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CONCEPTUALIZING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF
MCCORMICK & CO. INC.

by

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CONCEPTUALIZING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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CONCEPTUALIZING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Abstract

CONCEPTUALIZING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF MCCORMICK & CO. INC.

Melanie Yanney

This case study used content analysis of a corporate web page and interviews with employees to explore how corporations and employees define and perceive corporate culture. Theoretical research used to analyze and understand organizational culture included Schein's model of organizational culture, social identity theory, and organizational identification. Communication research concepts relating to the topic included organizational culture and mediated communication. The corporation's web page identified six factors that shape its corporate culture, including a participative style of management, a core set of shared values, and involving employees in business decisions. Unaided employee responses identified only one primary factor—employee-company relationships. Implications for the corporation include utilizing employee-centric terms on the website in order to reflect employee perceptions of corporate culture.

Keywords: organizational culture, employees, social identity theory (SIT), organizational identification (OI), Schein's model of organizational culture

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Conceptualizing Organizational Culture: A Case Study of McCormick & Co., Inc.

There is no one true meaning of culture. In language, the concept has progressed from a physical sense to a social sense - its meaning has expanded from the tending of nature to a "process of human development" (Williams, 1976, p. 26). Organizational culture has been described as inherent to all organizations and encompassing "the organization's values, goals, and production processes, and its expectations about the roles and contributions of organizational members" (Hollifield, Kosicki, & Becker, 2001, p. 93). Past studies have demonstrated the significance of organizational culture in communication research (e.g. Ruch, 2009; Smith, 1997; Wasko, 2001). It has been found to communicate "the identity and function of the organization" and provide employees with an "organizational identity" (Maneerat, Hale, & Singhal, 2005, pp. 189-190). Scholars have applied models and theories to understand organizational culture, including Schein's model of organizational culture (Dainton & Zelle, 2005; Ionescu, 2009), social identity theory (Collier & Esteban, 2007; Turban & Greening, 1996; Turker, 2009), and organizational identification (Scott, 2007; Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam, & Van Dick, 2009). Organizational culture provides a system of meaning for employees and a way to make sense of organizational priorities (Ionescu, 2009).

Why should companies value their employees' perceptions of corporate culture? Because companies are realizing that "their employees are the business" (Board, 2012, p. 282). A relationship exists between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction (Board, 2012). Even the best planned external communication campaigns would be ineffective if customers witnessed low employee morale or were given inconsistent information once they entered the business (Board, 2012). Edelman's (2014) Trust

Barometer found that “employees are considered the most trusted source” (p. 7) and that “the public wants to hear directly from employees as ambassadors for the company who can attest to its integrity” (p. 7). If a company’s brand promise is woven into the culture and consistently delivered—particularly with its employees—“the brand and reputation are strengthened in the customer’s eyes” (Holland & Weathers, 2013, p. 257).

While researchers have conceptually defined organizational culture and incorporated a theoretical framework into their studies, few have compared how organizations illustrate their culture to external publics and how internal publics—employees—define the company’s culture based on personal experience. This paper analyzed how both parties define corporate culture and explored the implications of when a company’s corporate communications regarding organizational culture differs from its employees’ perceptions.

For this case study, data were collected from the website and employees of an international, publically traded flavoring company headquartered in the Eastern United States with approximately 10,000 employees globally (McCormick corporate profile, 2013). McCormick & Company, Inc. (McCormick), has been in business for 125 years and carries multiple consumer brand names in the United States, including McCormick®, McCormick Gourmet®, Grill Mates®, Old Bay®, Zatarain’s®, Simply Asia®, and Thai Kitchen® (McCormick brand fact sheet, 2013). Its products are sold in retail outlets and also incorporated as ingredients in foods sold by other manufacturers and food service organizations (McCormick, 2009). In 2010, the company was named one of *Fortune’s* 100 best companies to work for (McCormick, 2009). The website content and employee interview feedback were compared to explore how the organization illustrates its culture

to external publics and how internal publics—employees—define the company's culture based on personal experience.

Using content analysis and in-depth interviews, this paper answered the following four research questions:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): How does the corporation define its organizational culture?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): How do employees define their organization's culture?

Research Question 3 (RQ3): How does the corporation's portrayal of organizational culture compare and contrast with employees' perceptions of organizational culture?

Research Question 4 (RQ4): What are the implications of the organization's description of organizational culture differing from the employees' descriptions?

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to explore both theoretical literature and communication research as they relate to organizational culture and employees. Three major theories that apply to organizational culture and employees were explored: Schein's model of organizational culture, social identity theory, and organizational identification. In terms of communication research, this paper identified two major areas of scholarship: organizational culture and mediated communication. This case study focused on how these areas impact employees.

Theoretical Research

Theoretical research examined models and theories used to analyze and understand organizational culture, including Schein's model of organizational culture, social identity theory, and organizational identification. Schein's model of organizational culture can be used to understand organizational communication through three levels of culture: artifacts, which are the observable, physical evidence of culture; values, the preferences about how issues should be handled; and assumptions, the subconscious viewpoints people hold about the world (Dainton & Zelle, 2005). Schein (2003) cautioned that the observed values can be different from what the culture claims the values to be. For example, if the artifacts of a company that claims to value innovation include discouraging risks, allowing little time for employees to experiment, and having a low research and development budget, one might posit that the organization's true assumption is that innovation is too great a risk to fully support (Dainton & Zelle, 2005). Similarly, Donnelly (2013) discussed how a company's authenticity is called into question when its brand messages convey a different meaning between internal and

external publics. If a health insurance company communicates itself as a wellness company to external publics, but its cafeteria only serves unhealthy foods to employees, then the company's authenticity is at risk (Donnelly, 2013). These examples highlight a gap between how the organization illustrates its values and how employees actually perceive and experience company values. Schein (2003) explained the complexities of sense making in culture and suggested observing groups and speaking with group members in order to understand the basic, core assumptions, beliefs, and feelings of that group.

Social identity theory (SIT) suggests that people categorize themselves into social groups based on many factors, including the company they work for, and their membership in those categories impacts their self-concept (Turban & Greening, 1996). According to Turker (2009) a business organization is a type of social categorization in which membership may become part of an employee's identity. Collier and Esteban (2007) found that employees' understanding of their own identity was related to their perceptions of the company with which they were employed. For example, if an organization acted unethically and damaged their image, then by extension, employees' self-images were damaged as well (Turban & Greening, 1996).

A related concept, organizational identification (OI), refers to employees feeling unified with their organization (Wieseke et al., 2009). Wieseke et al.'s (2009) research showed that if organizational leaders embody a oneness with the corporate culture, their support staff will portray the same. Also, Maneerat et al. (2005) studied employee OI within two companies and found that the employees of the organization that provided a

family-like organization-employee relationship demonstrated a stronger sense of oneness with the company.

At the other end of the spectrum, research suggests that OI can also “have negative connotations for the ways in which employees define themselves” (Collier & Esteban, 2007, p. 27). These negative connotations have been identified during episodes of corporate wrongdoing, like the case of Enron, where employees felt “uncomfortable with their own self-understanding and confused about their allegiance” (Collier & Esteban, 2007, p. 27).

Communication Research

A review of the literature suggested that communication research is a very broad area of scholarship. This case study focused on organizational culture and mediated communication and their impact on employees. Many scholars have related organizational culture to employees (e.g. Fitzgerald & Desjardins, 2004; Maneerat et al., 2005; Schein, 2003). Scott's (2007) study of the application of SIT in communication studies offered great insight into the topic of organizational culture, namely in the area of computer-mediated communication and virtual work. According to Scott (2007), computer-mediated communication and the anonymity it offers may heighten the impact of social identity with online groups. Similarly, Yee (2009) found that virtual worlds allowed people to focus less on physical age, gender, attractiveness, or attire, and focus more on the content of their messages, which built positive interpersonal relationships.

Other scholars have performed content analysis of corporate documentation and websites to explore mediated communication (Rogers & Swales, 1990; Singh & Point, 2006). Rogers and Swales (1990) performed an in-depth textual analysis of the written

ethical code of an automotive parts manufacturer. Their study focused on how the organization referred to themselves within this document, the repeated use of the terms "people" and "we," and the fact that their ethics code was signed by "The Policy Committee," rather than showing no authorship or simply signed with the name of the organization (Rogers & Swales, 1990). The textual analysis demonstrated how the organization dispersed responsibility for the ethical well-being of the company and utilized terms such as "we the people" to unobtrusively make a statement that the term "we the management" would call into question (Rogers & Swales, 1990). This type of research is useful for exploring the attitudes and corporate culture behind the content of a written document.

Similarly, Singh and Point (2006) performed a content analysis of websites of large European companies to explore how organizations represented gender and ethnic diversity. They utilized critical discourse analysis, an analytical framework that focuses on the style of the disclosure, and analyzed numerous components of mediated communication, including text, photographs, symbols, statistics, and web page placement (Singh & Point, 2006). The researchers advised practitioners to pay close attention to the language used to communicate diversity in order to avoid creating confusion or negative views (Singh & Point, 2006). Their study offered a clear framework for analyzing website content.

Not all organization-employee communication is written. Gilsdorf (1998) researched how clearer communication methods might reduce employee uncertainty and costly mistakes. Within organizations there is often an unwritten understanding about "how we communicate here" (p. 176) in that employees figure out on their own what

rules exist and whether or not following those rules is beneficial (Gilsdorf, 1998).

Gilsdorf (1998) found that a majority of communication expectations were conveyed through unwritten means and that a corporation's culture is the primary means for transmitting communication rules to employees. Gilsdorf's (1998) research is part of the supporting body of literature that speaks to the relevance of organizational culture studies and its impact on employees. The findings are significant in that they demonstrate how corporate culture acts as a conduit for communicating rules and norms within an organization.

Method

This research was designed to explore how a company and its employees define and perceive corporate culture. The intention is not to make statistical generalizations about one perspective over another (Bulmer & Buchanan-Oliver, 2006). Similar to past case studies in organizational culture (Scott, 2007; Singh & Point, 2006), this study used qualitative content analysis of a corporate website to identify how the organization defined its culture to external publics. From an employee perception standpoint, Schein's (2003) research revealed the complexities of sense making in culture and suggested observing groups and speaking with group members in order to understand the basic, core assumptions, beliefs, and feelings of that group. Therefore, in-depth employee interviews were performed to explore how they define the company's culture.

Qualitative analysis is “the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships” (Babbie, 2008, p. 394). Within qualitative research, case studies can be interpreted broadly, focusing attention on a single event of a social phenomenon, like a period of time or a specific group of people; however, their purpose is descriptive in nature (Babbie, 2008). Interviews typically achieve high response rates, reduce unanswered questions, provide the opportunity to clarify items for participants, and allow for observation of the environment and of the respondents (Babbie, 2008). Because this study explored employee perceptions of corporate culture, qualitative research methods were deemed most appropriate for their descriptive, rather than causal, design.

Qualitative content analysis was conducted of a single web page within the corporate website. Content analysis is often used to complement other forms of research

such as surveys or focus groups allowing researchers to compare and contrast their results (Smith, 2009). The web page entitled “Who We Are” was selected because its content was most relevant to this study of organizational culture in that it outlined the foundation of the company’s culture (McCormick, 2010). The researcher analyzed the location of the web page within the total website, use of pronouns, specific references to culture and employees, and images included on the web page. (See Appendix B for an image of the web page.) These elements are discussed in the Analysis section of this study.

The researcher is employed full-time with McCormick, which presented a unique opportunity to interview other employees throughout the organization. Employees who have worked with the researcher were recruited for interviews. None directly reported to the researcher within the organization, and participation was strictly voluntary. At the beginning of each interview, the participants were informed that their identities and responses would be kept confidential and that they can stop the interview at any time. Requests for participation were asked in person or via email. The response rate was 100%, which might be attributed to a preexisting level of trust with the researcher. It was also noted that the employees seemed to feel comfortable openly sharing constructive criticism of the organization during their interview, which may speak to the culture of the organization. For confidentiality, the names of the participants were changed within this study. All interviews were taped and are available upon request. (See Appendix C for summarized notes from these interviews.)

A total of eight interviews were conducted to understand employees' perceptions of the company’s corporate culture. Conducting interviews with McCormick employees allowed for an exploration and understanding of "how we communicate here," as

described in Gilsdorf (1998). Performing a content analysis of a corporate web page would only present one side of the coin. Incorporating employee perceptions, experiences, and understanding of the unspoken or unwritten rules of the corporation provided valuable insights into the dynamics of organizational culture. The researcher intentionally selected employees who would offer the study great variety regarding the participants' departments, pay grade, length of employment, and ages. Two participants worked in finance, and one participant each worked in marketing, sales, quality control, product development, consumer affairs, and office management. Four were hourly employees and four were salaried employees. Length of employment with the company ranged from three months to 21 years. Two participants were male and six were female, and ages ranged from 23 to 40.

All interviews were conducted in the organizational setting—in the researcher's office. With the participants' consent, all interviews were recorded using Windows Sound Recorder software. The participants and interviewer spoke into a microphone attached to a laptop running the recording software. Interviews lasted approximately 12 to 38 minutes with the shortest interview coming from the participant who was only employed for three months and felt unable to elaborate on some areas of discussion. See Appendix A for complete interview questions.

After the interviews were complete, the researcher replayed the audio files and typed notes into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet based on the answers from each participant to each question. See Appendix C for interview notes. Some answers were fully transcribed so that they could be quoted in this case study. Patterns and themes within the responses were identified.

Analysis

While researchers have conceptually defined organizational culture and incorporated a theoretical framework into their studies, few have compared how organizations illustrate their culture to external publics and how internal publics—employees—define the company's culture based on personal experience. This study utilized content analysis of McCormick's (2010) "Who we are" web page and interviews with employees to analyze how the company and its employees defined corporate culture. Similarities and differences were explored and implications are discussed.

Content Analysis of Corporate Web Page

Content analyses of corporate websites and documents are commonly used in research to understand corporate culture (e.g. Rogers & Swales, 1990; Singh & Point, 2006). An analysis of McCormick's (2010) "Who we are" statement located on a web page within its corporate website helped to answer RQ1: How does the corporation define its organizational culture? McCormick's (2010) "Who we are" statement consists of six paragraphs describing the corporate culture. The statement was located on a web page situated several layers within the website. From the home page, one must navigate and click through two web pages in order to locate the content. The corporation primarily utilized third person pronouns, including "the Company" and "McCormick", rather than first person pronouns, like "we" and "us." The only exception appeared in the "Who we are" title of the web page. Employees were described as the "McCormick family" (para. 1) and "diverse" (para. 2). Under the title of "Who we are" appeared a subtitle of "The Power of People;" however, this phrase was not hyperlinked or explained anywhere on the web page.

Six components that shape its corporate culture were discussed on the web page: "a participative style of management" (para. 1), a core set of shared values, promoting diversity, involving employees in business decisions, supporting employee continued education, and promoting employee health and safety programs (McCormick, 2010). McCormick (2010) claimed to encourage "the active involvement of all employees in community service activities" (para. 1) and highlighted "unwavering concern for others and respect for the dignity of the individual" (para. 1) as one of the company's shared values. However, no other value from the claimed set of shared values was listed on the web page. The company's "Corporate Diversity Council" (para. 2) was cited as the promoter of diversity training and education, and McCormick's winning of two James Rouse Diversity Awards was emphasized (McCormick, 2010). "Multiple Management Boards" (para. 3) were specified for allowing members "to make a meaningful contribution to the business" (para. 3), and "Learning & Development Centers" (para. 4) were described as the resources for "business information and courses for skills development, career development and change management" (McCormick, 2010, para. 4). Also, a tuition assistance program for employees, scholarships for employees' children, and "a full range of programs" (para. 6) for employee safety and health were referenced (McCormick, 2010).

Several images were incorporated into McCormick's (2010) "Who we are" web page content. See Appendix B for an image of the web page. The corporate McCormick logo was placed in the upper, left-hand corner of the page. Its colors were red, white, and blue, and it consisted of a stylized "MC" inside of a box with the brand name "McCormick" typed below. Extending across a majority of the web page above the text

was a portion of the world map, beginning with North America on the far left of the page and spanning through Asia to the far right. An image of fresh, green basil leaves was superimposed over the North America continent, and an image of ethnically diverse business people was superimposed over the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia. South America, Australia, and Antarctica were not visible on the web page. Incorporated into the "Who we are" text was a photograph of a white woman dressed in medical scrubs kneeling next to a young, Hispanic girl holding two gift bags. Both the woman and girl are posing and smiling for the photograph. Behind the two figures were a group of Hispanic people seated around a wooden table with vegetation and a village appearing in the background. One child seated at the table is looking toward the photographer, while the other group members are looking elsewhere.

Images and storytelling have been used "as a powerful communication tool" to disseminate company information (Chiu, Hsieh, & Kuo, 2012, p. 264), which may have driven the decision to include this visual content on the web page. However, the images selected by the company for the "Who we are" web page may be sending confusing or misleading information to the viewer. First, the image of fresh, green basil leaves might imply that McCormick manufactures fresh herbs. However, the company primarily manufactures dried herbs and spices and other flavorings (McCormick brand fact sheet, 2013). Second, contrary to the web page's claim regarding "[n]urturing and developing the people" (para. 1) and "encourages the active involvement of all employees" (McCormick, 2010, para. 1), the company used stock photography depicting diverse business people rather than using photographs of real employees. The same stock photo can be found on a number of other websites (e.g. Toshiba, 2014; Medical Management

Association, 2014; Hindustan Institute, 2014). Third, the omission of South America, Australia, and Antarctica within the world map could be interpreted as a business preference to avoid those areas of the world for a variety of activities (e.g. ingredient sourcing, product manufacturing, or employee recruitment). Fourth, the woman in medical scrubs makes no overt connection back to the business, which is primarily the manufacturing of dried herbs and spices and other flavoring products (McCormick brand fact sheet, 2013). No images of actual products or employees are present on this “Who we are” web page.

Employee Interviews

To further explore how the company and its employees define and perceive corporate culture, interviews were conducted to answer RQ2: How do employees define their organization’s culture? Participants were asked to explain what the term "corporate culture" meant to them in order to understand each person's perspective on the research topic. Overall, three general areas of understanding emerged: employee-company relations, politics, and communication. Half of the participants conceptualized corporate culture as a relationship between a company and its employees. A 5-year employee described corporate culture as "how the employees of a company treat each other, how the company treats its employees, and, I guess, also, like, how motivated the employees are to do a good job for the company." Two participants used the term "politics" to describe corporate culture, specifically "the politics of your department" and "a lot of politics, a lot of norms, developing of norms and abiding by norms, and status quo." Employees also described corporate culture in terms of communication. The participant from quality control described culture as a flow of communication:

This company is, they say, from bottom up. So all the ideas and whatnot are supposed to be feeding from the bottom and then go up to the corporate level...some companies I've been with are the other direction where everything rolls downhill...communication flow, idea flow.

After a context for corporate culture was established, employees were asked to describe McCormick's culture. All participants related employees with McCormick's corporate culture, and a majority of respondents described the culture as valuing and caring toward employees. One participant described a time when the plant where she worked was closed down, and she and all of her co-workers were relocated to other divisions rather than laid off. Others described an open-door policy, freedom to express opinions, and overall friendly atmosphere. A marketing manager commented about how members of the dominant coalition interacted with employees: "If you look at any of the senior management, everybody pretty much knows your name. I know when I started, um, everybody knew your name within, like, a week." A member of the finance department described the importance of relationships within the corporate culture: "It's all about the relationships. McCormick is very much the who and not the how. You need to know who does certain things—who to ask how to get things done." Another finance employee noted, "I think we're really caring about everybody. It seems like McCormick people take care of their own." Echoed a five-year employee, "They don't leave the employees hanging out there." The participant from product development described McCormick's "old-fashioned" corporate culture, which embodied care for others:

Caring about another person—genuinely caring—not just something that you have to do because it's a policy or anything like that, but a genuine need to care

for other people in the company and outside the company—customers, clients, no matter who—just a genuine care of people. Because that's the only way that anything's going to get done is by people—and not just people within the company, but all over.

The cultural emphasis on relationships also had its down-side. Employee criticism of McCormick's corporate culture surfaced in three primary areas: slow pace, lack of clear processes, and politics. Three participants spoke specifically about the undesirable time frame in which business decisions are made. One 11-year employee described business as moving at a "snail pace." Another explained the impact of obtaining input from too many co-workers before making business decisions:

It's nice to have everybody's opinion and get feedback from everybody, but it draws out the process so much. Where some of the new companies that you see come along or that you work with—they can get things done—a day or two—done. You know, everybody has their say in it or whatnot—it's out the door. McCormick takes forever. It takes weeks to do it. So it's nice that they like to make sure that everyone has their two cents, but it just takes too long.

Others expressed how a lack of clear processes contributed to involving more co-workers than necessary in business activities and slowing progress:

Sometimes it would be nice to be able to just look at a procedure or know how something's done without knowing necessarily who does it and, um, having to ask ten people about how to get it done. It would be nice to just have some documented things and some processes in place that are repeated so you're not starting over every time you're trying to do something.

Finally, the politics of the corporate culture received criticism from three employees. One six-year employee expressed discontent with the need to obtain visibility with members of the dominant coalition in order to progress in his career. Another explained that employees need to participate in corporate committees in order to advance; however, many people are unable to participate due to other commitments, like family and school.

A majority of participants explained that they learned about McCormick's corporate culture either through personal experience working for the company or through a combination of personal experience and official corporate orientation sessions or documentation. The three-month employee suggested that a clearer way to communicate McCormick's corporate culture could be hosting "a presentation on what McCormick stands for;" however, most employees felt that personal experience was the most effective way to understand corporate culture. The 21-year employee explained how structured methods of communicating corporate culture to employees could lead to misinterpreted messages:

You can hold all the meetings you want, but everybody's going to interpret what they've said a little differently. Or you can cut all the trees down you want and hand them a piece of paper; they're going to read it—each person is going to interpret it differently.

Comparing and Contrasting Corporate and Employee Descriptions of Culture

After the content analysis of McCormick's web page was completed and interviews with employees were finalized, the two areas of study were analyzed to answer RQ3: How does the corporation's portrayal of organizational culture compare and contrast with employees' perceptions of organizational culture? According to the

corporate web page, there were six factors that shaped corporate culture: "a participative style of management" (para. 1), a core set of shared values, promoting diversity, involving employees in business decisions, supporting employee continued education, and promoting employee health and safety programs (McCormick, 2010). The interviewees directly related employees with McCormick's corporate culture, describing the culture as valuing and caring toward employees, and discussed an open-door policy, freedom to express opinions, and overall friendly atmosphere. Employee criticism of the culture included slow pace, lack of clear processes, and politics. While there was some crossover in the areas of shared values, diversity, and employee continued education, employees generally provided different descriptions of the corporate culture from the content posted on McCormick's "Who we are" web page.

The researcher anticipated that unaided responses from employees would not return consistent descriptions of corporate culture with the website, so several interview questions were asked to directly address the six factors posted on the web site after unaided responses were captured. In other words, the researcher tested whether employees agreed with how the company defined its corporate culture. Regarding the first factor contributing to corporate culture, a participative style of management, only one employee did not feel that management was involved in day-to-day activities, explaining that "higher management doesn't want to get involved unless there's a problem." However, several participants did not view an engaged management style as positive. A five-year employee explained that managers were involved in day-to-day activities "almost to a fault" in that they slow the progress of business decisions:

Managers should be more of the forward-thinking aspect of the corporation... they're in the day-to-day all the time, so it doesn't allow that cut-off for, like, the supervisors on the floor or the crew leaders on the floor to just go ahead and just make the decision.

Other employees expressed the desire for a balance between management being participative and micro-managing.

Some unaided responses did include diversity, the second factor of corporate culture, as a component of McCormick's culture. When asked directly, all participants agreed that McCormick promoted diversity. Methods of promotion discussed by the interviewees included events hosted by the corporate diversity council, training sessions, diversity-focused hiring practices, and mass emails regarding diversity initiatives.

Likewise, several unaided responses mentioned the third factor, McCormick's support of employee continued education. Again, when asked directly, all participants agreed that this factor contributed to the company's culture. Some employees cited the tuition reimbursement program, educational seminars, corporate boards and committees, and methods of support, mentoring, and encouragement. The interviewee from the marketing department felt that McCormick mandated continuing education, citing the way that job descriptions included master's degrees as requirements.

With respect to the fourth factor shaping McCormick's corporate culture, employee involvement in business decisions, five participants felt involved as either decision-makers or contributors to the decisions that more senior-level employees made, and three participants felt uninvolved in business decisions. One of the finance members felt involved in a supporting role:

While I may not be making the final decision, I feel like my superiors look to me to make the recommendations on certain things that I might be a subject-matter expert or provide them the background that they need to make the decisions.

The three employees who felt uninvolved were all hourly employees. The office manager explained that as an hourly employee, she felt that her opinion would not be weighted the same as a salaried employee or a co-worker with a degree. Echoed another participant: "Involved, yes. Heard, no. Being invited to a meeting, listening in to conference calls—as far as being heard and being taken seriously, no I don't get that feeling."

The fifth factor contributing to corporate culture discussed on the McCormick "Who we are" web page was promoting health and safety programs. Unaided responses from employees did not cite this factor; however, when asked directly, all participants felt that the McCormick culture incorporated health and safety, citing the company medical center, safety training programs, annual checkups, Weight Watchers® programs, smoking cessation classes, and yoga classes. The participant from quality control noted that the company's safety programs appeared to be targeted toward plant employees while health programs were focused on office employees.

The last factor of corporate culture cited on McCormick's (2010) web page was "Shared Values" (para. 1) with "unwavering concern for others and respect for the dignity of the individual" (para. 1) specifically called out. However, no other value from the claimed "set of Shared Values" (para. 1) was listed on the web page. When asked to describe McCormick's corporate culture, all participants mentioned some form of the company's care for employees, and several mentioned diversity, charitable giving, and benefits, like education assistance, health insurance, and reduced working hours during

Christmastime. When asked directly if they were aware of McCormick's shared values, only the three-month employee was not familiar with the term. When asked to name some of the shared values, concepts such as ethics, teamwork, trust, people, and performance were mentioned, with ethics cited most often. Two employees commented that the concept of shared values incorporated "common-sense" behaviors.

Regarding word choice, both the company web page and the employees utilized both first person and third person pronouns when discussing the company. There was no consistent use of collective terminology, such as "we the people," to describe the company. The corporation primarily utilized third person pronouns, including "the Company" and "McCormick," rather than first person pronouns, like "we" and "us." The only exception appeared in the "Who we are" title of the web page. Employees spoke of the company using personal pronouns more often than the web page. For example, "we don't necessarily have processes in place," "we kind of move slow," "the way we communicate," and "our hiring process" were mentioned. However, employees used third person pronouns, such as "the company" and "McCormick," as well.

Implications

After the McCormick web page content and employee responses were compared and contrasted, the significance was analyzed to answer RQ4: What are the implications of the organization's description of organizational culture differing from the employees' descriptions? Overall, the company cited six components that shape its corporate culture: "a participative style of management" (para. 1), a core set of shared values, promoting diversity, involving employees in business decisions, supporting employee continued education, and promoting employee health and safety programs (McCormick, 2010).

However, the interviewees' unaided responses primarily cited one component that shaped McCormick corporate culture—employee-company relationships with emphasis on care for employees, open-door policy, freedom to express opinions, and overall friendly atmosphere.

It may be implied that since only one shared value was listed on McCormick's (2010) "Who we are" web page, "unwavering concern for others and respect for the dignity of the individual" (para. 1), that it is the most significant value according to the corporation. This corporate value is consistent with employee perceptions of McCormick's culture—a focus on people. However, there are areas on the web page in which the speech genres, or behaviors and speech patterns appropriate to a given communication space (Davisson, 2009), are inconsistent with the company's description of culture. Namely, with a focus on people, McCormick may consider adding a more human element to the non-personal committees and boards it described on its website. For example, the company's "Corporate Diversity Council" (para. 2) was cited as the promoter of diversity training and education, "Multiple Management Boards" (para. 3) were specified for allowing members "to make a meaningful contribution to the business" (para. 3), and "Learning & Development Centers" (para. 4) were described as the resources for "business information and courses for skills development, career development and change management" (McCormick, 2010, para. 4). Using more employee-centric terminology, such as "Employee Diversity Council" rather than "Corporate Diversity Council," may better reflect employee perceptions of corporate culture.

Through social identity theory (SIT), one might rationalize that because employees identify themselves with their organization, the organization's description of culture should mirror the employees' descriptions and vice versa. To be fair and ethical, the organization may choose to define their culture the way that employees perceive it. It is important to consider what pressures a corporation faces and how those pressures impact its definition of organizational culture. McCormick identified six components that shape its corporate culture. Certain components including involving employees in business decisions and supporting employee continued education might appeal to middle management and support staff employees seeking career growth and skill development. Other components, particularly promoting employee health and safety programs, might resonate with plant workers who perform physical labor. Further, promoting diversity might be a promising cultural component for senior-level employees of diverse ethnicity and nationality seeking a position within the dominant coalition of the organization. One might posit that the corporation considered the interests of its employees and the interests of potential employees when developing its six components of corporate culture. However, they should be conscious of whether their description mirrors employee descriptions.

Many studies have explored the interplay between computer-mediated communication and relationship building (e.g. Bogost, 2006; Smith & Just, 2009; Voorhees, 2009). According to Scott (2007) computer-mediated communication and the anonymity it offers may heighten the impact of social identity with online groups. Because McCormick chose to communicate its portrayal of organizational culture on its website, an opportunity is presented to build stronger ties with employees. However, the

organization does not allow for two-way communication on this portion of its website, so employees are less able to build their relationship with the corporation or utilize their membership to develop their own self-identity. In other words, the corporation is failing to use a method of mediated communication to its fullest potential. At the time of these employee interviews, an employee intranet was under development but not fully launched. Opportunities may exist for two-way communication and discussions of organizational culture within the new intranet system in the future.

It has also been found that conveying a responsible brand image has been positively related to “the presence of corporate heritage” in communications (Blombäck & Scandeliuss, 2013, p. 375). However, the images selected by McCormick for the “Who we are” web page may be sending confusing or misleading information to the viewer. Because images and storytelling have been used “as a powerful communication tool” to disseminate company information (Chiu, Hsieh, & Kuo, 2012, p. 264), it is critical for website visuals to reflect the activities, values, and people of the organization. Most notably, employees could be pictured instead of stock photos to help bring the company to life in an accurate and authentic manner.

Other researchers have identified the importance of synergistic corporate communications and employee perceptions. Fitzgerald and Desjardins (2004) found a positive correlation between clear value communication and organizational involvement, which indicated a relationship between clearly defined values and employee involvement within an organization. Likewise, Easton's (1966) study discussed the importance of synergy between how an organization presents its corporate image and how it actually behaves. He cautioned that inconsistencies may produce confusing messages for publics,

which would be self-defeating for the company and a waste of resources (Easton, 1966).

Similarly, Wieseke et al.'s (2009) research warned that differing descriptions might

indicate lower organizational identification and suboptimal job performance. Clearly

there is value in consistent portrayals of corporate culture between an organization and its

employees.

Conclusion

This research contributed to organizational culture literature by filling a gap in communication research and theory. While researchers have conceptually defined organizational culture and incorporated a theoretical framework into their studies, few have compared how organizations illustrate their culture to external publics and how internal publics—employees—define the company’s culture based on personal experience. This study analyzed implications of when a corporation’s description of organizational culture differs from its employees’ descriptions.

Why should companies value their employees’ perceptions of corporate culture? Because companies are realizing that “their employees are the business” (Board, 2012, p. 282). A relationship exists between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction (Board, 2012). Even the best planned external communication campaigns would be ineffective if customers witnessed low employee morale or were given inconsistent information once they entered the business (Board, 2012). Edelman’s (2014) Trust Barometer found that “employees are considered the most trusted source” (p. 7) and that “the public wants to hear directly from employees as ambassadors for the company who can attest to its integrity” (p. 7). If a company’s brand promise is woven into the culture and consistently delivered—particularly with its employees—“the brand and reputation are strengthened in the customer’s eyes” (Holland & Weathers, 2013, p. 257).

During this time of declining public respect for business, the issue of trust and the public’s demand for proof of authenticity is facing all organizations today (Arthur W. Page Society, 2007). According to a study of enterprise and authenticity, the Arthur W.

Page Society (2007) found that employees play a significant role in strengthening organizational culture, building authenticity, and establishing trust:

Realize a company's true character is expressed by its people. The strongest opinions – good or bad – about a company are shaped by the words and deeds of its employees. As a result, every employee – active or retired – is involved with public relations. (p. 18)

Not only does this case study reinforce the concepts of trust and authenticity described in Edelman (2014) and the Arthur W. Page Society report (2007), but the results of this research can also further develop models and theories used for understanding organizational culture, including Schein's model of organizational culture, social identity theory, and organizational identification. In this case study, the company identified six components that shape its corporate culture, and employees identified one primary component through unaided responses. Although aided responses led to most employees agreeing to all six cultural components stated on the web page, there is an opportunity for the company to strengthen employee involvement in business decisions. Also, employees could be pictured on the web page instead of stock photos to help bring the company to life in an accurate and authentic manner, and more personal pronouns referencing the organization as "we" could be used to reflect employee viewpoints. All of which would better align the physical evidence of culture with employee values as described by Schein (2003). The findings in this case study are significant in that they demonstrate how corporate culture acts as a conduit for communicating rules and norms within an organization and provides a system of meaning for employees and a way to make sense of organizational priorities (Ionescu, 2009).

Limitations

There are some limitations to this case study, including the number of interviewees and the fact that all were office workers; no plant workers were included. Like any interview project with employees, respondents' possible lack of confidence in the confidentiality of the study and their resulting desire to provide responses that reflect greater organizational support may be factors (Maneerat et al., 2005). Due to the scope of this research study, the content of one corporate web page was analyzed; however, there are many web pages available for future analysis. Another limitation was the use of qualitative research, which utilizes exploration and interpretation of observations, which can result in misinterpretation. Also, qualitative research results cannot be generalized. These factors call for future research to extend the scholarship of corporate culture.

Future Research

While this study utilized content analysis and interview methods to study a corporate culture, it is important to note that other potential research methods exist. Future studies can utilize quantitative research methods to analyze an organization and its publics. For example, use of a corporate personality scale, which measures corporate personality based on human personality traits, can be used in organizational culture studies (Vercic & Vercic, 2007). Organizations can also be analyzed based on stakeholder expectations or on perceived honesty traits (Vercic & Vercic, 2007). Future research can study the impact of various types of cultures, including clan, market-oriented, role, task, power, and person-oriented, on how corporations define and communicate their culture and how employees perceive and experience corporate culture (Ionescu, 2009). Also, interviews could be conducted with international McCormick

employees, and the results could be compared with the local employee responses collected in this study. Finally, researchers can incorporate interviews with multiple McCormick stakeholder groups, including stockholders, retirees, consumers, and the media. No one study can be exhaustive, and it is valuable to identify how studies can be enhanced or extended in future research.

Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Questions

1) Rapport-building questions

A) How long have you been working for McCormick?

B) What department do you work in?

2) Communication research: Corporate culture and employees questions

A) What does the term "corporate culture" mean to you? What is it?

B) How would you describe McCormick's corporate culture? What factors contribute to it?

C) What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you like?

Why?

D) What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you don't like or that could be improved? Why?

3) Theoretical framework: Social identity theory & organizational identification questions

A) Do you feel that you are involved in McCormick's corporate culture? How?

B) Can you relate McCormick's corporate culture to your own personal life or to your family's culture in any way? How?

C) If McCormick ends the year higher than expected, how would that make you feel? Why?

4) Theoretical framework: Schein's model of organizational culture questions

A) Can you think of any physical things that relate to or reflect McCormick's corporate culture? How?

B) Can you think of any non-physical things that relate to or reflect McCormick's corporate culture? How?

5) Communication research: Mediated communication questions

A) How did you find out about or learn about McCormick's corporate culture?

B) Was it an effective way to communicate corporate culture? Why?

6) Validate McCormick's claimed components that shape corporate culture

A) Would you say that McCormick managers get involved in day-to-day activities? How?

B) Does McCormick promote diversity? How?

C) Do you feel that you are involved in business decisions? Why?

D) Does McCormick support employee continued education? How?

E) Does McCormick promote any type of health or safety programs? How?

7) Validate McCormick's claimed shared values

A) Are you familiar with McCormick's "shared values"? What are they?

B) Do you think they're truthful? Why?

This concludes our interview. Thank you for your time!

Appendix B

Corporate Web Page

Who We Are | McCormick x

mccormickcorporation.com/Sustainability/Who-We-Are.aspx

Apps Facebook Pinterest Instagram Twitter RGA RGA File Sharing Honeycomb Kwikiee Cisco MeetingPlace Postini GA Campaign Track... PVO Pic

McCORMICK

Search GO

HOME OUR COMPANY INVESTOR RELATIONS SUSTAINABILITY NEWS ROOM COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT CAREERS CONTACT US

Home > Sustainability > Who We Are

WHO WE ARE

The Power of People

Nurturing and developing the people who make up the "McCormick family" has always been a top Company priority. McCormick's culture is founded on a participative style of management that encourages the active involvement of all employees in community service activities as well as at all levels of the business. At the core of the culture is a set of Shared Values, one of which is an unwavering concern for others and respect for the dignity of the individual.

McCormick's global employee population is diverse. In the U.S. the McCormick Corporate Diversity Council establishes Company diversity initiatives, promotes diversity training and sponsors educational diversity events. The Company is a proud recipient of two James Rouse Diversity Awards.

For over 75 years the Company has offered employees a system of professional development, called Multiple Management. Each of the 13 global Multiple Management Boards allows its members the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the business while developing their own career skills.

McCormick believes in lifelong learning and offers many internal learning and development opportunities to employees. The Company has two Learning & Development Centers (one in Maryland and one in the U.K.) which house central resources for business information and courses for skills development, career development and change management.



For employees who choose to take continuing education courses, in the U.S. McCormick provides an educational tuition assistance program. In addition, the Company sponsors a number of scholarships for colleges and trade school educations for children of employees.

The Company takes a leadership role in the health and safety of its employees. A full range of programs has been developed to promote safety in the workplace and good health habits among employees.

RELATED LINKS

- History of Valuing People Culture
- Shared Values & Diversity

Appendix C

Notes from Interviews

	Mike	John	Molly	Betty
Length of Interview	0:13:45	0:37:43	0:12:12	0:20:41
Age	34	34	23	36
1 Rapport-building questions				
A How long have you been working for McCormick?	5	6	3 months	5
B What department do you work in?	Finance	Marketing	Sales	Quality Control
2 Communication research: Corporate culture and employees questions				
A What does the term "corporate culture" mean to you? What is it?	How the employees of a company treat each other; how the company treats its employees; and I guess also like how motivated the employees are to do a good job for the company	It's a bit stuffy, a little bit white collar, uh a little bit too structured... a lot of politics, a lot of norms, developing of norms and abiding by norms, and status quo	How the overall company works together in their beliefs on the business	Looking at how basically upper management looks at the entire organizational structure. Um, as in, like, this company is, they say, from bottom up. So all the ideas and whatnot are supposed to be feeding from the bottom and then go up to the corporate level - so the structure and how it's laid out like that. Like, some companies I've been with are the other direction where everything rolls down...communication flow, idea flow, and how just how people treat each other overall.
B How would you describe McCormick's corporate culture? What factors contribute to it?	I think we're really caring about everybody; it seems like McCormick people take care of their own	open but still pretty structured underneath the surface meaning you can promote an open culture however, behind that I don't know as if the behaviors necessarily represent the talking points... openness to ideas... preconceived opinions... previous experience... dichotomy between old school and new school people... a functioning divide, it's not like they can't work together...	They're very structured, um but the also value family and time and personal time like with the time off over Christmas and stuff like that	bottom up um they seem to take into account the lower echelons...when they decided to close...they were able to absorb us so they technically didn't have to lay off anybody...a lot of companies would be like, uh we're closing (pist) done! You're gone!
C What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you like? Why?	It seems like a very friendly atmosphere; um it seems like if somebodys in trouble um everybodys always willing to help them out; and then I think in turn that just makes you as an employee want to work harder for the company; (previous job was like swimming with the sharks)	if you look at any of the senior management, everybody pretty much knows your name, I know when I started, um everybody knew your name within like a week, all senior management, all those... senior management is available to anybody really at anytime... the ability to be pretty honest with people... if you want an organization that's highly charitable or those types of things, the extent to which that makes it into the culture... is going to depend upon how much attention senior management gives to any particular topic	I like that everyone's pretty friendly um and you can always ask questions to people, they're open, there's always like an open-door policy, which is nice	Everybody seems to be very friendly from the top down...they really take people's...feelings into consideration when they do things that they do for the company, they don't leave the employees hanging out there
D What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you don't like or that could be improved? Why?	Sometimes we can be a little too...we don't necessarily have processes in place...technology wise I think we're a little bit behind...	Politicizing... in order to quote-end-quote be successful at mccormick, you have to kind of have that visibility... from a growth perspective, maybe mccormick is growing faster than its culture can kind of keep up with...	We move kind of slow...we're a little dated...not open to new technologies...old fashioned...we don't do a whole lot of online marketing	decision making. That it's nice to have everybody's opinion and get feedback from everybody but it draws out the process so much. Where some of the new companies that you see come along or that you work with they can get things done - a day or two - done, you know, everybody has their say in it or whatnot - it's out the door. McCormick takes forever, it takes weeks to do it. So it's nice that they like to make sure that everyone has their two cents but it just takes too long.
3 Theoretical framework: Social identity theory & organizational identification questions				
A Do you feel that you are involved in McCormick's corporate culture? How?	I participate in C-Day, I'm friends with people that work here	Everybody's involved in it to some extent, am I like a leader in that culture? No, definitely not...	Yes, C-Day bowling, carnival, raffle tickets	I do, yes. I'm in the middle ranks...I see how people make the decisions...put my two cents in where needed and people listen to me...makes me feel useful
B Can you relate McCormick's corporate culture to your own personal life or to your family's culture in any way? How?	Mccormick is very family-oriented...I'm friends with people I work with	To a certain extent, you work somewhere because it fits maybe your lifestyle and it fits you know kind of the needs that you have for your family... McCormick is a pretty family-oriented business...	give back...donate time and money to things that are important to you	my home life and family culture is more of the top down versus than the bottom up as mccormick is. You know, the "you listen to me, it doesn't matter what you say" - type of mentality
C If McCormick ends the year higher than expected, how would that make you feel? Why?	Better bonuses...if we do poorly could be job cuts or no raises...I take a sense of pride	Annual appraisal, bonus... no one wants to work for a company that sucks... success breeds more success, so if the company's successful then in kind, people will be successful	good for the stockholders...earnings would be higher...comraderie among employess would be higher	great...I own stock...also that I feel that what I've done actually has helped, especially being at being at the plant level...trying to get product out the door to meet customer orders, I know that we did what we should have been doing, keeping people safe, being in quality
4 Theoretical framework: Schein's model of organizational culture questions				
A Can you think of any physical things that relate to - or speak to - McCormick's corporate culture?	foodies, cook, eat, Create-It Center...shows that we're very creative people	Diverse opinion base, diverse demographic base, age	knick-knacks...collector items...they like to show that they work for McCormick and they're proud of it, they're proud what mccormick has grown into over past years	Trinkets that they give you along the way...you always get some type of trinket to take with you...to try to keep reminding you of how mccormick works...the 211 building, redoing things, the corporate buildings...customers see us, that's what we reflect on them...flaunting how well we've been doing, it's not like we have a shabby building or anything like that, we always want to make a good impression
B Can you think of any non-physical things that relate to - or speak to - McCormick's corporate culture?	the way we communicate, haven't run into any jerks, handle in a professional way, not dog-eat-dog company, older people working here, a lot of people have been here for a long time	Its very structured, it's very process driven, it's very linear, its very laid out for you... at the end of step 12 you'll have a new product...	honesty...paperwork, process...slow	our hiring process because...who fit into the actual group, like how they interact with people, how they handle situations, its not all about what your education was coming into it, you could have the greatest education under the sun, but yet you people skills suck...personality, basically how they view the things around them...

		Mike	John	Molly	Betty
5 Communication research: Mediated communication questions					
A	How did you find out about or learn about McCormick's corporate culture?	Orientation, you just pick up on, surprised how high far behind in technology, older people, interview process via television link, everybody being foodies	observation/interpretation of things you hear or don't hear, personal interaction on projects...	just from working here and talking with people who have worked here longer	starter program, three-day session at corporate, not your regular orientation, this is how mccormick was built, power of the people book...from there, asking lots of questions, and living it from day to day
B	Was it an effective way to communicate corporate culture?	it worked for me, orientation, you just pick up on naturally	leadership kind of guides the types of things that it wants the company to gravitate to... c-day...	There could probably be a clearer way...they have those cultural presentations...they could have a presentation on what mccormick stands for	Not a clearer way, it's more than most companies do, especially that initial on-boarding
C	Is there a clearer way to communicate corporate culture?				
6 Validate McCormick's claimed components that shape corporate culture					
A	Would you say that McCormick managers get involved in day-to-day activities? How?	Yeah, definitely, sees what we're doing, not it a bad way	I've seen it both ways... (I don't think they should be)... there's a fine balance between not being involved and being overly involved...	I'd say so...they get involved when they need to, not so much day-to-day	Yes, almost to a fault...managers should be more of the forward-thinking aspect of the corporation...they're in the day-to-day all the time, so it doesn't allow that cut-off for like the supervisors on the floor or the crew leaders on the floor to just go ahead and just make the decision.
B	Does McCormick promote diversity? How?	Yeah, diversity council meetings, I've participated, presentations, calendar	Yes... diversity council... new employee training... who the company hires	Yes, with the diversity luncheons, lunch and learns, presenations, being a world-wide countries, India luncheon, people who sailed around the world, (diversity) committee	Yes, diversity council activities...who they've hired in the past has allowed diversity to creep in...location of company...incorporate everybody
C	Do you feel that you are involved in business decisions? Why?	Yup, new products, pricing, manage advertising spend, how we want to close out the month, forecasting	Yeah... I felt pretty involved in business decisions, but I think a lot of that is based on the projects you're working on...	as much as I need to be, I don't actually make the decisions...I can help provide the data that will help make the managers make the decisions	Yes, to a point. I do get to put my two cents in...so come version of it comes out in the end
D	Does McCormick support employee continued education? How?	Yeah, pay for part of tuition, LDC, MMB	I think to a certain extent it requires it... MMB... from a like formalized education standpoint like university I do think that it mandates it... If you read the job descriptions increasingly its like either MBA or master's or whatever is I won't even say preferred anymore its more a bit of a requirement...	Yes, they help you fund it, encourage going back to school	Yes...LDC, strategic leadership, negotiate to win, go back and get their degrees, reimbursement for schooling, they would work with me to change my job responsibilities
E	Does McCormick promote any type of health or safety programs? How?	Yeah, wellness awareness draw blood, medical facility, health tips	Yes, within plants...emails...	Yeah, first responders, health center	Yes, at the plant level. Training, work-days without injury, after so many days you have a pizza or ice cream party, OSHA. But in the corporate end of it...focus more on health, yoga classes...plant can't get involved in that
7 Validate McCormick's claimed shared values					
A	Are you familiar with what McCormick calls their "shared values"? Can you name them?	Card, acronym	I think I can picture the graphic... ethics... I think I share a value system with McCormick...	No...	Card. I know it's the ethics
B	Do you think they're truthful? Why?	Yeah, I do. Finance role, ethics checks, collection for sick people, throw party for people leaving, celebrating success	(Yes) I think they're a lot of the same common sense things...if one didn't (show these traits) I don't think they'd be at McCormick... You get the culture that you hire	I think they do...	Yes..

	Clarice	Malvina	Louise	Missy
Length of interview	0:18:50	0:13:39	0:14:32	0:14:50
Age	39	33	40	40
1 Rapport-building questions				
A How long have you been working for McCormick?	11	2,5	10	21
B What department do you work in?	Product Development	Finance	Consumer Affairs	Office Manager
2 Communication research: Corporate culture and employees questions				
A What does the term "corporate culture" mean to you? What is it?	A group of different people getting together to do...multiple jobs under one company... people, how you treat people, your ethics, how you respond to people when in meetings when you're representing the company when you're not here, just basically being able to diffuse and get along with many different cultures and still get the job done	It's kind of the essence of the company...how people interact, the politics of um of your department, it plays in with the expectations	The feeling and the um the morals of the company, like how the company operates. Their image but then also what they expect from their employees it's underlying and it's also stated... in policies and different um documents that the company gives you when you're hired and also throughout your employment um and then the underlying part would be how they contribute to charity and how they interact with the community. For instance, diversity - well defined within a manual to say that everybody's going to be treated equally um and then trickle down to something like our C-Day event where it's not written down that everyone has to participate but its kind of underling that everyone should...its part of our culture	Office morale, the people you're working with, communications withing not just your department but the company in general, diversity
B How would you describe McCormick's corporate culture? What factors contribute to it?	The home body kind of feel, its not really the tech-savvy, kinda deal where you have a bunch of people walking around kind of really stiff, it's like a small family...a little old fashioned... family, close-knit, people know everyone, you make an effort to get out and know who is everyone in the company... like a church congregation, care about people	It's all about the relationships. McCormick is very much the who and not the how. You need to know who does certain things; who to ask how to get things done	they value diversity and education, they want their employees to interact with the community and the nation...global and local...honesty... tolerant.	Good, really haven't had too much problems with diversity, communications... communication at the plant doesn't flow as easily as the office
C What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you like? Why?	caring about another person, genuinely caring, not just something that you have to do because it's a policy or anything like that but a genuine need to care for other people in the company and outside the company customers clients no matter who just a genuine care of people because that's the only way that anything's going to get done is by people and not just people within the company but all over	I like that people are very passionate and they care and it seems to be more than a job for most people	I like the fact that they take their time hiring people and do investigations and look into their backgrounds... they match charity contributions even if its not one that they're supporting... they value education and they help their employees pay for that.	benefits...health, dental, christmas vacation, flex hours, work from home...they care about their employees
D What are some elements of McCormick's corporate culture that you don't like or that could be improved? Why?	The slow... the snail pace in today's world doesn't quite get the results all the time that I think we could get... we may start something today and two years out it's still dragging on... Apple, fast, we're just a little bit behind in that sense	Lack of structure and processes. Sometimes it would be nice to be able to just look at a procedure or know how something's done without knowing necessarily who does it and um having to ask ten people about how to get it done. It would be nice to just have some documented things and some processes in place that are repeated so you're not starting over every time you're trying to do something.	The networking part of the culture...you have to serve on various boards to advance your career whereas some people might not be able to participate- not at night - students are out of the running for that b/c no time	communication in the plants...hush-hush... organizational changes aren't communicated as well at the floor level...management team knows it, but it doesn't flow down
3 Theoretical framework: Social identity theory & organizational identification questions				
A Do you feel that you are involved in McCormick's corporate culture? How?	C-Day, cafeteria, spice sales, flower sales, when I can go to other divisions/buildings	c-day, being part of things that are outside of your normal job	I utilize continuing education and c-day... and I believe in it	Every day I come to work...I am the first person that everybody sees when they walk through our front door here...however I interact with internal or external customers is how they're going to perceive the company
B Can you relate McCormick's corporate culture to your own personal life or to your family's culture in any way? How?	Yes and no. The home culture is that we're not really concerned if we hurt your feelings... The caring is similar.	Cooking. You have to cook with our products... it comes back to passion for what you do for the company	Yes, I think that um they accept all people of all nations and I feel like no matter what background they're from... and we definitely believe in charitable giving to 10% of what we earn	I don't think so, it just all flows, from home to work to work to home...work ethics, diversity
C If McCormick ends the year higher than expected, how would that make you feel? Why?	It makes me feel good that I was a part of it, but it makes me feel nervous... OK what's the catch. Cut costs by half next year, the expectation is always higher, higher, higher, anxiety, I already worked so hard, but next year I have to work harder	Proud. We all worked really hard...sense of accomplishment cause I know that I had a hand in - I mean, a small part - but I feel like we all had a hand in that performance.	Great and secure... when they do better than they expected they usually share it with stockholders and employees and it even just boosts morale throughout the divisions	better bonus... makes me feel that I played a part somehow, you know whether it be sales samples, sales communication, whatever it may be
4 Theoretical framework: Schein's model of organizational culture questions				
A Can you think of any physical things that relate to - or speak to - McCormick's corporate culture?	Quilt, baking goods, vanilla extract, black pepper, drawing people together with food, food draws people together	The spice smell outside...the products on everyone's desks. I feel that people are very engaged... a reflection of like this is what we do, this is who we are...	Tea house at corporate... they value the past... HR resources, books... placques and awards, test kitchen	The building, we get a lot of compliments on our interior design, because it flows with our packaging...not a bland building...other buildings you have one or two colors...belige...we put a lot of thought into what we wanted our building to look like...it's not dull
B Can you think of any non-physical things that relate to - or speak to - McCormick's corporate culture?	Values, inclusion of other people, the databases, the systems that attempt to include people, the flip side... it has to be one big one as opposed to many pieces	The open door policy, and what's neat to me here is that you're so close to corporate office that you actually know all of the people that you see on the calls and CNN and the earning reports... you get to see the CFOs, the COOs, that typically people don't get to interact with and its interesting that they too almost have like an open door policy so you can almost not feel equal, but you can feel comfortable like talking to people who are very accomplished and high on the organizational chain that most companys you probably wouldn't be able to do that.	Mentoring program... they empower managers to foster employees to help them along with their career... motivate the employee... how can I help you with your next step, where would you like to be in 10 years	Can't think of anything...it's all good! Management style

	Clarice	Malvina	Louise	Missy	
5 Communication research: Mediated communication questions					
A	How did you find out about or learn about McCormick's corporate culture?	The People Magazine, the products, Baltimore inner harbor smell, reminds me of my core family values, interview/HR, trust, good quality just by using the products, tours, constantly growing here, not just one day, my grandmother baked	Interviews. You just kind of feel it... the perception that you have of the place as soon as you start working	My mom worked here. I worked here in the 80s. I re-entered, the culture became more corporate. The company went from local...to national. When I re-entered there were training programs that taught you about corporate culture	you've seen a lot, I've been in four divisions, different management styles, communication is a little different, different managers view your appraisal differently, it's hard because your wage is based on that appraisal...I've been there
B	Was it an effective way to communicate corporate culture?	I like the People Magazine, people actually read it, it's information on the company at that particular time, archive	There's probably a clearer way. Something should be probably communicated in your new employee orientations and training... there are other things that are just implied... you can't write everything down.	No, I think it was effective... because it was basically um stated in black and white and then the rest of the culture you kind of absorb as you're working here and you watch other people doing what they're doing	you can hold all the meetings you want, but everybody's going to interpret what they've said a little differently. Or you can cut all the tress down you want and hand them a piece of paper, they're going to read it, each person is going to interpret it differently, so probably not (personal experience is the best)
C	Is there a clearer way to communicate corporate culture?				
6 Validate McCormick's claimed components that shape corporate culture					
A	Would you say that McCormick managers get involved in day-to-day activities? How?	Some do, some don't. standoffish, hands-on. I'm OK with either one, I like a happy medium.	Yes...I think most people here...they feel empowered by knowing how to and not just delegating... they want to challenge different things that we do and understand them... they're not just there to tell you what to do	I've had a lot that do and some that don't. For the most part they do. The higher-level management is more absorbed in international dealings	Depends on the level...mid-management vs. high-level management...mid-management is more involved...high-level management doesn't want to get involved unless theres a problem or an issue...so I don't think they're involved in most of the day-to-day
B	Does McCormick promote diversity? How?	Absolutely...diversity training, teaches you how to deal with with different situations in the workplace, so different personalities, different ethnic backgrounds, and different workplace situations...or ask a colleague	I would, don't we have a diversity council? Respect for people from different cultures and from different backgrounds... lunch and learns	Yes, definitely. I think they go out of their way to hire people that are diverse, um and make sure that we probably meet a federal standard that's set forth um and they also know that the different diverse backgrounds can help...with our products	Yes, they're constantly sending emails about it...but the plant people can't go
C	Do you feel that you are involved in business decisions? Why?	No. Involved, yes. Heard, no. Being invited to a meeting, listening in to conference calls, as far as being heard and being taken seriously, no I don't get that feeling.	I do, I actually really do...while I may not be making the final decision I feel like my superiors look to me to make the recommendations on certain things that I might be a subject-matter expert or provide them the background that they need to make the decisions	No. I have a task-oriented, hourly job. So I think that my job um there's a few business decisions like contracts and things like that with the call center, but in general I'd say no.	I wish I was involved in my raise! Yes, with starting up this building...involved in vendor contacts, maintenance...allowed to make decisions...(outside of building management) as an hourly person, no. I think they don't necessarily view all of our opinions the same as they do somebody um in a management- or with a degree.
D	Does McCormick support employee continued education? How?	Yes, if it's related to your job function. They pay for a portion.	They do, in fact, right now I'm taking accounting classes... they offer tuition reimbursement... LDC, leadership programs	Yes I do. They have tuition reimbursement and also ive had people that have mentored me since Ive been back to try to encourage me to do that so thye value it and they try to help you along with it as well...flexible work hours, encouragement, what can they do help, work from home on friday	yes, it has to be job or McCormick related, they pay towards it
E	Does McCormick promote any type of health or safety programs? How?	Yes, but moreso at the plant levels	They do, they have the wellness program... they have a nurse... medical department... yoga	Yes, we have safety programs. We had a lot of them in the plant...we also have a wellness program through our medical department... weight watchers, checkups, blood pressure screenings	all the time...we get emails on it all the time...cease smoking classes, pilates, classes, weight watchers classes
7 Validate McCormick's claimed shared values					
A	Are you familiar with what McCormick calls their "shared values"? Can you name them?	Yes. Ethics, teamwork, trust	I am. People, performance. I could picture the little laminated thing.	I am, the exact definition I don't know... pamphlet mailed to me at home... common-sense behavior... I knew that I already possess them.	I've heard of it, I've probably read it, but I don't remember...
B	Do you think they're truthful? Why?	I think they are all shared among the employees, we fall short on innovation - we play it safe. I think you can take risks	I think they do...	Yes... concern for one another and ethical behavior, I'm sure as best as you can do in business	It's possible...

Appendix D

IRB Approval Letter



EXEMPTION NUMBER: 10-1X37

To: Melanie Yanney
From: Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, Melissa Osborne Groves, Member
Date: Thursday, April 15, 2010
RE: Application for Approval of Research Involving the Use of Human Participants

Office of University
Research Services
Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001
t. 410 704-2336
f. 410 704-4494

Thank you for submitting an application for approval of the research titled,
*The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Employees:
Perceptions, Motivators of Involvement, and Outcome Measurement*

to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants (IRB) at Towson University.

Your research is exempt from general Human Participants requirements according to 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). No further review of this project is required from year to year provided it does not deviate from the submitted research design.

If you substantially change your research project or your survey instrument, please notify the Board immediately.

We wish you every success in your research project.

CC: Hua Jiang
File

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CURRICULUM VITA

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Major: Business Communication
 Minor: None

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- Digital Content Manager, McCormick & Co. (July 2013-present)
- Associate Product Manager, McCormick Grill Mates (July 2012-July 2013)
- Associate Product Manager, Simply Asia Foods (January 2010-July 2012)
- Assoc. Consumer Promotion Manager, McCormick & Co. (August 2006-January 2010)
- Account Manager, Agora Publishing (March 2005-August 2006)
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- Consumer Promotion Intern, McCormick & Co. (Fall & Winter Semesters 2003)
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