

## Overview of Research on Enterprise Subculture

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**Abstract.** On the basis of summarizing the research on enterprise subculture by domestic and foreign scholars, the research fields of its research results are defined, constituted, classified and formed. In accordance with the order of overseas and domestic and time evolution, this paper reviews the research status of enterprise subculture from the perspectives of cold focus, concentration, frontier, achievement and deficiency.

### Introduction

Corporate culture is divided into main culture and sub-culture. Generally speaking, corporate subculture is based on the culture of business owners. That is to say, the enterprise subculture is called "sub-culture" to a large extent because it is an extension and complement to the business owner culture. At present, there are many and mature researches on general corporate culture or main culture in the academic circle, but few and immature researches on corporate subculture. In the academic circle, although some scholars have conducted certain research on enterprise subculture, their research areas are limited and their achievements are not large. Therefore, it is of great significance for people to clarify the current situation of research on enterprise subculture through research summary, make up for deficiencies in current research on enterprise subculture, carry out targeted research and enrich and improve the theory of enterprise subculture. Based on the current status of its research results, this paper intends to carry out the research through the definition, composition and classification of enterprise subculture, and the division of research fields such as formation cause, and use descriptive research paradigm.

### Research Overview of Enterprise Subculture

#### Definition of Enterprise Subculture

Van Maanen & Barley (1985) used the term subculture to describe the subgroups that have regular communication in an organization, believing that they are distinct groups within the organization that share the same problems with each other, and that the behavior of employees is governed by the same but different thinking patterns within a population [1]. This is an early description of the definition of corporate culture, from the perspective of "differentiated groups in the organization" and "different thinking modes in the organization govern the behavior of employees". The definition of enterprise subculture by Chinese scholars is based on the relationship between enterprise subculture and enterprise culture. Jing CHEN (2004) proposed that the enterprise subculture and the enterprise culture are accompanied by the non-mainstream enterprise subculture which exists in the enterprise. In the tortuous process of the formation and development of the enterprise culture, the enterprise culture becomes a component element of the joint force of the internal culture, which plays a positive or negative role in the enterprise operation and management [2]. Hai-li TU emphasized that enterprise subculture is a non-subject, non-mainstream and non-dominant corporate culture formed in a certain period of time. Enterprise subculture comes into being with the emergence of enterprise culture [3]. Xing Chen (2007) also pointed out that the enterprise subculture is a small group of people with common values, interests and hobbies, which is formed naturally due to the different social roles of enterprise members. They have a cultural

resonance, thus playing a hidden role in the enterprise [4].

### **Composition and Classification of Enterprise Subculture**

Miner (1979) was acutely aware of three different cultures within the organization: entrepreneurial, professional, and group [5]. Jones divided the enterprise subculture into: production culture, bureaucratic political culture, professional skills culture [6]. Sonja A Sackmann (1992) divides the corporate subculture into: sub-culture at the level of hierarchy, strategic culture, sub-culture in the functional department, and sub-culture in the management team [7]. Schein (1996) classified enterprise subculture into operational culture, executive culture of management and engineering culture [8]. Hofstede, a cultural master, established the tree diagram analysis through empirical research, and believed that the subculture in the organization can be divided into three types: professional subculture, administrative subculture, and customer-oriented subculture [9]. Von Meier divided the enterprise subculture into operational culture and engineering technology culture [10]. Ling ZHU classified enterprise subculture into vertical sub-culture type and functional sub-culture type, according to the different levels of power set in the organizational structure of the enterprise the vertical sub-culture is divided into strategic high-level sub-culture, executive sub-culture of middle management and operational sub-culture of base level; according to the functional requirements of the main process of enterprise innovation, the functional sub-culture is divided into engineering technical sub-culture, production operational sub-culture and marketing sub-culture [11].

### **The Cause of Formation of Enterprise Subculture**

Trice H, Beyer J. M. (1993) believes that the characteristics of organizational structure, such as organizational size, task differentiation, power center and staff composition, make some enterprises easier to produce enterprise subculture than others. Corporate subcultures are more likely to evolve in large, more complex, bureaucratic organizations that are more likely to contain a range of functions and technologies. Different occupational groups in an organization encourage enterprises to produce subcultures, because professionals tend to establish cross-organizational boundaries in the organization, while non-professionals who hold different values will not agree [12]. Schein (1996) analyzed the formation mechanism of organizational subculture, he thinks that the acceleration of organizational environment change, the complexity of technology, the refinement of organization, different core sharing technologies and different learning experience, the effectiveness of organization, the evolution of Shared cognitive model, interaction and communication are the causes of formation of organizational subculture [8]. Huan XU think, in decentralized enterprises, decision-making power is an important autonomous power. The function of subculture is to bring innovation to the enterprise and bring necessary autonomy and resources to the employees, so as to establish the subculture [13].

## **The Research Review**

### **The Overall Situation**

Research on enterprise subculture by scholars: In terms of time, it focuses on the 1990s; from the content, mainly focus on the composition and classification of enterprise subculture; from the research front, it is the formation cause of enterprise subculture; At home and abroad, foreign scholars have done more research on enterprise subculture than domestic scholars, but domestic scholars have done more research in this century; On the whole, there is little research on enterprise subculture in the academic circle, with limited research scope and limited achievements, to sum up, the theoretical system of enterprise subculture has not been formed yet.

### **Achievement and Deficiency**

The achievements made in the study of enterprise subculture in the academic world are mainly that the definition, composition, classification and formation cause of enterprise subculture from different perspectives are given with different cognitive manifestations, which lays a foundation for

the in-depth study of enterprise subculture in the future. The main deficiency of academic research on enterprise subculture is: Firstly, the research is not systematic and comprehensive enough, and there are few researches on the characteristics, functions, internal structure relations, formation mechanism and construction methods of enterprise subculture; Second, the research is not deep enough, such as the definition of enterprise subculture, essence, and the relationship between the main culture is not deep enough; Thirdly, there is a lack of connection between theory and practice. The lack of these studies, or the "cold spot" of the research, can be and should be the focus and direction of future scholars to carry out this research.

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