



Organisational Culture in Information Technology Projects: A Case Study Analysis

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Agenda

- Background
- Research Methodology
- The Case Study Projects
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Future Work



Background

This paper reports on research in progress which has the overall aim of investigating whether organisational culture provides an environment that promotes or prevents IT project success.



Background

- The human aspect of projects is often overlooked.
- Yet it is a very important aspect of any project
- All projects are managed by, worked on, and completed by humans, without them a project simply would not exist



Background

Project HRM

- Traditional components of project success include time, cost and scope but ignore people
- The impact of HRM on the success/failure of projects has been widely studied. For example:
 - Project success relates directly to the quality of talent employed and the manner in which they are deployed (Laplante 2003)
 - Social issues are a cause of many major project failures (Belout & Gauvreau 2004)
 - 12 “real” factors of project success and notes that people are a part of each factor (Cooke-Davies 2002)



Background

Project HRM

- Many aspects of project teams have been studied and all play a part in the success of IT projects. For example
 - Characteristics of the project manager (Hughes & Cotterell 2006; Marchewka 2006)
 - Types of roles within the project team (Hughes & Cotterell 2006; Marchewka 2006; Smith 2001; Bellefeuille & Kuhl 1990)
 - Project team structure (Hughes & Cotterell 2006; Logue & Drouillard 2006; Marchewka 2006)
 - Impact of leadership style on project team efficiency and ability to deliver successful a project (Smith 2001; Wang et al 2005)



Background

Culture

- Henrie & Sousa-Poza (2005) found that culture within project management has not been heavily examined or studied in the past due to:
 1. Measuring culture is not easy
 2. There is a deficiency in the research on leadership of multinational teams
 3. There is confusion over the definition of culture



Background

Culture

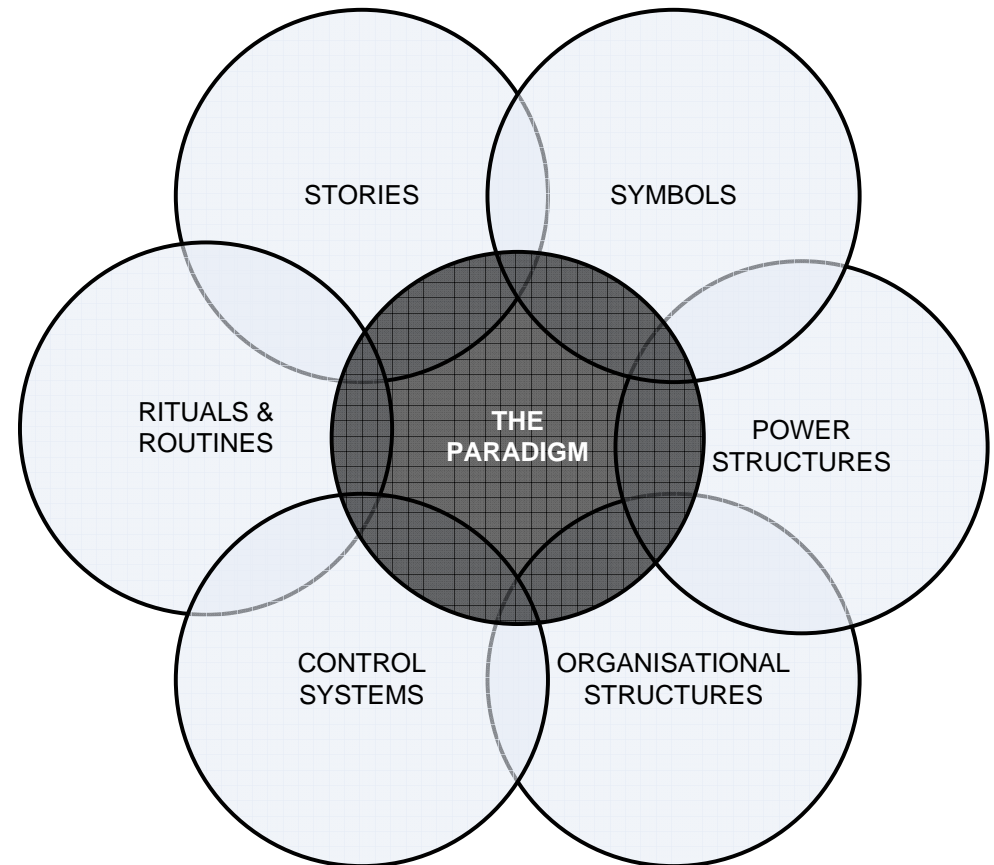
- Culture within project management or projects has not been widely studied
- Project management texts discuss project culture in terms of organisational culture (for example Marchewka 2006, Hughes & Cotterell 2006).
- Many models of organizational culture exist and the following models are discussed in this paper
 1. Manifestations of Culture (Hofstede et al. 1990)
 2. The Cultural Web (Johnson & Scholes 1999)
 3. Levels of Culture (Schein 1992)



Background

The Cultural Web

(Johnson & Scholes 1999)





Research Methodology

- Interpretive and Qualitative research approach using a dual case study
 1. Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002) Compliance Project
 2. Anti-Money Laundering/Counter-Terrorist Financing Project
- Data collection via reflective observations and informal conversations with people in the field as one of the researchers had worked on both projects.
 1. Reflection on past observations for the SOX Compliance Project
 2. On-site observation for the AML/CTF Project.
- Case analysis was undertaken using Johnson and Scholes' (1999) Cultural Web



The Case Study Projects

The SOX Compliance Project

1. Created to allow the Oil Company and its operating companies to become compliant with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002 (SOX)
2. Two groups – Business and IT in two regions (NA and **WONA**)
3. Phases of the project
 - Phase 1 – Process Documentation
 - Phase 2 – Remediation
 - Phase 3 – Testing



The Case Study Projects

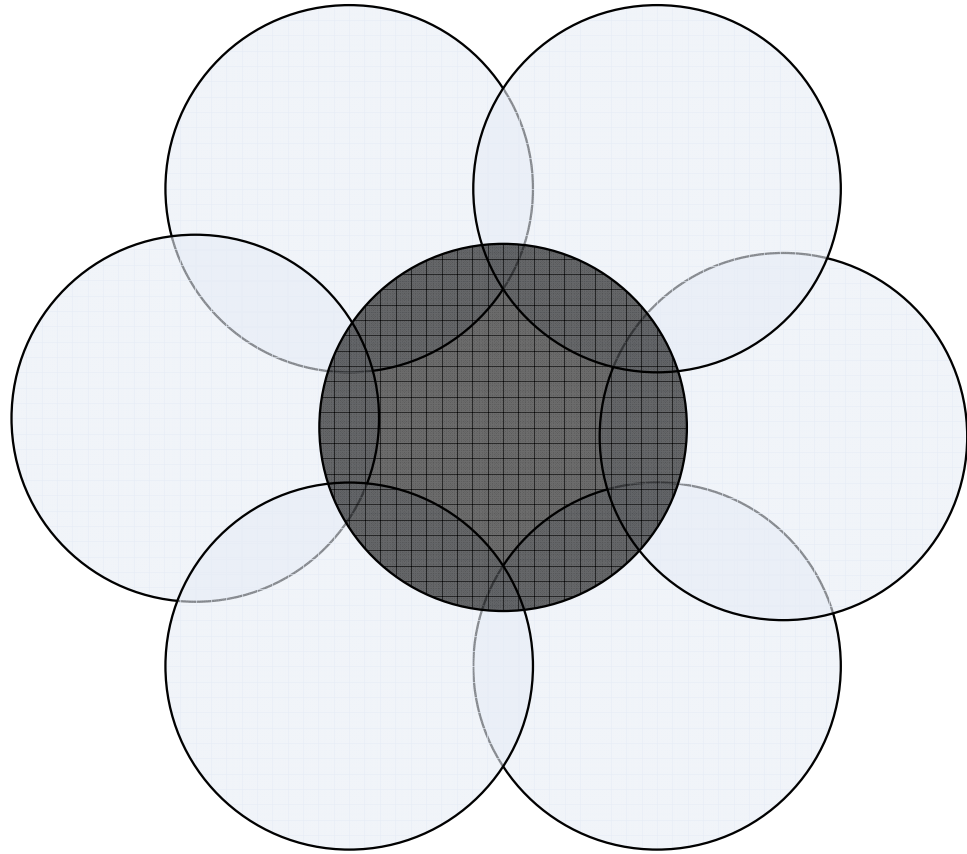
The AML/CTF project

1. The case study covers the Customer Information Program sub-project of the overall AML/CTF project.
2. This sub-project was tasked with determining the work required to comply with minimum AML/CTF requirements across all BUs of the bank.
3. Phases of the project
 - Phase 1 – Discovery
 - Phase 2 – Analysis & Solution Development
 - Phase 3 – Development of an Implementation Roadmap & Final Report



Discussion

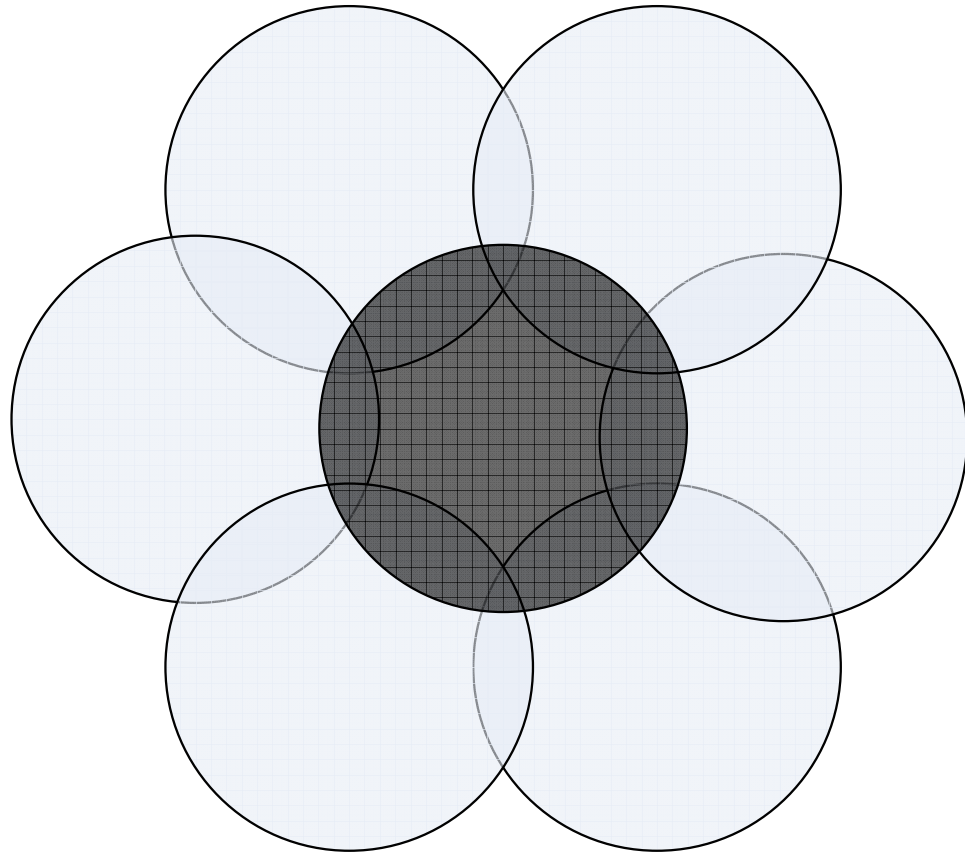
SOX Project
Cultural Web





Discussion

AML/CTF Project
Cultural Web





Conclusions

- The case studies offer an insight into the cultural aspects of projects
- The Cultural Web allowed a number of conclusions to be drawn regarding the culture of these projects
 - Opposite in terms of **Organisational Structure**
 - Differing **Control Systems**
 - Opposing **Power Structures**
 - **Stories** highlighted different types of communications
 - Similar **Rituals and Routines**
 - Project specific **Symbols**



Future Work

- This is research in progress.
- Document the creation of the questionnaire and the pilot test results so far
- Further work on the questionnaire and a more detailed further pilot test must be conducted
- Conducted the questionnaire with the aim to understand, on a wide scale or perhaps within an industry sector, the impact of organisational culture on IT project success.