Chapter 2

Literature review

This chapter will be discussing two separate but main issues of the research work namely:

- organization culture, and
- decision making behavior.

Discussion on organization culture will focus on some of the existing definitions, its significance and its impact onto the formation of values not only for the organization as a whole but also members within it, individually. As on the issue of decision making, the discussion will be served based on the general theoretical aspects before zooming into the individual aspects of decision making. As such this chapter will be organized based on the following sections:

i) definitions of culture as within the contacts of organization culture

ii) roles and functions of culture in an organization

iii) theories and models of decision making

iv) the individual psychological set-up in decision making
2.1. Some definitions of culture as in organizational culture

According to Eliott Jacques\(^6\), culture is the customary or traditional ways of doing things, which are shared to a greater or lesser extent by all members of the organization and which new members must learn and at least partially accept in order to be accepted into the service of the firm.

Edgar H. Schein\(^7\) defined organization culture as the sum total of the collective or shared learning of any group or social unit as it develops its capacity to survive in its external environment and to manage its own internal affairs. Culture is the solution to external and internal problems that have worked consistently for a group and are, therefore, taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about, and feel in relation to those problems.

Schwartz and Stan Davis defined culture as a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization's members. These beliefs and expectations produce norms that powerfully shape the behavior of individuals and groups. From this perspective it is assumed that the culture could react as a control system that guides and coordinates the phenomenal flow within the organization itself. (Charles O'Reilly, 1989).

Culture is further defined by Schwartz and Stan Davis\textsuperscript{8} as a normative order that will create standards that helps us to interpret and evaluate events. At this point, the norms form the basis for members of the organization to approve or disapprove certain attitudes or beliefs or even to act in certain ways. This sort of situation is very much a fact if we are to talk about any organizations in this part of the world whereby we are known for being conservative and bonded by our eastern cultural values.

As a comparison to the cultures of most western countries, less protocol is being stressed in their communications, may it be within formal or informal setting. However, based on my observation as a public servant, it is very rare to come across an active flow of two ways discussion in a meeting between the superior and the subordinates within the organization. This is mainly due to the act of respect and accepted norms that most of the time we would ‘blindly’ accept the prerogative of the chair person whom normally is the superior. Even at times of bad ideas, one would hardly has the nerves to openly criticize them or to voice

\textsuperscript{7} Beaumont, P.B., op.cit, p.35.
\textsuperscript{8} O’Reilly, Charles, Corporations, Culture, and Commitment: Motivation and Social Control in Organizations, (California Management Review, Summer 1989, p.12)
out his own personal views just because the beliefs and accepted organizational norms reminded them not to do so but to show respect and not disgrace one before others.

An organization that practices stringent norms would normally lose the opportunity to tap the benefit of its members' potential and creative contributions. If we are to talk about the philosophy of human resource optimality, then, it does not apply within this sort of a setting. However, it is important to bare in mind that the attitudes of organizational members are very much cultivated by the kind of prevailing and accepted norms that transpires within the organization; and this to a greater extent depends on the style of leadership. Then again, to what extent the norms prevail within the organization also depends on how wide it is being accepted among members of the organization concerned. At this juncture, a good example would be our public organization of today that is trying to attain the principle of management by Quality. From my perspective, whether this would be achievable or not, will depend on the majority that accept or against the idea. Of course it is not something that is impossible to be achieved, but it depends on the role of culture that color the organization.
2.1.1. The roles and functions of culture to an organization

Charles O'Reilly (1989)\(^9\) talked about the role of culture in promoting innovation. He stated whether the culture would help or hinder innovation process lies in those norms that are widely shared and strongly held by members of the organization. So if we are talking about positive norms then this would bring about positive effect onto the organization and its members as a whole. However if it is the negative norms that prevail, then, the effect would be negative too. Table 2.1 on pages 19-20 contains a list of norms that promote innovation based on a survey over 500 managers.

Based on the viewpoints of Charles O'Reilly\(^10\), it is interesting to note that among the elements that falls under the required norms that promote innovation, he has identified among others, the significant of risk taking, rewards for change, openness, common goals and autonomy. From my perspective, these are the significant and basic norms that should be present if we are to talk about organizational change for the future. Those days of absolute autonomy, centralization of power, static structured work procedures and other red-tapes bureaucratic fibres are no longer applicable in today's competitive and speedy work environment:

\(^9\) O'Reilly, Charles, op.cit p. 12
\(^10\) O'Reilly, Charles, op.cit p. 15
Table 2.1. Norms That Promote Innovation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Norms to Promote creativity</th>
<th>B. Norms to Promote Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Risk Taking</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Common goals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freedom to try things and fail</td>
<td>- Sense of pride in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Acceptance of mistakes</td>
<td>- Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Allow discussion of ‘dumb’ ideas</td>
<td>- Willingness to share the credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No punishments for failure</td>
<td>- Flexibility in jobs, budgets, functional areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Challenge the status quo</td>
<td>- Sense of ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Forget the past</td>
<td>- Eliminate mixed messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Willingness not to focus on the short term</td>
<td>- Manage interdependencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Expectation that innovation is part of your job</td>
<td>- Shared vision and common direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Positive attitudes about change</td>
<td>- Build consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Drive to improve</td>
<td>- Mutual respect and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Concern for the whole organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2) Rewards for Change</strong></td>
<td><strong>2) Autonomy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ideas are valued</td>
<td>- Decision making responsibility at the lower levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Respect for beginning ideas</td>
<td>- Decentralized procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Build into the structure:</td>
<td>- Freedom to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Budgets</td>
<td>- Expectation of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opportunities</td>
<td>- Belief that you can have an impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Resources</td>
<td>- Delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tools</td>
<td>- Quick, flexible decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time</td>
<td>- Minimize the bureaucracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Promotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Top management attention and support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Celebration of accomplishments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suggestions are implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- encouragement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the new management approach of today, the concern is more onto cultivating the potentials of the available human resources and as much as possible to get rid of obstructions that could jeopardized these potentials. This is indeed an important effort if we are to talk about bringing in changes into our organization which in this case is the public sector. I belief that there is a need for the public organization to be able to provide an arena for the executives to ‘test’ their potential and ability in all spectrum of their job, which, at this point
making decisions is one of them. For the past 50 years, the style of management has been the kind that is not 'human-friendly' which in most cases the feelings and emotions of employees are not significant factors to be considered. However, the approach has changed gradually in today's modern style of management whereby the issues of feelings, aspirations, hopes and fears are essential because they act as the source of motivation and energizer among the employees. Gorman\textsuperscript{11} quoted that:

"As Pareto has aptly pointed out, actions come from feelings not logic; logic is applied after the event. In other words, man is often a rationalizing rather than a rational animal."

Organization culture is as important as when we talk about one's principle in life. This is so because we are actually talking about the 'self' identity or the special characteristics that has become the feature of that particular organization. Culture is critical in developing and maintaining levels of intensity and dedication among employees that often characterizes successful organizations. At the same time the organization culture itself should not be static but dynamic in nature so as to be able to readjust to the changing environment around it.

The dislocation of obsolete management style, the coming in of the new working philosophies, technologies, knowledge and few others has entrapped organizations and their employees in difficulties as a result of these changing

\textsuperscript{11} Goarman, Liam, Corporate Culture – Why Managers Should be Interested, (Irish Management Institute, Dublin, LODI 8.5, 1987, p. 3)
events. Failure of readjusting to the presents evolution can have a tremendous
negative impact onto the performance of the organization and its members.
Bumstead and Eckblad\textsuperscript{12}, talked about the organization culture and the
challenges of the changing environment. They stated that:

"Each organization has a unique set of contributions to make; the potential
for these contributions is embedded in the culture of the organization, in its
underlying style or nature; this culture is a living entity, evolving and
building on its own history, in interdependence with its environment; at
some point the environment ceases to be so benign. The organization
then faces a crisis; the rapid erosion of traditional markets, technologies,
and ways of organizing work, and the sudden emergence of new market,
technology and organizational options, post a kind of threat that require
the organization to go back to its basic principles so as to modify the
operation of the basic principles in such a way as to meet the challenge of
the new situation".

Based on the above statement, one can assume that an organization
culture varies from one organization to another. In fact it formed a kind of a
secret recipe for each organization in their strive for success. However this recipe
does not promise constant result over time unless members of the organization
are willing to take flexible readjustment based on the changing environment.
Gorman\textsuperscript{13} stated in his work that:

"...the definable characteristics of successful companies have pointed to
certain aspects of culture, such as the strength and pervasiveness of core
values as an element and, it is claimed, a pretty large element in their
success."

\textsuperscript{12} Bumstead, Dennis and John Eckblad, Developing Organizational Cultures, (Fordwell Limited, LODJ
5.4. 1984, p. 21)
\textsuperscript{13} Gorman, Liam, op.cit., p.3.
Learning from the Japanese, Gorman\textsuperscript{14} added that the secret behind the success of most Japanese firms is the fact that there is a strong bond of shared values between the management and the workers. These values resulted in behavioral norms that demonstrate a commitment to quality, problem solving and co-operative effort.

Almost all public organizations in Malaysia today are involved in at least one kind of an innovative project intended to improve the quality of their management system which the end result would relate to the quality of ‘the service’. Many had been done and much had been spent and not denying few have successfully achieved at least one form of recognition for their effort that comes in the form of Quality Awards or even ISO 9000 certification for the significant changes that these people have successfully shown. As a public servant of course this is a pride and a success to be reckoned. However, there is still this pertaining question as to how genuine have these successful organizations in bringing about the new cultural change to suit today’s new working environment and challenges. Pursuing the ‘change’ is a matter by itself but maintaining the ‘changed’ is another.

Changing an organization culture is not actually an easy task to be done although it is possible. Motto, slogans or client charters are not enough in implementing and maintaining a culture that fosters creativity and innovation in

\textsuperscript{14} Gorman, Liam., ibid. p.3
an organization. As has been mentioned earlier, it involves total commitment and above all action rather than mere preaching by the organization’s leaders.

There are very significant functions that culture has upon organization. One can have different perception on this based on what they experienced but in a simplified manner, the purposes or functions of culture to an organization can be seen as follows, first, through it (culture), members of the organization learn to perceive reality in a particular way, to make certain assumptions about how things work and how to behave. In short it forms the ‘belief system’ that shape the organization’s people and form a kind of a control system that enable the organization in return to regularize its members.

Gorman\textsuperscript{15}, in his work on culture, pointed out some of its main functions that can briefly be seen as follows; First, culture as the transmission of learning. What it actually means here is that one will learn to understand the events and activities around the organization based on what he or she learned as being common or normal practices on how things are handle in the organization. At this juncture there is the requirement on the part of the individual concerned to be able to readjust accordingly and learn to perceive reality in a particular way, to

\footnotesize{15 Gorman, Liam., op.cit p.5}
make certain assumptions about what is important, how things work and how to behave which is based on the message seen from the cultural values practiced by members of the organization.

Second, culture reduces complexity and enhances consistency and makes decision making, control, co-ordination and common purposes possible at all levels in the organization. In other words culture helps to form a guideline and working procedures which will form a kind of a control system so as to hinder unnecessary conflict of interest among the employees.

Third, it functions as a justification for living and existence that helps members of the organization to draw reasons for them to feel secure, self-worthy and proud to share the identity of the organization and to be part of the organization too. This is the point where a stronger bond and loyalty to the organization is being able to be sealed between the employees and the organization itself.

2.1.2. The ingredients of organization culture

Much have been mentioned about organization culture but I think the discussion would not be sufficient without knowing what actually are the ingredients that formed culture. There have been different views forwarded by experts of organization culture but basically the core elements that form culture
are the same. Terrence Deal and Allan Kennedy\(^{16}\) defined organization culture a blend of values, stories, heroes, and rituals and ceremonies.

Organization values assist employees to know how they are expected to behave and which actions are considered acceptable. These values are shaped and communicated to the members of the organization by the management, and all members of the organization know and share them. It is equally important to note that to be able to convey the organization values to the members, there must be a sound communications strategy and plan undertaken by the management that is able to project the organization's culture correctly and positively. Some of the options available include newsletters, memos or by oral delivery system such as related courses, staff meetings and personal appraisal.

Values to an organization is also view as either functional or elitist. The former focus on how organization members should carry out their work and the expectation from their performance. Where as elitist values serve to give the organization and its members a feeling of superiority. In other words, the elitist values are actually a reflection of the organization standards, achievements and successes.

Stories or myths are about what had happened along the success or existence of the organization history. This is taken for granted as being able to

bring a kind of positive and significant impact onto the confidence and motivation level of the present employees. These stories will not only become an instrument of reinforcement but also encourages the employee to follow and maintain similar foot-steps if not better.

Heroes as another part of the ingredient in organization culture is actually referring to the role models that has performed good deeds and characters just as being preached within the organization's values. These heroes are actually the few among the lots that have been innovative, reliable and act as the main actors to drive the success of the organization.

Finally, ritual and ceremonies are seen as the outward signs of what the organization values. Both ritual and ceremonies are actually a justification to how the organization treat its employees over matters like appraisal and reinforcement, provision of fringe benefits and other facilities, social obligations, annual family day gatherings, etc. These activities can actually provide the employees a sense of purpose in their work. They will realize that they are not being left unattended but are actually being recognized and appreciated accordingly for their contributions. This in return would also boost their morale to strive for excellence in their work.

Overall, then, a culture can be said to be important to an organization. Culture can have a positive impact onto an organization if it is able to create
behavior consistent with the expressed strategy, and when it constitutes values 'owned' by members at all levels. At the same time, culture could bring a negative impact if it is too strong and pervasive which in return become resistance to changes. Most of the corporate sectors have been able to tap and enjoy success because of the fact that they are always ready to go for a change based on the environmental changes (especially the taste and expectation of their customers). However in other organizations such as the public sector which has been for so long groomed by its well-known bureaucratic red-tapes, may find certain problems to transform itself into a dynamic organization that is able to keep up with situational, technological and philosophical changes. However, this is an unavoidable phenomena that must be faced by the public sector as a whole. The 'comfort-zone' that the bureaucrats have been enjoying from the heritage of the system left by the colonial masters all this whilst, have deprived them from gaining an at par status with their counterparts from the private sectors. No doubt this is a big challenge that has to be faced by the bureaucrats of today to convince the old guards on the need for a new and innovative culture, given the fact that there are those who are still in favor of maintaining the old culture which to them have proven to work and succeed for their era.

2.2. What decision making is about

As mentioned earlier in the first chapter, it is not the intention of this research work to dwell in depth the definitions, models and the technical
processes of making decision. Clearly I do not wish to get entangled between views of pioneer experts in decision making research works such as that of Charles E. Lindblom’s incremental change model, Aaron Wildavsky’s budgetary process model, Herbert A. Simon and James G. March’s satisficing model, the ideal rational model, Yehezkel Dror’s optimum model and Richard Wallen's stages of problem solving model.

Although the contributions of the above experts are based on foreign setting, they however, have provided sets of significant and valuable inputs. These very much help to set the course and form the basis of this particular research work within the local set and in trying to identify what stand does the Malaysian public bureaucrats of the executive level have to say about their role in ‘decision making.’

For purpose of terminology clarification, a simple explanation of making decision is actually a phenomena of having to pick a (right) choice out of the available alternatives. The choice determine of what is to be done and action to be taken. Anthropologists such as Pierre Teilhard de Cardin(1959), defined decision making as intentional and reflective choice in response to perceived needs. This ability to reflect and choose is considered as the fundamental characteristic distinguishing man from lower forms of life.

---

Subconsciously, we make decisions everyday in our life. Some of the simplest and routine decisions that one will have to make daily are matters like, what attire to wear, menu to have for breakfast, lunch or dinner, program to watch on television and many more. Of course there are some other complicated decisions that one has to make with extra careful in life, like things involving bigger financial commitment, examples, to buy or not buy a car or house, to marry or not to marry, etc. The more complicated the decision that has to be made, means the bigger the risk thus the more significant the impact will be onto one’s life. This is normally the kind of decision that one will have to make in his or her official capacity as a member of an organization.

Worrall\textsuperscript{18} classified decision making into two parts namely one which is known as \textbf{low-order decision making} and \textbf{decision situation}. The former is said to have the following characteristics: (a) the outcomes of the choices made are unlikely to have any serious bearing on the subsequent lives of ourselves or anybody else; (b) the range of choices for practical purposes is small, example to watch television or read newspaper; (c) there is little risk or none at all associated with the decision; (d) and you have ample information to make a ‘best’ choice, i.e. to know what you want, what is available, and you choose accordingly.

There is then a much more complicated decision situation (as termed by Worall), whereby the characteristics are just the opposite. The outcomes of these type of choices are more serious and the choices available are bigger. The level
of uncertainty tends to be higher given the fact that sufficient information may not be available to facilitate the making of a better decision. There is also a possibility that this type of decision situation to be affecting the destiny or fortune of others apart from the decision maker himself thus creating a bigger risk.

2. 2. 1. Types of decisions

Decision is actually categorized into two main types known as programmed and non-programmed decisions. From the perspective of human nature, Worrall (1980) mentioned of what is termed as pre-programmed decisions which actually is the same as a programmed decision as in an organization setting. Pre-programmed decisions are actually spontaneous decisions that require less thinking or none at all. Action taken out of this type of decision is seen as a result of our reflexes, habits and skills.

Reflex actions means the automatic reaction that a person does when encountered by a problematic situation which in most cases is threatening or hazardous to his life. One for example would avoid pot-holes while driving or cover his face with his hands when thrown with an object. These are actually reflex actions that our human nature initiate automatically without further thinking and uncertainty.

\[ \text{Worrall, Norman, People and Decisions, (Longman, 1980, p.3)} \]
Habits are actually a pre-formed decisions that patterned or provide the explanation as to why a person does such a peculiar thing. It (habit) is the repeated action that has resulted into satisfaction. This experience when 'enjoyed' over time, created a uniform action by the person concerned, under a similar condition. As an example, the sequence of actions that one normally does when waking up in the morning. First, the person may have the habit of sitting in bed for a few minutes and do a bit of stretching, then brush his teeth and takes his bath and repeats (maintain) this sequence which to him is comfortable. Another good example would be the attitude of liking to take the back seat in a bus, lecture hall or other places rather than going for the front seat which to certain people is not comfortable and too glaring. Over time, this preference turned into an automatic action that formed one's habit. Again this form of decision may require a bit of thinking to make the preference of choice at the initial stage, but then it later develops into scheduled action or response without conscious deciding. However it is important to note that habits when applied to major decisions can be dangerous, since decision environments do change whereas habits may not. According to Worrall\(^9\), one of the main reasons why people are resistance to change is due to the fact that they have to forego the comfort established by their habits.

The last element that is categorized under pre-programmed decision is skills. It is something that a person acquire through a process of learning.

\(^9\) Worrall, Norman, op.cit, p.4.
training, practice and past experience. Terms like trial and error, and practice makes perfect are few of the means that help us to acquire skills. A good example on the acquisition of skills would be the process of learning to drive. It is normally difficult at the initial stage but the problem subsides as you are more familiar with the technical skills and constantly tested over time through practice. Worrall\textsuperscript{20} again quoted that:

"The early stages of learning a skill are, as it were, 'writing a programme' which is modified by later testing and is eventually executed fluently. In a real sense, the deciding has already been done long ago, and the different 'subroutines' have been prepared to handle eventualities that may arise. Thus highly skilled behavior can be regarded as being pre-programmed so as to minimize the need for on-the-spot decision making."

Elaborating further into the discussion on programmed and non-programmed decisions within the setting of an organization like the public sector, the former is said to provide repetitive and routine solutions. Such decisions are made without spending unnecessary time and effort on them. There are normally clear set of rules, standard operating procedures or policies that facilitates the effort to solve the problem given the nature that it (problem) is something repetitive or routine.

However when it is an unstructured problem containing new elements that the management has not confronted before or is complex and extremely

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{ibid}, p 4
important, then the non-programmed decisions approach is used\textsuperscript{21}. This approach will demand a sense of creativeness to handle the nature of the problem which is more complex and novel.

At this point, I foresee that it is extremely important within the capacity of the bureaucrats to be able to identify which problems fall under a programmed and or non-programmed decision. To a certain extent, it is also equally important to be able to judge whether the steps and solution given to a case that happened years back is still applicable to a similar case but under a new different condition and circumstances of today. This is a very important issue if we are to talk about implementing a new working culture as in the form of being efficient and at the same time giving a quality service.

Sometimes it is a natural habit that we tend to refer to old files as a guideline to study a case but then again there is always a possibility that one would take it as a 'short-cut' to settle a problem by just following what has been decided before without taking into consideration the changes that has happened over time. This of course can be seen as an abuse of the programmed decision approached. Few contributive factors can be the result of such an abuse like (a) the urgency to make a decision, (b) lack of exposure onto decision making, (c) inaccessibility to authority in making decision and the problem of having

difficulty to get a decision from the higher authority, (d) avoidance of risk and making mistake, (e) or may be it is an accepted culture.

Government organizations are normally involve with important public decisions that influence the lives of every citizen. The scenario is that most problems catered by the government are complex and novel, thus involving a lot of non-programmed decisions. The tasking to make decisions over these problems normally move at a parallel trail between the difficulty level of the problem as to the management level. Figure 2.1 explains the Types of problems, Types of Decisions, and Management Level in the organization. It can be seen that programmed decisions which are simpler, are made at the lower levels of management; whereas non-programmed decisions which are more complex are made at the higher levels of management.

**Figure 2.1. Types of Problems, Types of Decisions, and Management Level in the Organization**

*Programmed decisions are made at lower levels of management; nonprogrammed decisions are made at higher levels of management.*

*Resources: Donnelly, Jr., et.al, Fundamentals of Management, 1998,*
In most organizations, the decision making pattern adopted, closely resemble the segregation between position held as to the level of complication of task/problem that need to be undertaken as shown in the above figure. In other words, the tougher the problem the higher the level of officer assigned to handle it. However in our understanding of decision making within public organization, it would be misleading to assume that there is no such things as equal participation or teamwork among each different level of officers to solve any problem arising. In fact decision making within public organizations most of the time involve advisory contributions from the 'team' that has been given the task, to act as advisors to the senior management. This 'team' may include not only the executive officer appointed to the task but also those down the line and the 'field-man' or street-level bureaucrats as termed by Lipsky (1980)\textsuperscript{22}, who acts as the information feeder and are much closer and clearer to the nature of the problem faced, thus having a better access to the information needed. This form of networking is very important especially when it comes to having to understudy a new public policy and the need to get feedback out of the public reactions.

This is actually a very sensitive networking among members in the public organization. Failure by the senior management to recognize the significant and benefit of this networking will only pose problem and complication to make good decision. As on the part of the executive officers in the public organization, they

\textsuperscript{22} Ham, Christopher and Michael Hill, The Policy Process in the Modern Capitalist State. (Harvester Wheatsheaf, New York, 2\textsuperscript{nd} P.14)
should be able to get and identify correct information in order to provide positive advise. Very much as I agree to the concept as prescribe in Figure 2.1, I however feel that a better decision can only be made when there has been a ripe discussion of the problem per se by all level and not solely based on classification of types of problems, types of decisions, and management level in the organization.

Tracing back onto the secret of the effectiveness and successes of our Japanese counterparts as have been mentioned during my previous discussion on organization culture, this is where the so called consultative decision making is cultivated. Meaning, it is a type of a decision making approach that foresee an interactive consultative process within the management. According to Hattori(1977)\textsuperscript{23} "...The usual procedure is that a formal proposal will be initiated by a middle manager, but often under the directive of top management". The middle manager will then engage in informal discussion and consultation about the decisions with his subordinates, peers, and supervisors.

Through this approach, it helps to emphasis on the inclusion of all group members in the process of decision making. Of course the question of who will have the last say to a final decision undoubtedly lies in the authority of the top management, but the beauty is that the approach has been able to provide the arena for each and everyone to view out his piece of mind about the matter.

Psychologically, those who had been given the chance to their views, feel that their presence are being appreciated and that they have been fairly heard. At this point there will be a tendency that they are willing to support the decision made even though they may not feel that it is the best one.

2.2.2. Individual differences as decision maker

Each individual is a unique entity of itself and this has been one of the factor that why you and I can have a different perspective over an issue. Similarly this also explains why each individual could have a different approach in decision making, needs a longer time to come to a decision and or even come up with an unpredictable decision.

Apart from factors like the individual psychological set-up and experience, the differences in one's decision making is also due to the "style" he adopts as termed by Keen and Morten\(^{24}\). This personalized style tend to affect and influence the outcome of the decision process and may be effective in some problems and less so in others. In a technical term, this style can be seen as a person's information processing capability.

In our effort to understand how the individual information processing come about, there have been two main approaches; (i) the cognitive complexity approach which explains problem solving in terms of individual cognitive structure. It says that people with low levels of differentiation can deal only with limited categorizations of information. Similarly, those with low ability to integrate can be confused by too much information; (ii) the complexity theory came up with the assumption that there is an optimal balance in information input for any one individual. A disequilibrium will lead to negative effect such as too little or simple an input load leads to boredom and too much leads to panic\textsuperscript{25}.

If we are to typify the working style or behavior, especially within the context of decision making, I tend to classify them into two main types of classification namely those that fall within the category of systematic thinkers and those that come under the category of intuitive thinkers. According to McKenney and Keen (1974)\textsuperscript{26}, systematic thinkers are those who tend to approach a problem by structuring it in terms of some method that would likely leads to the intended solution whereas intuitive thinkers is more inclined to form hypothesis-testing and trial-and-error. They (intuitive thinkers) are more flexible in their approach and are more willing to jump from one method to another, to discard information and to be sensitive to cues that they may not be able to identify verbally.

\textsuperscript{25} ibid, p.73
\textsuperscript{26} Keen, Peter G.W., and Michael S.Scott Morton, op.cit p.75.
Out of the two main approaches mentioned above, it can be seen that those who fall within the systematic thinkers tend to be 'risk-avoidance' in their working style whereas the intuitive thinkers are more daring to risk. In fact, in associating to the opinion of Keen and Morten (1978)\(^{27}\), intuitive thinkers are said to be better in dealing with ill-structured problems (non-programmed decision) where the information, the solution or the nature of the problem itself do not allow the use of any predetermined method. In view of this opinion, it post a very interesting query as to which approach thus our bureaucrats dominantly practice in making decisions.

Individual differences are said to be able to make certain impact in the decision-making process. R.O.Mason and I.I. Mitroff (1973)\(^{28}\) mentioned about the psychological set up of each individual being responsible as to how individuals validate information and perceive reality differently.

Donnelly, Jr. et.el (1998)\(^{29}\) pin-point four aspects of individual differences namely; values, personality, propensity for risk, and potential for dissonance. They added that each of these individual differences has a significant impact on the decision-making process.

---

\(^{27}\) ibid, p.75
\(^{28}\) ibid, p.75
\(^{29}\) Donnelly, James H. Jr., et.el. op.cit p.122
Values are said to form the guidelines that the individual uses in making a choice. By definition, value according to Kluckhohn et.al (1951) as quoted in Mohd Sabri Tajuddin:

"A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or character of a group, of a desirable which influences the selection from available modes, mean and ends of action."

Also based on a conclusion given by Mohd. Sabri Tajuddin, he added:

"...a value can be described as a conception about what is personally more or less important, about what is good or bad, and about things which are right or less so. Value give direction to one's attitudes, beliefs and behavior and provide a guide for choosing..."

In relation to decision making, the application of this value is said to be very much prevailing in the individual's value judgement in selection of opportunities and the assignment of priorities in order to establish the objectives; in developing alternative out of the various possibilities; in choosing an alternative; in choosing the means for implementing a decision; and in conducting evaluation and taking corrective action over the decision made.

---

30 Mohd Sabri Tajuddin, Work Value Systems of Malaysian Engineers, (University Malaya, 1984, p.6)
31 Mohd Sabri Tajuddin, op.cit p.7
Individuals have distinct personalities, which influences their behavior. The personality of a person refers to the total of that individual’s characteristics such as attitudes, beliefs, and needs of the individual. Rotter\textsuperscript{32} classified this individual personality into two main types namely \textbf{internal personality type} and the other \textbf{external personality type}.

According to Rotter, those who have an internal personality have a strong control over their life. They feel that many of the events that occur are the result of their own efforts. They tend to pursue more innovative strategies in undertaking their task. They also display more risk-taking behavior. The external personality type is just the opposite and those who have this sort of personality attribute much of what happen in their life to factors beyond their control, like fate or luck.

From my perspective, I believe that either a person would portray an inclination towards being an internal type of a personality or external type of a personality, this very much come to the kind of working environment or culture that they are groomed into. Of course there is also the contribution of the experience they gain from their up bringing but factors like opportunities given by

the superior, the trust, the kind of motivation given, the scope of authority bestowed and few other positive factors, they all sum up to the formation of what kind the person will be as a member of the organization that he/she is serving.

The famous Theory X and Theory Y by Douglas McGregor\(^{33}\) has indicated the validity of this phenomena. His theory X assumed a worker as having negative values such as being lazy, dislikes work, unconcerned about organization, avoids responsibility and not ambitious. As such there is a need for stern control and directive by the management. However, despite blames put onto workers as seen in theory X, McGregor developed his Theory Y in the belief that people only become the way they appear in Theory X because of the way they are treated. As a matter of fact, workers do have positive values in them and towards their work and organization. It is just that the management have been negligence for not allowing this kind of spirit to bloom within their organization culture.

In concluding the significant influence of personality on the decision making process, Donnelly.Jr, et.el (1995)\(^{34}\) provided the following opinions:

1. The proficiency level of each individual differ in all aspects of the decision making process and this explains why some people do better in one part of the process, while others do better in another part.

2. Such characteristics as intelligence are associated with different phases of decision making process.

\(^{33}\) Worrall, Norman, op.cit p.25  
\(^{34}\) Donnelly, James H Jr. et.el, op.cit p.123
3. The relation of personality to the decision making process may vary for different groups on the basis of such factors as sex and social status.

As has been mentioned earlier, making decisions can be an easy task given sufficient information and clear alternative added with a sound knowledge of the expected outcome. But as the scope of the decision that need to be made begin to involve bigger commitment and affecting the destiny of others, then the risk level is higher. Apparently, there are several sub-dimension of the risk taking, for example, monetary risk, physical risk, political risk, social risk and ethical risk (Gupta and Govindarajan, 1984; Wright, 1985).

Making decision is a game of 'gain and loss.' What has been decided out of the options would normally mean forgoing other possibilities of a probably better solution or even creating implication onto other aspects as a result of the decision made. This is so in most decisions that involve the conflict of interest between, for example, the government versus the people.

As much as the personality differ between decision makers, their propensity for taking risks also vary greatly. The optimistic decision maker who has a low aversion to risk establishes different objectives, evaluates alternative differently, and selects different alternatives. However those who has high aversion to risk would prefer to make choices for which the risk is low or for which the certainty of the outcome is high. Then again, it would be interesting to note that under group decisions, there is a tendency that many people are
bolder and advocate greater risk-taking. This is so knowing the fact that such people are more comfortable to accept shared risk as member of a group rather than being a sitting target of criticisms for a decision made alone.

The last aspects of individual difference as identified by Donnelly, Jr. et al., is potential for dissonance\(^\text{35}\). This is actually a different dimension in understanding the individual decision making behavior whereby the focal of interest is to look at the decision maker's post-decision anxiety, or cognitive dissonance. This anxiety is said to have come about as a result of unstable conditions in the individual's various cognition such as his attitudes, beliefs, values and so on, after a decision has been made by him/her. Under such situation, the decision maker has doubts and second thought about the choice that was made. The intensity of such an anxiety is said to happen most under conditions where the decision is a very important one and there are a number of forgone alternatives that have many favorable features.

A positive corrective action to such a condition would be to admit that a mistake has been made. Unfortunately, rarely many individuals have the quality of bravery and sense of responsibility to do so. Rather, they are more likely as mentioned by Donnelly, Jr. et al, try to reduce the dissonance by means of: a) seek information that support their decision(s); b) selectively distort information in a way that supports their decision; c) adopt a less favorable view of the forgone

\(^{35}\) Donnelly, James H. Jr., et al. op. cit p.123
alternatives; d)and minimize the importance of the negative aspects of the decisions and exaggerate the importance of the positive aspects\textsuperscript{36}.

2.2.3. Conclusion.

The human factor is also known as a social being. This is so given the fact that there is a strong tendency for every individual to perform communication and interaction not only verbally but non-verbally. Apart from the ability to influence others, human being is also subtle to situation and condition around them that indirectly may bring about significant impact onto their behavior or way of thinking.

Being a member of an organization, the experience gained within their official hours are most likely to have re-modify certain aspects of their personality and working style. The values or norms that prevail in an organization as have been discussed earlier, could have a significant impact over each individual in the organization itself. Most of the time the accepted norms and values become the qualifying test for a new member to convince others that "we're the same."

The strength of the so called organization culture is beyond prediction. Those organization that have practice good culture can be considered lucky but those that do not, may find it tough to change because the accepted culture may

\textsuperscript{36} Donnelly, James H Jr., et al. op cit p 125
have provided a comfort zone to its followers that they are not interested to challenge the status quo anymore. This is where the problems are when there is an initiative to go for the better but there is no cooperation by others who feel that the changes would only be taking away their comfort zone. As a result, the bad culture will go on from generation to generation. The sad part is that it not only hindered improvement but affect productivity thus customer service. This is normally the case associated to the public sector and organization.

However, as time changes, the working philosophy of the public bureaucrats are said to have move forward too. Then again, there is the question of to what extent have they changed? This survey tries to peek into this area of organization culture and the decision making behavior of the public bureaucrats. It is felt that organization being the designer, contributed the most to the fashion(culture) displayed by its models (members of the organization). Hopefully, by the end of this research work, the significant relationship between organization culture and the working behavior of its members can be proven. Of course the impact of organization culture could be seen from various angles like disciplinary aspect of the members, punctuality, teamwork, creativity and more but for purpose of this survey the impact will be seen only between the organization culture and the decision making behavior of its members.