Staff involvement in quality assurance and diversity

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dr. Dries Berings
Faculty of Economy and Business
Work & Organisation Studies

MODEL

The 'software of the mind' behind employee involvement in quality and diversity in higher education.

Software of the mind:
- Organisational culture
- Strategic orientation
- Quality and diversity beliefs

Staff involvement (attitude and role):
- Internal quality assurance
- Diversity policy

Background variables:
- Sex, age, experience
- Position
Three issues:

Staff involvement
Quality culture
Relation between QA and Diversity Policies

SAMPLE

974 employees in Higher Education
Educational staff: 67%
Supporting staff: 25%
Management: 8%

Flanders: 60% (3 HEI; 14 departments)
Netherlands: 40% (2 HEI; 15 departments)
INSTRUMENT

Culture MirrorsPLUS

Expanded version of ‘Culture Mirrors’, an instrument developed in collaboration with the Flanders Bologna Expert Team (Berings et al., 2011). This instrument can stimulate reflection and debate on quality culture.

Elements of Quality Culture:

* Awareness and shared concern about quality.
* Involvement of internal and external stakeholders
* A balanced organisational culture
New elements in Culture MirrorsPLUS

1. Complementary to the six internal cultural orientations, two external strategic orientation are added:

http://www.internationaliseringvanhetcurriculum.be/nl/kwaliteitscultuur-een-andere-ki...
Other new element in Culture MirrorsPLUS

2. Questions about ‘involvement in QA’ are now complemented with questions about ‘involvement in Diversity’.

3. Respondents are confronted with 15 statements about quality and diversity in education.

4. Questions about ‘participation of stakeholders’ are added.

RESULTS
Involvement in QA and Diversity

**Culture mirrorsPLUS:**
Involvement in QA and DIV: attitude and role

**ATTITUDE TOWARDS QUALITY ASSURANCE**
How can you best describe your attitude towards quality assurance in your organisation?
- enthusiastic
- neutral
- sceptic
- disapproving

How can you best describe your role concerning quality assurance in your organisation?
- pioneer
- collaborator
- follower
- adversary

**ATTITUDE TO DIVERSITY POLICY**
How can you best describe your attitude towards the policy about diversity in your organisation?
- enthusiastic
- neutral
- sceptic
- disapproving

How can you best describe your role concerning the policy of diversity in your organisation??
- pioneer
- collaborator
- follower
- adversary
Involvement in QA and Diversity

QA versus DIV: Attitude

Enthusiast: QA = 37.1, DIV = 34.9
Neutral: QA = 41.1, DIV = 55.9
Sceptic: QA = 19.3, DIV = 8.7
Dissapproving: QA = 2.5, DIV = 0.5

**1% significant; * 5% significant

Involvement in QA and Diversity

QA versus DIV: Role

Pioneer: QA = 22.4, DIV = 11.7
Collaborator: QA = 61, DIV = 58.7
Follower: QA = 15.8, DIV = 29.2
Adversary: QA = 0.8, DIV = 0.4

**1% significant; * 5% significant
Gender: Involvement in DIV

**DIV: Attitude and gender**

- **Man**
  - Enthusiast: 30.1
  - Neutral: 58
  - Sceptic: 10.8
  - Dissapproving: 1.1

- **Women**
  - Enthusiast: 38.5
  - Neutral: 54.5
  - Sceptic: 7
  - Dissapproving: 0

**1% significant; * 5% significant**

Experience: Involvement in QA

**QA: Attitude and experience**

- **<5 years**
  - Enthusiast: 38.2
  - Neutral: 37.7
  - Sceptic: 12
  - Dissapproving: 3.2

- **5-10**
  - Enthusiast: 35.6
  - Neutral: 39.1
  - Sceptic: 21.9
  - Dissapproving: 1.6

- **>10**
  - Enthusiast: 36.4
  - Neutral: 25.1

**KU LEUVEN**
Position: Involvement in DIV

DIV: attitude and position

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<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Coordinators</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
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DIV: Role and position

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INNOVATION

Organisation A is known as a trendsetter in using modern methods and techniques. It rapidly responds to new trends in society. Changes in supply, internal organisation and regulations follow each other quickly. If one believes something can be improved, immediate action is taken.

PEOPLE

In organisation B the managers have great confidence in their employees. They believe that most people are motivated by themselves and are capable to decide the best way to do their job. Consequently, everyone can carry out his duties according to own insights and principles and own style.
In organisation C all activities are perfectly in line with each other. There is system, logic and order in everything. Objectives, plans, appointments and tasks are put on paper. Careless work and sloppiness are banned. Management insists that everything is done according to the agreements made.

Organisation D is characterised by real team spirit. The employees have a strong belief that everybody contributes to a common goal and ideal. Time and effort are allocated to develop a common future-oriented mission. Employees are prepared to adapt their work to achieve that.
Organisation E is known for its solid and also traditional approach. This organisation only brings about change when it is absolutely necessary and only if it is almost certain that the new approach is better than the old one.

Organisation F employs specialists who are recruited mainly because of their particular professional skills. Those professionals focus almost exclusively on expanding and developing their expertise. The support departments and secretariats take care of the organisational issues.
Culture mirrors

Below we describe eight organisations. Read each description carefully and then answer the two questions:
1. Would you like to work in this organisation?
2. To what extent does your organisation resemble this organisation?

ORGANISATION A  Organisation A is known as a trendsetter in using modern methods and techniques. It rapidly responds to new trends in society. Changes in supply, internal organisation and rules follow each other quickly. If one believes one can improve matters, immediate action is taken.

Would you like to work in organisation A?
- absolutely not
- rather not
- partly
- with pleasure
- with most pleasure

To what extent does your organisation resemble organisation A?
- not at all
- to a small extent
- partly
- to a large extent
- entirely

Organisational culture preference

- People: 4.27
- Collector: 4.20
- Innovation: 3.68
- System: 3.17
- Specialisation: 3.14
- Tradition: 2.70
Administrators / lecturers:

- Collective: 4.16, 4.35
- People: 4.23, 4.29
- Innovation: 4.08
- System: 3.21, 3.31
- Specialisation: 2.99, 3.27
- Tradition: 2.40, 2.75

QA enthusiasts / sceptics:

- Collective: 4.30, 4.24
- People: 4.23, 4.3
- Innovation: 3.61, 3.81
- System: 3.24, 3.27
- Specialisation: 3.14, 3.26
- Tradition: 2.57, 2.94
DIV enthusiasts / sceptics:

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Strategic orientation
*Culture mirrors PLUS*

- Innovation
- Collective
- System
- Market
- Specialisation
- Tradition
- Sustainability
- People
Organisation G has a strong reputation, a national as well as international profile. It has the ambition to become market leader. People who work for this organization strive to enhance the competitive advantage of the organisation by focusing on the customer and the market. They pursue excellence in everything they do to contribute to achieve the strategic goals of the organisation.

Organisation H wants to contribute to the creation of a fair and social society in which people can get opportunities to the maximum. People who work for this organization realize that the organisation carries a great social responsibility. They believe it is obvious to commit themselves beyond their core assignments, their specialisation and short-term personal goals.
Culture mirrorsPLUS

ORGANISATION G  Organisation G has a strong reputation and international profile. It has the ambition to become market leader. People who work for this organisation strive to enhance the competitive advantage of the organisation by focusing on the customer and the market. They pursue excellence in everything they do to contribute to achieve the strategic goals of the organisation.

Would you like to work in organisation G?
- absolutely not
- rather not
- partly
- with pleasure
- with most pleasure

To what extent does your organisation resemble organisation G?
- not at all
- to a small extent
- partly
- to a large extent
- entirely

Strategic orientation

Sustainability  3.88
Market  3.40

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Administrators / lecturers:

- Sustainability: 3.6
- Market: 3.31

QA enthusiasts / sceptics:

- Sustainability: 3.82
- Market: 3.63
DIV enthusiasts / sceptics:

- **Sustainability**: 4.05
- **Market**: 3.37

Strategic orientation: **Staff**

- **Market**: 11%
- **Sustainability**: 34%
- **Intersection**: 18%
- **Total**: 37%
Strategic orientation: Administrators

- Market: 6%
- Sustainability: 47%
- Market overlap: 9%
- Total overlap: 38%

Strategic orientation: Lecturers

- Market: 13%
- Sustainability: 33%
- Market overlap: 21%
- Total overlap: 33%
Concern about Quality and Diversity

The software of the mind of the staff

Culture mirrorsPLUS:
15 items about quality and diversity:

Education is aligned with real practices and case studies from the field.

Would you say that this feature is:
- not at all important
- a little bit important
- rather important
- very important
- of the utmost importance

To what extent does this feature apply to the organisation?
- not at all
- to a small extent
- partly
- to a large extent
- entirely
15 statements about quality and diversity

FACTOR 1°: concern about quality (Q)

5 Education is aligned with real practices and case studies from the field. (Q)

4 One makes an effort to systematically guarantee the quality of the programme and increases it where possible. (Q)

6 Education reflects current scientific research and is attuned to new scientific trends. (Q)

8 Students have the opportunity to develop their talents to the maximum and by doing so build the best possible career for themselves. (Qd)

11 The quality of education meets international standards. (Q)

7 Challenges in today’s society are addressed in education. (Qd)

1 One makes an effort to give talented students opportunities to excel. (Q)

2 Students have the opportunity to align their study programme with their needs and ambitions. (Q)

10 The critical mind is formed and the ability to take a stand is developed. (Qd)

FACTOR 2: concern about diversity and inclusion (D)

13 Employees are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset and acquire general competences with respect to diversity. (D)

12 Students are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset, acquire general competences with respect to diversity and develop strong social skills. (D)

14 Efforts are made to help students with another philosophical, social or cultural background feel at home in the organization. (D)

9 Students are being prepared to function in a very diverse society. (Dq)

15 People with disabilities can access and use the premises, rooms and facilities. (D)

3 One makes an effort to maximize the opportunities for students who start the programme under unfavourable circumstances. (D)
15 statements about quality and diversity

SORTED by importance (%4+5; “very important” or “of the utmost importance”)

HIGH CONSENSUS: > 66%

5 Education is aligned with real practices and case studies from the field. (Q) (85%)

4 One makes an effort to systematically guarantee the quality of the programme and increases it where possible. (Q) (82%)

10 The critical mind is formed and the ability to take a stand is developed. (Qd) (79%)

8 Students have the opportunity to develop their talents to the maximum and by doing so build the best possible career for themselves. (Qd) (77%)

15 People with disabilities can access and use the premises, rooms and facilities. (D) (76%)

9 Students are being prepared to function in a very diverse society. (Dq) (76%)

7 Challenges in today’s society are addressed in education. (Qd) (72%)

11 The quality of education meets international standards. (Q) (72%)

12 Students are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset, acquire general competences with respect to diversity (D) (70%)

MODERATE CONSENSUS: <= 66%

13 Employees are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset and acquire general competences with respect to diversity. (D) (66%)

6 Education reflects current scientific research and is attuned to new scientific trends. (Q) (63%)

1 One makes an effort to give talented students opportunities to excel. (Q) (59%)

14 Efforts are made to help students with another philosophical, social or cultural background feel at home in the organization. (D) (59%)

3 One makes an effort to maximize the opportunities for students who start the programme under unfavourable circumstances. (D) (58%)

2 Students have the opportunity to align their study programme with their needs and ambitions. (Q) (51%)
15 statements about quality and diversity

HIGHEST GAP BETWEEN IMPORTANCE (..%) AND PERCEPTION

1 One makes an effort to give talented students opportunities to excel. (Q) (59%; gap: 0.77)

3 Employees are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset and acquire general competences with respect to diversity. (D) (66%; gap: 0.71)

5 The critical mind is formed and the ability to take a stand is developed. (Qd) (79%; gap: 0.69)

4 One makes an effort to systematically guarantee the quality of the programme and increases it where possible. (Q) (82%; gap: 0.56)

9 Students are being prepared to function in a very diverse society. (Dq) (76%; gap: 0.53)

8 Students have the opportunity to develop their talents to the maximum and by doing so build the best possible career for themselves. (Qd) (77%; gap: 0.53)

12 Students are encouraged to develop a multicultural mindset, acquire general competences with respect to diversity. (D) (70%; gap: 0.53)

Concern about Quality versus Diversity

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<th>Diversity</th>
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<td>Gap</td>
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Gap= Importance score (1-5)– Perception score (1-5)
Administrators / lecturers:

Concern about Diversity: 3.87
Concern about Quality: 3.92

QA enthusiasts / sceptics:

Concern about Diversity: 3.87
Concern about Quality: 3.93

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DIV enthusiasts / sceptics:

Concern about diversity

Concern about quality

Cultural preference and concern about Quality en Diversity
CONCLUSIONS

STAFF INVOLVEMENT:

- 1/3 of the staff is enthusiastic about internal quality assurance (QA) as well as diversity policies (DIV)
- Scepticism is higher for QA than for DIV
- For DIV more than half of the staff seems to be ‘indifferent’
- The number of pioneers is higher for QA than for DIV.
- Age and experience have only a marginal effects on aspects of involvement.
- Indifference for QA is higher for young people
- Woman are more enthusiastic and less sceptic about DIV
- Involvement in QA and DIV is related to each other.
- 1/3 of the pioneers in QA is also a pioneer in DIV

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

- The most valued cultural orientations are People and Collective, respectively with self-determination and collaboration as core values.
- The top three for lecturers as well as for administrators is People, Collective and Innovation.
- An innovative and traditional organisational culture is respectively more and less attractive for administrators compared to lecturers.
- A lower preference for innovation and higher preference for tradition is typical for employees calling themselves sceptic.
STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

• A sustainability strategy is valued higher than a market oriented strategy.
• Administrators value both external orientations quite equal and both higher compared to lecturers.
• 1/3 prefer a sustainability strategy and 1/3 goes for a combination of a market and a sustainability strategy.
• Administrators have a more pronounced vision on strategy.

QUALITY AND DIVERSITY BELIEFS

• A majority of staff members agree with most of the statements about QA en DIV. Their ‘software of the mind’ seems to be in line with the principles and assumptions of both policy domains.
• Consensus is higher for standardisation than for differentiation.
• A readiness to change exist as well for striving for excellence as for become well to participate in a diverse society.
• Consensus around quality and diversity is highest in innovation and collective oriented organisational cultures.
DISCUSSION

• Is it necessary to do more effort to enhance staff involvement in QA en DIV?
• What kind measures or initiatives can be taken to enhance the involvement of (sceptic) lecturers?
• Are quality assurance and diversity policy just two sides of one coin? Is there some incompatibility between both policy domains? Is standardisation and differentiation compatible?
• Does it make sense to integrate both policy domains in one vision, one strategy and one supporting staff?
• Do we need an organisational culture shift? What are the internal organisational cultural orientations that fit the best the concept of ‘quality culture’?

CONTACT

If you have more questions about the study presented here or if you have interest in our research and instruments on quality culture, you can contact me:

dr. Dries Berings, Associate professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Work & Organisation Studies, KULeuven, Warmoesberg 26, 1000 Brussel

dries.berings@kuleuven.be
+32 496 82 99 88
Literature:


https://lirias.hubrussel.be/bitstream/123456789/2200/1/HRP35.pdf


## ADENDA

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<td><strong>Wens G</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.339&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.048&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.251&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.228&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.029&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.175&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.134&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>.369&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>.102&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.343&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.002&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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</table>
Study 1 (Berings, 2001)

44 HEI departements

Table 2. Culture images and TQM-criteria: Pearson-correlations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Image</th>
<th>TQM Implementation</th>
<th>Student satisfaction</th>
<th>Employee satisfaction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Collective</td>
<td>.39 (*)</td>
<td>.60 ***</td>
<td>.73 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.46 **</td>
<td>.69 **</td>
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<td>Innovation</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.46 **</td>
<td>.51 **</td>
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<td>System</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.49 **</td>
<td>.51 **</td>
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<td>Tradition</td>
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<td>.17</td>
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<td>Professional</td>
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<td>R²</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p <.05; ** p <.01; *** p<.001

four clusters
**Four clusters / three criteria**

- **TQM**
- **TEAM**
- **INDET**
- **TRAD**

**z-scores**

-1 -0,5 0 0,5 1

- TQM implement.
- Student SF
- Employee SF

**Study 2 (2009)**
28 units of universities and colleges (‘hogescholen’)

**Study 3 (2010)**
64 units of universities and colleges (‘hogescholen’)

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*KU LEUVEN*
ATTRACTIONNESS: trend

- Collective: 3.89 (Colleges 2000), 4.15 (Colleges 2010)
- People: 3.89 (Colleges 2000), 4.15 (Colleges 2010)
- Innovation: 3.40 (Colleges 2000), 3.78 (Colleges 2010)
- System: 3.32 (Colleges 2000), 3.59 (Colleges 2010)
- Professional: 2.35 (Colleges 2000), 3.22 (Colleges 2010)
- Tradition: 3.03 (Colleges 2000), 3.00 (Colleges 2010)