational culture in the Nigerian federal civil service. Using a cross-sectional survey of 86 civil servants from selected organisations, the study subjected the data collected to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability testing. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (0.872) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($\chi^2 = 958.615$, $df = 171$, $p < .001$) confirmed sampling adequacy and item intercorrelation. Two factors emerged, accounting for 62.77% of the variance, consistent with the theoretical dimensions. After removing weakly loading items, the scale achieved excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.943$). These findings confirm the construct validity and reliability of the Double S Cube in diagnosing culture within Nigerian civil service organisations. The study has been able to provide practical approach for identifying prevailing cultural patterns, guiding cultural reforms, and strengthening organisational effectiveness.

Key words; Corporate culture, Organisational culture, Double S Cube, Solidarity and Sociability

INTRODUCTION

The constructions of culture have captured the interest of many disciplines over the years. Much research has been conducted to uncover the diverse aspects of culture and its impact on human behaviours. Culture being as old as mankind has played a part to understanding individual differences and preferences across groups and societies. There has also been a growing need to understand organisational culture in corporate organisations. The field of organisational psychology has had its own share in the research surrounding culture in corporate organisations. Studies (Mikusova et al., 2023; Ogbonna, 2010; Zheng et al., 2025) have modelled research in organisational culture in different critical areas in a bid to ascertain the extent of her influence on the organisation and employee outcomes. However, the discrepancies in cultural parameters have made the subject of studying organisational culture in the Nigerian civil service more complicated. The course of influencing culture to have a predetermined effect on organisational factors and employees behaviours has also been a subject of concern.

The etymology of the word 'culture' is from a Latin word 'colere', which means 'to tend the earth and grow', or 'cultivate and nurture'. Tijani et al. (2016) argued that there has been no universal acceptable definition of culture due to the complexity of cultural dimensions. Definitions tend to vary from one country to another, one continent to another. What is morally acceptable in one country may be abominable in another. What generally constitutes a culture is the way of life of a group of people; their behaviours, beliefs, values, way of thinking, feeling, reacting, dressing, eating, and greeting. Culture also includes the increasing deposit of knowledge, experience, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, society, roles and spatial relations (Irfan, 2016). It is a system of knowledge, beliefs, procedures, attitudes, and artefacts that is shared within a group (Gill, 2013).

CULTURE IN CORPORATE ORGANISATIONS

Following the complex nature of conceptualising culture, there has been a parallel disparities in the meaning and use of culture in corporate organisations across society, cultures and customs around the world (Bardley et al., 2007; Fischer, 2004; Osawe, 2015). Some studies argue that an organisation plays a significant part to building and developing organisational culture (Chukwu et al., 2017; Sadri & Lees, 2001). Other studies indicated that there are aspects of culture which are not necessarily proponents of an organisation but are made out of the way people work that may influence work and organisational behaviours (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Li, 2015; Ogbonna, 2010; Traven et al., 2008; Zheng et al., 2025). For instance, Su and Littlefield (2001) suggests that Chinese work culture has known as “*guaxi*” – a workaholic culture, places relationships and moral obligations flowing from this relationship above other factors. While the Indians, Chinese and Japanese are also known with a workaholic culture, the Americans tend to job-hop to make ends meet based on the nature of work in their economy. For Nigerian civil service organisations, the basic foundations for culture are built by the civil service commission and the Office of the Head of service and enshrined in the public service rules (Etire-Ebute & Anifosowe, 2019; Mustapha & Adetunji, 2018; Ujebe et al., 2023). Furthermore, Ujebe et al. (2023) argue that the ability to identify the culture traits of an organisation provides a platform for better understanding of the operations of the organisation for a better performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The **Collective Constructionist** Theory is a cultural psychological theory whose tenets can serve as a base to understanding disparities in organisational culture with a psychological perspective. It is a major point of focus in cultural psychology to develop principles of intentionality by which culturally constituted realities and reality-constituting psyches continually and continuously make each other up. Realities from cultures and psyches perturb reciprocally by interpenetrating each other's identity and conditioning each other's existence (Shweder, 1995).

This theory posits that the co-creation processes between culture and minds occur via everyday situations that are collectively experienced in specific cultural contexts. More specifically, the theory proposes that daily situations are culturally constructed realities, and thus systematically vary from one culture to another. Individuals who subscribe to shared cultural values and assumptions collectively produce daily situations that are consistent with their cultural values and assumptions. Those situations in turn function as mechanisms of promotion and maintenance of a particular set of psychological tendencies. Thus, it is a theory that focuses on the mutual-shaping processes between daily situations and psychological tendencies from the inclusive mutual constitution framework, that is, the interrelation between perceptions, cognition and the daily choices and decision people make as they interact (Kimin & Heejung, 2014).

Based on the tenets of this theory, organisational culture is assumed to be unique in the Nigerian context and as much, in its civil service since the theory holds that situations are daily culturally constructed realities. Hence, the experience of working in the civil service over time can generate a substantive work culture and perception of work among civil servants. The theory collects cultural data by asking participants to describe situations. Hence, organisational culture in the Nigerian civil service can be ascertained through formations from experiences built overtime by working in the service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The civil service in Nigeria is used to refer to workers in service to the government in her ministries, extra-ministerial departments, and agencies (MDA) excluding the armed forces, judiciary and the police (Nweakeku & Obiorah, 2019; Osawe, 2015). According to Obasa (2018), the public service rules (PSR) serve as the corporate culture in the civil service to moderate and regulate the conduct of civil servants.

In the study of Rahim et al. (2017) which ran through historical development within the civil service, it was shown that the civil service was a product of British colonialism. Service then

was created as a mechanism to conveniently implement the administrative structure and activities of the British colonialist for exploitation and actualization of colonial rule. The public service in Nigeria however, transformed after independence in 1960 to a complex structure for harnessing the country's resources and to expedite economic development in a way and manner that will transform natural resources into goods and services that would meet the increasing expectations of the citizens. Hence corporate culture as instituted in the PSR is one of service to the nation.

However, Osawe (2015) on examining the issues and challenges confronting the public sector performance, showed that the culture in the civil service is not strictly adhered to as rules are often neglected. The culture of respect for elder, uncommon loyalty and brotherly love based on age, religious or ethnic affiliation have affected work and service delivery in the Nigerian civil service. Furthermore, on examining organisational culture in the civil service, it was observed that the high rate of favouritism and nepotism, bribery and corruption, absenteeism and lateness to work tends to negatively shape organisational culture in the civil service. In addition, the lack of morale had made workers to neglect the culture and principles of the civil service for their own ideologies of work (Udofia et al., 2021). In the light of this, Obasa (2018) suggested that the civil service rules should be revisited and amended to recent management principles in contemporary age.

More studies have revealed conceptual issues surrounding organisational culture in the Nigerian civil service. Several cultural typologies have been applied towards understanding her culture. Although the term organisational culture has flooded these research studies on culture in the civil service, Sadri and Lee (2001) clarified that corporate culture is often used interchangeably with organisational culture.

The study of Chilaka et al. (2019) which associated organisational culture with good governance among senior civil servants measured culture in terms of adaptability, involvement, consistency and mission. In Akintola and Adepoju (2016)'s study among secretaries in Oyo state civil service, culture was conceptualised as the history of consistency of an organisation over a period of time. Mba (2013) used four (4) dimension of organisational culture – teamwork, communication, training and development, and reward and recognition were deployed to examine culture in Bayelsa state civil service. Another study patterned organisational culture after pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions that may not have been articulated but shape the ways in which people in organisations behave and things get done (Mustapha & Adetunji, 2018).

The aforementioned studies examined more of group characteristics than individual characteristics in conceptualising culture. Common definitions of culture see culture as consisting of shared features amongst a group of individuals that distinct the group from others. Hence the typology of studying and understanding culture from group perspective seems more encompassing. Furthermore, the need for understanding of corporate culture in the Nigerian civil service from the group perspective bears on two (2) main reasons. First, Osawe (2018) had referred to the civil service as having a dysfunctional ecology – in terms of the relationship between the civil service and its environment (physical, cultural, social). Hence, the concept of culture bearing upon relationship in the group context may have an edge over the seeming conglomeration of other individual cultural characteristics.

Secondly, Udofia et al. (2021) observed that the civil service is currently bedeviled with poor organisational culture and practices such as lateness, insubordination, lack of commitment to work and undue interference from the political office holders. This implies that the cultural prescription in the public service rule has not successfully created or shaped culture in the civil service. It will henceforth be a weak base to incorporate such definition of culture in research aiming to understand other aspects of behaviours and attitudes which may be influenced by organisational culture.

Consequently, on understanding culture on the group level, Montgomery (2006) describes that culture can develop out of sync with formal written rules. Accordingly, this form of culture is best understood with the double S cube. The double S cube was first introduced in the study of Goffee and Jones (1998) to understand culture in terms of solidarity and sociability and as

a diagnostic tool for corporate culture in organisations. The work of Mikusova et al. 2023 situated the double S Cube as salient conceptualization of organisational culture while empirically diagnosing organizational culture with the Competing Values Framework OCAI in Czech Republic. Their study revealed how relational conceptions of culture can be translated into pragmatic diagnosis, but however did not utilize solidarity and sociability in their diagnosis. The study fills the gap in deploying the solidarity and sociability thus extending the reliability and construct validity of the scale in Africa public sector. In essence, the study tested the psychometric properties of Goffee and Jones (1998)'s scale of organisational culture in selected organisations in the federal civil service, in Abuja.

Diagnosing Solidarity and Sociability Culture

Solidarity and sociability are derivatives of two sociological concepts - social solidarity and spontaneous sociability. Sociability refers to the degree of friendliness, cooperation and kindness between the members of a group. It describes the emotional relations between individuals or groups. Solidarity refers to the degree of commonality of objectives and goals between the members of a group (Goffee & Jones, 1998). Solidarity is based on the interests of individuals pursuing shared goals with an emphasis on what is in it for me (Bentum & Stone, 2005).

Grudzinskiy and Petrovia (2015) argue that the positive effect of sociability is creativity because it promotes the exchange of information and team-work. While, the negative effect is the risk of creation of groups (cliques); and the actions of such groups can damage the decision-making process in the organisation. The positive effect of solidarity is the promotion of unity and coordinated work to achieve common goals, while, the negative effect is the isolation of employees that have different views. Organisational solidarity and sociability have been two effective dimensions of organisational culture prevalent in diagnosing the working culture in organisations while studying its underlying effects (Malagas et al., 2017; Pinto et al., 2017; Ponnu& Hassan, 2015; Sadri & Lees, 2001). Consequently, as shown on Figure 1, there are four (4) kinds of culture which could be diagnosed in organisations based on the level of sociability and solidarity, namely: fragmented, networked, mercenary and communal culture.

<i>Sociability</i>	High	NETWORKED	COMMUNAL
	Low	FRAGMENTED	MERCENERY
		Low	High
		<i>Solidarity</i>	

Figure 1: Double S Cube Organisational Culture Diagnosis

Source: Rashid et al. (2004 p175)

1. **Fragmented culture:** The fragmented culture exists where there is low sociability and low solidarity. It places low value on collective experience and a high value on individualism and autonomy. Employees are expected to be free agents, distinct individuals with highly developed specific skills who function in an almost autonomous manner with regard to their work. This culture is common in fast paced, high-risk organizations, such as investment banking, advertising, and in some high technology

fields, as well as within academic departments and faculty in universities (Goffee & Jones, 1998). Attendance at meetings and planning session are considered as a disdainful obligation rather than something of value. Leadership roles in this type of culture may be viewed as an unwelcome, imposed assignment (Montgomery, 2006).

2. **Networked Culture:** A networked culture is characterized by the fact that people know and like each other as often indicated by high level of sociability and low solidarity. The network culture fosters high levels of socialisation between its members which in turn translate into a high degree of loyalty, and commitment to the organisation and its goals. Significant value is placed on the ideal of reciprocity in human interactions (Montgomery, 2006).
3. **Mercenary culture:** The mercenary culture is the flip side of a networked culture characterised by high solidarity and low sociability. According to Montgomery (2006), mercenary culture is “restless and ruthless” and includes the “hallmarks of high solidarity: strong, rather fierce, agreement around goals, a zest to get things done quickly, a powerful shared sense of purpose, a razor-sharp focus on goals and a certain boldness and courage about overcoming conflict and accepting the need to change.
4. **Communal Culture:** A communal culture brings together the competitive spirit of the mercenary culture and the work ethic of the networked culture. It is characterised by high level of solidarity and sociability. This kind of culture has high interest in results, yet is concerned with process and people. Oftentimes, communal cultures build themselves around a single person or group of persons and their particular vision of the work and institutional mission (Montgomery, 2006). Employees in communal cultures are often expected to attend company parties and other social events designed to strengthen the group. Employees not totally committed to the communal ideals may resent this constant intrusion into their personal lives (Goffee& Jones, 1998).

METHOD

Design and Sample: The study is patterned after the positivism philosophical paradigm which relies on empirical evidence, objectivity and statistical evidence to provide systematic conclusions (Bryman, 2016). It adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research design on a sample of federal civil servants in Abuja working with selected organisations which include – Nigerian Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research (NITR), Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA) and National Salaries Incomes and Wages Commission (NSIWC). NSIWC and SGF were selected due to her strategic relevance to delivery in the public service. NITR and NASRDA were selected for feasibility reasons. The sampled participants from these organisations were selected via the stratified random sampling to ensure that subgroups of job cadres and rank were fully represented. The total numbers of sampled participants were 86 from these organisations. The distribution of participants was flooded by a majority of male (56%) than females; and a majority between the ages of 31 to 40 years (33%); other age groups were few – 12.8 % (21-30 years), 24.4% (41-50 years) and 20.9% (51-60 years).

Instruments: Organisational culture was measured using Goffee and Jones's (1998) cultural typology. It is a scale that diagnosis the kind of work culture prevalent in an organisation. The scale consists of 23 items, with 11 items for sociability and 12 items for solidarity dimensions of organisational culture. A high score on both sociability and solidarity indicated the organisation possessed a *communal culture*. A low score on both sociability and solidarity indicated the organisation possessed a *fragmented culture*. A high score on sociability and low on solidarity indicated the organisation possessed a *networked culture*. A low score on sociability and high on solidarity indicated the organisation possessed a *mercenary culture*. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) reported for solidarity dimension and sociability dimension of organisational culture are .8895 and .8309, respectively. The Cronbach's alpha

coefficient for organisational culture for the 23 items is .7157 (Goffee & Jones, 1998). Oke (2006) found a Cronbach alpha of .8092 for the scale with a Nigerian sample. A sample item for the scale is “hitting targets is the single most important thing in my organisation”. The scale was measured in a six-point Likert measure option, ranging from “strongly disagree (1)” to “strongly agree (6)”.

Data Collection: The researchers obtained consent to carry out research through the respective heads of the selected organisations. They presented a formal request to the organisation to administer questionnaire to staff. Permission was then given and staff completed a print version questionnaire to complete and return to the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

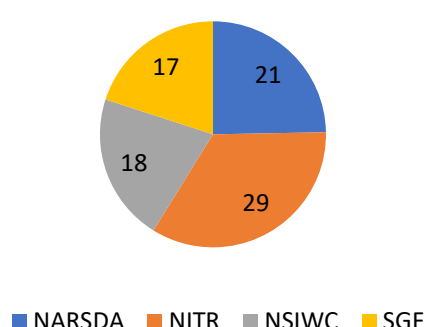


FIGURE 2: SELECTED ORGANISATIONS SAMPLED

The chart above shows the number of participants from selected organisations in Abuja with the majority drawn from NITR – being 29 out of the total of 86 participants.

To validate the scale for organisational culture in the civil service, the study subjected the data collected to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to determine the construct validity of the scale. It also harnessed Cronbach alpha to establish the internal consistency reliability of the measures.

Construct Validation

The output of the PCA revealed Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy at 0.836 for the scale, thereby indicating that the data was adequate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 1055.745$, $df = 253$, $p < .001$) indicating items on the scale are correlated. Two 2 factors were extracted and the Total Variance Explained by the extracted factors is 55.621%. Factor loadings of scale items being extracted are shown on Table 1. Loading 1 showed that 4 items did not load above an average factor of 0.5 supported by Costello and Osborne (2005).

After removing the 4 items that did not load above 0.5, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy became 0.872 for the scale indicating that the data was adequate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was still significant ($\chi^2 = 958.615$, $df = 171$, $p < .001$) indicating items on the scale are correlated. The Total Variance Explained by the extracted factors became 62.773%. Loadings 2 for all items were above average factor of 0.5 supported by Costello and Osborne (2005) as shown on Table 1.

Table 1: Factor loadings for Organisational Culture Scale

Items	Loading 1	Loading 2
Staff here genuinely like one another	.497	Removed
Staff here often socialize outside of work	.447	Removed
Staff here do favours for each other because they like one another	.644	.637
Staff here make friends for the sake of friendship – there is no other agenda	.444	Removed
Staff here confide in one another about personal matters	.569	.558
Staff here build close long-term relationships	.722	.736
Staff here know a lot about each other's families	.529	.555
When staff leaves, co-workers stay in contact to see how they are doing	.666	.662
Staff here protect each other	.760	.781
Staff here are always encouraged to work things out – flexibility – as they go along	.827	.840
Staff here get along very well and disputes are rare	.809	.823
Staff here knows business objectives clearly	.646	.666
Staff here follow clear guidelines and instructions about work	.796	.818
Poor performance is dealt with quickly and firmly	.824	.820
Staff here really wants to win	.617	.646
When opportunities for competitive advantage arise staff move decisively to capitalize them	.610	.618
Strategic goals are shared here	.743	.740
Rewards and punishments are clear	.754	.752
Staffs are determined to beat clearly defined enemies	.616	.646
Projects that are started are completed	.713	.726
It is clear where one person's job ends and another person begins	.590	.601
When people want to get something done, they can work around the system	.415	Removed
Hitting targets is the single most important thing	.775	.760

Internal Consistency Reliability

The reliability of the scale was ascertained using Cronbach alpha measure of internal consistency. Cronbach alpha measures the degree to which items on a multi-item scale are correlated; thereby indicating that they measure the same underlying construct. Thus, an alpha of 0.7 is considered good and high while values above it are considered as better and stronger (Taber, 2018). The Cronbach alpha found for Organisational Culture scale is 0.943, thus showing that the scale's reliability is excellent after items that did not load to average was removed.

The main contribution of this study is establishing the psychometric properties of Goffee and Jones' (1998) Organisational Culture Scale. The two factors that emerged corresponding to the solidarity and sociability dimensions of the Double S Cube. The total variance explained by the factor is acceptable in the social science and further demonstrates that the scale captures the latent structure of organisational culture in the civil service of Nigeria. The factor loading derived which were high or equal to .05 for items on the construct demonstrates discriminate and convergent validity. The high reliability coefficient alpha supports the robustness of the instrument in measuring culture in the civil service compared with earlier application of the scale by Oke 2006 with non-civil service populations.

Towards Application in Research and Practice

The solidarity and sociability dimensions of culture have gained prominence in organisational research (Malagas et al., 2017; Pinto et al., 2017). This is partly due to an individual's social

niche and the tendency of behaviours to be influenced by group cultural values. Furthermore, organisational behaviours are not completely fathomed on the individual context but also the group level considering the organisational context where work is done. Mehmet et al. (2015) argues that the goals of an organisation are accomplished in factions of group within an organisation. The groups which could be formally or informally created groups do have severe effects on the organisation. This implies that examining the solidarity and sociability dimension of culture which captures group related cohesion, is far reaching.

Yet only a few studies on the Nigerian civil service have deployed the double S cube (solidarity and sociability) conception of organisational culture. Meanwhile, the civil service holds a strong base for acts of solidarity with its strong alliance to unionism. The consistent flag of nepotism and favouritism in the civil service suggests that its embrace of sociability is a viable source that could be utilized in understanding organisational culture in the civil service.

In practice, Sadri and Lees (2001) argued that an organisation can initiate solidarity or sociability at any point in time in the organisation to strengthen positive outcomes or weaken negative outcomes. This form of culture can be deployed as a regulatory mechanism for organisational behaviours. Organisations can utilise training and workshops to imbibe solidarity or sociability among her employees depending on which is needed to be strengthened in an organisation par time. Similarly, for civil service organisations, irrespective of the unified cultural regulations portrayed, each organisation through its leadership can instigate solidarity or sociability to regulate organisational behaviours.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the field of organisational psychology and other associated fields by validating the Goffee and Jones (1998) typology of organisational culture in the Nigerian civil service. The psychometric evidence confirms that the Double S Cube, through her indices of sociability and solidarity, is both valid and reliable for capturing cultural dynamics in the federal civil service. The study additionally overcomes the challenge of inconsistency and weak conceptualisations of culture predominant most especially in Nigerian studies by refining a measurement tool and demonstrating excellent reliability.

This practically offer civil service policymakers and organisational leaders a diagnostic tool to better understand, monitor, and manage cultural tendencies such as nepotism, solidarity-driven unionism, and sociability-driven informal networks that could shape work behaviour in the civil service. Therefore, interventions can be driven to target how to strengthen positive cultural elements (e.g., teamwork, loyalty – which is solidarity-based actions) while mitigating negative ones (e.g., cliques, favouritism). In summary, the study has established that the Double S Cube is highly effective to be utilized in making diagnosis and assimilation of organisational culture in diverse organisation while understudying its effects on other parameters. The complex influence on corporate culture in Nigerian civil service organisations requires the utilisation of such culture diagnostic tool to examine organisational culture in research and practice. Future studies can be conducted to revalidate the diagnostic tool with a larger sample size to extend the generalization of the instrument.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The authors of this research work hereby affirm that the research adheres to the Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) Guideline which is a core requirement for the Journal of Applied Psychology.

- 1. Reporting Standards and Study Design: The study follows suit with APA standards for reporting journal articles for quantitative research. It provides methodological details, which includes sampling and instruments for measurement in the method section.*
- 2. Preregistration: No preregistration was done for the study.*
- 3. Data and Code availability: The instrument used to measure organisational culture, Goffee and Jones, 1998, Double S Cube is a well published and cited scale. Areas which were adapted are well clarified in the method section. The researchers have availed the dataset and analysis code upon request.*
- 4. Replication: The method section provides sufficient details to permit replication by other interested researchers.*

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