

PRIORITIZATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY INDICATORS IN QAEMSHAHR MUNICIPALITY

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Abstract. Organizational identity is a model of beliefs, values and feelings that forms in a special interaction between individuals and their peripheral environment in the context of organizational culture. The purpose of this study is to prioritize organizational identity indicators in Qaemshahr Municipality. This research is applied in terms of purpose and is descriptive in terms of data collection. In this research, collection method was library and field design and the standard questionnaire was organizational identity measurement which Cronbach's alpha was 0.81. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The results showed that in organizational identity components, correlation, loyalty and similarity indices are in the first to third priority respectively.

Keywords: Organizational Identity, Membership or Solidarity, Loyalty or Organizational Support, Similarity or Perception of Common Characteristics.

1. Introduction

Organizational identity can be considered as an emerging element in behavioral and organizational sciences, which has attracted the attention of many scholars. The concept of organizational identity comes from two general ideas of identity and social identity in general. Lee (1971) acknowledges that organizational identity implies membership, loyalty, and common characteristics. These concepts are mixed together and their analysis is not possible apart from the general concept of organizational identity (Faraji, Ganjavi, 2009). Organizational identity refers not only to organizational attributes, but also to the deep rooted in the values and beliefs of the organization's collective spirit, which may not be known by the members of the organization (Gholipour, Amiri, 2009). Today, in many governmental and non-governmental organizations, there is a tendency to increase the rate of displacement, increasing absenteeism, reduce job satisfaction, increasing the alienation of work and the lack of employees' sense of responsibility and, in general, the lack of identification of members with their organization. The need for increased awareness of managers and managers of these organizations is becoming increasingly apparent from the factors affecting the formation of organizational identity and the potential benefits resulting from the existence of a strong organizational identity. Despite many researches about the identity of the organization, there is little knowledge about the formation and the factors affecting its creation. The above points to the fact that the existing literature on organizational identity is still insignificant and there is room for further research. The present research can also increase the richness of existing literature, in spite of its research results and its shortcomings, in spite of its richness. Obviously, by investigating the factors affecting organizational identity, it is possible to provide an appropriate platform for establishing the organizational identity status in the organization. Therefore, in this research, we are going to examine the organizational identity in Qaemshahr Municipality.

1.1 Theoretical Foundations of Organizational Identity

Organizational identity is one of the most important issues in the field of organization and it means that the employees of an organization accept the goals, values, and organizational goals, and attribute themselves to it, and define themselves by the same characteristics that they believe are defining the organization. This category is challenged in several ways, which seems to be one of the things that can affect this factor, the phenomenon of merging organizations, because in practice most of the mergers take place regardless of the cultural differences of organizations. Organizational identity is a particular form of social identity that is based on the institutionalization of the characteristics, goals and achievements of the organization by the employees and having a sense of unity and belonging to it. When employees feel the identity of the organization, often consider the characteristics of the organization as their own characteristics, they consider themselves as the hallmark of their organizations, and

consider the values and benefits of the organization in making decisions and evaluating existing choices. (Hatch, 1997).

1.2 Employee Organizational Identity

Since identity plays a key role in the theory of social science; in the last two decades, this concept has become "organizational identity" as well as organizational literature (Corley et al., 2006). As many schools have accepted, this concept is the key to understanding modern organizations. Organizational identity definitions are usually presented in two formats (Dahlla, 2008):

Basic definition: A common understanding of employees about the nature of the organization they belong to, due to their awareness of their organization. In fact, this definition refers to the common understanding of members.

Secondary definition: Employee understanding of their organization is distinct from other organizations in a way that the organization distinguishes itself from other organizations (Fehsenfeld, 2011), which refers to employees' awareness of belonging to a particular organization compared to other organizations (Cornelissen, Haslam & Balmer, 2007). In other words, this definition focuses not on the common understanding of the members, but on their understanding of the differentiation of their organization with other organizations. It should be noted that, with regard to organizational identity, there are several definitions that these definitions have similarities and differences; however, most research on organizational identity refers to Albert and Watten (1985) and Asforth and Mile (1989) (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006).

1.3 Identity of an organization

Organizational identity is created by how members feel and feel about the organization. The identity of the company and the company's badge also come from how customers, investors and other people understand outside the organization of identity. In order to exploit the benefits of building an intrinsic and exterior image of the organization, one must look at the ways in which they look at the image. What external observers receive their information about the organization? Do some routes go to the employees in particular, while the rest speak about customers? Organizational identity in the past was defined as a collective acquisition of indicator values and organizational characteristics. According to Olins, organizational identity is evident through products and services, environment, communications and behavior. He also says that the organization must consider the relationship between structure and identity (Olins, 1995).

1.4 Organizational identity pillars

Organizational identity and the sense of belonging and similarity with the organization are related but distinct concepts (Ravishankar & Pan, 2008). Organizational identity theory perceives organizational identity with that set of organizational features that members of the organization perceive them as pivotal, stable, and distinctive features, and helps them define and explain their organization and sense of belonging to it (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). Pratt and Foreman (2000) have shown that an organization can have more than one organizational identity; when different conceptualizations are made about the organization's pivotal, distinctive and sustainable things (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). When people categorize themselves as members of a group or social class, there is a sense of belonging (Ashfowth and Mill, 1989). This sense of belonging may also be driven by dynamic processes such as self-inclination or self-sustainability (Datton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). Feeling of belonging or similar to the person's perception of himself in terms of specific characteristics of an individual social class (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), the perception of being one with collections and human categories, or belonging to certain human groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and the implicit explanation of the sense of membership in the group. Feeling affiliation is a process by which people view themselves with someone else or a group of similar people and act as an influential source of motivation for individuals to act and act jointly. The sense of being one with a plurality of human beings makes individuals' goals and interests consistent with goals and interests, which increases the likelihood of collective action based on common understanding and understanding (Kramer & Brewer, 1984). Asforth and Mills (1989) consider the sense of organizational affiliation as the perception of being one or belong to the organization, and Dotton (1994) regards the sense of belonging as a link between the definition of an organization and the definition that a person uses for himself. On the other hand, loyalty is also one of the social values and it is very important in our lives and in our relationships between people. In Dehkhoda's culture, loyalty is defined as truth and honesty, truth and intimacy in life and relationships, and the owner of the well-being (Dehkhoda, 2010). In fact, loyalty can be defined as the stability and stability of relationships and honesty in interactions and the fulfillment of obligations (Dehkhoda, 2010). The purpose of loyalty to the organization is to employ the full power of the staff to achieve the goals of the organization, to be accountable, to pursue eagerly, double-effort, to coordinate with changes, and so on. Several definitions have been written for loyalty. H.Becker believes that if one, despite knowing the better conditions for a job, more rights and more suitable conditions, refuses to accept that job in order to maintain his current job, loyalty to the organization is considered (Gharehcheh and Dawboian, 2011). The most important assets of organizations are loyal and professional staffs who are well-informed about their activities in the organization and

what they should do. But these skills and abilities are not achieved in today's specialized professions except through continuous activity and continuous contact with the working conditions of the organization. As a result, employees need to be kept faithful to the organization to gain more fluency in their field of work.

Loyalty to the organization and long-term longevity of individuals in the organization will lead to an exaggeration and more relationships among employees in an organization, which will also lead to the intimacy and effective communication of employees and, consequently, increase motivation and willingness to work in the organization. The relationship between employees and members of an organization in the organization that is known to be related to the relationship is a direct channel to coordinate and resolve the organization's problems, and includes an important part of staff satisfaction. For effective communication, there are obstacles that include: differences in perception, differences in language, voice, emotions, incompatibility between verbal and non-verbal communication, distrust, etc. (Boroumand, 2007). As can be seen, many of these barriers, including differences in perceptions and differences in language, distrust, and emotions, and the rest, will be resolved to some extent by the continuous and long-term relationship of the staff, and will be less effective. Some of these obstacles, such as employees' lack of trust in each other, are in fact due to their lack of understanding of each other, which, with the continuous entry and exit of employees, these problems will be continuous and doubled and the incomplete and ineffective communications will dominate the organization, which will undermine the organization. Therefore, the main elements of organizational identity can be identified in the following three components (Boroumand, 2007):

- Loyalty or support to the organization.
- Membership or affection.
- Similarity or perception of having common features.

1.5 Conceptual framework of research

According to theoretical foundations, the conceptual model of this research is as follows:



Figure 1: Organizational Identity Components (Cheney, 1983)

1.6 Organizational Identity Theories

There are many definitions of organizational identity that represent different perspectives in this field. In this section, some of these ideas have been presented in the field of organizational identity.

Foote's View (1951): For the first time, Foote used the term organizational identity to identify identity as the basis of motivation. Foote identity recognizes organizational identity as a commitment to a particular identity or group of identities. He claims that a person tends to identify with his companions in groups. These groups categorize the community around them and affect their behavior. From his point of view, organizational identity is a concept of personality as an organization member. Foote used the concept of self-concept to define organizational identity, and this self-realization of individuals to move in line with the interests of the organization (Foote, 1951).

Olins's View (1995): Olins divide organizations into identities and structures into three different categories: independent, verified, and marked (Olins, 1995).

1) Independent class: In this category organizations with an independent identity always use a name and a visual identity and structure. All products and services provided by the organization have a name, style, and features.

2) Approval Class: In this category, authentication identities are found where organizations have grown by purchasing other companies. They often trade in a variety of fields and have a wide range of activities, because the groups have their name and identity, but they are oriented toward the image of the parent company.

3) The tagged class: Identity structures consist of a number of badges, but they have no outsourcing. The identity of the organization is distinct from the identity of the signs (Olins, 1995).

Lee's View (1971): Lee (1971) defines organizational identity as the degree of individual identification with the organization. His approach to organizational identity emphasizes three main dimensions: the first is the sense of belonging, which results from common goals with employees' emotions or those whose duties fulfill their individual needs. The second feature of loyalty refers to attitudes and behaviors that support organizational goals or defend the organization against foreigners. Finally, the third dimension is a common feature that is used as a similarity between an individual and others within the organization. The definition of Lee shows the distinction of the structures of others, such as Brown. He used the term loyalty as part of an organizational identity that is related to attitudes and behaviors that support and defend the organization (Lee, 1971).

2. History of research

Table 1: History of research

Researcher	Year	Title	Results
Nasr Isfahani and Aghaebabapour Dehkordi	2013	Organizational Identity Relationship with Employees' Silence	There is a positive and significant correlation between organizational silence of employees and each component of organizational identity.
Rastegar et al	2012	The Role of Spiritual Leadership in Organizational Identity	The dimensions of spiritual leadership influence organizational identity.
Aghaz & Hashemi	2012	Extended model of organizational identity according to employee personality traits	Personality traits are effective on employees' sense of identity.
Wang et al	2014	Organizational Identity Management in E-Commerce	In e-commerce, organizations must maintain their organizational identity to achieve long-term success.
Pit	2013	Multiple organizations and identities	There is a strong link between working groups and professional and organizational identity.

3. Methodology

Research question

How to prioritize organizational identity indicators of Qaemshahr Municipality?

Statistical Society

All official Qaemshahr Municipality staff and its five affiliated organizations such as Firefighting Organization, Taxi Organization, Cemetery Organization, Bus and Civil Organization, in the spring of 1396, formed a statistical society that according to the latest statistics obtained from the municipality's staff, the number of members 322 people (including 267 men and 55 women). The sample group also included 181 people who were determined by cluster and stratified random sampling according to Kerjesi and Morgan tables.

Method and tool for data collection

In this research, the main tool for collecting information is a questionnaire containing three questions of demographic characteristics (age-gender-education level) and 12 questions related to membership dimensions or sense of solidarity, loyalty or support to the organization, similarity or perception of common characteristics. According to the purpose of the research, the questions are categorized as five options of the Likert spectrum.

Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Since in this research, the most important tool for data collection and measurement of variables is a questionnaire, the validity of the questionnaire is very important (Hafeznia, 2004). In this research, according to the questionnaire standardization and its more consistent use by researchers, the validity of the questionnaire has been approved by the relevant faculty members. The most common reliability test is the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which is also used in this research. So, 25 questionnaires were distributed among the members of the sample and the calculated data of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient were calculated. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is placed between zero and one, which indicates zero integrity and positive 1 of complete reliability. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was determined using SPSS software, which indicates that the questionnaire has a relatively high reliability, which in this research is a reliability of 0.81.

Data analyzing method

SPSS16 software was used for processing and analyzing the data obtained from the questionnaire. This includes two sections of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Friedman test has been used to prioritize the components studied.

Results and Findings

Data analysis is important for verifying the accuracy of the research hypotheses. Information analysis is one of the main and most important parts of the research. Therefore, after introducing the research method, it is necessary to use the data and statistical methods to carry out the tests required in the research. In this section, the data collected is used to confirm or reject the research hypotheses. To analyze the findings, the research data (which were collected in field operations through questionnaires) were first extracted. Then, all data were analyzed using SPSS software. Here, one-sample t-test was used to examine organizational identity status and Friedman test for ranking organizational identity indices in Qaemshahr municipality. According to the results of table2, it can be seen that the component of organizational identity and its indices, i.e., membership or feeling of solidarity, loyalty or organizational support, and the similarity or perception of common characteristics, are all significant with regard to the test of t with the test value of 3 and the confidence interval of 95%. In other words, since the difference in mean for organizational identity and its three indexes are all positive, it shows that organizational identity is in good desirability. Also, dimensions, feelings of solidarity, loyalty and similarity are also in good condition. As a result, it can be stated that the organizational identity of the municipality is in a desirable situation in all three dimensions.

Table 2: Single sample t test

	Test value = 3					
	t Statistics	Degrees of freedom	Significant	Difference of averages	confidence interval %95	
					Low limit	Upper limit
Organizational identity	23.178	180	0.000	1.10294	1.0088	1.1970
Solidarity	4.606	180	0.000	0.38603	0.2203	0.5518
Loyalty	30.253	180	0.000	1.61765	1.5119	1.7234
Similarity	24.272	180	0.000	1.30294	1.1988	1.4115

After determining that the organizational identity of Qaemshahr Municipality is in desirable conditions, using Friedman Ranking Test, we have shown the priority of each of the organizational identity indicators. The results of Table 3 show that loyalty or institutional support of organizational identity in Qaemshahr Municipality is at the top of the list, and the similarity or perception of common characteristics is also ranked second. At the end of the day, there is membership or feeling of solidarity.

Table 3: Friedman Ranking Test Results

	Average Ratings
Loyalty	2.68
Similarity	2.10
Solidarity	1.22

On the other hand, Table 4 shows that the Friedman rank test is significant and the test is validated according to the chi-square test statistic and significant value.

Table 4: Test statistic for significance of Friedman test

Sample size	181
Chi-square statistic	164.091
Degrees of freedom	2
Significant	0.000

Since the value of the test statistic in the t test is greater for the loyalty index than other indicators, this result is consistent with the Friedman ranking test (Table 3). In other words, these two tests confirm each other, which is evidence of the accuracy of the results.

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