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The 'OCTAPAC' Culture As A Core Component Of HRD Climate: A Survey

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Abstract The concept of Human Resource Development (HRD) requires a specific and congenial climate to flourish. In other words, it can be said that success of HRD in an organization depends on the existence of a favorable HRD climate. HRD climate deals with the interactions among employees within the organization from different levels using a set of techniques to achieve the objectives of the organization and to ensure the development of the employees who share similar culture that enhances productivity and spirit of innovation. This paper measures HRD culture known as "OCTAPAC culture" as first introduced by Rao and Abraham 1986. In order to understand how it can be function as a source of sustained competitive advantage, this study investigated the practices of OCTAPAC in the Ministry of Education headquarters in the Sultanate of Oman. According to Rao and Abraham model, OCTAPAC culture is determined to be a core component of HRD climate.

Keywords: HRD climate, HRD culture, openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, proactivity, autonomy, collaboration

1. Introduction

Human resource development is considered a new science. This term was defined for the first time by Nadler in 1970 (Hamlin & Stewart, 2011) and has become the cornerstone for any organization to go forward and cope with future changes and needs enhancing by its high performance, productivity and ability to read the surrounding environment.

Kayani (2008) cited a definition for T.V. Rao describe HRD as a process by which the employees of an organization are helped, in a continuous, planned way, to acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or expected future roles; develop their general capabilities as individuals and discover and exploit their own inner potential for their own and/or organizational development purposes; develop an organizational culture in which the supervisor-subordinate relationships, teamwork, and collaboration among sub-units are strong and contribute to the professional well-being, motivation and pride of employees. This definition is considered is the base for HRD climate where it takes into consideration the practice of HRD in the organization and the role of individuals, putting emphasis on the work culture and becoming an integral part of the organization's climate.

HRD climate is considered as a fundamental part of the organization's climate. It deals in-depth with employee-employee and manager-employees relationships, the mechanisms which facilitate these relationships, and the culture that enhances these relationships. Chaudhary et al. (2013), citing Rao and Abraham, suggested that "HRD climate could be defined as a sub-climate of overall organizational climate which reflects the perception that the employees have of the development environment of the organization" (p.42).

The relation between HRD and education is very strong and interdependent; where there is a need for advanced education to provide the market with qualified human recourses, only qualified human resources can produce this type of education. Thus educational institutions are very aware of the need for qualified employees to help them in planning and developing the educational system. For example, in terms of education, Scandinavian countries were ranked within the top 25 countries in the world in human development index, with

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Norway ranked first internationally in human development. Thus, education plays a major rule when it comes to ranking and evaluating human recourse development in any given country by taking in consideration the expansion and quality of education and its influences in human lives and the country's development. "In fact the education and skills of the workforce will be the key competitive weapon for the rest of the 1990s as well as for the 21st century (Tan, 1996).

The above statement emphasizes the importance of HRD climate inside the organizations, either public or private because by providing a supportive and productive climate in the organization, individuals can exercise their potential and contribute to the achievement of the goals of the organization. "A good work climate can improve an individual's work habits, while a poor climate can erode good work habits (Galer et al, 2005, p.51)". Most importantly, a positive work climate leads to and sustains staff motivation and high performance. The HRD climate can be related to relation between managers and employees and how the top management looks at the importance of HRD and facilitates employee development. Also, it deals with the relation among the employees themselves and how seniors give hand to juniors in order to improve skills and knowledge, and prepare them for future responsibilities. Moreover, the institution should provide a conductive psychological climate that enhances employee development.

This study however focuses on one of the main components in HRD climate namely the 'OCTAPAC' culture. A strong culture within the organization can facilitate communication, decision making and control, and create cooperation and commitment. The institution's culture could be strong and cohesive when it has a clear and explicit set of principles and values, which the management devotes considerable time to communicate to employees, and which values are shared widely across the organization (Ng'ang'a & Nyongesa, 2012). HRD culture is a wide term, so Rao in 1986 tried to create a framework that makes culture somewhat measurable through focusing on some of its characteristics. The framework became known as OCTAPAC culture. OCTAPAC stands for Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proactivity, Autonomy and Collaboration. If these characteristics are practiced well in educational institutions, all parties involved will be very supportive of enhancing the quality of education and coping with the rapid change in educational field and technology.

Some researchers discuss HRD culture and organizational culture interchangeably and it is defined as shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms in organizations (Zhu & Engels, 2014). Culture is an open environment that is receptive and where employees are proactive, have the time to introduce and take in new ideas and work together to identify problems and opportunities, and encourage learning. So, by identifying the employees' perceptions about the HRD culture, the ministry of education will determine how far the existing culture is tied and flexible, and if it is able to modify behavior, structures, and systems and examine to what extent the employees have common beliefs, values, and expectations. Also, this study will help the ministry to appreciate the degree to which employees are satisfied with the current culture and to what degree this culture contributes to their performance, their ability to reach their expectations and improves employee retention rates.

Decision makers in the ministry should be aware of the reality and practices of the HRD climate within the ministry headquarters to see the areas that need more attention, as well as finding solutions to the influx of qualified people from headquarters. However, it is not necessary to study perception to discover faults in the organization and solve them, it could be for developmental purposes such as nurturing the ability to predict the coming challenges and recognize possible opportunities for a better future because the core function of HRD core is to be proactive, not reactive. Therefore, studying HRD climate in the field of education and particularly in the Ministry of Education shows the current status of the ministry and what the ministry must do to develop to cope with future demands for the benefit of both current and future generations. In particular, this study attempts to examine the employees' perceptions about HRD culture practiced in the Ministry of Education headquarters.

2. Literature Review

2.1 HRD in Oman

Much effort has been expanded to improve human recourse in Oman with significant support from HM Sultan Qaboos who emphasizes the importance of developing Omani citizens in his annual speeches. For instance, in his speech at the opening of the Council of Oman's fifth term on 31st October 2011, Sultan Qaboos said: "We have constantly stressed the importance we attach to the development of human resources. We have pointed out that these resources take top priority in our plans and programs, since it is the human being who is the cornerstone of every development enterprise; he is the pivotal element around which every type of development revolves, since its ultimate goal is to ensure the happiness of the individual, enable him to enjoy a decent life and guarantee his security and safety" (Ministry of Information, 2010).

HRD plays a major role in Oman Vision (2020) -which was launched in 1995- in five ways. First, achieving a balance between population and economic growth. Second, provision of basic health services and reduction of the rate of mortality and infectious diseases. Third, dissemination, encouragement and patronage of knowledge and the development of education. Fourth, establishing a post-secondary and technical system based on the provision of the main specializations required by national economy, together with the provision of the necessary facilities for carrying out applied research in the social and economic fields. Fifth, creating employment opportunities for Omanis in public and private sectors in addition to equipping them with training and qualifications that conform to labour market requirement (Siyabi, 2012).

In general, HRD practitioners in Oman think that the government is on the right track. In 2012 the government spent about R.O 121.2 million for learning and R.O 13.4 million for vocational training which means R.O134.5 million (about $ 347.5 million) (National Center for Statistics and Information, 2013b) in order to develop the human resources. However, no matter how much the government has spent in HRD, the main issue is the real return on this money. Although a number of studies have covered HRD in Oman from general national perspective such as training, learning and employment, there is a shortage of studies which describe HRD within the organization context such as HRD culture, practice or climate which exists there.

2.2 HRD Culture

Historically, the word culture derives from the Latin word 'colere', which could be translated as "to build", "to care for", "to plant" or "to cultivate" (Dahl, 2004). Culture as defined by Hofstede (1998) is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another. It consists of the beliefs, values, norms, and artefacts within the organization, representing its unique character or personality. Moreover, culture helps to hold an organization together with the use of what Hofstede described as social glue. Another scholar defines a culture an open environment that is receptive and where employees are proactive, have the time to introduce and take in new ideas and work together to identify problems and opportunities, and encourage learning.

T.V. Rao tried to establish a framework to conceptualize HRD culture, or OCTAPAC culture, which define the organizational culture or HRD culture which exists in the organization. It stands for Openness, Confrontation, Trust, Authenticity, Proactivity, Autonomy and Collaboration. These values contribute to foster a continuous development climate for employees in an organization. Also, these values are essential to facilitate HRD. The OCTAPAC culture has elements such as open and frank communication system, creating an environment of trust, participation in decision making and the encouragement of innovation. In addition, it promotes a proactive attitude towards development by employees and line managers, and an authentic approach towards developmental issues. OCTAPAC culture provides a positive environment for settling matters of dispute and grievances forthrightly with positive interaction (Mohanty et al 2012).

2.2.1 *Openness*

Openness describes an environment where people can express their ideas, opinions and feelings freely to anyone regardless of the title they hold. They have the freedom to communicate, share and interact without hesitation. Abraham (2012) defined it as "an environment where employees feel free to express their ideas and the willingness of the organization to take risks and to experiment with new ideas and new ways of doing things" (p. 916). Openness is displayed when employees feel free to discuss their ideas, activities and feelings with each other as defined by (Agrawal, 2005; Chaudhary et al, 2011). Brown (2007) defined it as a "spontaneous expression of feelings and thoughts and receiving feedback and information without defensiveness" (p. 63).

2.2.2 *Confrontation*

Confrontation can be defined as facing, and not shying away from problems; deeper analysis of interpersonal problems; taking on challenges (Brown, 2007; Famina, 2009). However, it is not individual work but group work where employees are required to find solutions and tackle issues directly without hiding them or avoiding them for fear of hurting others (Abraham, 2012) or getting hurt (Agrawal, 2005). Therefore, employees should work together to face problems and challenges boldly to find solutions, tackle them directly and frankly, and address the areas that need improvement rather than finding fault with anybody. Thus organizations should

encourage people to recognize a problem, speak up, diagnosis and analyze it and devise ways to overcome it.

2.2.3 *Trust*

Trust as defined by (Brown, 2007; Famina, 2009) is "maintaining confidentiality of information shared by others and not misusing it; a sense of assurance that others will help when needed and will honour mutual obligations and commitments" (p. 63, p75). Another definition by Abraham (2012) described trust as "the extent to which employees individually and in groups trust each other and can be relied upon to do whatever they say they will do" (p. 619). (Choudhury, 2012) thinks trust is developed slowly and it is related to openness where openness can help to raise trust in the mind of employees. It is about keeping the confidentiality of information shared and not misusing it.

2.2.4 *Authenticity*

Authenticity is the value underlying trust (Lather et al, 2010). It is the congruence between what one feels, says and does (Famina, 2009) which means that people do what they say. It is about owning one's actions, taking responsibility for mistakes and the unreserved sharing of feelings. Famina suggested that authenticity is closer to openness and can reduce the distortion of information in the organization. Choudhury (2012) agreed with Famina in the definition and its closeness to openness, and stated that authenticity is important in order to develop a mature culture within the organization. The outcome of authenticity enhances openness in the climate of the organization as the behaviour of a person who is authentic or genuine is easy to predict.

2.2.5 *Proactivity or Pro-Action*

Proactivity is when employees are action-oriented, willing to take initiative and value preplanning. In addition, proactivity dictates that, preventive action and alternatives are explored well in advance. Employees are able to predict certain issues and act or respond to the needs of the future (Abraham, 2012). (Brown, 2007; Famina, 2009) defined proactivity is "taking initiative, preplanning and taking preventive action and calculating the pay offs of an alternative course before taking action". It enables a person to start a new process or set a new pattern of behavior. In this sense, proactivity means freeing oneself from, and taking action beyond immediate concerns. This culture teaches employees how to form strategic plan and enhance the spirit of initiative.

2.2.6 A*utonomy*

Autonomy is "giving freedom to let people work independently with responsibility" (Agrawal, 2005). Thus, employees are free to act independently within the margins imposed by their role/job, or certain limits set by the organization. Employees enjoy the power of their position but should respect others and encourage others to do the same. Management should understand and respect this characteristic in employees and delegate them some authority to enable them to experience a sense of worth within the organization, thereby instilling a sense of responsibility to the organization. The result of autonomy is growth of mutual respect between employees and employers, confidence among employees, improved individual initiative, enhanced creativity, and better success planning.

2.2.7 *Collaboration*

Collaboration is a cooperative process where employees work together, combining individual strengths for a common reason. Collaborative individuals do not solve their problems by themselves, they share their concerns with others in order to help them through preparing strategies, working out plans of action and implementing them together (Abraham, 2012). Agrawal (2005) suggested that "collaboration is to accept inter-dependencies to be helpful to each other and work as teams" (p. 119). It is about how to give help to, and ask help from others, working together as a team to solve problems (Brown, 2007) in a friendly and open climate in the organization.

An empirical study of HRD climate and OCTAPAC culture in FMCG companies in India done by Wani and published in July 2013 pointed out that "Manager Support for subordinate Development" and "HRD towards employee development" are important factors contributing to general supportive climate for HRD. However, there are some factors that do not score that well: "Top managements interest towards Potential Appraisal" and "Top management Support in HRD" with their individual mean values of 2.37 and 2.5 respectively are significantly lower than the group average. For workers "Top management belief in HRD" and "Manager Support for subordinate development" topped the list and "Time and resources towards HRD" and "Manager support to HRD" scored below average. Thus, he recommended more support, time and resources should be provided by the top management towards HRD.

Srimannarayana (2009) conducted a survey which involved 726 employees working in 18 organizations in manufacturing sector in India and found that OCTAPAC culture is ranked first among the three categories of HRD climate with relatively high scores on collaboration, authenticity and trust.

A study done by Saraswathi (2010) to assess the extent of HRD climate prevailing in software and manufacturing organizations in India shows that both organizations practice OCTAPAC culture in a good way. In software organizations, respondents expressed very positively that the employees in their respective organizations are very informal. Employees do not hesitate to discuss their personal problems with their supervisors and employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their subordinates. On the other hand, openness and proactivity scored excellent in manufacturing organizations, while trust, autonomy and authenticity are moderate in the organizations. Collaborative and confrontation scored an average of 54 percent. The study concludes that the OCTAPAC existing in the software organizations under study is better than the manufacturing organizations.

A study conducted in SBI bank in Bhopal region in India by Mittal and Verma (2013) presents that employees aged between 36 and 45 do not feel free to discuss their ideas, activities and feelings. Rather than hiding them they want someone to listen to their problems and issues openly in order to find a solution. They ask for freedom to work independently and take initiative to experiment with new ideas. Respondents with 11-15 year experience in their career thought that OCTAPAC culture needs to be activated in the workplace. They feel there is a real need for openness in thought and work, enhancing team work and community of trust, exploring new things, and promoting advance thinking about future issue and change. Also, they need to enhance authenticity culture and confront the problems rather than hide them.

3. Methodology

The basic objective of this research is descriptive; it aims to answer fundamental questions regarding to the HRD climate in the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. Thus, this chapter primarily describes the methods used to gather and analyze data. Most of the data came from surveys and questionnaire which are the primary sources of gathering information about an issue. This study was applied in the Ministry of Education headquarters in the Sultanate of Oman. The headquarters is located in Muscat, the capital city of Oman. The total number of employees in the ministry headquarters is about 2963. However, this study focuses mainly on the employees who work in three directorates general under undersecretary for educational planning and human resource development: Directorate General of Human Resource development, Directorate General of Planning and Quality Control, and Directorate General of Educational Evaluation. The number of employees in these three directorates is about 530 according to the latest Ministry database in August 2014. Accordingly, the sample should be between 217 and 226 based on the sampling table of regarding to Krejcie and Morgan (1970). However, of 273 questionnaires distributed, only 222 were returned.

The instrument used in this study is adopted from standard research questionnaire developed by Rao and Abraham in 1986. Since that date, it has been used by many researchers. In 2012, Chaudhary et al found the reliability of the questionnaire is .942 which considered strongly reliable (excellent) according to Cronbach's Alpha reliability range (see table 1) cited from (Chen et al, 2002). A recent study done by Dash et al in 2013 found the reliability is 0.844 which considered very reliable (good). Ganihar and Nayak (2007) modified the questionnaire and reduced the number of items to 35; the reliability of the tool was established to be 0.87. Even with 3 less items, the questionnaire is still valid and reliable. In this study, the reliability was tested and for the HRD OCTAPAC culture dimension the reliability index for 15 items tested was 0.928.

Table 1: Interpretation of Reliability Based on Cronbach's Alpha (Chen et al, 2002)

Cronbach's Alpha	Score
Excellent	$0.9 < a \leq$
Good	$0.8 < a \leq 0.9$
Acceptable	$0.7 < a \leq 0.8$
Questionable	$0.6 < a \leq 0.7$
Poor	$0.5 < a \leq 0.6$
Unacceptable	$< a \leq 0.5$

This questionnaire is translated into Arabic because the formal language in Oman is Arabic and most of the employees prefer to answer in their mother tongue. Later the answers are translated back into English to be processed by SPSS software. Del et al. (1987) said: "translation of questionnaires is required when information is collected from people of different language groups". They believe that a literal translation is preferred but it is not always meaningful, so the preliminary translation should be done by someone who is aware of the overall objective of the questionnaire as well as the intent behind each question. The evaluation of the preliminary translation can be done in two ways. The first evaluation is by experts to ensure that the translated version is quite similar to the original in its content, meaning and clarity of expression. The second method is back-translation which involves giving the translated version to someone who is expert in language and asking him to translate it back to the mother language of the original questionnaire. Both methods need to be repeated until the translated questionnaire is satisfactory.

The scale of the instrument was shifted from five to six possible responses. The reason is to break the walls of fear among respondents so that they can choose answers to reflect the reality. Respondents are asked to freely choose their responses to the items. Thus, this questionnaire is redesigned based on a 6 point Likert ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Table 2 represents the six-point scale that is used in the questionnaire and table 3 determines the position of the mean scores in 6-point scale.

Table 2: Six-point Scale of HRD climate Questionnaire

Scale	Response	In Arabic
1	Strongly Disagree	بـ شدة مـ افـ ق غـ ير
2	Disagree	مـ افـ ق غـ ير
3	Somewhat Disagree	مـا حـد إلـ ى مـ افـ ق غـ ير
4	Somewhat Agree	مـا حـد إلـ ى مـ افـ ق
5	Agree	مـ افـ ق
6	Strongly Agree	بـ شدة مـ افـ ق

Table 3: The Determination of the Position of the Mean Scores in 6-Point Likert Scale (Khademfar & Idris, 2012)

Range	Level
1 – 2.66	Low
2.67 – 4.35	Moderate
4.36 – 6	High

4. Results

This section is about respondents' perceptions of the OCTAPAC culture that existed in the Ministry of Education headquarters. The total number of items is 15 and they are all at moderate level. The items are arranged according to OCTAPAC starting with Openness and ending with Collaboration.

More than half (59.4%) of the respondents are afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their superiors while (58.1%) of them are not afraid to do the same with their colleagues (items No 1&2). Almost half (49.6%) of the respondents confront problems which arise and try to solve them rather than continuing to accuse each other behind the back; however, more than half (55.5%) of them do not have the will to learn the truth about their strengths and weaknesses from their supervising officers or colleagues (items No 3&4).

More than half (59%) of respondents think people trust each other in this ministry (item No 5), and accordingly (63%) of them feel there is genuine sharing of information, feelings and thoughts in meetings (item No 6). However, items (No 7&8) show that people in the ministry are not very authentic as more than half

(58.1%) of them think that people in the ministry have some fixed mental impressions about each other, and (64.4%) of them see that employees in the ministry are too formal and hesitate to discuss their personal problems with their supervisor.

It seems that more than half (64%) of the respondents do not get the opportunity to try out what they have learnt from training programs they attended (item No 9), and item (No 10) supports this attitude where (51%) of them feel less motivated to take initiative and do things on their own without having to wait for instructions from supervisors. On the other hand, (56.7%) of them tend to agree that employees are encouraged to experiment with new methods and try out creative ideas (item No 11). The span of autonomy is quite restricted where more than half (61.3%) of respondents express that it is not common to delegate authority to juniors to enable them to develop their abilities to handle increased responsibility even though more than two-thirds (68.9%) of them think that when seniors delegate authority to juniors, the juniors use it as an opportunity for development, (items No 12&13). On the other hand, more than half (56.3%) of them feel that spirit of collaboration is of the highest order in the ministry, and almost three quarters (74.7%) of them believe that people in the ministry are helpful to each other (See table 4 for further details).

Table 4: The OCTAPAC Culture

N	Item		SD	D	SW-D	SW-A	A	SA	M	STD
1	Employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their superiors.	*f*	12	64	56	54	32	4	3.19	1.207
		%	5.4	28.8	25.2	24.3	14.4	1.8		
2	Employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their colleagues.	*f*	13	30	50	51	60	18	3.76	1.356
		%	5.9	13.5	22.5	23.0	27.0	8.1		
3	When problems arise people discuss these problems openly and try to solve them rather than keep accusing each other behind the back.	*f*	14	41	55	75	31	6	3.39	1.197
		%	6.3	18.5	24.8	33.8	14.0	2.7		
4	Employees in the ministry take pains to find out their strengths and weaknesses from their supervising officers or colleagues.	*f*	19	61	43	59	32	8	3.22	1.321
		%	8.6	27.5	19.4	26.6	14.4	3.6		
5	People trust each other in this ministry.	*f*	15	36	40	105	23	3	3.42	1.126
		%	6.8	16.2	18.0	47.3	10.4	1.4		
6	There is genuine sharing of information, feeling and thoughts in meetings.	*f*	19	25	38	84	53	3 1.4	3.61	1.242
		%	8.6	11.3	17.1	37.8	23.9			
7	People in the ministry do not have any fixed mental impressions about each other.	*f*	28	38	63	67	26	0	3.11	1.200
		%	12.6	17.1	28.4	30.2	11.7	0		
8	Employees in the ministry are very informal and do not hesitate to discuss their personal problems with their supervisor.	*f*	26	52	65	45	29	5	3.06	1.278
		%	11.7	23.4	29.3	20.3	13.1	2.3		
9	Employees returning from training programs are given opportunities to try out what they have learnt.	*f*	26	51	65	57	19	4	3.02	1.211
		%	11.7	23.0	29.3	25.7	8.6	1.8		
10	Employees are encouraged to experiment with new methods and try out creative ideas.	*f*	29	26	41	91	30	5	3.37	1.290
		%	13.1	11.7	18.5	41.0	13.5	2.3		
11	Employees are encouraged to take initiative and do things on their own without having to wait for instructions from supervisors.	*f*	33	41	39	82	26	1	3.14	1.283
		%	14.9	18.5	17.6	36.9	11.7	.5		
12	Delegation of authority to encourage juniors to develop handling higher responsibilities is quite common in the ministry.	*f*	47	40	49	52	29	5	2.96	1.412
		%	21.2	18.0	22.1	23.4	13.1	2.3		
13	When seniors delegate authority to juniors, the juniors use it as an	*f*	17	30	22	58	69	26	3.95	1.454
		%	7.7	13.5	9.9	26.1	31.1	11.7		

	opportunity for development.									
14	Team spirit is of higher order in the ministry.	*f*	21	34	42	79	43	3	3.44	1.263
		%	9.5	15.3	18.9	35.6	19.4	1.4		
15	People in the ministry are helpful to each other.	*f*	17	15	24	99	54	13	3.89	1.241
		%	7.7	6.8	10.8	44.6	24.3	5.9		
		Overall							**3.37**	**.900**

Note: N= Number, f= frequency, %= percentage, SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, SW-D= Somewhat Disagree, SW-A= Somewhat Agree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree, M= mean, STD= Standard Deviation

5. Discussion and Conclusion

In summary, this study presents that OCTAPAC culture is at the moderate level in the ministry headquarters. Employees are much more open with their colleagues than with their superiors. Confrontation culture seems debatable where employees can confront external issues but not their weakness. Trust culture is good where people trust each other in this ministry but authenticity culture is weak which makes trust culture questionable. Proactivity and autonomy cultures do not meet employee ambitions while collaboration culture is good.

Openness is there when employees feel free to discuss their ideas, activities and feelings with each other as defined by (Agrawal, 2005, p. 118; Chaudhary et al, 2011, p. 667). The result shows that there are two opposite opinions about openness in the ministry where respondents disagree that employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their superiors but they agree that employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their colleagues (items No 1&2 in Table 3). This somehow contradicts the results in the previous two sections which describe the relation between superiors and subordinate positive. Confrontation culture seems debatable where in item (No 3), the percentage of agreement and disagreement are close even though respondents tend to think that when problems arise people discuss these problems openly and try to solve them rather than keep accusing each other behind the back. However, the employees are not confrontational enough to discover their strengths and weaknesses as seen by their supervising officers or colleagues as shown in item (No 4).

Abraham (2012) described trust as "the extent to which employees individually and in groups trust each other and can be relied upon to do whatever they say they will do" (p. 619). According to the statistics, trust culture seems good where the respondents agree that people trust each other in this ministry, and there is genuine sharing of information, feelings and thoughts in meetings (items No 5&6). However, there is weakness at authenticity culture where respondents disagree that people in the ministry do not have any fixed mental impressions about each other, or employees in the ministry are very informal and do not hesitate to discuss their personal problems with their supervisor (items No 7&8). Authenticity culture makes trust culture questionable where (Lather et al, 2010, p. 352) defined authenticity as the value underlying trust.

Proactivity is when employees take initiatives and risks to explore the alternatives well in advance. It seems there is some contradiction about proactivity culture among respondents. For example, while they disagree that employees returning from training programs are given opportunities to try out what they have learnt, they agree that employees are encouraged to experiment with new methods and try out creative ideas (items No 9&10). Proactivity is overlapped with autonomy culture where item (No 11) shows that respondents, somehow, disagree that the employees are encouraged to take initiative and do things on their own without having to wait for instructions from supervisors. Bureaucracy still plays a role in the ministry's practices preventing proactivity and autonomy. Autonomy as defined by (Agrawal, 2005) is giving freedom to let people work independently with responsibility but this has not been practiced here. Item (No 12) enhances this attitude where respondents do not think that delegation of authority to encourage juniors to develop handling higher responsibilities is quite common in the ministry. On the other hand, respondents agree that when seniors delegate authority to juniors, the juniors use it as an opportunity for development (item No 13). It becomes a matter of trust and it seems inconsistent with item (No 5), again making trust culture questionable.

Finally, Agrawal (2005) defined collaboration as "accepting inter-dependencies to be helpful to each other and to work as teams" (p.119). Collaboration culture is good where respondents express their agreement that team spirit is of higher order in the ministry, and people in the ministry are helpful to each other (items No 14&15).

This study concludes that the ministry should think about enhancing the HRD culture in the ministry which can facilitate communication, innovation and improve performance. The management should adopt an open door policy to sustain openness in the organization, letting subordinates communicate with them easily and discuss their problems face to face or using technology such as intranet or internet. These types of policies will create a comfortable climate in the organization leading to immediate problem solving, clarity in objectives and

job satisfaction. The ministry should encourage people to confront problems, to bring them up, diagnose and analyze them to arrive at suitable methods to overcome them instead of accusing each other. This culture builds problem solving abilities within organization members and enhances team discussions and decision making, reduces internal ambiguity and enables top management to deal with external or developmental issues.

6. Acknowledgements (Use "Header 1" style)

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