

**Watching (Out For) Each Other:  
The Role of Clan Controls in Managing Project Teams**

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Abstract

As project teams become more prevalent in organizations, using traditional agency theory-based concepts of control to understand the behavior of individuals in organizations becomes much more difficult. A useful alternative perspective is Ouchi's (1980) concept of clan control. However, the limited theoretical development of this concept prevents it from being more widely used in organizational research. I address this lacuna by developing a model of the antecedents and consequences of the acceptance of clan control by members of a project team, based on theories of identification, socialization and social exchange. Propositions are offered based on the arguments embedded in the model.

## **Introduction**

How can the interests of individuals and the organizations they operate in be aligned? Studies on the types of controls and their uses can help answer this question. Building on organizational theory and agency theory (Eisenhardt, 1985), researchers have traditionally focused on investigating the choice between behavior and outcome controls. This decision is often made on the basis of how clearly-defined, measurable and observable the expected outcomes and behaviors were. Some of the assumptions underlying the choice of controls included the organization's ability to foresee the consequences of the controls adopted, the stability of the organization's and individual's goals over time, and the restriction of the control relationship to the controller-controllee dyad.

These assumptions have restricted the usefulness of organizational controls research, reflected in the calls made within the broader management literature to move beyond their limiting focus (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1996). One particular organizational form where findings from control research have been difficult to apply is the project team. To empower their workers, organizations are removing traditional bureaucratic structures (Rock & Pratt, 2002), and replacing them with teams as the basic work unit (Lawler, Mohrman & Ledford, 1995). Since teams are usually loosely interconnected, coordination and control becomes much more important when teams become prevalent; however, organizations are finding it harder to achieve the requisite level of synchronization and integration (Thatcher & Zhu, 2006).

In the case of project teams, this difficulty may be due to their distinctive characteristics: their members may or may not have a shared history, often come from diverse backgrounds, and tend

to engage in interdependent tasks. In such a context, behavior and outcome controls are less salient because outcomes are less measurable, behaviors are less observable, and tasks are less analyzable. In organizations where both behaviors and outcomes are ambiguous and difficult to measure and observe, clan control (Ouchi, 1979, 1980) has been suggested as the preferred mode of control. Clan controls are proscriptions on behavior based on ritual, ceremony and shared experience (Ouchi, 1980), and rely on socialization techniques to integrate the interests of individuals and organizations. This concept differs from traditional agency-theory based concepts of control, since it considers both the impact of time as well as the social milieu in which control takes place. In contrast, traditional perspectives assume that controls are applied by organizations on individuals without regards to the social environment they exist in. By ignoring time, they also pay little attention to control processes and possible changes in organizational or individual interests over time.

However, although clan control has been examined in some empirical studies, it lacks a robust conceptual scaffolding. This paper draws on the social exchange, socialization and organizational identification literature to strengthen the theoretical base of clan control<sup>1</sup>. I show how these theories complement each other to provide an integrated view of the process by which clan control is accepted by individuals. Socialization has been argued to be a crucial source of organizational control (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), while identification has been shown to be an important mechanism affecting how work is carried out as well as how individuals perform (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002). Given that groups are a source of an individual's identity (Hegtvedt, 2005), I argue that identification shapes the willingness of individuals to engage in clan control, especially since groups can be understood

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<sup>1</sup> I do not make separate predictions for each of its three aspects (ritual, ceremony and shared experience), but instead consider them jointly. This is because the model presented here is an initial one. I hope to offer predictions

by examining their symbols, practices, and collective histories (Ravasi & Schulz, 2006).

The paper presents a model that integrates organizational and individual perspectives, and discusses the consequences at both levels too. The outcomes relate to performance, which existing literature has rarely commented on. Although clan controls are present in larger organizational groupings, the ideas here are meant to apply especially to project teams. This is for two reasons.

Firstly, in contrast to firms or other large organizations, project teams tend to be *de novo* collectives with members from various backgrounds, who are collaborating for a more-or-less fixed time period. The lack of a shared history and the limited possibility of continued future interaction make it difficult to discern if behavior and outcome controls are appropriate and feasible. For example, team leaders may not know which certain team members work better with more supervision and which with less. Team members may also be evaluated and compensated based on their performance in the department or division they originated from, not on their work on the project. Thus, clan control is more crucial in a project team context. Secondly, since the model focuses on the processes by which clan controls are accepted by individuals, examining the interaction between individual actions and social processes in the context of a project team would limit the extraneous factors that could enter the model. For example, studying clan control at a higher level of analysis, such as an entire firm, would require a variety of different issues to be addressed, such as the type of control practices used historically, senior management's experience with clan control, and industry control practices.

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for each of the separate aspects in future research.

## **Describing and Differentiating Clan Control**

Before delineating the proposed model, it is useful to place this study in the relevant context. Broadly, control can be defined as “any process that helps align the actions of individuals with the interests of their employing firm” (Tannenbaum, 1968). More specifically, control is defined as being between two actors, a principal and an agent, where the principal wants the agent to either perform some task (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990) or not perform some other task (Fogarty, Graham, & Schubert, 2006). Traditional control theories, which are typically based on agency theory, focus on the influence of self-interested outcome maximization on employee behavior (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 1992), and look at the tradeoffs between behavioral and outcome controls. Agency theory's view of control, also called ‘command-and-control’ (Tyler & Blader, 2005), draws upon employees’ instrumental concerns and utility maximization goals.

This perspective's usefulness has been questioned on a number of fronts. Although the command-and-control approach works when controllers have complete knowledge of cause-effect relations (Snell & Youndt, 1995), it is doubtful whether this occurs in reality. Secondly, command-and-control is costly in terms of surveillance, as it creates a sense that the organization is the employees’ adversary, as well as a culture of distrust among employees (Tyler & Blader, 2005). Moreover, it assumes that the goals of employees and employers diverge, which may not be the case (Ouchi 1980).

There is also a lack of analysis of the social context, which is surprising since individuals interact with each other while carrying out their work, it is likely that their interpretation of and adherence to control is affected by their social network. The increased use of teams in

organizations means that employees interact with certain groups of employees more often than others. There is also little mention of the processes of creating and applying control. Finally, the increased uncertainty and unpredictability of work tasks means that flexibility and adaptability are more important, while formal control systems become less effective and more expensive (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1995). It is worth noting that these are not new issues. For example, Thompson mentioned that behavior control assumes managerial knowledge of "cause-effect relations" (1967: 85).

I anticipate that in today's workplace, where working in project teams is more common, using conventional control practices that are based on the assumption of having a perfect knowledge of the consequences may not lead to the expected outcomes. In contrast, understanding the logic of the social processes through which controls work may be more predictive in situations where the responses to possibly misinterpreted control mechanisms are uncertain. This is in line with the perspective that controls are instruments for gaining information to reduce uncertainty, rather than tools for reducing goal divergence (Davila, 2000). For example, with a project slipping behind schedule, a project team leader may require team members to be present at the office at 9 am every day (a behavior control), assuming that this would ensure that work would be completed on schedule and would reduce possibilities for shirking. However, this may be viewed by some team members as an infringement on their personal freedom or as a stance that casts doubt on their professionalism. Thus, although they may be present at 9 am as required, they may react by reducing the quality of their contribution to the project's tasks. If the team leader was aware of this unforeseen outcome and the processes that underlay it, s/he could have clarified to the team that the objective was to meet the project's timeline. This would help the team understand that the control was needed to reduce uncertainty, not their possible penchant

for shirking.

This argument is an extension of the emerging perspective on organizational forms, which focuses on teams, relationships, impermanence, fuzzy boundaries, and distributed power (Child & McGrath, 2001). Ouchi's (1980) conception of a "clan" fits well here, since its attributes are:

- i) ambiguous performance measurement: teamwork is common and technologies change often, making individual performance very ambiguous
- ii) congruent employee and employer goals: implying that there is low opportunism, and
- iii) common objectives between individuals, because of their dependence on one another

Clans can be defined as "small close-knit groups whose members transact on an informal basis of shared information, personal trust, and equality" (Boisot & Child, 1988). Clans are organizationally "tight", in that there are strong social norms and low tolerance for deviation from these norms (Gelfand, Nishii & Raver, 2006)<sup>2</sup>.

As we move towards "clans" and away from away from the bureaucracy/market, clan controls rise in importance while the agency theory perspective becomes less useful. In clan controls, the social context matters, and control is best understood as a process of socialization. However, this concept lacks adequate theoretical development, which is surprising since Ouchi marked out the requirements of clan control as norms of reciprocity, legitimate authority, common values and beliefs, and traditions, which map closely to research on socialization, social exchange and identity. Although most prior research has been conceptual, the absence of a well-developed foundation has limited the development of these ideas and their empirical examination (cf. Kirsch, 1996). For example, some studies have found it difficult to identify instances of clan

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<sup>2</sup> Norms are defined as expectations of appropriate and inappropriate attitudes and behaviors (O'Reilly, 1989), while values provide rationales for these normative requirements (Cialdini, Kallgren & Reno, 1991). Group norms are

control (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990; Choudhury & Sabherwal, 2003), while others (e.g. Sia, 2002) that postulated increases in clan control found the reverse.

One way to clarify a construct's scope is by contrasting it with other constructs related to it. Two concepts similar to clan control have been advanced in the literature. First, culture, defined as a pattern of shared beliefs and expectations that produces norms that shape behavior (O'Reilly, 1989), is seen as a system of social control (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996) that provides meaning to the behavior and events surrounding individual members and acts as a vehicle for solidarity (Nemeth & Staw, 1989). It operates more extensively than most formal control systems and, paradoxically, makes individuals feel more autonomous even though they are conforming much more than in any formal control system (O'Reilly, 1989). Although it is useful, social control can narrow alternatives for decisions, lead individuals to defend established courses of action beyond their useful lives, and stifle organizational adaptiveness (Nemeth & Staw, 1989). Second, concertive control (Barker, 1993) refers to a system of normative rules, enforced by self-management and high-level coordination. Compared to formal bureaucratic control, it is seen as more powerful (an "iron cage") and more difficult to resist, even though it is less apparent.

I argue that clan control, which focuses on rituals, ceremonies and shared experiences, subsumes both social and concertive control, since it includes many of the elements described above. Clans are organic associations that provide solidarity to their members because of their dependence on one another, and may be more directive than other, more explicit mechanisms (Ouchi, 1980).

Symbols, practices, and a collective history help individuals make sense of what an organization is about and provide cues for action (Ravasi & Schulz, 2006), thus fulfilling the goal-alignment

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standards that regulate behavior among group members (Bettenhausen & Murnighan, 1985)

objective of organizational control. While clan control is more neutral in its suggested outcomes than concertive control, a common factor in the literature across all three domains is the dominance of conceptual work and a lack of empirical research. There is discussion of how these three concepts operate, but limited consideration of how they emerge or are used. There is thus wide scope for future research in this domain. This paper's focus on clarifying the routes through which clan control is accepted by team members provides one avenue by which knowledge can be furthered on how control through symbols, myths and rituals can be used to engage employees and encourage their attachment and commitment.

### **Conceptual Development**

Although the paper does not focus on describing the source of clan control, it is worth specifying what they are as they provide a useful contextual grounding. Feldman (1984) identified four sources of group norms: explicit statements of supervisors or co-workers, critical events in group history, primacy of behavior patterns, and carry-overs from past situations. These help to increase the predictability of behavior, specify role expectations, set group expectations, and identify awkward interpersonal situations.

An alternative way of describing the sources of clan controls is as being either emergent or directed. Emergent controls are derived from task dimensions (e.g. the level of interdependence<sup>3</sup>), team dimensions (e.g. tenure, shared history), and individual differences (e.g. demographic heterogeneity, demographic faultiness<sup>4</sup>). Directed (or top-down) controls are from the team leader's past experiences and organizational practices, which can be either pre-existing

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<sup>3</sup> Wageman & Gordon (2005) find that shared egalitarian values are related to higher interdependence, while shared meritocratic values are related to lower interdependence.

or newly introduced (e.g. after a review by an organizational development consultant. Since this is not the focus of this paper, only the broad outlines are sketched out here, leaving the details for future research.

A number of different concerns accompany the decision to abide by an organization's clan controls. Some of these corollaries will be listed here to justify the theories chosen to develop the model. First, accepting an organization's clan controls, or internalizing them (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996), indicates an agreement with the quality of the social exchange taking place. Since clan controls integrate organizational and individual goals and encourage the acceptance of group norms, individuals who accept clan control are giving up their distinctiveness in return for higher quality group-level outcomes. This is especially so in ambiguous contexts, where the pressure for conformity increases because adhering to the organization's norms and supervisor tastes become surrogates for promotion criteria (Nemeth & Staw, 1989). Hence, I will use theories of social exchange to examine the processes through which employees accept clan controls.

Second, accepting clan controls denotes a willingness to adapt one's identity to match the organizational identity (e.g. becoming an "IBM guy" or a "Microsoftie"). The individual employee is self-categorizing herself as being in the in-group. People's tendency to want to join in-groups is very strong and organizations need to construct situations that provide for this (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996). Since identities provide the "cognitive and affective glue for organic organizations" (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007, p. 10), individuals' commitment to organizations is likely to be based on identification or pride of affiliation (O'Reilly & Chatman,

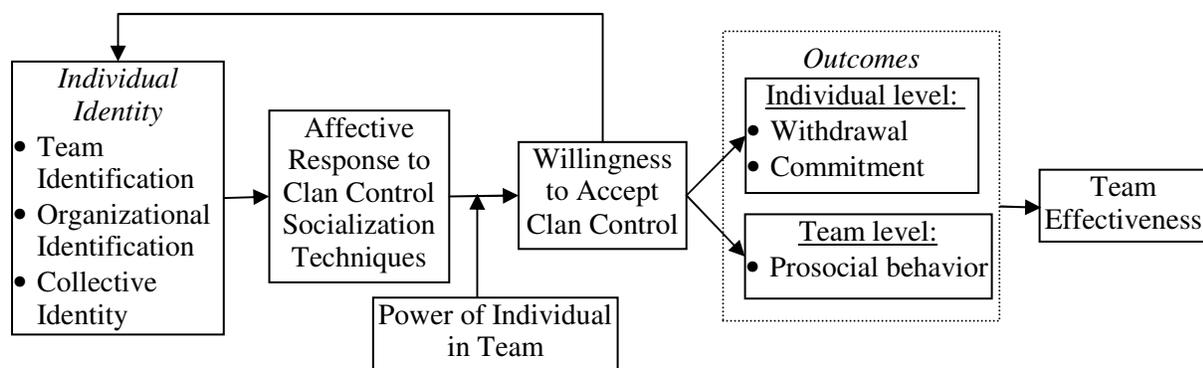
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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lau & Murnighan, 1988.

1986). Thus, I will use theories of identity to examine the clan controls acceptance processes.

Figure 1 below depicts the outline of the model I will be discussing. The next sections will discuss the individual constructs in the model and their relationships. Research propositions will also be offered.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Acceptance of Clan Control in Project Teams**



#### How is clan control transmitted?

When performance is ambiguous, explicit monitoring and evaluation are difficult to implement, and individual performance is hard to determine (Wilkins & Ouchi 1983). Socialization thus becomes an effective way to control work tasks, as it permits the transmission of clan controls (Ouchi, 1979). Socialization is an effective alternative control mechanism because, once organizational members come to accept the organization's goals as their own, they will act consistently with those goals (Perrone, Zaheer & McEvily, 2003). Group leaders can influence people and direct action through cognitive and emotional means, especially by creating symbols that carry meaning beyond the person (Pfeffer, 1981).

Socialization is defined as the acquisition of appropriate role behaviors, development of work skills and abilities, and adjustment to work group's norms and values (Feldman, 1981). Van Maanen & Schein (1979) classified the various ways socialization could differ based on these dimensions: collective vs. individual, formal vs. informal, fixed vs. variable, sequential vs. random, investiture vs. divestiture, and serial vs. disjunctive. Since socialization practices influence the levels of fit between the individual and the group (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991; Grant & Bush, 1996), socialization techniques for the transmission of clan controls would probably be collective, sequential and serial (i.e. newcomers would be able to find role models, and not have to create them). This is because techniques with such attributes will reflect the use of rituals and ceremonies, which are key components of clan control.

#### Impact of Identity on Response to Socialization Techniques

Given that clan controls are transmitted through socialization practices, the model posits that individual members' responses to these practices is influenced by their level of identification with the team/clan, since groups are a source of identity for individuals (Hegtvedt, 2005).

Internalizing group norms is easier when newcomers identify with group members who share a common fate (Feldman, 1981). Although clans have a common objective, individual performance is ambiguous. This is because there is high dependence on one another, making teamwork crucial (Ouchi, 1980). Thus, when individuals are part of a clan, their individual and social identities are very closely related, as compared to them being part of a bureaucracy or a market.

Overall, the more closely individuals identify with their organization, the more positive their

response will be to these socialization techniques. Identification can take place at three levels – beliefs and values, emotions, and cognition – and each of them impacts individuals’ reaction to clan control socialization techniques. Organizational identification refers to the extent to which individuals feel they share their organization’s *values and belief* systems (Rousseau, 1998) and the characteristics of other organization members (Mael & Tetrick, 1992). Here, identities reside in shared interpretive schemas that an organization’s members’ construct together (Gioia, 1998). If the norms exemplified by the socialization techniques match their values and beliefs, then they will respond positively to these techniques.

Collective team identification is “the *emotional* significance that members of a given group attach to their membership in that group” (p.33, Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005). Emotions are central, not peripheral, forces in collective organizing processes (Dutton, et al, 2006). Since people want to belong to valued groups and be known as valued group members (Lind & Taylor 1988), this is a strong indicator of interest in continuing active participation in a group. Finally, collective identity orientation, where individuals *define self as a member* of a social group (Flynn, 2005), is, in contrast to the other two identity constructs, a more explicit identification with the team.

*Proposition 1: A high level of organizational team identification and collective identity orientation is positively related to the affective response of team members to clan control socialization techniques.*

If team members respond positively to clan control socialization techniques, they indicate a willingness to accept those controls on their behavior. It is possible that some team members will

not respond positively to the socialization techniques. According to our model, this will occur if they neither identify with their project team nor define themselves as part of it. Their negative response to the clan controls will manifest itself in resistance to the clan controls. Their exact response is contingent on their status in the team. Figure 2 below indicates the possible responses. This discussion helps separate the four ways in which acceptance of clan controls could be observed. Individuals with a high status in the team, e.g. senior employees, more knowledgeable or experienced employees, and who identify closely with the team will not only be willing to work under the clan control restrictions on their behavior, but will also participate in enacting the clan control socialization techniques. On the other hand, individuals who are low in status in the team, e.g. new members, but identify closely with the team will be willing to surrender to the clan control socialization techniques. Low-status members who also do not identify closely with the organization will be uninterested in either of the two options presented above. Because they do not identify closely with the project team, they are reluctant to surrender to the clan controls, as non-compliance poses no threat to their legitimacy. The challenging group will be individuals who are high-status but who do not see the clan controls as necessary for themselves and actively resist their imposition. Thus, a team member's willingness to accept clan control will fall somewhere in a continuum with participation at one end and total disinterest and resistance at the other, and surrender in the middle.

**Figure 2: 2x2 Matrix for Willingness to Accept to Clan Control**

		Status in team	
		High	Low
Organizational Identification	High	Willing to participate in clan control socialization processes	Willing to surrender to clan control socialization processes
	Low	Unwilling to surrender to (i.e. resist) clan control socialization processes	Uninterested in participating in or surrendering to clan control socialization processes

*Proposition 2: Team members' response to clan control socialization techniques is positively related to their willingness to accept clan control*

*Proposition 3: The impact of team members' response to clan control socialization techniques on their willingness to participate in clan control is moderated by their status in the team.*

### Consequences of Accepting Clan Control

The acceptance of clan controls has impacts at both the team and individual levels, and they are discussed in turn.

#### *Team-level outcomes*

From the perspective of social exchange theory, the willingness of team members to accept clan controls encourages prosocial behaviors. Although the interdependent nature of teams requires and results in more cooperative behavior than individual-based work (Janz, Colquitt & Noe, 1997), their positive emotional energy can be increased by collocating team members, having ritualized greetings, and rhythmically synchronizing the interactions among individuals (Turner & Stets, 2006). Since rituals and ceremonies are embedded in clan controls, it is likely that their practice will help enhance the overall mood of the group.

The use of clan controls promotes a change in the exchange relationship between the team leader

and the team members, as the relationship moves beyond bartering economic incentives for job contributions. Blau (1964) argued that social exchange relationships are based on trust and are valuable in and of themselves. They do not require immediate quid pro quos, since the trust permits short-term asymmetries in what is received and offered. The socialization techniques used to transmit clan controls influence team members to accept that they will be treated fairly in the long run, thus allowing short-term reward imbalances that encourage cooperative behavior to occur (Wilkins & Ouchi 1983).

As team members engage in rituals, ceremonies and other shared experiences, the “objects” being exchanged become less concrete and particularistic (Foa and Foa 1974, 1980). Such generalized inducements and regular intense interactions increase the cohesiveness of the team. As team members begin feeling closer to their peers, they should increase the range of helping and conflict management behaviors they enact to benefit the team. One example of such prosocial behavior is organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which refers to extra-role employee behavior that is above and beyond what is required and contributes to organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988; Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994). It is desirable as it increases the resources available to a firm and reduces the need for more formal control mechanisms (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). OCB can be directed at either individuals (OCB-I) or the entire organization (OCB-O). In the context of clan controls, I posit that increased acceptance of clan controls will encourage members to engage in OCB-O. This is because since clan organizations are marked by low opportunism, high interdependence and a difficulty in measuring individual performance, members will focus their attention and energies on attaining organization-wide goals, not individual gratification.

*Proposition 4: The willingness of team members to accept clan control increases the prevalence of group-level prosocial and organizational citizenship behaviors directed at the organization.*

#### *Individual-level outcomes*

The acceptance of clan controls should increase individual commitment to the organization, since adjusting to group norms and values leads to higher commitment and involvement to one's work (Feldman, 1981). Organizational commitment is defined as an affective attachment to an organization characterized by shared values, a desire to remain in the organization, and a willingness to exert effort on its behalf (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). Clan controls, such as shared experiences and rituals, are transmitted by institutionalized socialization, which represents common initiatory and learning experiences and support from members to confirm newcomers' identity, and has been found to have a stronger link to organizational commitment than individualized socialization (Jones, 1986; Allen & Meyer, 1990).

The acceptance of clan controls, which focus on developing shared values, beliefs and goals, not on specifying behaviors and outputs, implies more interpersonal respect and less mistrust among team members (Das & Teng, 2001). It also indicates a convergence of values which enhances person-group fit. The latter is defined as inter-personal compatibility between individuals and their work groups and has been found to affect employee satisfaction with coworkers (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). Increased satisfaction reduces the probability of withdrawal behaviors, which are attempts to psychologically or physically avoid the work environment (Hanisch & Hulin 1991), being manifested. This is important in teams because of

the high level of task interdependence (Roberson & Colquitt, 2005). Thus, the similar value set and the desire to work together denote an individual's high level of commitment to the group, and indicate that clan controls are working well (Kirsch, 1996).

*Proposition 5: The willingness of team members to accept clan control increases their organizational commitment.*

Individuals who accept clan controls should also identify more strongly with their organization. Managers can facilitate identity formation by using cultural symbols, practices and history, which help make sense of what an organization is about and shape responses to organizational identity threats (Ravasi & Schulz, 2006). Moreover, individuals who conform to clan controls are able to accentuate their identity confirmation, a state that exists when an individual's social environment is consistent with his/her self-identities (Milton & Westphal, 2005).

In parallel with this stronger identification effect, accepting clan controls also reduces the chances of individuals deviating from accepted norms. Individuals in tight organizations, such as clans, have higher self-regulation, in the form of frequent and attentive monitoring and an intense negative self-reaction to deviations (Gelfand, Nishii & Raver, 2006). Departing from group norms may thus lead to losing one's legitimacy, if one's membership in a much-liked social identity group is called into question (Roberts, 2005). However, adjusting to group norms and values could also allow individuals to earn some "idiosyncratic credits" by being good group members, so that when they engage in deviant behavior, they do not attract the usual sanctions for violating norms (Feldman, 1981). Hence, the effect of accepting clan controls on the probability of engaging in deviant behavior is ambiguous.

*Proposition 6: Accepting clan controls leads to employees identifying more strongly with their organizations.*

## **Discussion**

The model presented in this paper provides one avenue for explaining team effectiveness. Understanding the latter require detailing the processes involved, which are the observable interpersonal behaviors that occur between two points in time and help explain the linkage between team characteristics and performance (Hackman & Morris, 1975). Using theories on identity and social exchange, I have presented some possible processes through which the use of clan control results in impacts at the individual and team levels. Since greater cooperation, one of the objectives of organizational control in general and clan control in particular, leads to improved individual performance (Milton & Westphal, 2005), the use of clan control and its acceptance by members should impact team performance positively.

The underlying theory in this paper is social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), where group identification is seen as the result of a multifaceted approach involving self-categorization. These categories are used to make sense of the world by defining the in and out-groups (Rosch, 1978). This theory is especially appropriate here as the development of a social identity leads to the acceptance of a group's norms and consequently, coordinated individual behavior among all who share that identity (Brewer & Silver, 2000).

Understanding the impact of clan control is timely as the emphasis on traditional bureaucratic

structures and control systems is gravitating towards more fluid team- and project-based work, where personal relationships and interactions offer informal social controls (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). With the diminution of returns to performance and productivity from rational strategies of organizing, paying more attention to values, ideals, norms and other non-rational, symbolic aspects of management might increase organizational effectiveness (Barley, Meyer & Gash, 1988).

Encouraging control research to adopt a paradigm that deals with these changes led to the use of clan control as an overriding framework. Its pertinence is highlighted when contrasted with the currently-dominant paradigm in control research. Traditional control theory, with its lack of attention to the social context within which control takes place, is at odds with Lewin's field theory (1951), which reminds us that since individuals participate in a variety of life spaces, it is necessary to understand behavior as the totality of an individual's interactions with the environment. Similarly, Weick's (1979) emphasis on the importance of focusing on organizing, and not only organizations, highlights the need to examine the processes of control, which have been ignored in agency-based control theories.

Clan control is a good fit for research on the more symbolic aspects of control because it focuses on aspects of organizational performance besides performance outcomes, such as norm and identity alignment. This is especially useful for contexts reflecting conditions opposite to market relations, namely high performance ambiguity and low opportunism (Ouchi, 1980), which are similar to those in which team-based work takes place. However, there has been limited work to define the conceptual underpinnings of clan control.

The model presented here provides a framework with which clan control can be studied. Using identity and social exchange theories, researchers will be able to obtain some insight into the avenues through which clan control operates, and affects individuals and the organizations they belong to. Further research could focus on integrating ideas from stewardship theory (Donaldson, 1990), which adopts a positive view of managers compared to the opportunistic view of them in agency theory, with this model. The latter implies that managers and employees act as stewards of their organization, as they focus on shared outcomes and are not self-serving. This would help in providing some of the boundary conditions and moderators for the propositions offered here. For example, Davis, Schoorman & Donaldson (1997) describe a range of psychological mechanisms, such as identification, motivation and power, which influence the likelihood of individuals adopting a stewardship perspective. These could be included as extensions to the model offered here, by examining the possibility that managers will use clan control, given these individual differences.

Socialization can also be understood using the social contagion perspective and social network theory. This would be akin to Roberson & Colquitt's (2005) explanation of the development of shared team justice, which is a shared perception. The social contagion view (Burt, 1982, 1987) holds that cognitions and attitudes can be communicated from one person to another, converge over time and are maintained by a network. This network consists of members of a social system connected by links that indicate the relationships (or lack thereof) between them (Brass, 1995). The focus is on how network members interact and structure their interactions. Contagion takes place through social networks, and is influenced by structural equivalence (similar interaction patterns lead to shared norms) or cohesion (through communication-based influence processes). Thus, it is likely that clan controls will diffuse in project teams, with their tight connections, high

interdependence and high volume of communication, following this perspective.

Another avenue for further research would be to clarify the sources of clan control. These were briefly mentioned in this paper and require deeper analysis. Some of the questions that can be asked are: Is it easier to transmit clan control from one of the sources (emergent or directed) than the other? How do managers handle clan control mechanisms, such as different norms on work quality, that are in conflict? How does national culture affect the possibility that clan control will be used, relative to behavioral and outcome control?

For managers, the implications of the ideas presented here are that they should temper the “harsh” behavioral and outcome controls with clan controls, as they affect additional outcomes, such as cooperation and commitment, that have an impact on overall performance. This paper identifies some of the non-obvious levers that yield differences in outcomes, such as socialization practices and individual power balance. Managers will find practical usefulness in learning how to balance out the deficiencies of contracts and other forms of formal mechanisms with clan control.

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