

CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF LEADERSHIP: A MONOGRAPHIC STUDY OF FUNCTIONAL AND DYSFUNCTIONAL FORMS

C. G. Alawattage

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the findings of an empirical study, of monographic nature, into the cultural dynamics of leadership. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the study explores functional and dysfunctional forms of cultural dynamics associated with leadership.

Being explanatory variables of functionality as well as dysfunctionality, leadership and culture were explored across a monographic site to code functional and dysfunctional attributes of cultural configurations. Thus, specific networks of relationships among major cultural attributes associated with leadership in functional and dysfunctional modes were explored to provide coherent models of cultural functionality and dysfunctionality.

Existence of dysfunctionality over time was attributed to the existence of a "polar dynamic equilibrium" in the organisational setup. This polar dynamic equilibrium operating in organisational units makes it almost impossible to shift the existing pattern of performance to a higher stage, unless a strong leadership influence originates. Such polar dynamism could be explained through a set of interrelated "vicious circles" of collective behaviour.

C. G. Alawattage is a lecturer attached to the Department of Accountancy and Financial Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. This paper is based on a thesis submitted by the writer in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the MBA degree of the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Such vicious circles are, indeed, centred on some dysfunctional attributes of the positional leaders, and are reinforced by some dysfunctional attributes in the collective behaviour of organisational members.