

Beyond the Boundaries of Risk: Factors Influencing the Risk-Taking Propensity of Student Leaders and Implications for Leadership Development

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Introduction

Leadership is a process that occurs when an individual inspires a group of individuals to work together toward a common goal (Northouse, 2000). Colleges and universities bear the obligation of developing the leaders of the future (Boyer, 1987). To do this, universities must engage in a deliberate attempt to guide students from their current level of skill, ability, and maturity, through the collegiate experience, and to graduation as an adult with the competencies, experience, and confidence to contribute positively to the communities they will inhabit. As universities undertake this endeavor, it behooves them to provide education and experiences that allow students to understand and be able to articulate the skills and abilities they have developed.

Universities take their role as developers of student leaders very seriously and with much pride. However, there appears to be a lack of understanding as to what exactly it means to develop students as leaders. Fortunately, there are leadership experts who have identified certain skill sets, or competencies, that leaders should possess. Among these skills is the ability and willingness to take risks in a healthy and constructive manner. This study begins to answer some questions about how to develop this ability in collegiate student leaders, which factors contribute to risk-taking behavior in students, which do not and what the implications are for students and those who strive to help them grow.

Purpose of the Study

This study is a part of a larger research agenda that seeks to identify the most effective and efficient leadership education system. This overarching paradigm considers the factors that affect the success of leadership education programs. The factors include selection of appropriate theory, teaching

methods, delivery media, and program length. In addition, several student attributes -- gender, learning style, ethnicity, age, and leadership experience -- are a part of this research program. Finally, specific skills, behaviors, and the environment of practicing leaders are investigated to ascertain their impact and inclusion in leadership education programs.

The purpose of this study is to examine if the culture of the student organization influences a college student's propensity to take risks as a leader within that organizational context. Three research questions more specifically address the problem:

1. What is the relationship between organizational culture and the risk-taking propensity of student leaders?
2. Is an individual's propensity to take personal risks the same as his or her propensity to take risks as an organizational leader regardless of the context?
3. Does a leader's risk-taking vary with the purpose of the organization?

Hypotheses

From these three questions, ten null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

H₀₁: There is no relationship between the clan organizational culture score and risk-taking category scores by student leaders in the organizational context.

H₀₂: There is no relationship between the adhocracy organizational culture score and risk-taking category scores by student leaders in the organizational context.

H₀₃: There is no relationship between the market organizational culture score and risk-taking category scores by student leaders in the organizational context.

H₀₄: There is no relationship between the hierarchy organizational culture score and risk-taking category scores by student leaders in the organizational context.

H₀₅: There is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in the organizational context.

H₀₆: In a clan culture, there is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in an organization.

H₀₇: In a hierarchy culture, there is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in an organization.

H₀₈: In an adhocracy culture, there is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in an organization.

H₀₉: In a market culture, there is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in an organization.

H₁₀: There is no difference in risk score based on organizational purpose.

Summary of the Review of Literature

Introduction

The review of the literature covers the four broad factors investigated in this study. These factors are the developmental level of the college student, risk and risk-taking, organizational culture, and leadership. They are discussed in this order.

Student development

Traditionally aged college students are not yet adults; however, they are no longer children. Parsons et al. (1997) called them "late adolescents." These students still possess some of the characteristics of high-school aged students. They tend to be egocentric and sensation seeking. Parsons et al. (1997) found that these students do not perceive the benefits or risks of their behavior the way adults do. College students tend to overweight perceived benefits and underweight perceived hazards of their behaviors. Additionally, traditionally aged college students, in general, have not progressed through levels of reasoning that enable them to see past the authority or influence of their peer group (Smith, 1978). One could suspect, then, that these students will not always evaluate decisions regarding uncertainty in the most constructive way.

Risk

Risk is a concept that is ambiguous at best. Most people tend to think of something risky as something that presents danger or hazard or is undesirable. According to Byrd (1974), risk can be

conceptualized as either static, in terms of losses, hazards, and danger, or as dynamic, in terms of possibility for innovation, creativity, growth, and success. Most writing regarding risk tends to dichotomize it in this fashion - risk is something to be avoided or something to be sought. Kahneman and Tversky (1982; 2000a; 2000b), through extensive research, have found that individuals do not always act rationally toward uncertainty. Prospect theory is the result of this work. Prospect theory proposes that people tend to be risk seeking when outcomes of choices are uncertain but are framed in terms of loss and risk-averse when outcomes are framed in terms of gains. This research is supported by myriad studies on a variety of populations (Brockner, 1992; Case & Shane, 1998; Chow-Chua, 1997; Heath et al., 1999; Hogarth & Einhorn, 1990; Muhs & Justis, 1981; Plax & Rosenfeld, 1996; Radner, 2000; Ritov & Drory, 1996; Wang, 1996). Many of these studies have identified confounding variables that suggest that prospect theory cannot predict all behavior.

Research regarding risky behavior by college students, mostly centered on sex, drugs, alcohol, and health issues; finds that college students do not act according to prospect theory. This population tends to be risk seeking when they believe the benefits of this behavior will meet their needs and motivations (Cooper et al., 1981; Parsons et al., 1997; Smith, 1999). Additionally, they will tend to disregard or underweight the perceived hazards associated with “risky” behaviors (Parsons et al., 1997). Because they are heavily influenced by their peer group (Astin, 1993a; Kuh et al., 1991; Powell & Drucker, 1997), and this overweighting of benefits also characterizes those in their peer group, it is not surprising to see students often engaging in potentially counterproductive behaviors.

Culture

The culture of an organization has been equated to the personality of the individual. It is composed of the underlying beliefs, values, assumptions, and artifacts (Schein, 1992) that give meaning and stability to those operating within the organization. Each organization develops its own unique culture. However, there are patterns within cultures that emerge and allow the classification of culture into particular types. Cameron and Quinn (1999) have developed a valid and reliable (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Howard, 1998) tool that classifies organizations according to two sets of competing values.

Organizations can be categorized based on the extent to which they are flexible or controlled regarding decision-making autonomy and the extent to which organizational processes are internally focused and integrated or externally focused and differentiated. (See Cameron and Quinn's framework in Appendix A.)

Many studies have found that the culture does influence the behavior of individuals within the organization (Johnson & Covello, 1987; Martin, 1992; Pennington, 2001; West & Berthon, 1997), both for the good and to the detriment of themselves and the organization (Detert et al., 2000; Feldman, 2000; James, 2000; Sims & Keon, 1999; Vardi, 2001). Additionally, there is a systemic relationship between organizational leaders and organizational culture (Schein, 1992). However, leaders enter organizations with their own experiences and skill sets acquired outside of the organization. These individual characteristics seem to influence the way leaders behave within an organizational context (Kotter, 1998).

Leadership

Finally, leadership is another ambiguous concept that is often spoken of but is not clearly defined. Leadership is about inspiration and influence as opposed to being about management and control. Much has been written about leadership. Many authors have developed and described skills sets and competencies possessed by effective leaders (Bennis, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Mumford et al., 2000b; the Vision for Student Leadership task force, 2001; Woodard et al., 2000). In general, these competencies include a sense of vision, knowledge of personal values and of self and an ability to know others, an awareness of the situation and the ability to apply particular skills to particular situations, and personal integrity. Included in most of these competencies, either explicitly or implicitly, is the willingness and ability to take appropriate risks (Bennis, 1989; Byrd, 1974; Cress et al., 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 1987). That is, the ability to engage in behaviors where the outcome is uncertain but is believed to result in growth, development, innovation and creativity and the ability to encourage others to behave this way as well.

Mumford et al. (2000a; 2000b; 2000c), assert that leadership skills can be measured and are useful in predicting behaviors associated with these skills. Additionally, Brungardt and Crawford (1996)

emphasize the necessity of measuring collegiate leadership development programs. The Vision for Student Leadership task force (2001) at Texas A&M University has developed a matrix that promises to be a useful framework for both developing and evaluating collegiate leadership programs. (See Appendix B for an example of the Leadership Matrix.)

Research regarding collegiate student leadership is often found within the literature on the significant benefits of student involvement (Boyer, 1987; Brungardt & Crawford, 1996; Cress et al., 2001; Hanselka, 2001; Reardon et al., 1998). Leadership involvement, education, and development have been found to improve both students' self-perceptions of leadership skills (Tabke, 1999; Thorp, 1997) and their leadership abilities in situations after college (Cress et al., 2001; Reardon et al., 1998). However, it has also been found that different populations benefit differently from different approaches to leadership development and not all leadership skills are used the same way in all situations (Kezar & Moriarity, 2000; Whitt, 1994). Thus, it is essential for programs to have a firm grasp on which skills are to be developed and the experiences in which students engage as part of their leadership education.

Additionally, the influence of the peer group on traditionally aged college students has been found to be significant (Astin, 1993b, Gamson, 1993; Kuh et al., 1991; Terenzini et al., 1993) and can result in counterproductive behaviors if the goals of the group are destructive and, conversely, in constructive behaviors if the goals are positive (Kuh et al., 1991). Thus, it is essential for leadership development programs to be intentional in terms of goals of the programs, skills taught, and experiences offered to develop leaders. In addition, continuously monitoring these programs can improve the quality of the program (Brungardt & Crawford, 1996) while giving students the freedom to make choices and decisions while keeping them on the track to developing healthy and productive skills.

Methodology

Population and sample

A purposive sample (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996) was chosen for this study. The sample consisted of 100 students in attendance at the Texas A&M University Fall Leadership Conference. All attendees at

the conference, both male and female college students, participated in the study. These students were all campus leaders and represented various campus student organizations. Data was collected from all participants during one of three concurrent sessions at the conference.

Instrumentation

Organizational culture, the independent variable was measured using the Organizational Culture Assessment Inventory (OCAI). Risk-taking propensity, the dependent variable in this study, was measured using the Risk Inventory for Students – Collegiate (RISC) that was developed for this study by the researcher.

The OCAI measures the leader's perception of the culture of the organization and classifies it as a clan, adhocracy, market or hierarchical type culture. The OCAI consists of six items in a questionnaire format (see Appendix C). For each of the six items, participants are asked to distribute 100 points between four statements describing their organization. The internal reliabilities for the OCAI in this study were .77 (n = 99) for the clan culture score, .75 (n = 99) for the adhocracy culture score, .85 (n = 99) for the market culture score, and .74 (n = 99) for the hierarchy culture score.

The RISC (see Appendix D) is a questionnaire that is used to measure the dependent variable in the study. The dependent variable consists of the individual's risk-taking propensity within his or her role as a leader of a university student organization. The RISC has two parts, an individual section and an organizational section. This RISC gives a total risk score as well as a risk score for personal risk-taking and for risk-taking as a leader within a specific organization. The RISC was developed by the researcher through a compilation of previous experience, literature reviews, and reviews of other questionnaires purporting to measure risk. The reliabilities for the RISC were .70 for the individual portion and .70 for the organizational portion of the instrument.

Summary of Findings

Findings related to hypotheses one through four

Hypotheses one through four tested the statistical significance of the relationship between organizational culture scores and risk-taking category scores. Hypotheses one through three failed to be rejected because both personal risk-taking scores and risk-taking scores for leaders within the organizational context were not significantly related to the organizational culture scores for organizations with a clan culture, an adhocracy, or a hierarchy culture. However, hypothesis four was partially supported because personal risk-taking scores had a significant positive relationship with the market culture (see Cameron & Quinn's (1999) Competing Values Framework in Appendix C), while scores for risk-taking as leader and market culture scores were not significantly related.

Findings related to hypotheses five through nine

Hypothesis five was a null hypothesis that stated, "There is no difference between an individual's propensity to take personal risks and the individual's propensity to take risks as a leader in the organizational context." A statistically significant difference was found to exist between the means of the individual risk-taking scores and the risk-taking scores for leaders so the null hypothesis was rejected. The mean of the individual risk-taking score was higher than the mean for the leadership risk-taking score. Thus, individuals were more likely to take personal risks than they were to take risks as leaders within an organizational context.

Hypotheses six through nine were null hypotheses that addressed differences between the individual's propensity to take personal risks and his or her propensity to take risks as an organizational leader within a particular organizational culture as identified by the OCAI. Each of these null hypotheses was rejected, as the individual's propensity to take personal risks was significantly higher than his or her propensity to take risks within the specific culture of the organization within which he or she was a leader.

Findings related to hypothesis ten

Hypothesis ten was a null hypothesis that stated, “There is no difference in risk category scores based on organizational purpose.” Organizational purpose was categorized as being social, community service, student/campus service, academic/honor, knowledge or skill acquisition, athletic, special interest, or culturally or ethnically based (see Appendix B, page 107, question 1 of the RISC – organizational). There were no statistically significant differences found between risk scores based on organizational purpose. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Conclusions

Several conclusions were drawn from this study. However, as conclusions are considered one must bear in mind the limitations of this study. First, the RISC instrument was used for the first time in this study. This instrument will continue to be refined and validated. Second, this study was conducted on student leaders at Texas A&M University and the results can only be generalized with certainty to this population. However, the results give rise to notions that may be considered regarding similar collegiate leader populations.

Conclusion one

Possibly the most important finding of this study was the general conclusion that, for these students, risk-taking propensity of student leaders does not appear to be at all related to organizational culture within which they are currently a leader. This finding supports what James (2000), Mumford et al. (2000b), and others (Hersey, 1984; Jansen, 2001; Kotter, 1998) said about the situationality of the development and use of leadership skills. Because the use of leadership skills is based upon a particular situation and the development of skills takes a considerable amount of time (Mumford et al., 2000a), perhaps student leaders have not yet had the opportunity to be influenced by the culture of one particular organization. This could particularly be true because most of these leaders were new to the particular leadership position to which they referred when they completed the instruments.

This finding is contrary to what Schein (1992) said about the linkage between organizational culture and leadership. Additionally, it appears to refute Astin (1993) and Kuh et al. (1994) findings regarding the peer group as most influential in individual student decision-making. However, it supports Terenzini et al.'s (1993) finding that showed a negative relationship between a student's gains in critical thinking and a positive, supportive relationship with peers. Of course, it is possible that it is not the peer group that composes the organization that has the most influence on the student leader's risk-taking propensity. Perhaps it is a peer group that includes those in the organization, but is not limited to them.

Conclusion two

Another noteworthy finding is related to hypothesis five, that students in this study were significantly more risk seeking regarding personal risks than they were as leaders within a specific organization culture and regardless of the organizational context. This was particularly surprising as it is contrary to the notions of peer group influence noted above. Additionally, it refutes what Kahneman and Tversky (1982; 2000a; 2000b) have said about individuals tending to be risk seeking in some situations and risk averse other times depending upon the frame of the choice. It appears that student leaders are relatively more risk averse as a leader than they are regarding personal decisions regardless of the frame. Additionally, this finding has implications regarding what Parsons et al. (1999) found about students over weighting the perceived benefits of a risky choice and under weighting the perceived risks. It appears that, at least in a leadership role, students tend to weigh perceived benefits and risks differently in their leadership role than they do outside of this role. This finding may also suggest that other factors may mitigate a leader's risk-taking propensity, and because they are in a new experience they are less risk seeking. This notion is supported by Wildavsky and Douglas (1982) as well as by findings of Wechsler et al. (1995) and Dorr et al. (1999).

Conclusion three

Regarding the finding related to hypothesis six that student leaders tend to have a higher propensity for personal risk-taking than they do as a leader of a clan culture, this finding partially supports Cameron and Quinn's (1999) profile of a clan culture. Cameron and Quinn (1999) assert that this culture

is like an extended family and is characterized by support, commitment and concern for others. Levels of certainty maintained in this type of culture may lead to risk averse behaviors by leaders as posited by Douglas (1985). However, this culture is also characterized by a relatively high level of flexibility and discretion in decision-making and one may expect leaders to be encouraged to take risks as espoused by Hartman and Nelson (1996), Kouzes and Posner (1987), and West and Berthon (1997).

Conclusion four

Regarding the finding related to hypothesis seven that student leaders tend to have a higher propensity for personal risk-taking than they do as a leader of a hierarchy culture, this finding does support Cameron and Quinn's (1999) profile of a hierarchy culture. Both an internal focus and low levels of autonomy where stability, predictability, and efficiency are valued characterize this type of culture. This culture does not appear to support risk-taking by leaders due to its emphasis on policies and procedures.

Conclusion five

Regarding the finding related to hypothesis eight that student leaders tend to have a higher propensity for personal risk-taking than they do as a leader of an adhocracy culture, this finding does not support Cameron and Quinn's (1999) profile of an adhocracy culture. This type of culture is characterized by dynamic risk-taking as described by Byrd (1974), Kouzes and Posner (1987), and others. Additionally, the external focus and high level of autonomy found by Hartman and Nelson (1996) in risk-taking groups is present in this type of culture. One would expect leaders to tend to be more risk seeking in this environment.

Conclusion six

Regarding the finding related to hypothesis nine that student leaders tend to have a higher propensity for personal risk-taking than they do as a leader of a market culture, this finding partially supports Cameron and Quinn's (1999) profile of a market culture. A market culture is characterized by an external and differentiated focus and by control and stability regarding decision-making. With a less than autonomous structure and a focus on winning and profitability one would expect highly calculated,

risk averse decision behaviors. However, West and Berthon (1997) found that advertising managers would take more risks that are positive in a culture that encouraged risk-taking, with bottom up (autonomous) decision-making processes, and in a well performing (profitable) firm.

Conclusion seven

This conclusion is related to the finding from hypothesis three that as market culture score increases, the personal risk-taking propensity of the student leader increases. Cameron and Quinn's characteristics of a market culture were discussed above. The finding of this study partially supports this assertion as discussed above. Additionally, West and Berthon's (1997) study, also discussed above, does support this finding. It is interesting to note the student leaders in a market culture had higher scores for both personal risk-taking (IPR = 4.5) and for risk propensity as a leader (PRO = 3.44) than for any other culture (clan culture scores, mean IPR = 4.018, mean PRO = 3.26; hierarchy culture scores, mean IPR = 4.028, mean PRO = 3.306; adhocracy culture, mean IPR = 4.067, mean PRO = 3.353). It could be that the emphasis on competition and winning found in a market culture attracts students with a higher propensity for personal risk but that, as discussed above, this propensity as a leader is mitigated by other factors such as the autonomy found in this culture, the leader's newness to the organization or the leadership position, or the influence of peers outside that specific organizational context.

Conclusion eight

Finally, the finding regarding hypothesis ten, that the risk propensity for leaders is not influenced by the purpose of the organizational is again contrary to the notion of peer influence. Additionally, it is contrary to Douglas and Wildavsky's (1982) assertions about the social construction of the culture. It does, however, partially support an assertion of Mumford et al. (2000c) that it takes some time for the leader to develop skills appropriate and useful within a specific organization.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the results of this study several recommendations are made for student development and leadership education professionals.

First, collegiate student leader curriculum and development curriculum, both within the classroom and through extracurricular development programs, should include an in-depth study of risk as a concept area and a leadership skill. This study should include various perspectives of risk as well as risk-taking as it applies to personal leadership development. Specifically, programs could include methods for discerning both potential gains in innovation and creativity balanced with the potential costs of trying something new and different.

Second, collegiate students should be given the opportunity to assess their own risk-taking propensities as an individual and as a leader. This will enable them to develop an awareness of their risk-taking style and can aid them in monitoring their risk-taking attitudes and behaviors within their leadership role and consider the influence their risk-taking style may have on their organization and on other organizational members.

Third, leadership development curriculums should also include a module that addresses the concept of organizational culture. An awareness of the values, assumptions, and artifacts that influence organizational behavior will allow leaders to understand and work effectively within the unique climate of their organization.

Next, leadership training should include an awareness of the influence of the peer group on an individual's behavior within a leadership role.

Additionally, leadership training should be based on a holistic model of leadership development similar to the one developed by the Vision for Student Leadership Task force at Texas A&M University (2001). This type of model will make leadership development more deliberate and will enable competencies to be operationalized for assessment purposes. Measurement and evaluation of leadership programs should include a variety of instruments and procedures that give a comprehensive assessment. Experiences within leadership development should be appropriate to the developmental level of college students and should be monitored constantly to ensure that the program holds to the goals and objectives set forth at the beginning.

Finally, student advisors would benefit from the same type of training and experiences mentioned for student leaders above. Because student development professionals are responsible for the growth and development of student leaders, they should develop the same level of awareness. With this knowledge, professionals can model appropriate risk-taking behaviors and guide students through the process of developing the leadership skills and abilities they will take with them into the future.

Recommendations for Research

Based on the results of this study several recommendations are made for further research in this area.

First, a greater understanding of the influence of organizational culture on risk-taking of leaders may become known if several student organizations having differing cultures were identified and surveyed and the risk propensity of the leaders within those organizations were compared.

Second, a comparison of risk propensity across demographic variables would provide an increased understanding of differences occurring within the student population.

Third, a study of risk propensity of student leaders across a variety of factors that are reported in the research to influence risk-taking propensity would provide additional insight.

Fourth, a study of the phenomenon of risky-shift, the tendency for group decisions to be polarized from the average of the individual decisions within the group (see McGuire, Kiesler, & Siegel, 1987, for a thorough discussion of risky shift), occurring within the leadership ranks of student organizations may contribute to increased understanding of how group discussion can influence student leader decisions regarding uncertainty.

Fifth, it may be helpful to find if experiential activities regarding risk-taking are more helpful than just classroom instruction regarding risk.

Finally, further refinement and validation of the RISC instrument should be conducted so it can be used in future studies to reliably evaluate risk propensity.

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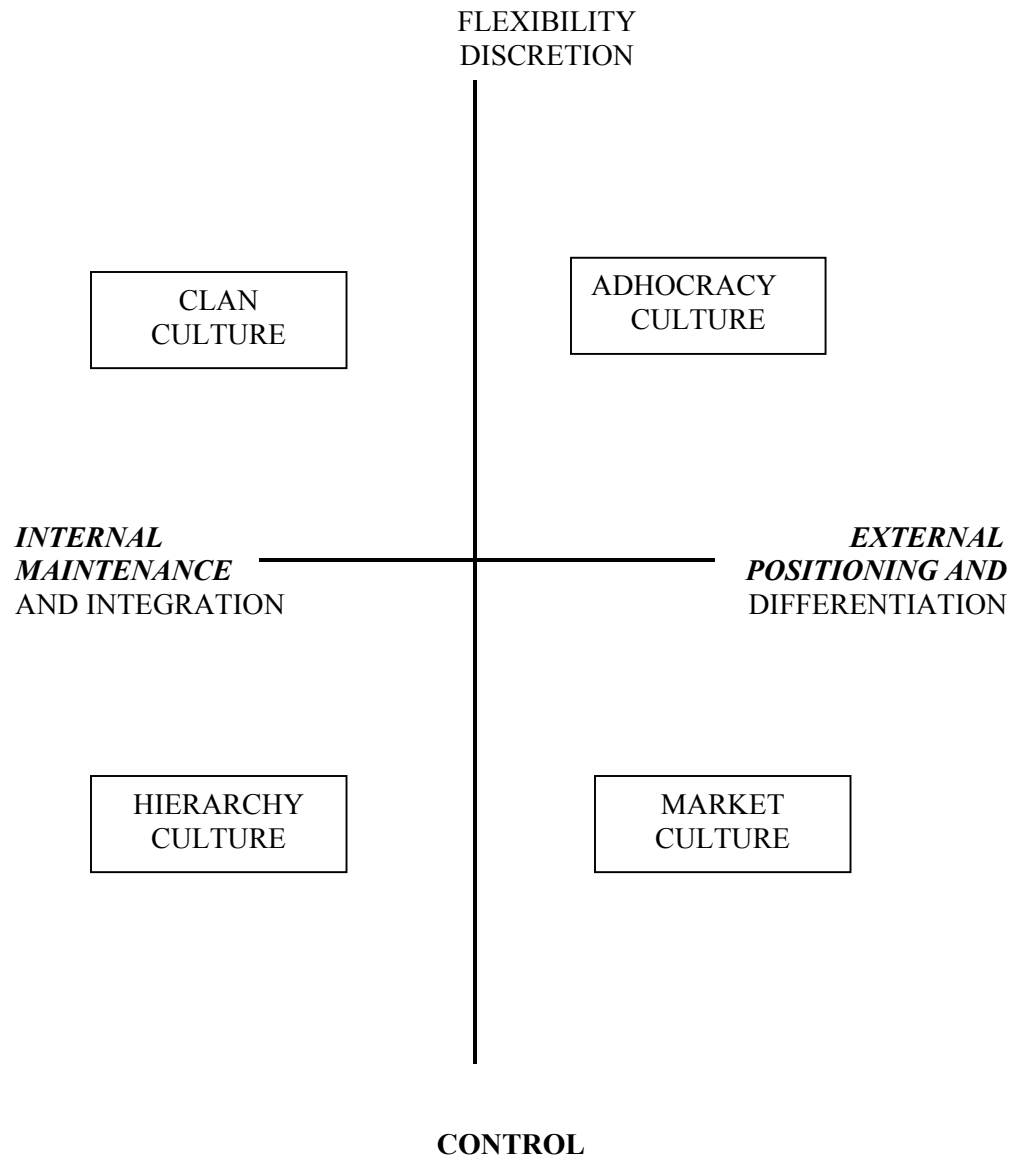
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APPENDIX A
COMPETING VALUES CHART



APPENDIX B
LEADERSHIP MATRIX

Classification	Involvement	Instruction	Environment	Employment	Comments & Life Plan
** Dev. Self					
**Dev. Others					
**Vision					
**Org. Mgmt					
**Values					

APPENDIX C

*The Organizational Culture Assessment
Instructions*

The OCAI consists of six questions. Each question has four alternatives. READ EACH ALTERNATIVE CAREFULLY AS DIFFERENCES MAY BE SUBTLE. Divide 100 points among these four alternatives depending on the extent to which each alternative is similar to your perception of the student organization you referred to in the RISC. Give a higher number of points to the alternative that is most similar to your organization. For example, in question 1, if you think alternative A is very similar to your organization, alternatives B and C are somewhat similar, and alternative D is hardly similar at all, you might give 55 points to A, 20 points each to B and C, and 5 points to D (see example below). Just be sure that your total equals 100 for each question. (Adapted from Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture, (1999) by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn)

EXAMPLE QUESTION

<i>EXAMPLE. Dominant Characteristics</i>		Points
A	A. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.	55
B	B. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.	20
C	C. The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement oriented.	20
D	D. The organization is a very controlled and structural place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.	5
<i>Total</i>		100

The Organizational Culture Assessment

Please address each question as instructed above.

1. Dominant Characteristics		Points
A	A. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.	
<i>B</i>	B. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.	
C	C. The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement oriented.	
D	D. The organization is a very controlled and structural place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.	
<i>Total</i>		100

2. Organizational Leadership		Points
A	A. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.	
<i>B</i>	B. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovating, or risk taking.	
C	C. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-driven focus.	
D	D. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.	
<i>Total</i>		100

3. Management of Employees		Points
A	A. The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.	
B	B. The management style in the organization is characterized individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.	
C	C. The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.	
D	D. The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.	
<i>Total</i>		100

4. Organization Glue		Points
A	A. The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to organization runs high.	
B	B. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.	
C	C. The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. Aggressiveness and winning are common themes.	
D	D. The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.	
<i>Total</i>		100

5. Strategic Emphasis		Points
A	A. The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.	
<i>B</i>	B. The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.	
C	C. The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.	
D	D. The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important.	
<i>Total</i>		100

6. Criteria of Success		Points
A	A. The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.	
<i>B</i>	B. The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.	
C	C. The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.	
D	D. The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost production are critical.	
Total		100

APPENDIX D

RISK INVENTORY FOR STUDENTS – COLLEGIATE (RISC)

INTRODUCTION

RISC is designed to identify the willingness of college students to take risks in their personal lives and as leaders within student organizations. This inventory is being used in a study to investigate the relationship between risk taking of student leaders and the culture of the organization within which they lead.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the instructions at the beginning of each of the section of the RISC carefully.

On items requiring the use of the scale, respond by writing a number from 1 to 7 that best indicates the extent to which each statement describes you, as an individual in the first section and as an organizational leader in the second section. A response of:

1 indicates that the statement does not at all describe you;

4 indicates the statement somewhat describes you;

7 indicates the statement is very much describes you.

Use any of the numbers in between to show relative degrees of how the statement varies with its applicability to you.

Write the appropriate responses (numbers) in the spaces to the left of each statement.

Do not worry about “right” or “wrong” answers or “better” or “worse” answers. There is no “preferred” or “ideal” response. This inventory will not make you look “good” or “bad” and your answers will remain confidential.

NOTE THAT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE USUALLY THE MOST ACCURATE, so don't spend too much time on each question. Go with your gut response. There is no set time limit, but keep moving. Do not spend too much time debating any given item.

Thank you for participating in this study!

Risk Inventory for Students - Collegiate Individual

Please answer the following questions about yourself. Your answers will help us gather general information about the group that is filling out the questionnaire. The results of individual questionnaires will remain confidential. Write your response on the line to the left of each item.

- _____ 1. Age
- _____ 2. Sex:
_____ M
_____ F
- _____ 3. College of Major (choose one only):
_____ Agriculture
_____ Business
_____ Education
_____ Engineering
_____ Geosciences
_____ Liberal Arts
_____ Vet/Med
_____ Double major
- _____ 4. Number of completed college credit hours.
- _____ 5. Number of semesters in which you have held one or more collegiate leadership positions.
- _____ 6. Number of collegiate leadership positions you have held or currently hold.

Consider how each of the following statements describes you as an individual. Use the numbers on the following scale to indicate the extent to which each statement is like you. Write your choice on the line to the left of each statement.

Not at all like me		Somewhat like me		Very much like me
1	2	3	4	5
				6
				7

- _____ 8. I would rather watch a game of tackle football than play in one.
- _____ 9. I would choose a \$3,000 annual raise over a \$10,000 bonus, when I had about a one-in-three chance of winning the bonus.
- _____ 10. I have done things with a group that I wouldn't have chosen to do if I were alone.
- _____ 11. I often check for "expert" opinions before making a major purchasing decision.
- _____ 12. I avoid uncertain situations because I may lose something or be exposed to some kind of hazard.
- _____ 13. I can do anything I set my mind to.
- _____ 14. I believe that "nothing ventured, nothing gained."
- _____ 15. I fasten my safety belt before I put the car in gear.
- _____ 16. I often change my mind to go along with the group.
- _____ 17. I make it a point to talk to my professors in their office or after class at least 3 or 4 times per semester.
- _____ 18. I still feel it's worth taking a chance, even when the odds are against me.
- _____ 19. I am afraid to ask someone out or over to my house because they may say "no."
- _____ 20. I would rather deal with intense disappointment over having lost or failed than with severe regret over not having tried.
- _____ 21. I carefully lock my residence at night.
- _____ 22. The approval of my peers is very important to me.
- _____ 23. I talk to my parent(s) at least once per week.
- _____ 24. I tend to see situations in terms of what I have to gain.

- _____ 25. I have said I was sick just to get out of making a presentation in front of the class, even when I was prepared.
- _____ 26. I will go against the rules if I think I won't get caught.
- _____ 27. I would rather flip burgers than be unemployed after graduation.
- _____ 28. I often check with my friends about which classes I should take.
- _____ 29. I have met with my departmental academic advisor only once since I've been in college.
- _____ 30. I think of tests as an opportunity to see what I have learned.
- _____ 31. I have confidence in my ability to recover from my mistakes, no matter how big.
- _____ 32. I don't mind going to a bar or club by myself.
- _____ 33. I have crossed roads leaving more careful companions behind.
- _____ 34. A friend has talked me into buying something that I was unsure about.
- _____ 35. High-risk investments are an opportunity to lose large amounts of money.
- _____ 36. I have caught an airplane at the last minute.
- _____ 37. I believe the advertised health ramifications of smoking are grossly underrated.
- _____ 38. I can handle big losses and disappointments with little difficulty.
- _____ 39. I wouldn't consider going out to eat by myself.
- _____ 40. I haven't started projects because I'm afraid I won't finish them.

Risk Inventory for Students - Collegiate Organizational

For this section: think of the student organization where you hold the highest of the leadership positions in which you are currently serving. Write the name of the organization and position here (optional):

Organization

Title

(Do not use employment or non-collegiate organizations)

Answer the questions in this section in regards to this organization.

For questions 1 through 6, place an “X” on the line to the left of the item that best describes your organization.

1. Primary purpose of the organization (choose one only)
- _____ Social
- _____ Community service (off campus - local, state, national or global)
- _____ Student / campus service
- _____ Academic / honor
- _____ Knowledge or skill acquisition
- _____ Athletic
- _____ Special Interest
- _____ Cultural or ethnically based
2. The organization is part of the
- _____ Pan Hellenic Council
- _____ Panhellenic Council
- _____ Inter-Fraternity Council
- _____ Corps of Cadets
- _____ None of the above
3. How many members are in your organization?
- _____ 25 or fewer members
- _____ 26 - 50 members
- _____ 51 - 75 members
- _____ 76 - 150 members
- _____ 150+ members
4. Size of the executive board (or small group with whom you most often make organizational decisions)
- _____ 4 or fewer members
- _____ 5 – 10 members
- _____ 11 – 15 members
- _____ 16+ members
5. How long has your organization been in existence at Texas A&M?
- _____ 0 – 3 years
- _____ 4 - 7 years
- _____ 8 – 15 years
- _____ 16+ years

6. If the organization is part of a larger, non-TAMU, organization that requires you to follow its policies and procedures, is the overall governing organization
- _____ At the state level
- _____ At the national / international level
- _____ At the local level
- _____ It is not part of a larger organization. This question is not applicable.

Consider each of the following statements as it pertains to you in your role as an officer within the you organization named above. As you respond to each item, think of it in terms of what you would do within the scope of your role as an officer of this organization. Use the numbers on the following scale to indicate the extent to which each statement describes you as an organizational officer. Write your choice on the line to the left of each statement.

Not at all				Somewhat			Very much
like me				like me			like me
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

- _____ 7. In a conflict I would be more likely to side with my advisor than with my peers.
- _____ 8. I consult with one or more of my peers within the organization before making a decision for the organization.
- _____ 9. I will stop an activity or event I think will fail, even if we've put in a great deal of time and money.
- _____ 10. I would continue with an activity or event that my advisor has cautioned me will likely fail.
- _____ 11. I consider the safety of participants when planning an activity or event.
- _____ 12. I will try to put on an activity or event that has failed before because I can make it work.
- _____ 13. If given the choice I would rarely meet with my advisor.
- _____ 14. If I know I'm right, I don't change my mind even after a discussion with other officers.
- _____ 15. An event that fails is an opportunity to learn and grow.
- _____ 16. It is better to ask for permission, than to beg for forgiveness.
- _____ 17. I would cancel an outdoor event or activity if threatening weather was forecast.

- _____ 18. I would meet with my advisor's boss to try to get what I want for the organization if I didn't agree with my advisor's decision.
- _____ 19. Having an advisor present at all organizational events and activities is a must.
- _____ 20. Talking with my peers helps me clarify alternatives and make better decisions.
- _____ 21. If no one comes to an event it is a total waste of time and money.
- _____ 22. I carefully assess all alternatives and their consequences before making an organizational decision.
- _____ 23. It is not possible to have too many people at an event.
- _____ 24. If I make a poor choice in my position, nothing will really happen to me.
- _____ 25. I know the university policies and procedures regarding student organizations.
- _____ 26. Meetings are a waste of valuable time.
- _____ 27. I would select someone for an important office in my organization who had unlimited potential but was new to the organization even if there was a person available for the position who had more experience but less potential.
- _____ 28. Developing new and creative programming ideas is a common occurrence for me.
- _____ 29. I would plan an event that requires long hours of driving.
- _____ 30. My combined level of knowledge and experience makes me a good leader.
- _____ 31. The approval of my advisor and other administrators is very important to me.
- _____ 32. I have changed my opinion after a discussion with fellow organization members.
- _____ 33. My organization should stick to the kinds of activities and events they are known for.
- _____ 34. I would make an agreement with an outside vendor without first checking with relevant others within the organization if it seems like a good deal.
- _____ 35. I will take steps to ensure that there is no alcohol at an organizational event.
- _____ 36. I wonder when people will figure out that I'm not really as competent as they think I am.
- _____ 37. I will do whatever is necessary to improve the organization.
- _____ 38. I keep a close watch on my budget within the organization.