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Exploring Organizational Consciousness: A Critical Approach towards Organizational Behavior

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Abstract

Maintaining a higher level of organizational performance would always remain an active research focus. Increased complexity in business environment requires organizations to continuously revisit their human resources for augmented output. Organizational consciousness is a relatively new paradigm for analyzing organizational behavior that views organizations as self-consciousness entities. The analytical approach provided by organizational consciousness benefits OD practitioners and researchers to transform or bring about permanent changes in organizations. The purpose of the present article is to critically evaluate the literature available on organizational consciousness and set forth avenues for research in the domain. The article develops a conceptual foundation for researchers to explore new themes in the area.

Keywords: corporate consciousness, global consciousness, organizational culture, organizational development (OD).

1. Introduction

The 21st century is a daunting century full of challenges and possibilities. The information explosion is radically changing the organizational landscape and developing channels of revolutionary advanced business models. Business and Management specialists must be shrewd to not only realizing the change in business environment, but they must also be ready to transform the organization for the emerging new challenges. Failure of large multinational companies have manifested that the old business paradigm is no longer practical in an ever-changing and mutually interconnected and influential business world. The traditional paradigm is limited to assessing problem cause and effect relation only. It cannot examine its counter side effects or consequences. In consequences to that, there is a need to change the aptitude and move towards the organic paradigm that explores the organization as a living organism in which all the mechanisms are jointly interrelated with each other. The organizational consciousness approach, in addition to assessing causes and effects, can explore the associations which are mutually dependent on each other, where even the minutest constituent can drive waves upon the entire corporation and vice versa.

The present consciousness paradigm highlights the connotation of intangible assets rather than the focusing on organization's tangible assets. This paradigm drives the conscious organizations to begin an evolutionary transformation of who they are, what they value, and how they perform; it involves environmental and social responsibility, in which organization must dynamically contribute. Consciousness paradigm develops new forms of management and administration that are appropriate for the comprehensive revolutions that are happening inside us and all around us. In addition to that, there is a need to reinvent or re-defined many of the existing and dominating business models or paradigms in contemporary corporations to impede sustainable development in the long term. The conscious transformation entails businesses to focus on more than the single motive of the bottom line one that pursues social, personal and environmental gains to monetary results.

Researchers have introduced a number of guide lines and principles to study the organizational consciousness paradigm through various propositions and theoretical frameworks, but this result in context-specific interpretations and abstract concepts with a multiplicity of meanings. Corporation’s capability for consciousness is extensively debated among corporate specialists. Campion and Palmer (1996) propose that organizational consciousness is embedded in corporate culture, business ethics, values, organization’s social responsibility and multiple stakeholders. A number of corporate initiatives and trends can be understood through a paradigm of organizational consciousness, and it might be helpful for strategic planning. Furthermore, the researchers claim that organizational consciousness is a state of existence or paradigm and mechanisms like culture, values, corporate social responsibility, business ethics and various stakeholders as antecedents in the framework. The results of the framework are diversity of and affirmative action, strategic decision making, global thinking, procedural justices, ethical decision making and so on as depicted in the figure (1). Authors put efforts to distinguish among probable reasons, mechanism, or procedure of organizational consciousness. The figure (1) provides a snapshot of a framework, and it is a heuristic method rather than an entirely perceived model with implicit interconnections.

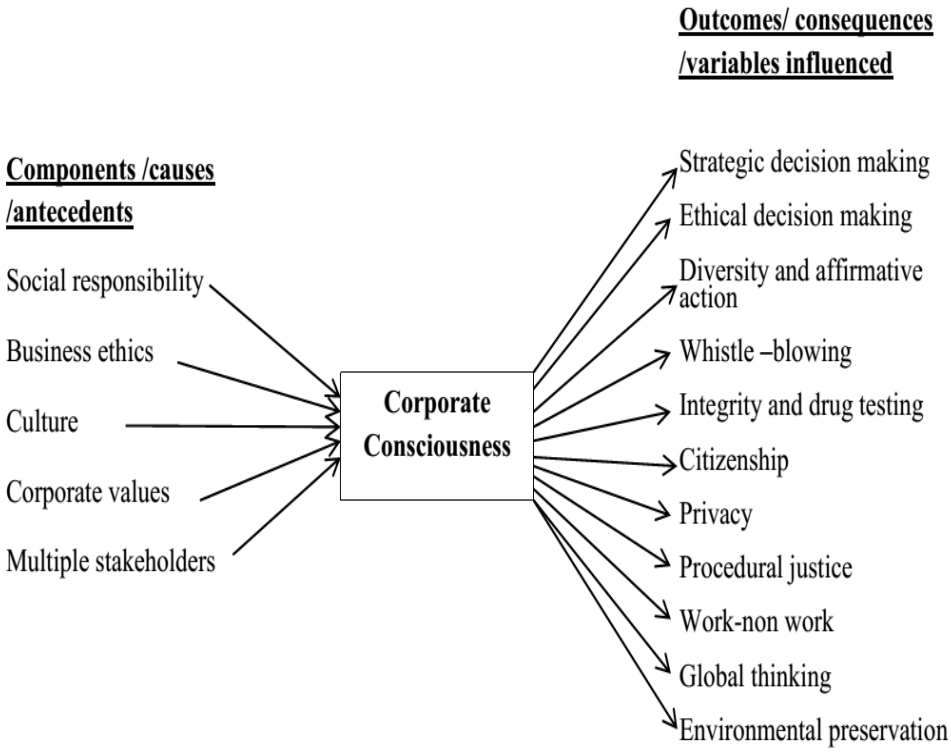

Figure 1: A Framework for Corporate Consciousness

Source (Campion and Palmer, 1996)

After Campion and Palmer , Barrett (2003) (see figure 2) using hierarchical levels needs of Maslow theory, design the organizational consciousness parameters in seven levels, which are survival, relationship, self-esteem, transformation, internal cohesion, making a difference, and service. After analyzing the organizations, Author argues that a successful organization must function on all seven levels of consciousness.

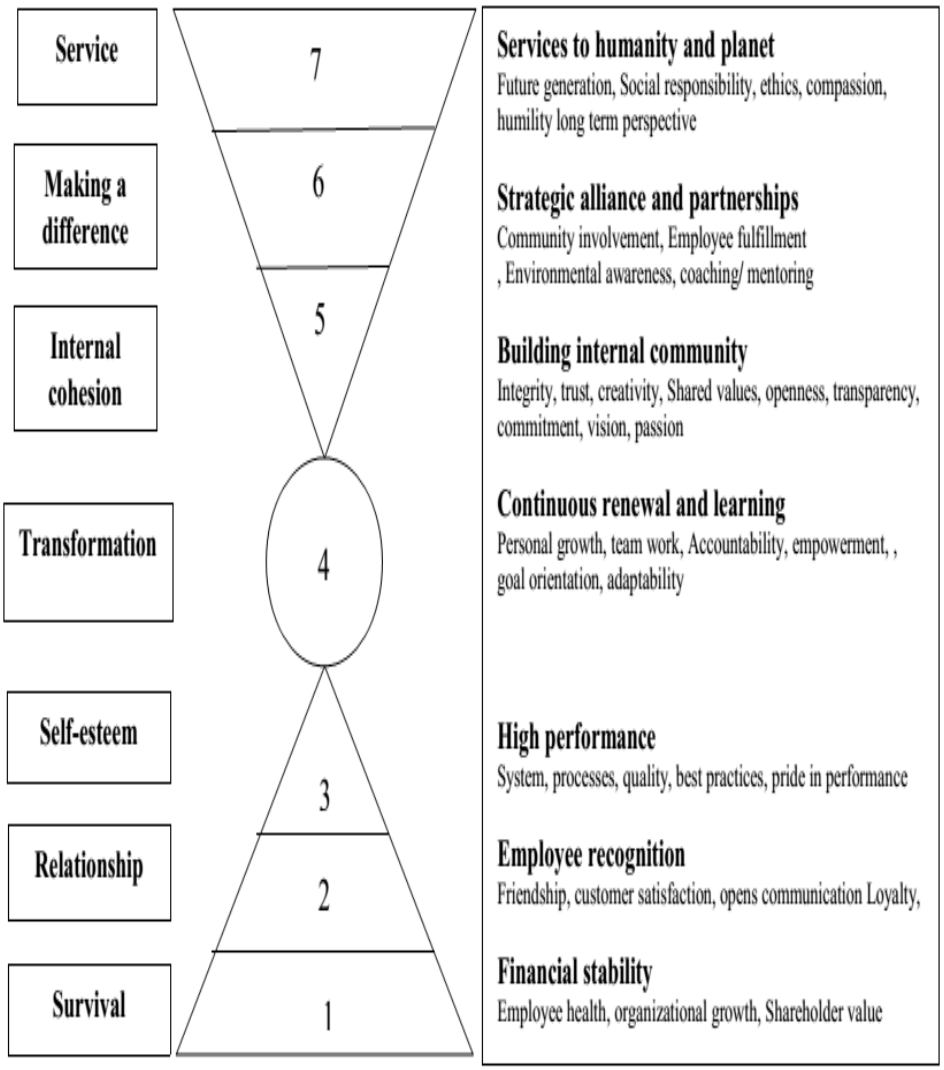

Figure 2: Seven Levels of Organizational Consciousness

Source (Barrett, 2003)

Author further classifies the seven levels into three board levels, ranging from low level of consciousness to high level of consciousness. The lower level of consciousness is from, levels 1 to 3, emphasis on the primary needs of business, the quest for profit or financial stability, building employee relationship, customer loyalty and high-performance processes and systems. The main purpose of these lower levels is on the self-interest of the stockholders and organization. The focus of the fourth level is a transformation a shift from fear based, rigid, authoritarian hierarchies to more open, inclusive, adaptive systems of governance that empower employees to operate with responsible freedom. The higher level of consciousness is from, levels 5 to 7, emphasis on traditional configuration and interrelation, building mutually valuable alliances and

long-term sustainability. According to Barrett, corporations that focus only on the satisfaction of the lower needs are not normally market leaders. They can get some financial realization, but together they are also self-centered and internally focused, or too obstinate and rigid to be at the top of their game. In addition to that, organizations are not competent to adjust itself to fluctuating market conditions: they are not flexible, and do not authorize employees. Subsequently, there are minute innovation & creativity and there is no zeal among the employees. These corporations are habitually governed by fear, and do not provide conducive environment for work. Employees mostly sense un-satisfaction, and talk about stress.

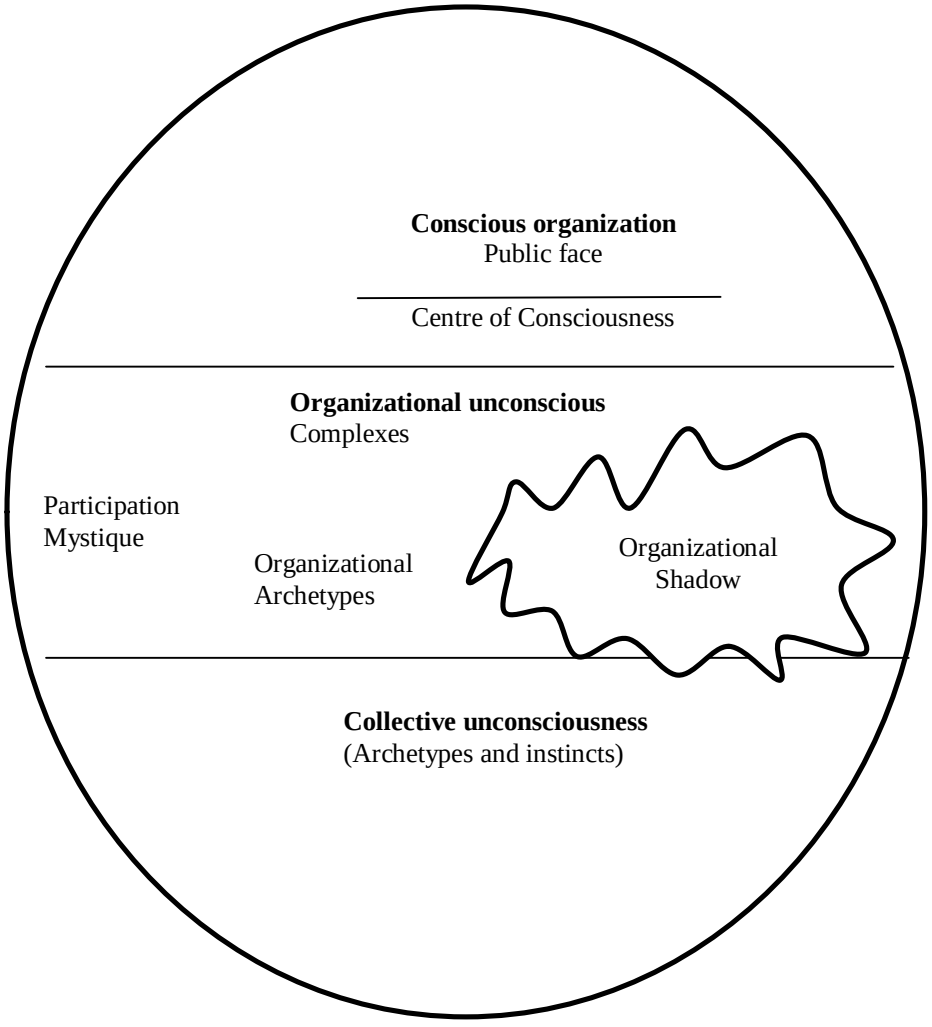

Figure 3: The Organizational Psyche: A Depth Psychology Model
Source (Corlett and Pearson, 2003)

Subsequently, analyzing the organizational consciousness at three board levels by Barrett, some scholars like Corlett and Pearson (see figure 3) in the same year, argue altogether different approach of organizational consciousness from the psychological perspective of organizations, and they believed the organizational psyche (consciousness) has two main layers: conscious layer and unconscious layer. The authors argue that an organization's actions and strategic planning are ego-driven and shape organizational culture. The unconscious layer of the organization provides the cognitive energy which is essential for conscious activities, which are happing in a corporation.

The conscious part of the organization contains the "public face" and "center of consciousness." The "center of consciousness" is similar to Jung's concept of the ego. It contains all the conscious activities performed in an organization, such as planning, organizing, leading, implementing, controlling, coordinating, and recruiting. The center of consciousness contains the all collective egos of the individuals who are working in the organization. These collective egos are organized in an organizational structure established by its top management.

Jung's concept of the persona links the "public face" with organizational psyche. The persona of the organization reflects how well the individuals represent themselves to the external world. The representation of the individuals to the external world depends upon these factors: the social desires, aims of individuals, the requirements, folkways and mores of culture. The organization reference provides a network through which dynamism flows in and out of the organization psyche and its association with the external world. It is somewhat the brand identity of the organization exits. It communicates the model metaphors of itself to the external domain by hiding the characteristics which are considered "internal" by the corporation's management.

Organizational Unconscious obliges as the substance for the whole psyche (consciousness) of the organization. It is the reservoir for the intellectual capital that describes us as human beings. It exists in the hereditary structure of the brain. It consists two layers of constructions: instincts and archetypes. Archetypes are consciousness structure that shapes individual behavior. Instincts are the reliable instrument of activities shared to all individuals who does not require explicit arrangement. They are unwritten prevailing guidelines in the minds that control individuals understanding of life. On the other hand, archetypes describe the basic responses to corporation life.

The organizational unconscious is the unique set of "guts, energies and truths" that function as the conscious regulator for an organization. It is the connection between the collective conscious and unconscious the organization. It provides the psycho arrangement for these two authorities who interrelate with each other. It consists of the sharing aura, the shadow, the complexes and the organizational archetype.

Jung's shadow theory contains the collection of what has been scared as the corporation cannot buy its procedures, values or rules. The shadow of an organization, is just like its person supplement, is it prepares to adapt ego. It contains both positive and negative inspirations and marginally affects how a conscious organization does its business. The shadow takes in for questioning features that are inconsistent with group morale and custom's conventions.

The input mystique is the part of the organizational unconscious that links persons' egos to the organization. It deals with the attractor that graces an individual to be a part of a

particular organization. It is the channels for the organizational archetypes to be expressed by every single person in the organization.

Organizations are a reservoir of past complex judgments, feelings, and memories experienced as work progresses finished the stimulus set of a prototype. They are, in spirit, the important agreements that are experienced at the unconscious level. With the passage of time, these developments completely identify by the organization and offer ground for organizational culture. Beliefs and values are fabricated upon complexes and change over time as the circumstances provide chances to solve new problems. The organizational archetype approximately resembles to the archetypal nature in individuals. It helps as a significant reservoir of energy for the organization and proposals the procedure for how it functions. Human features of the organizational archetype relate to the universal collective unconscious archetypes from which they request their arrangements.

Corlett and Pearson construct a useful and unique design of the organizational psyche and extend the concepts established by Jung. This (see figure 3) design angels us into the thrillers of organizational life that go beyond conscious events. It provides us appreciation and understanding of the constructions in the unconscious accountable for the psychodynamics that control much of the happiness, and success (or the opposite) intimates our corporations.

Having a fruitful debate of organizational consciousness from psychological point of view, Whitney (2004) put forward a new approach towards OC and suggested Appreciative Inquiry model of organizational consciousness (see figure 4). Appreciative Inquiry is an approach and arrangement to interfere that can profoundly reshape the application of organization learning, development and strategy. Appreciative Inquiry is an asset based thinking from the field of organizational development that has been collecting dedication for its productive solicitation in empowering organizational change. Appreciative Inquiry is an exercise that investigates into, distinguishes, and further advances the best of, what an organization needs in order to create a better tomorrow. An indispensable belief is that organization's development toward higher organizational consciousness based on what they have learned.

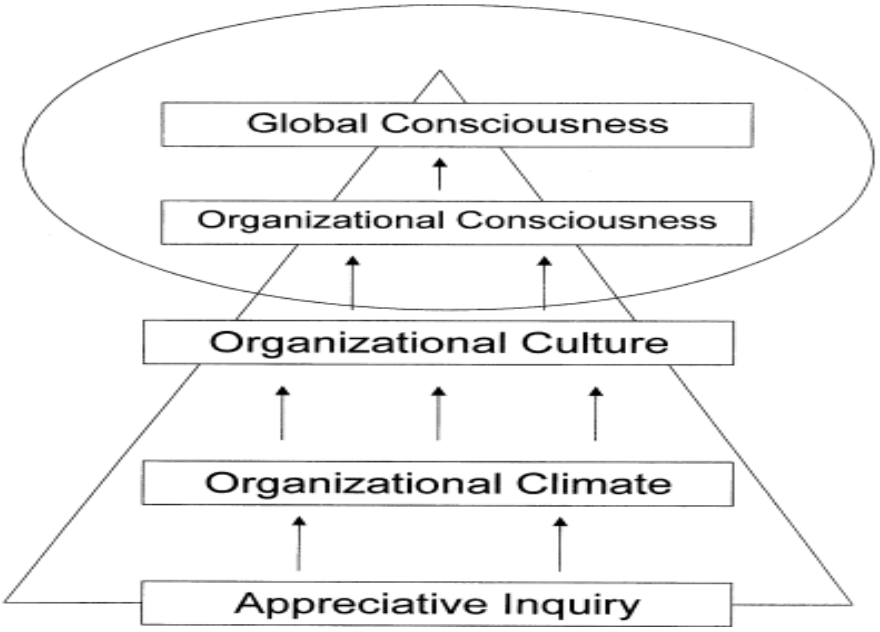

Figure 4: Appreciative Inquiry Model of Organizational Consciousness

Source (Whitney, 2004)

Appreciative Inquiry comprehends organization issues, challenges, and concerns in a significantly different way. Organizational researchers first conclude what is going on particularly good in their organization, instead of focusing on issues and problems. Then, despite assessing possible explanations and reasons, they envisage what it might be like if "the best of what is" occurred more frequently. Naturally in an organizational setting, individuals narrate and recall personals practices of achievement, identify the communal features of these involvements, and develop reports and action plans for making those experiences happen more frequently in the organization. As Appreciative Inquiry stresses on the positive approach & thinking and is grounded in persons' real experiences, they "walk away with a sense of commitment, affirmation and confidence that they have been successful. Consciousness is a pervasive phenomenon and recognizes no borders of organizations, countries or continents. Appreciative Inquiry application includes the whole system in appreciating the best of what is, foreseeing artistic potentials and forming life-nourishing organizations, catches great potential for the development of organizational consciousness.

Pandey and Gupta (2008) (see figure 5) once again adopted the three levels approach of Barrett, and they developed a collective consciousness valuation construct for business organization for their growth and development. They provide the idea of atomistic-integrative and the objective– subjective aspects in an organization. The atomistic-integrative dimension argues to the relationship concerning among social, ecological system and organization. Observing organization as a unique entity, an atomistic player in the business place generates the atomistic understanding in the organization. On other hands, considering organization embedded in the bigger social and natural system creates the integrative understanding of the organization.

Authors also put forward a three levels classified integrative structure of organizational consciousness, which are material, social and spiritual. The insights of ethical, superiority and ethical viewpoint of organizations at various levels of consciousness are also discussed. The business organization must have all three sets of values, which include spiritual values, social values and market values. The asset value's hierarchy describes the three collective arrangements of organizational consciousness.

Organizations mainly function at market consciousness, societal consciousness or spiritual consciousness. Transcendence consciousness describes the ordered combination of various levels in an organization. Transcendence is an accomplishment of the advanced level of consciousness, with lower levels remaining contained within. Organizations that could recognize itself as a performer in the marketplace or can transcend this individuality and receive a vigorous character at the social level or at the level of the larger environment. Organization's transcendence is represented in social and spiritual levels of collective consciousness.

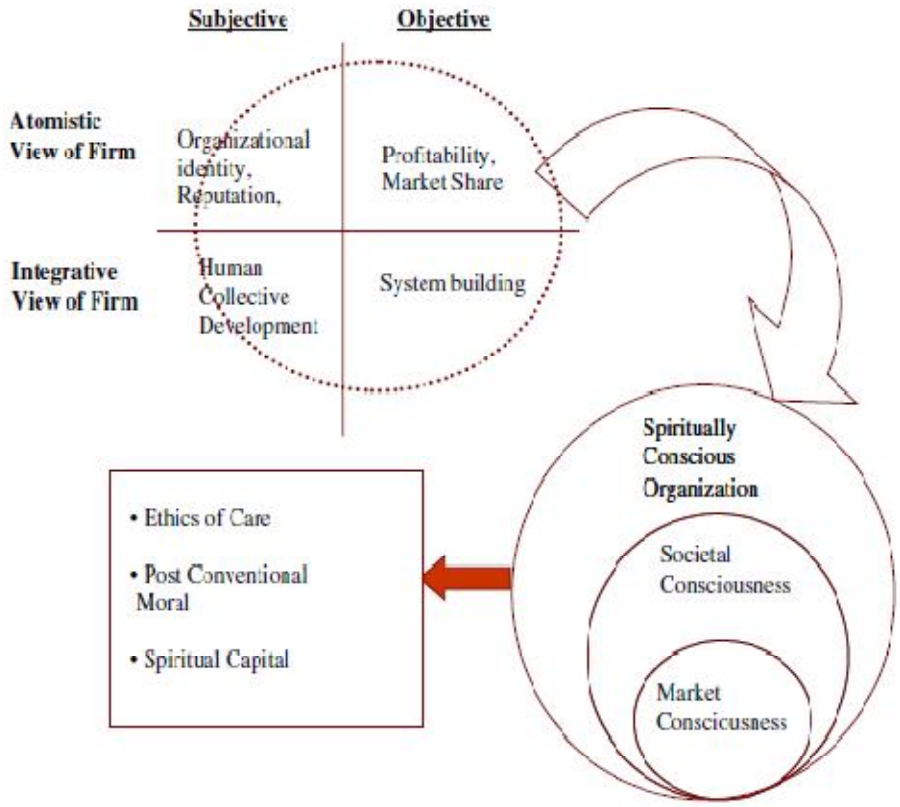

Figure 5: Transcendence Approach of Organizational Consciousness

Source (Pandey and Gupta, 2008)

After having a discussion about the organizational consciousness at three levels or dimensions, i-e market consciousness, social consciousness and spiritual consciousness,

Pees et al. (2009) provide two more level or dimension of organizational consciousness in addition to social consciousness, i-e collective and reflexive dimensions. According to Pees et al. (2009) (see figure 6) organizational consciousness is developed in organizations and functions at three distinctive levels – reflexive, social and collective consciousness. Inside these three interconnected levels, the corporation obviously outlines its purpose, fundamental capability, and those ascertaining attributes it practices describing itself inside the limits of the corporation and positions itself to others outside the corporate arrangement. Consciousness turns out to be persistent in the corporate philosophy, and in environment as the management provides the structural arrangement its form to backing its identity. All sub-arrangements are apprehended in a gentle equilibrium, yet focus to change as the management makes choices in reply to administrative requirements and outside ecological stimuli.

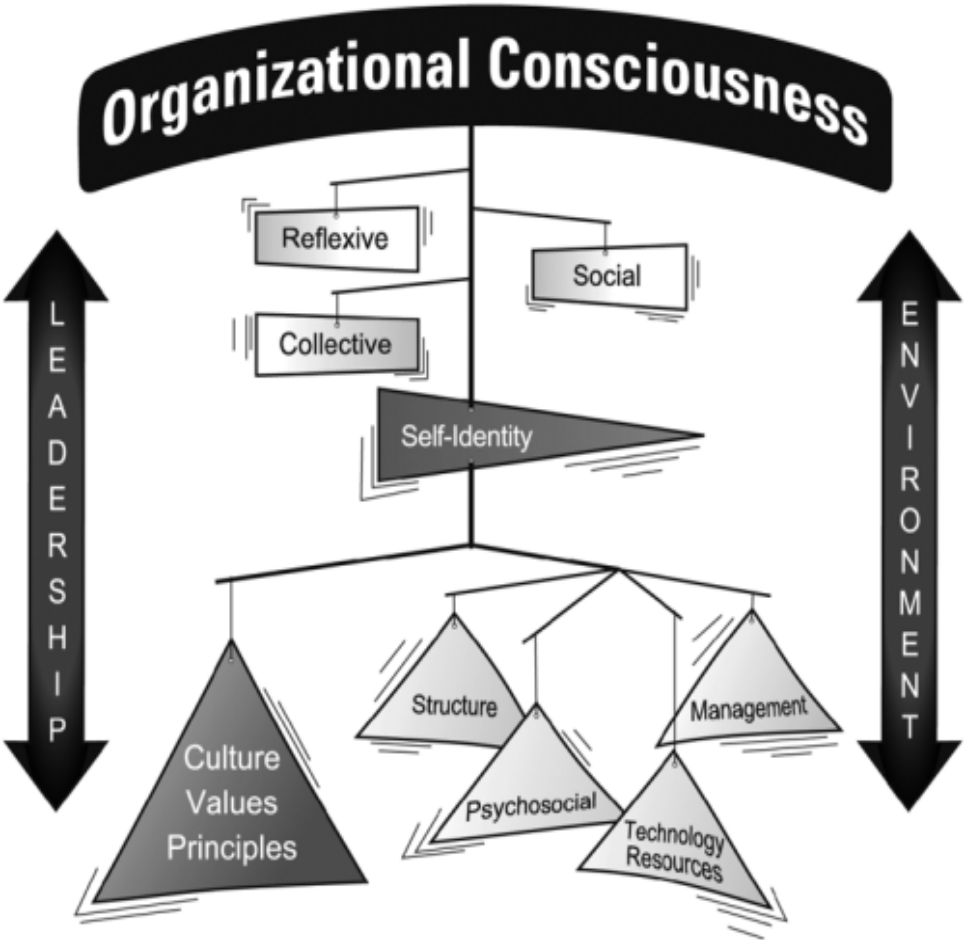

Figure 6: Three Levels of Organizational Consciousness

Source (Pees et al., 2009)

Organizational consciousness is a strategic decision making philosophy that enables the organization to know and understand itself and to its environmental settings. It deceits

outside the borders of the official arrangements in an organization, and offers the place in the corporation to gather itself and eventually provide the expression to its administrative philosophies, main capabilities and values. Finally, organizational consciousness offers a significant combination of the individuals and functioning arrangements, and can work across administrative limits such that the business can jointly attain victory.

The governing directions have transformed as organizations are managed from a different perception with extremely multifarious choices concerning excellence of care, cost, education and proficient responsibility. Due to this complex nature, corporations need to be cautious and attentive in their situation on where excellence and proficient obligation assemble on the hierarchy of challenging concern.

It suggests the view that organizational consciousness does happen, and it does matter for inside it places the consciousness of a corporation's determination and its obligation to prosper in the inclusive process of and structural arrangement. Organizational consciousness connects all sub-arrangements to originate organized as a cohesive and collective whole. Organizational consciousness is subdivided in each sub-arrangement: structural; values and culture; technical; and managerial psychosocial.

From the above discussion if we combine two theories the organizational consciousness has five levels, stages or dimensions, (market, social, spiritual, reflexive and collective) the researcher put the organizational consciousness in another way ,Whitney (2004) and Smith (2008) studied the organizational consciousness from the cultural capital perspective and different cultural indicators respectively.

2. Critical Analysis

The literature review of organizational consciousness is argued by different organization's scholar and researcher from more or less the similar paradigm. The researchers have focused this phenomenon at the organizational level by having consciousness of the different phenomena like corporate social responsibility, cultural, business ethics, corporate values, and multiple stakeholders of the organization (Campion and Palmer, 1996). The Barrett (2003) and Pandey and Gupta (2008) also believed in the transcendence approach of consciousness and provide three levels of organizational consciousness. The first level focused in both the situations is same, the financial stability and utilitarian approach. In level two (Barrett, 2003 after transformation of the organization goes for third level of corporate social responsibility, but Pandey and Gupta (2008) believed that level two for corporate social responsibility and level three for spiritual consciousness by focusing the ethics of care approach. The Pee et al (2009) approach is also transcendence and similar to Barrett (2003) and Pandey and Gupta (2008), comprising of three levels of consciousness, the reflexive consciousness (financial stability, profitability and values and mission), social consciousness (corporate social responsibility) and collective consciousness (culture, structure and rituals) which united the individuals (spiritual consciousness). Whitney (2004) and Smith (2008) argued cultural aspects of organizational consciousness , Whitney believed on cultural capital of the organization as organizational consciousness by taking appreciative inquiry of organizational consciousness, while, on the other hand, Smith provides the cultural indicators for unconscious, aware, accepting, or blended organizations. Corlett and Pearson (2003) argue an unalike view of organizational consciousness and believed on the organizational psyche in two levels: unconscious and conscious. Organizational

Unconscious the collective unconscious assists as the basis for the whole psyche of the corporation. It exists in the inborn arrangement of the mind. It covers two types of arrangements: the archetypes and the instincts. (The detail critical analysis of literature in shown in the table 1)

Table 1: Critical Analysis: A Summary

Authors' Main Opinion	Critical Analysis
Campion and Palmer (1996) • Organizational consciousness is embedded in culture, business ethics, corporate values, corporate's social responsibility. • Its products are Strategic decision making, Ethical decision making, Integrity and Citizenship.	• It provides a simple definition of very complex phenomena, which exist in the human minds of the organization for strategic planning and change management. • The framework does not tell how organizational consciousness works and enhances itself in the organization.
Richard Barrett (2003) • Views organizational consciousness through seven levels. • Organizations that concentrate solely on the satisfaction of the lower needs are not usually market champions.	• It is a concept and does not articulate on using it for strategic planning and sustainable change management. • It does not elucidate on maintain higher levels of consciousness because organization reverts back to previous state after some time.
Corlett and Pearson, (2003) • Organizational has two psyche layers, namely unconscious and conscious. The unconscious layer provides the psychic energy necessary for conscious actions.	• The concept does not mention how organizational consciousness works and how the collective un-consciousness is structured. • It does not tell how collective unconsciousness creates collective intentionally. • It is silent on organization learning and how to enhance the organization consciousness.
Whitney (2004) • Appreciative Inquiry is a methodology to transform that can essentially redesign the exercise of corporate learning, development and design. • Cultures are definite and restricted to organizational and national	• Whitney considers culture as the only dimension of the organizational consciousness and takes the appreciative inquiry method for change management. • It also not mentioned how organizational consciousness exists and works and how it be used for

boundaries.	strategic planning and sustainable change management. • The model does not support the organizational learning and how the organizational consciousness can be enhanced.
Pandey and Gupta, (2008) • Three levels integrative hierarchical framework of organizational consciousness namely spiritual, social and material. • Corporation primarily functions at spiritual consciousness, social consciousness or market consciousness.	• The levels talked about the abstract level understanding of the organizational consciousness. It also does not support the collective consciousness necessary for the strategic planning and sustainable change management. • The spiritual consciousness is a concept similar to Meta's consciousness and beyond the scope of organizational consciousness.
Pee et al (2009) • Organizational consciousness develops in corporations and functions at three distinctive levels – reflexive, social and collective consciousness. • The model signifies the corporation as a socio-technical arrangement of five corporate sub-arrangements getting ideas from the outside. These arrangements are so interconnected that an alteration in one arrangement disturbs all others.	• It provides an abstract level of understanding of organizational consciousness. • It does not tell after what specific level the organization achieves higher-level consciousness and also the relationship between the entities is not specified, presenting a vague understanding of very complex phenomena, which exists in the human mind of the organization.

3. Future Research Directions

Campion and Palmer (1996) emphasize that organization consciousness is a paradigm, correlated with information processing and awareness; the conception is intellectual, not metaphysical or spiritual. Organizational consciousness functions as a framework for conceptualizing the contemporary trends inside organizations headed for better alertness of social representation and of the organization's influence within higher systems in which organizations exist.

There are numerous phenomena, which are happing inside a corporation, without a conceptual framework to make responsible for a rationale for the variations, they may be realized as mere hypocrisy or unproductive efforts. The concept of organization consciousness put forward a completely new paradigm for recognizing corporate

activities and strategic planning; it is a source of providing a clear understanding for a phenomenon that already cropping up in the minds of the individuals.

According to Lavine and Moore (1996) rather than thinking of organizational consciousness as an organizational variable or a construct to be measured, it must be regarded as a paradigm, and philosophy to direct research and training in corporation. Organizational consciousness may be well suited to function as a framework for appreciative organizational complex issues, which are occurring in the organization and its potential use as a framework in no way diminishes its significance.

An organization is more than the collective sum of those individuals who work within it. In a sense, the acknowledgement of a state of responsiveness to a corporation may be supportive in actually theorizing organizational consciousness. By examining consciousness as recognized on an individual level, it offers a valuable starting point for conceptualizing it on a corporation-wide level; it might establish a link between macro and micro level issues by providing a cause and effect relationship (Peiro, 1987; Staw, 1990).

After the critical analysis of the literature review, there is a need to study the conceptual framework of organizational consciousness, by taking into account the individual consciousness and linking it into the group consciousness. The group consciousness becomes the collective consciousness by connecting with organizational memory. In the proposed conceptual framework the mechanisms of organizations, activities performed in the organization and decision taken in organization can be understood in a better way and brings changes in a nice and easy way.

Organizational consciousness may deliver a more efficient means for developing productive results, by providing a paradigm through which a number of corporate initiatives and trends might he recognized. The framework borrows profoundly from the social, intellectual, and organizational psychological literature and must be understood from individual, group and organization levels of analysis.

Organizational consciousness is a broad and complex a paradigm, a new approach of observing contemporary corporate activities. It is about corporate response and adaptability, the understanding of which drives through the very essential of our charge as specialists in office behavior. By connecting corporation personnel to a complete appreciative of miscellany and the nature of difference, stereotyping and instinctive handing out can be reduced (Fiske and Neuberg, 1990) , and an environment of recognition and value for diversity can take place. Moreover, the outcomes produced by such an enterprise would probably have an optimistic influence on other corporate issues such as organizational commitment, strategic planning and sustainable change management.

A conceptual framework for organizational consciousness is a philosophy that derives from new arenas of psychology (for example, social psychology, cognitive psychology and open systems theory). It is an indicative of the improvement of the understanding of corporate culture, which borrowed profoundly from the works in both sociology and anthropology.

Although organizational consciousness is a paradigm of change, it is also a paradigm of constant and dynamic consciousness. It is also valuable to have a mutual framework for recognizing this broad range of arenas. The paradigm of organizational consciousness is

one of the marvelous conceptual significance, as it is a fundamental paradigmatic shift in which corporations have developed from narrow and being exclusive in view to broad and inclusive. Daft (1992) explicates that all corporations differ in their capability to extent external corporate boundaries, as well as their need to do so.

It must be recognized that, although paradigm-breaking, it is simply a means of organizing that which already exists. It will optimistically motivate the investigation of even more theoretical boundaries. As contemporary's corporations are undergoing rapid evolution, the development of corporate investigation must not fall far behind.

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