

Transforming Education: Effective Change in Leadership & Management

Leading & Managing Professionals
Within Education





Reflections on directed study tasks



Leadership & Culture



What is the culture?



What is the culture?



Task

- On your mobile devices research a school/college/university of your choice and try to identify what the culture is of that particular institution.
- How do you know?



Feedback

- Culture comprises a set of beliefs, values, ideologies and behaviours that distinguish one group of people from another.

- 'Software of the mind' (Hofstede 1991, p.1)

What is culture?

- **Question** – how can leadership influence culture?
- The best leaders are those who are not only fully aware of the multiple cultures in which they are embedded but make informed judgements about the impact of certain practices on organisational success (Groysberg et al 2019, p.45)

Culture and organisational change (Schein 2004)

Levels of understanding

1. Artifacts of organisational culture
2. Espoused beliefs and values
3. Basic underlying assumptions

'culture as a set of basic assumptions defines for us what to pay attention to, what things mean, how to react emotionally to what is going on, and what actions to take in various kinds of situations.' (p.32)

Four attributes of culture



- **Shared** – shared experiences of the group often through unwritten rules
- **Pervasive** – permeates multiple levels in an organisation and features in collective behaviours, physical environments etc.
- **Enduring** – Can direct group thoughts and actions over the long-term
- **Implicit** – culture as a kind of silent language



Characteristics of an adaptive culture (adapted from Kotter & Heskett 1992)

- Willingness to make changes in culturally ingrained behaviours
- Emphasis on identifying problems before they occur and rapidly implementing workable solutions
- Focus on innovation
- Shared feelings of confidence about managing problems and opportunities
- Emphasis on trust
- Willingness to take risks
- Spirit of enthusiasm
- Candor
- Internal flexibility in response to external demands
- Consistency in word and action
- Long-term focus



Culture and educational leadership

- The role of societal culture
 - GLOBE study 2004
 - Power dynamics of leaders – in non-Western societies related to 'high power distance' (Hofstede 1997)
 - Essential to consider educational leadership within the context of where the institution is placed
 - Cross-cultural borrowing