The fusion of national culture and organizational culture in international settings

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Abstract

The main research objective is to investigate the role of culture in international settings. Concern for understanding the cultural aspect led to the result of utilizing critical ethnography methodology. As methods, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and, non-participant observations were conducted in four international organizations (IOs), with the participation of forty-four participants. For the first time in the existing literature, the findings develop a definition of International Culture, as a metamorphosed pattern of values, beliefs, assumptions, social ideas, language, symbols, rituals and working customs formed by the fusion of national cultures and organizational culture in international settings. Likewise, for the first time, Schein's cultural layers sketched a portrait of IOs'culture. Following this, with regard to culture, a final contribution has been in terms of national culture, the GLOBE study highlighted participants' national cultural characteristics.

Key words: International culture, organizational culture, national culture, international management

1. Introduction

IOs are like rainbows with all their colours on them. They host manifold nationalities. However, gender roles are different in every nation and society. For example, while many men do not contribute to housework in Middle-Eastern countries, housework is not labelled as a female occupation in most European countries. Although people work in an international environment, they still hold their national characteristics. To this effect, how will their national traits reflect on their international work environment is an interesting question to ponder upon.

The main research objective is to identify and analyse interaction of organizational and national cultures and developing a new definition for the

diffusion of these two different cultural categories. This research holds significant importance: Firstly, it will identify the main cultural dynamics in the context of IOs. Secondly, it will provide a better understanding for IO supervisors when managing members of their multinational teams. Thirdly, it will help establish a favourable and satisfactory work environment for IO staff. Fourthly, it will reveal how the reality of IOs has been shaped by historical developments and how their values have crystallized over time. Finally, it will make a significant contribution to the existing literature as defining a new type of culture.

2. Organizational culture of IOs

IOs have collective decision-making structures that encourage the participation of their members. Particularly, multilateral discussions related to global concerns cause power struggles among member states. To this effect, negotiations gain more importance during decision-making processes. IOs' decision-making capacity is rather hindered by attempts to build coalitions of power and ongoing negotiations among member states. Due to IOs' multilateral decision-making system, excessive bureaucracy and slow actions have become some of the main characteristics of their organizational culture (Bauer and Knill, 2007; Biermann and Siebenhuner, 2009; Reinalda, 2013; Weiss, 2013). Barnett and Finnemore (2004) defined four main aspects of IO bureaucracies as, hierarchy, continuity, impersonality, and expertise. Unlike most of their colleagues, they posit that due to the multilateral nature of the participation of members, bureaucracy is pretty helpful for developing common organizational values and achieving collective goals.

As the largest IO, the UN holds an important place in works related to organizational cultures of IOs. It deals with different kinds of activities in diverse regions of the world. Therefore, a high level of initiative and autonomy gains special importance in UN's organizational culture. In 1994, the UN adapted some reforms into its organizational working fundamentals, such as, moving away from a trait-based system to a goal-oriented performance appraisal structure, bringing more flexibility in the recruitment process, achieving gender-balance and equality, and abolishing permanent contracts (and in lieu of this, utilizing three types of contracts instead: a. short term (up to six months), b. fixed term (maximum up to five years), and, c. continuing contracts (as long as organizational requirements and performance is satisfactory). The UN Charter Article 101 declares the main principles of employment and service conditions as: providing efficiency, competence, and integrity. In addition, due to the conjoining impact of these three principles, Mathiason (2008) recommends to also include "effectiveness" as a fourth principle. After analysing the results of interviews with twenty-five UN high managers (D1, D2 and senior managers) and seventeen focus groups, with the participation of UN staff from different departments at all levels, Annan (1999)

declared a competence model that is consist in core values, and core and managerial competencies. "Integrity" and "respect for diversity" were defined as the core values of the UN. Communication, teamwork, planning and organizing, accountability, creativity, client orientation, commitment to continuous learning, and technological awareness, were listed as core competencies of the UN. Finally, leadership, vision, empowering others, building trust, managing performance, and judgement/decision-making, were specified as managerial competencies of the UN executive staff.

IOs have different aims, functions, organizational structures, and identities (Coicaud, 2001), therefore they do not have a monolithic culture that is shared by all such institutions. However, during periods of historical progress because of long years of interaction with each other, and when approximating profiles of their staff, they begin to share a rather similar organizational culture which encourages efficiency, competence, respect, integrity and effectiveness, based on a democratic culture.

3. Methodology

Answering research questions is one of the most important requirements of an academic investigation. In order to attain proper and satisfactory solutions, research must be designed akin to a long-term project. Hereby, establishing flexible, interactive, explorative and qualitative research designs, provides an in-depth understanding as it relates to the research topic. The components of this design must act in harmony and their fluency must be assured by the researcher. In order to ensure these requirements, utilizing abductive reasoning gains importance as it helps establish a more flexible and free research environment during the process of knowledge production. Philosophical perspective, paradigms of inquiry, and methodological approach must complement each other. Reality of IO concept is shaped by economic, social, political, cultural and historical developments. In addition, due to background of the researcher in IOs, the researcher and research subject are linked and personal values of researcher influence the research. Therefore, results are subjective and there is a need for dialogue between researcher and research subject. To this effect, the research philosophical perspective leans heavily on "phenomenology" by utilizing "critical theory".

The most distinctive feature of the IO work environment is its multicultural character. Here, it is common to find teams which are composed of all different nationalities. Therefore, for such a setting, national and organizational cultures must also be investigated thoroughly. It is for certain that utilizing ethnographic methodology provides a better understanding of culture-related concepts. In addition, due to its links to critical theory, as a research methodology, critical ethnography is utilized in this research by following Thomas's (1993) framework: the first step is developing an understanding of the critical potential of ethnography

and a fundamental understanding of critical thinking. The second step: techniques to implement are identified by considering ontology, selecting a critical topic, method, data analysis and interpretation, discourse and reflexivity issues. The third step is to move from implementing general principles to concrete examples. In this step, self-perception of the subculture and their meanings given by dominant culture are scrutinized and differentiated through empirical application.

The theoretical framework of the research is formed by the GLOBE study, and Schein's culture theory in this research. National characteristics of IO staff will be highlighted according to nine dimensions of GLOBE study. Likewise, IOs will be evaluated from three perspectives of Schein (2004). These theories bridged theory and praxis by being embedded into questions found in the empirical section. This link provided a better understanding of the findings, analysis, and interpretation sections of the research, and furthermore, it demonstrated how theoretical framework reflected into real situations.

4. Subject Area

IO concept covers many institutions, such as, intergovernmental, international non-governmental, and transnational hybrid organizations. In order not to get lost in the vast universe of IOs, and conversely, to be able to make necessary comparisons, three sister intergovernmental organizations, in the sectors of economy and development, were selected: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC). As a core body of the UN organizational structure, the UNCTAD determines its own main dynamics, regulations and general personnel profile. On the other hand, in order to see different working mechanisms and the mind-set of IOs, another dominant IO, the WTO, was chosen as a second institution. Moreover, the ITC holds an exceptional place amid these two major organizations by having a joint mandate with the WTO and the UNCTAD. It was assumed that the ITC would show the interaction and synthesis between the UN and the WTO in the course of implementation. Thereby, the ITC was preferred as the third IO in the practice part of the research. Among IOs, the UN holds a predominant place with its vast organizational networks, funds, programs, and specialized agencies. Hence, as a specialized agency of the UN, the World Health Organization (WHO) was included in the empirical segment of the research. Unlike economic and development oriented IOs, being in a different sector, that of health, helped bring a variant perspective into the whole research process.

5. Methods

After determining the epistemological and ontological positions, and methodology of the research, a question emerges: "How will data be collected in this research?" The phenomenological and ethnographic lenses of the researcher enlighten the process of responding to this question. Group member perspectives were explored through the utilization of interviews and focus groups in this study. Alternatively, in order to understand the social factors at work in IOs, as a third method, observation was also included in the empirical portion of the research. In addition to complement each other and provide methodological triangulation, these methods brought depth and diverse perspectives to the research process and helped in understanding cultural settings of IOs. There are two main workforce categorizations in IOs: supervisors and staff. In order to get their opinions, two different research methods have been applied: first, semi-structured interviews were performed with supervisors; and second, focus group studies were done with staff. While selecting participants from both groups, quota sampling technique was implemented. The GLOBE Study is one of the meso theories of this research; therefore, its cultural cluster was taken into consideration while determining participants' different national culture backgrounds. In addition, supervisor's sampling was divided into three segments: junior, middle and senior level supervisors.

6. Findings and Interpretation

As a subject matter, four IOs will be analysed and interpreted separately, concerning culture, theories, through the lenses of critical ethnography. In this segment, in order not to reveal the identities of the participants, no names shall be mentioned. Principally, the segment on culture is divided in two main parts, as organizational and national culture. Schein's levels of organizational culture are taken into consideration and IOs will be evaluated from three perspectives: Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs, and, Values and Underlying Assumptions. Artifacts exist on the surface level of the organizational culture model and include the visible structures of the organization. Espoused Beliefs and Values are the visions, strategies, objectives and philosophies of the organization. Finally, underlying assumptions are the ultimate source of values and actions, such as those unconsciously taken for granted: beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings. In addition, national culture will be analysed according to the dimensions of the GLOBE study.

6.1. The WTO

Regarding the Volunteerism Principle and Quota Sampling Technique, six supervisors for interviews, and the same number of staff for focus groups, were

included in this research. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher: the shortest lasted 24.57 minutes; the longest took 51.48 minutes; and, the average was 34.26 minutes. While the researcher was presiding over focus group discussions as the moderator, a professional research assistant took notes and recorded with a voice recorder. The focus group discussions lasted 63 minutes. In addition, the researcher followed a three-day working schedule for non-participant observation at facilities of the WTO.

6.1.1. Organizational culture

6.1.1.1. Artifacts

The WTO building is also known as the *William Rappard Centre*. The organization is rather sensitive vis-à-vis social responsibility and provides handicapped facilities, a three-floor library, a meditation room where members of different religions can worship, an occupational health service for staff, and keeping foliage green and artworks in good repair. There is a big tree in the middle of the atrium and outside the building is covered with grass, trees and plants. Even though the WTO is a new organization, the physical layout of the building synthesizes history and modernity through combining security concerns, artworks, the environment, and architectural design. To this effect, in lieu of being a heap of concrete, the building gives the impression of having a soul which encompasses the past, present and future. This formation also provides a heart-warming work environment for the staff.

There are no open office layouts at the organization as all workplaces are walled-off and enclosed. Although the enclosed office layout provided more privacy for each person, the organization does not seem to impress, as its aim is such a result. On the contrary, there is a palpable open-door policy throughout the entirety of the organization. In proof of such a reality and as a symbol to it, when staff leave their offices for vacation, they leave their doors open. This policy encourages verbal communication amongst the workforce. English, French and Spanish are the official languages of the organization. In order to get involved in work discussions, it is necessary to have familiarity with global trade lingo, such as, *trade facilitation*, *tariffs*, *free trade* and *exports*. No unique dress-code was observed during the observations. However, as a general trend, directors prefer formal business attire, and while others wear smart casual clothing for formal meetings, most staff wear formal business attire. Not having a unique dress-code at the organization positively affects organizational climate through encouraging a comfortable working environment. Their main rituals are witnessed in their habit of taking breaks. On average, the staff get one lunch and four coffee breaks each day.

6.1.1.2. Espoused beliefs and values

The WTO encourages the main principles of the multilateral trading system, such as, non-discrimination, lowering trade barriers through negotiation, being predictable and transparent, being competitive and more beneficial for less developed countries, and protecting the environment. Logo and artworks are the main symbols used to highlight and reinforce espoused beliefs and values. At the outset, the organizational logo is hacked on the wall of the entrance of the grounds, and again in the atrium. The logo was created by a Singapore-based graphic arts company, Su Yeang Design. The six graphic arcs symbolize the dynamic and optimistic relation between the organization and member states based on fair and open trade. The second symbol is the artworks. The statues of "Peace" and "Justice" welcome anyone who wants to enter the main building. The statue of a child sitting at the feet of a woman and offering an olive branch to her in "Peace". In contrast, a woman with a serpent at her feet is sitting with a dove on her left hand, in "Justice". "Peace" and "Justice" symbols were not chosen by coincidence: on the contrary, these symbols refer to values of the WTO. Every staff and visitor who wants to enter or leave the main building can see these symbols and remember the organization's stated ideals of justice and peace for the whole world. Moreover, concerning the Tiber statue, Tiberinus, the god of Tiber River, is reclining with an olive branch in his left hand while holding a jug with his right hand. Here, the olive branch infers peace as well. What is more, the door and window frames at the entrance are sculpted with symbols, such as harps, an anchor, a Libra, a torch, children, wheat, and a caduceus. Here, the caduceus refers to the mythological god Hermes who was the messenger of the gods and protector of merchants. This symbol makes reference to commerce and negotiation issues. The other symbols also refer to trade, agriculture, industry, and artistic subjects. The mural paintings and three-tiled panels refer to labour, agriculture and trade. Moreover, the DELFT ceramic panel notes that universal peace is possible "only if it is based upon social justice", and in the middle of the panel, there is a male construction worker laying down the foundation bricks of the building. This symbol reflects upon one of the existential values of the WTO system as well, which aims at removing social injustices and bringing social and economic welfare to the whole world.

Moreover, as can be seen from participant responses to the 8th interview and the 7th focus group questions gender is not a concern for supervisors. They see themselves as professionals and do not have any categorization in their minds which is based on sexual characteristics. This reflection creates an espoused value, such as, *"there is no gender inequality in the organization"*. Another reflection of espoused values, as "being able to make negotiations", is seen in the relationship between supervisors and staff, and the staff amongst each other: while they are discussing issues, they do not seem to be stubborn about their opinions, and in lieu

of direct rejection of any idea, they listen to other opinions and try to convince them in the desire to reach the common ground.

6.1.1.3. Basic underlying assumptions

The 3rd interview, and 4th focus group, questions, investigated participants' reaction towards unexpected events in the organization. According to them, unexpected events were part of the organizational culture. They did not get surprised when facing an unexpected event and assumed that at any time, anything could happen. Therefore, they developed a basic underlying assumption that, *"Unexpected events always occur in the organization".* The other basic underlying assumption is about motivation. Regarding staff's motivation, even though they worked in a multicultural environment, the participants of both interview and focus groups did not believe in the impact of national background on motivation issues. They assumed that *"the motivation concept is related to individual characteristics rather than nationalities".* Moreover, while the staff were working, they assumed that *"there is not much room for being creative".* One participant of the focus group expressed this assumption, while the others seconded him. This assumption directly reflects on staff work, instead of creating something different and innovative, they focus on just fulfilling the basic requirements of any given work; however, during interviews, this assumption was not shared by supervisors, and thence, it can be validated only for staff.

6.1.2. National culture

While working with different nationalities, supervisors did not have any concerns regarding managing multicultural workforces. The third interview, and fourth focus group questions, explored UA of participants. UA was pretty low amongst supervisors, and only two focus group participants. They did not display any concerns vis-à-vis these types of events and had gotten mostly used to them. Instead, they relied on social interactions. They sought advice from colleagues, used informal social interactions, and relied on team dynamics. On the contrary, four out of six focus group participants showed high UA through facing problems, modifying plans, not showing emotional reactions, implementing contingency planning, and taking it all rationally.

The fourth interview question investigated HO dimension. In order to encourage good human nature, there was a strong emphasis on providing social support and sensitivity training for staff on individual bases. Hence it could be concluded that HO was high amongst supervisors' priorities. Likewise, 2nd and 3rd focus group questions were related to HO aspect as well. Second question began

with asking participants' opinion about the Machiavelli phrase[1], and then asked their definition of power. The staff, especially while defining power concepts, showed low HO characteristics, such as high need for power possessions and self-interest priority.

The 5th question, for both interview and focus groups, investigated how team spirits can be created in IOs. In order to create team spirit, the supervisors encourage high IC through team building exercises, such as, having more sociality, sharing more difficulties, and establishing multilateral decision-making mechanisms. However, they do not believe that arranging some activities will lead directly to the result of providing team spirit. It requires a mutual effort which will be tried by leaders and followers, and as the participants infer, the key element in this process is communication. Next question, in both interview and focus groups, examined how a sense of belonging can be ensured in the context of IOs. Encouragement of high IGC was seen in the responses of supervisors, such as, periodically demonstrating special care for their staff, recognizing their achievements, ensuring their involvement into projects, providing promotions, and giving them more responsibility. Likewise, the staff showed high IGC through emphasizing the role of the organization and its leaders in lieu of individual contributions.

The 7th focus group cartoon, and 8th interview question, explored how roles, power, and responsibility are distributed between the genders in a multinational work environment. While the supervisors distribute roles, power and responsibility, between genders, in lieu of a gender-based evaluation, they take into consideration skills, merits and capabilities. This preference is also verified by the responses of the staff, while they did not see any reasons for restrictions on any gender-based performance of a task, or in holding a position. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a high GE amongst all the participants.

The 8th focus group, and 9th and 10th interview questions, investigated participants' PO and FO. Whilst supervisors improved performance of their team members, they used a mix of low and high-performance orientations. As well, while pursuing their own objectives, they showed low PO characteristics as they placed emphasis on social relations and valuing harmony with their environment, but had high FO tendency, seen from their emphasis on timeframes and deadlines. The 13th interview question, and 9th focus group cartoon, discussions, focused on the impact of cultural differences on motivation. The effects of national culture were not considered as issues vis-à-vis staff motivation in the context of IOs by participants. As one of the participants in a focus group inferred *"… with time, you also find some sort of common attitudes across these different nationalities"*. Also, one of the supervisors cited how national culture can transform into international culture:

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[1] Machiavelli (2008, p. 65) phrase: "A Prince who wants to stay in power must necessarily learn to be other than virtuous and must make use of his knowledge, or not, according to circumstances."

"Well, there are people who approach work differently. Some people are more Laissez-Faire and not prone to taking on full control of their work, but I do not know if that has to do with the effect of cultural difference…You have to deal with each person individually…So you have to be able to deal with the people and the work at hand and then move forward. But for me it is not a stereotype and you have to deal with each individual. And since we are all living here, we all become more like each other anyway. Do you see what I mean? Over time. So, it is more of a family thing that happens. You do not keep your national identity. Actually, the longer you stay in Geneva, you lose your national identity. You get a different awareness of cultural identities…"

Herein, the supervisor places emphasis on the "living abroad factor". This inference corresponds to the Marxist dialect as well. When national culture clashes with organizational culture, the internal struggle in this clash can be identified as the 'living abroad' factor. Most IO personnel end up leaving their home country and find themselves living in a number of foreign places for long periods of their lives. Consequently, they have to try to adapt to a new multicultural workplace.

6.2. The UNCTAD

Five supervisors from different managerial levels, nationalities, and departments, voluntarily took part in the research. The researcher conducted all the interviews: the shortest took 20.23 minutes; the longest lasted 47.18 minutes; and, the average was 30.91 minutes. On the other hand, five staff of different age, from diverse nationalities and departments, participated in the focus group discussions which lasts 81 minutes. In order not to reveal the identities of the participants, no names were mentioned. Moreover, the researcher, as a non-participant observer, followed a three-day working schedule at the facilities of the UNCTAD.

6.2.1. Organizational culture

6.2.1.1. Artifacts

The UNCTAD, as a UN body, is located at the main headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva (Palais des Nations). In addition, the UNCTAD logo is on all office doors: The UN globe with the UNCTAD logo underneath it and also the UN logo is seen on every floor of the organization as well. To these effects, it is rather difficult to separate UNCTAD's specific proprietorship and characteristics. Restaurant and cafeterias on the ground and first floors are for common usage for all other UN staff, but there is another cafeteria on the sixth floor which is utilized only by UNCTAD workforce. In order to socialize, there are many options for the staff. There is a very official work environment in the organization, but in the

restaurant and cafeterias, there is a difference, like day and night: in contrast to a dull and bureaucratic office environment, the restaurant and cafeterias are chirpy and cheerful.

In line with a belief in social responsibility, the UNCTAD does provide some facilities for its handicapped staff, such as special restrooms and transportation prospects. As well, there is a very large green garden on the palace grounds, and interestingly, one finds peacocks roaming freely, even near the main entrance. Neither staff nor the peacocks show any reactions to each other. Also, the UN encourages natural life in providing freedom for animals on their grounds and keeping a well-groomed garden to complement their classic architecture. Regarding the enclosed office spaces at the organization, staff are only forced to share according to the availability at the departments, and at most with one other person. Nonetheless, some interns share a room per three persons. There is an implicit closed-door policy. Most of the staff close their doors and work behind closed doors. Despite it being an intergovernmental organization, UNCTAD connotes a "library".

Even though there are six official languages, English is preferred in daily work discussions, but at times when some meet each other on the elevator or in the halls, they might salute each other in French. Except for directors and higher-level executives, most other staff wore smart casual attire. As a ritual, the staff gets four coffee breaks per day: around 09:30, 10:30, 13:30 and 16:00. There is an obvious twist in the organizational climate between work and social dwellings. The staff work in their offices and only socialize at places reserved for socialization.

6.2.1.2. Espoused beliefs and values

The main work motto of the organization is, "think, debate and deliver". Related to these principles, published papers are seen as the main product of the institution and are exhibited at almost every corner of the grounds. The organizational culture encourages individual progress of the staff through publishing in its publications. Herein, an espoused belief emerges: "*In order to be recognized by the organization, a research paper must be published*". Moreover, the UN not only encourages gender equality for the world but also inside its own organisations. This policy is also reflected within the UNCTAD's seventeen global goals for sustainable development, as its fifth goal (gender equality). Consistent with this policy, all the research participants approve this as well. Here, an espoused value emerges as: "*There is no gender inequality in the organization*".

6.2.1.3. Basic underlying assumptions

According to the responses to the interview, and focus group questions, all participants assume that unexpected events could occur at any moment. In line with

this understanding comes the basic underlying assumption which is taken for granted: *"Unexpected events always occur in the organization".* The organization has some problems in bringing sense of belonging to their staff, such as, short term contracts, dull bureaucracy, and feeling of exclusiveness. As regards the distribution of benefits, staff who hold permanent contracts and professional status have privileged remunerations, such as, higher salaries, dependency allowance, educational grants, home leave, and family visits. Hence the others' feeling of being excluded, and this differentiation in staff compensations, causes another fundamental supposition that: *"There are two types of staff in the organization: professionals and others".* In addition, while staff try to achieve their objectives, they rely on their leader and place too much emphasis on the leadership factor. Herein, another basic underlying assumption emerges that: *"In order to achieve our objectives, we need a pretty good leader".*

Some of the interviewees provided their opinions about the impact of national culture on staff motivation. They did not underestimate the existence of different nationalities in an international work environment but they also did not evaluate national culture as an important factor that influences staff motivation at IOs.

The final basic underlying assumption regards motivation. As the participants have lived for long periods in a multicultural work environment, they come to assume that: *"National background does not make an impact on motivation of the staff in the context of any international organization."*

6.2.2. National culture

While managing staff and executing their duties, difference in nationality never comes into the equation among participants. The third interview[2] and fourth focus group questions[3] investigated UA dimension. The supervisors saw unexpected events as part of their work, and relied on rules, preferred to find solutions through social interactions, such as, bringing senior staff together with team members to discuss the issues, gather as much information as possible, and remain flexible. Likewise, two out of five staff had more of an emotional reaction towards them. They had gotten used to dealing with unexpected events. Instead of relying on rules and plans, they preferred to find solutions through social interaction and discussion. Therefore, it could be concluded that their UA is low. Contrariwise, in order to solve the problem at hand, three out of five relied on coherent action plans. Hence, they had a tendency to show high UA.

According to answers to the fourth interview question[4], the supervisors showed high human oriented characteristics through giving importance to others'

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[2]   3rd interview question: What do you think of unexpected events that happen while working with multinational teams?

[3]   4th focus group question: What do you think about unexpected events that occur in your team?

[4]   4th interview question: How do you encourage good human nature at multinational teams?

interests and values. On the other hand, the 7th interview question clarified their relations with team members out of work. While developing relationships with their staff outside of work, they showed low HO through not preferring limited out of work relationships and placing certain borders between work and private association.

The 5th interview and focus group questions explored ways of creating team spirits in IOs. While two out of five supervisors showed high IC through putting an emphasis on collective actions, such as, social activities, going on missions together, and sharing a vision, the other three demonstrated low IC through highlighting individualism amongst the staff. The 6th interview and focus group questions investigated how to ensure a sense of belonging in IOs. Supervisors highlighted needing to be felt, respected and included in group works; desiring to have permanent contracts; and receiving the advantages of organizational benefits. They encouraged high IGC while rousing a sense of belonging amongst their staff. The 7th focus group, and 8th interview questions investigated gender issues in the context of IOs. All the participants showed high GE through minimizing gender inequality.

The 8th focus group, and 9th and 10th interview questions investigated participants' PO and FO. Regarding time orientation, except for one supervisor, the others' juncture is also tilted towards high FO: Two out of five participants showed FO; one showed past orientation; one a combination of present and future; and one demonstrated a combination of past, present and future. Moreover, all of them placed emphasis on the importance of a roadmap with clear objectives and realistic deadlines; this points to high FO characteristics as well. Likewise, while the staff defined how they achieved their objectives, they demonstrated high FO characteristics, such as describing and structuring clear goals, and developing a timeframe with realistic deadlines.

Due to the lack of proper financial incentives, and a difficulty to fire inefficient staff members, at the organization, the capacity of the organization is rather limited for the proper utilization of the carrot and stick approach. Promotion opportunities are also limited and financial incentives are not allowed to be used by the supervisors. What is more, when a staff member does not produce up to standards, it is most difficult to let go of them, and resultantly, low PO is common amongst the participants. Into this bargain, in lieu of taking control over how to achieve their own objectives, the staff expect their supervisors to help them and explain how to achieve those aims. Likewise, supervisors have difficulty encouraging PO. With these limited conditionals, they used the methods left to them: raising staff's energy, curiosity and strengths; sending them on travel missions; empowering them; providing training opportunities; and giving positive feedback. On the other hand, while supervisors described their achievement approach, only one out of five demonstrated characteristics of low PO by setting

team spirit and encouraging and engaging team members, while the others demonstrated high PO through individual control over their objectives.

6.3. The ITC

Based on *quota sampling technique* and *voluntarism principle*, five supervisors as interviewees, and five staff members as part of focus group discussions, participated in the research. All the interviews were conducted and recorded with a voice recorder by the researcher. Whilst the shortest lasted 28.22 minutes, the longest took 49.45 minutes, and the average was 37.77 minutes. During focus group discussions, which lasted 48.47 minutes, the researcher also acted as the moderator while a professional research assistant took notes. Whilst analysing the data, all the participants were kept anonymous. In addition, the researcher carried on with non-participant, structured, and overt observations, for a three-day period, at the facilities of the ITC.

6.3.1. Organizational culture

6.3.1.1. Artifacts

The ITC building is very close to the city centre (7-8 minutes walking from the main city train station). The UN guards provide security and do registration of the visitors. In addition, in the waiting lounge, there are a number of UN magazines to be viewed. Due to images such as this, when someone enters the building, although the ITC is only half budgeted and programmed by the UN[5], they get the impression of being inside a United Nations organization. For socialization, the cafeteria and restaurant are in the same place. There are enclosed office layouts at the organization. There is an obvious open-door policy at the organization which reflects in the interaction of the staff as well.

Verbal and nonverbal communication hold important places in communication systems. The intranet system is utilized in a highly effective manner for organizational work. Official documents and reports can be found in this system and electronic mails are utilized in any kinds of work. Even though UN organizations have six official languages, the ITC has three, which are all the same as the WTO's (English, French and Spanish). However, English is the main spoken language and used in relation to trade terminology. All the male executive staff (P5 and above) mostly wear formal business attire and have their daily shaves. Interestingly, Friday is an informal-dress day. Male or female, most of the executive and staff come to work with casual clothes. The informal dress day implementation provides a more relaxed work environment.

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[5]   The other half of the budget and program is provided by the WTO.

It can be inferred that as a ritual, there are two coffees and one lunch breaks in a day. Herein, there is not a sharp distinction between work and socialization areas. As a habit, most staff bring files and work documents to the cafeteria in order to discuss their work and execute meetings during their morning coffee break. At lunch too, some colleagues are heard discussing work, but not as much as it occurs during the first coffee break of the day. There are smaller posters, with the ITC logo and the slogan, "Our Way Forward", that can be seen on every floor. This slogan is in reference to the mission and goals of the organization and reminds the staff of their vital nature.

6.3.1.2. Espoused beliefs and values

In order to improve trade and investment performance and international competitiveness, the ITC gives professional support to SMEs. However, there is a reflective relation between them and their values. The ITC as an intergovernmental organization constructs and transfers its principles to the private sector, but it is also affected by some of the values of the private sector, such as being flexible, collaborative, knowledge, trust, and result based organization. It does not give the feeling of a classical intergovernmental organization. Organizational culture encourages staff's participation and showing individual respect. In addition, it gives the impression that without having enough knowledge about the duties' contents, it is rather difficult for the staff to manage surviving in the organization. Moreover, while the ITC encourages equal trade opportunities for economies of developing countries, it also supports egalitarianism among genders in its own organization. The reflections of these understandings may easily be found in the beliefs and values of the participants. Only one participant infers that *"...For some field missions in a country where a woman would not feel comfortable to go, we take it into consideration."* Apart from this, there is a consensus on gender egalitarianism. Contained within these understandings is an espoused value: "*There is no gender inequality in the organization*".

6.3.1.3. Basic underlying assumptions

The participants evaluate their main reactions toward unexpected events and assume that they may occur at any time. Hence, UA is categorically low at the organization, which also leads to a basic underlying assumption that "unexpected events occur all the time". Meetings hold an important place in the information flow and working structure of the organization. The participants believe that they are very useful to improving staff performance and creating team spirit along with a sense of belonging. Hence, one of their basic underlying assumptions is that "meetings are necessary at work". The final basic underlying assumption is about motivation. The participants refer to culture-neutral organization dynamics.

According to them, nationality is not an issue because they get used to working in a multicultural environment and presume that, "Motivation of staff is not related to their national background and they are culture-neutral in the organization".

6.3.2. National culture

The supervisors' main concerns while working with a multicultural workforce are about national insensitivities and PO. Herein, indeed, PO is more related to staff than supervisors, as the aim of the latter does not increase efficiency or performance. The third interview and fourth focus group questions examined UA dimension. While dealing with unexpected events, in lieu of relying on a backup plan, the participants preferred to lean on team interaction and instantly developed tailored solutions. These attitudes lead to conclude that UA is rather low amongst them.

The fourth and seventh interview questions explored HO. It is high amongst the supervisors, especially while encouraging good human nature. They assessed integrity through: sharing coffee and lunch breaks, understanding good things, being good examples, caring and listening, being open to dialogue, respect, and trusting each other. Also, they showed midlevel HO to the idea of seeing their staff outside of work. Even though they continued to see each other at social activities or during special events, there was a sense of professionalism between them. The preference of the supervisors connotes midlevel assertiveness by developing a basic level of friendship out of work. Furthermore, third focus group question investigated HO as well. Herein, only one staff met her supervisor outside of work in order to partake in a social activity, while all the others had not spent any time with their supervisors after work. Thereby, all the participants preferred not to meet outside of work and desired to have a more professional relationship. This preference is one of the main characteristics of low HO.

The sixth interview and focus group questions investigated how to ensure a sense of belonging in IOs. Still, in order to increase IGC, supervisors performed similar acts which were mentioned above, such as, recognizing each individual achievement of the staff, involving them in meetings and knowledge sharing, and overlapping individual and organizational objectives. Contrariwise, while discussing issues dealing with a sense of belonging, except for one participant (professional post) who expressed her feelings on the issue, all the others (general service staff) provided ambiguous answers by using words, such as, *sometimes* and *not really sure*, or mentioned their past experiences. These pretexts gave off the impression that the latter four have a low IGC threshold.

The seventh focus group and eighth interview questions investigated GE. Except for one supervisor who had concerns while sending female staff to a field mission in a country where a woman would not feel comfortable. GE is strong among other supervisors as high participation of females is encouraged. Likewise,

GE ranked very high with the staff as well. All were females and believed that they could do whatever they put their minds to. The eight-focus group and ninth and tenth interview questions examined PO and FO dimensions. The supervisors encouraged high PO through ensuring opportunities for developing necessary skills of the staff regarding given tasks, developing open dialogue channels which cover feedback, guidance and periodic reviews, and recognizing achievements. On the other hand, while working towards their own objectives, the supervisors placed emphasis on teamwork by defining clear objectives and creating an interactive work environment. Also, they showed high FO characteristics by preparing a plan with a timeframe. In addition, two out of five supervisors defined themselves as more concentrated on the future, one on both present and future, and the other two in a combination of past, present and future. Inversely, while the staff described their main achievement approach, each showed low FO by focusing on the present state of affairs with a low performance orientation, as they sought help from their colleagues and social environment, and used social interactions such as thinking positively, always smiling, and being flexible and adaptable.

6.4. The WHO

Semi-structured interviews, focus group activity, and non-participatory observations (a three-day schedule) were conducted at the facilities of the WHO, with the participation of six supervisors (interviewees), six staff (in a focus groups), the researcher, and a professional assistant (especially for focus groups). The interviews and focus group discussions were recorded. While the shortest interview lasted 24.22 minutes, the longest took 60 minutes, and the average was 38.41 minutes. On the other hand, the focus group discussions lasted 72 minutes.

6.4.1. Organizational culture

6.4.1.1. Artifacts

Security concerns, meeting rooms, artworks, and social responsibility were important components of the physical layout of the organization. There was an additional building, which was located in view of the main edifice, shared by the UNAIDS and the WHO: The 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors were utilized by UNAIDS staff, and the 4th floor was used by the WHO. Even though the supplemental building is shared by a different organization, both facilities have similar characteristics. Interaction of staff was rather poor and limited as they constantly work away on their computers, and if not necessary, they did not even look at each other.

Many symbols, posters, artworks and logos could be found in every corner of the organization. Posters displayed the main products of the organization by referring to its projects. Moreover, promoting health through the life-course,

especially in undeveloped and developing countries, was another main work subject. There were many exhibitions with the theme, the *WHO provided services in underdeveloped countries*. In addition to the art aspect, at the sub-text of these exhibitions, there was a recognition of staff and their efforts in the field, which demonstrated they were valuable to the organization. The WHO, as a UN agency, has six official UN languages. However, generally speaking, the routine language is English but most greet one another mostly in French. Male coordinators and higher executives wear formal business attire and have daily shaves. Female executives prefer mostly dark suits with jackets. Other personnel wear smart casual clothing. There are two different coffee break rituals within the organizational culture, based on the etiquette of the staff at work. This differentiation may stem from the profile of the workforce and impact of other sister organizations (UNAIDS). Personnel who work in the adjacent building are mostly medical doctors who have more workaholic manners. Even though lunch breaks can be extended for two hours, most grab a sandwich or a salad and utilize this time to participate in lunch seminars and panels on health matters, and personal development issues.

6.4.1.2. Espoused beliefs and values

The WHO's primary role is to direct and coordinate international health issues within the UN system. In order to carry out this role, it constructs health policies for a number of countries. Moreover, this construction is also reflected within the organization through such policies as no-smoking rules, provision of hand sterilization machines, bequest of free male and female preservatives, and posting of fliers on ways to prevent disease. The WHO also takes on the responsibility of informing all its staff on health issues. The WHO does not only try to lead the world on issues of health, but also to point out to its own staff the importance of starting awareness at their own home base. Awareness is an important component of the organizational culture of the organization. There are other options, such as lunch seminars and panels, for staff who seek to gain an awareness of issues not limited to their specialization. These attempts of raising awareness also indicate that the WHO is a knowledge-based institution.

One of the personnel claimed that while she was undertaking an internship at the organization, she worked with a "sexist boss" who gave all the credit and feedback to her male associates, even though they were all performing the same acts. Moreover, she thought that there was a male domination status quo at the executive level. Except for this participant, others did not believe that there is a gender problem at the organization. Therefore, the second espoused value is related to the gender issue, that, "*there is no gender* inequality *at work*". It can be concluded that one of the visions of the organization – *to work in line with the public*

good – reflects the subtext of participant responses. Here an espoused value emerges, that, "we are here for a good cause".

6.4.1.3. Basic underlying assumptions

The participants evaluate how they react towards unexpected events in the following manner. It can be easily seen that unexpected events are part of their work routine. Related to this taken for granted belief, there is a basic underlying assumption: "Unexpected events happen all the time in the organization". Meetings, as an important component of the organizational culture, are utilized for the goals of ensuring good human nature, improving performance, team spirit, and a sense of belonging. To this effect, *"meetings are necessary at work"*, is another basic underlying assumption in the organization. While evaluating the impact of manifold nationalities in the work environment on staff motivation, they do not see its impact on motivation. They see motivation from a more intrinsic perspective, and hence, they do not find any reason to develop a specific motivation model regarding different nationalities. They assume that "motivation concept is related to personality rather than nationalities". Even though there are five types of staff categorizations, the participants develop a basic underlying assumption, that "there are two types of staff in the organization: professionals and then the others". This view finds its roots in that professionals, unlike others, have permanent contracts and can use many organizational benefits, such as high salaries, educational grants for family members, and special leaves, amongst other perks, to complement their already higher levels of remuneration.

6.4.2. National Culture

The first interview question investigated supervisors' main concerns while working in a multicultural environment. Only one supervisor had no concerns when working with staff from different nationalities. Others' concerns focused on components of culture, such as difficulty to use humour, clarity of spoken English, national work ethics, and acclimating newcomers with the organization, their team, and the different meanings of symbols, colours and gestures. These concerns indicate supervisors' awareness to cultural sensitivities. The third interview and fourth focus group questions investigated UA dimension. Almost all participants showed low UA, as they took unexpected events normally and tried to find daily solutions.

The fourth and seventh interview questions, and third focus group query, examined HO and Assertiveness dimensions. The supervisors had a tendency to encourage high HO by putting emphasis on staff interests and individual recognition, establishing a friendly work environment, and overlapping individual and organizational values. Then again, regarding developing a relationship with

staff outside of work, in order to keep a power distance, they showed low HO characteristics through limited outside socialization and interaction.

The 5th interview and focus group questions explored IC dimension, which was encouraged by the supervisors through regular team meetings, group retreats and lunches, anticipating problems in advance, creating a common language and goal amongst team members, assigning a team name, providing autonomy, communicating, and showing respect to each member of the team. Staff expressed their eagerness to be a valuable member of the team and its teamwork, yet seen from the subtexts of some of their remarks, they still had the tendency to see themselves as individual entities; examples such as: having individual tasks, and being acknowledged and appreciated individually. If we regarded collectivism, in lieu of individual acknowledgment or appreciation, a collective acknowledgment or appreciation could have been emphasized. On the other hand, only two participants mentioned common wisdom and a friendly environment. Except for these two, the others had low IC.

The 6th interview and focus group questions investigated IGC dimension. IGC was also strengthened by the participants through similar activities which were recommended vis-à-vis providing team spirit. Alternatively, staff showed low IGC characteristics. When we looked at their profiles, it could be seen that they were young. As one of the participants inferred, "the IO Headquarters was not suitable for young staff members", as he had seen no action there. Accordingly, he believed that, "Headquarters, with its monotone working structure, was akin to a retirement location". Consequently, such a result as discussed, may emerge. The 7th focus group and 8th interview questions investigated GE in the context of IOs. All the participants encouraged high GE and did not see any reason to take into consideration sex issues while distributing power, roles and responsibilities, at work.

The 8th focus group and 9th and 10th interview questions examined FO and PO dimensions. Regarding time orientation at work, FO is the most common for supervisors. One supervisor defined himself as present oriented, two were a mixture of both present and future oriented, and three were FO. In addition, high PO was seen among their methods of performance improvement. Even though team meetings and retreats were seen as part of these efforts, the main approach was identifying personalized attributes and developing a special approach for each individual. In order to manage this, communication channels were kept open, many individual meetings were conducted, and a timeline was developed.

7. Contribution to knowledge

This study makes an original contribution to knowledge, from two main perspectives: methodological and theoretical. Regarding a methodological contribution, three ethnography methods, interviews, focus groups, and non-

participant observations, were applied in the context of international organizations. In addition, the use of three methods triangulated the data, and this combination brought different perspectives which helped enrich the process of knowledge production.

Theoretical contributions are made through synthesis of culture theories in this research. Firstly, in order to understand the organizational culture of the institutions covered in this study, levels of Schein's organizational culture model were for the first time applied in the context of international settings. Organizational culture of IOs have been evaluated from three perspectives of Schein (2004): Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs, and, Values and Underlying Assumptions. In addition, one of the main characteristics of an IO work environment is multiculturalism. To be able to evaluate an individual's national cultural attributes, the cultural dimensions of the GLOBE study were applied to IO personnel. With regard to culture, a final contribution has been in terms of international culture. It was realized that due to a Marxist dialectic interaction of opposites, as organizational culture and national culture, a new entity has emerged, both similar and different than its constituents. The unity of opposites is based on internal contradictions that are inherent in dialectical change. National culture arrived first on the scene, due to the existence of the nation state, but was followed by the emergence of organizational culture with the rise in organizational studies of the 1960's/70's. When national culture combines with organizational culture, the internal struggle can be identified as the 'living abroad' factor. Without it, there are no internal contradictions. This factor is the reason that dialectical change can be found in this research. The unity of national and organizational cultures, due to the internal contradiction of living abroad, leads to qualitative transformation, or change, in the form of international culture. A new entity, which shows the historical process of how the idea of culture has progressed and changed dialectically. Consequently, this research contributes to the field of study by giving definition of international culture as a metamorphosed pattern of values, beliefs, assumptions, social ideas, language, symbols, rituals and working customs formed by the fusion of national cultures and organizational culture in international settings.

8. Conclusion

As Schein (2004) described in the first level of his culture model, artworks not only offer artistic worth to the organization and demonstrate its visible face, but they also represent their organizational values. These implicit attempts at utilizing symbols seem to facilitate staff's adaptation to organizational values. Furthermore, rituals point out the main visible traits of culture in any society. Organizations are not that different from societies; unique rituals of organizations provide an idea of their work customs and characteristics. Regarding rituals, coffee and lunch breaks are diligently observed at each organization. Clothing is also a part of Schein's

artifact level as organizational characteristics can be embedded in administrative dress code policy as well. Generally, the personnel of all four organizations prefer smart casual clothing. This preference gives off the impression of a relaxed work environment. Language is not only a part of artifacts, it is also a key element of espoused values and basic underlying assumptions. In order to provide consensus vis-à-vis organizational aims, there is need for a common language. This also ensures transference of values and assumptions to the staff. As the second cultural layer of Schein's model, espoused values demonstrate corporate and common values shared by officials and members of organizations. Concerning espoused values, "there is no gender inequality in the organization", is the common value for all these institutions. The third level of cultural layer is basic underlying assumptions which indicates the essence of organizational culture. Depth Interpretation of the first and second layers helps us understand this stratum. "Unexpected events always occur in the organization", and "the motivation concept is related to individual characteristics rather than nationalities", are the common basic underlying assumptions for all the organizations. It can be concluded that if unexpected events always occur, they are not unexpected anymore.

The research explored interaction of organizational and national cultures in the context of IOs, through the lenses of critical theory as a paradigm of inquiry. This approach provided a holistic understanding, especially as regards the philosophical conceptualism of IOs, and encouraged the use of qualitative research typology as the paradigm for methodology. Explorative and qualitative research facilitated understanding of culture. Nonetheless, this approach did bring some limitations, especially where it concerns generalization of findings. As a future research area, quantitative inquiries which take into consideration generalization concerns, may be conducted, especially in the area of finding a generally accepted definition for international culture.

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Özet

Ulusal kültür ve örgüt kültürünün uluslararası ortamlarda kaynaşması

Bu çalışmanın ana amacı, kültürün uluslararası ortamlardaki rolünü araştırmaktır. Kültürün anlaşılma kaygısı, eleştirel etnografi metodolojisinin kullanılmasına neden olmuştur. Yöntem olarak yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar, odak grup çalışmaları ve katılımcı olmayan gözlemler, kırk dört katılımcının katılımı ile dört uluslararası organizasyonda gerçekleştirilmiştir. Mevcut literatürde ilk kez bulgular, uluslararası kültürü; ulusal kültürlerin ve örgüt kültürünün kaynaşmasıyla oluşan, değerlerin, inançların, varsayımların, sosyal fikirlerin, dilin, sembollerin, ritüellerin ve çalışma geleneklerinin biçim değiştirmiş şekli olarak tanımlanmıştır. Aynı şekilde, ilk defa Schein'in kültürel katmanları, uluslararası organizasyon kültürünün bir portresini çizmiştir. Bunu takiben, kültürle ilgili olarak, ulusal kültür açısından nihai katkı, GLOBE çalışmasıyla katılımcıların ulusal kültür özellikleri vurgulanarak yapılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Uluslararası kültür, örgüt kültürü, ulusal kültür, uluslararası yönetim.