

# THE INVESTIGATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ELEMENTS AND TYPOLOGIES IN A GIGA OPEN UNIVERSITY: ANADOLU UNIVERSITY OPEN EDUCATION FACULTY 40TH YEAR RESEARCH

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## ABSTRACT

Organizational culture acts as the mortar that connects the bricks. Every institution has its own unique culture which has been adopted and shared by all employees over the years. As establishment stories, ways of doing business, and communication styles change, culture also adapts itself to these in a way that is specific to that organization. Since there is no single understanding of culture covering all types of institutions, research has focused on classifying the concept of organizational culture according to types and concentrated on situational studies. As in for-profit businesses, culture is also significant in organizations that prioritize social goals. In this research, an academic organization within the realm of public institutions is discussed. The purpose of the article is to reveal the functioning of the elements that make up the organizational culture of the Open Education Faculty in the institution and the types of culture that are seen as dominant in the organization. In the case study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the managers who have taken important roles in the history of the institution, and the documents containing information about the faculty culture were analyzed. The results of the qualitative content analysis revealed that Anadolu University Open Education Faculty has a strong and established culture, and this contributes to the work done and institutional development. Considering the dominant cultural styles in the institution; it is noteworthy that it started as an effective, collaborative, dynamic and work-based culture. With the institutional growth being experienced over time, the faculty culture has evolved towards a more protective, bureaucratic, and analytical one due to the difficulties in the organizational environment and the risks in the decisions taken. However, considering the scope, structural features, and stakeholder diversity of open education at home and abroad, the faculty still maintains a dynamic, collaborative and developmental cultural style with its ability to coordinate between units, its flexibility to respond to environmental changes, and its efforts to take innovative steps.

**Keywords:** Organizational culture, academic organization, elements of culture, types of culture, content analysis, management of open higher education.

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is the creation of meaning through which human beings interpret their experiences and guide their actions (Geertz, 1973, p.24). Thus, culture is dependent on the meanings it has for those involved in that culture. Meaning refers to how something is interpreted subjectively by an individual. Individual meanings are certainly important and they are likely to vary across a group. Nevertheless, cultural understanding

does not focus on these individual interpretations, but on collectively shared orientations within a group (Alvesson, 2002). Cultural analysis can be applied to all kinds of social phenomena as long as it concentrates on meanings tied to each other and reflected in a symbolic form. Organizations are also infused with symbols, which create a distinct identity. Organizational culture, then, may be conceived as a pattern of symbols that needs deciphering and interpreting.

In today's world where competition has exceeded countries, it is important to formulate and correctly apply the elements that strengthen the institutions such as organizational culture, which is crucial for those aiming to understand people, strengthen corporate performance and belonging. Understanding culture is known to have positive effects on the performance and effectiveness of organizations in the long run (Ubius and Alas, 2009, p. 90). It is an accepted fact that organizational culture is primarily related to organizational success and failure (Cameron and Sarah, 1991; Lim, 1995). Ouchi and Wilkins (1985) argue that research on cultural and symbolic elements in organizational life has come to the fore as the Japanese surpassed American firms and were accepted as the new economic power in the late 1970s. Alvesson (2002) states that organizational culture is a subject of interest at the level of management research and academic studies, since it has a central role in all areas of organizational life. Organizational culture, which is terminologically included in Pettigrew's article in 1979 for the first time in the academic literature, has become a concept whose importance is increasingly recognized over time (Hofstede, 2001). In this context, culture has been the subject of many studies regarding its definition, boundaries, elements, types, analysis methods and related concepts (Schein, 2010; Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey, 2013; Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983). Organizational culture, which is significant for every institution from the strongest to the weakest in the sectors, is not an individual but a socio-cultural reality (Durgun, 2006). There is a need to understand the organizational culture in order to analyze the characteristic aspects that distinguish institutions from each other, to strengthen the influence of human and other resources, to combine parts and achieve institutional goals.

## **Organizational Culture**

Organizations that bring together people with different characteristics and structures to achieve a certain purpose can provide joint effort and cooperation with the support of the organizational culture. There are various definitions in the literature on organizational culture, all of which emphasize its unifying strength. Hoy and Miskel (2010) describe the concept as a system of orientations that keeps departments together and gives the institution a unique identity. According to Armstrong (1990, p. 206), organizational culture is a model of beliefs, attitudes, and expectations that guide employees in their ways of doing business and behaviors, and emerge through interaction. Dincer (1992, p. 271) defines the concept as a system of norms, values, beliefs and habits that affect the activity results of institutions and direct the behavior of people in the organization. Sabuncuoglu and Tuz (2001, p. 37) define organizational culture as a whole body of unwritten symbols, stories and past events that emerge over time that teach employees how to behave, find solutions for organizational problems and are based on general acceptance.

As a result of the definitions and conceptualizations made in the organizational studies literature, some features of organizational culture emerge. Eren (2010, p.138) gathered these features under four headings listed as follows:

- Organizational culture is an acquired and learned phenomenon.
- It is accepted by the employees and shared with others.
- It is not written, it is the thoughts, beliefs and values of the members of the organization.
- Behavioral patterns may occur because they are constantly repeated.

The concept of culture, which comprises the identity and style of organizations, is formed and shaped in a process. In the first stage, the ideas of the founder of the organization emerge. Second, the team is formed and these ideas are improved. In the third stage, the team tries to provide appropriate resources such as buildings, places, funds for the organization. In the last stage; different people are included in the organization and the general organizational culture begins to be built (Dogan, 1997, p. 63).

There are some functions that organizational culture provides for institutions. It is possible to list these functions as follows (Ozkalp & Kirel, 1998, p.109):

- It distinguishes organizations from others.
- It gives the members of the organization a sense of identity.
- It enables individuals to attach to the common value more than their interests.
- It increases the solidarity among the members of the organization.
- It becomes a control mechanism over the attitudes and behaviors of individuals.
- It facilitates the adaptation of employees to the organization.

Just as the culture of societies is important for the survival of citizens, organizational culture also has an impact on organizational functioning (Denison and Mishra, 1995). Organizational culture, which accepts the organization as a living organism beyond seeing it as a machine, adds a new dimension to organizational studies (Kara, 2006, p. 43). It also brings holistic thinking skills at the level of values and behaviors to research (Ashkanasy et al., 2000, p. 5).

Schein (1985, p. 209) defines the sources that determine organizational culture as founders, external environment and internal environment. Robbins (1990, p. 444) argues that the hypotheses and judgments of the founders will affect the life of the organization and that the people whom the founder recruits at the beginning will continue this process by interacting with the culture. The external environment is a resource that organizations cannot control. The natural environment, historical events, economic conditions, political developments, laws, technology, socio-cultural forces are the external environment elements that affect organizational culture (Berberoglu, 1990, p. 157). Tosi (1986, p.66) expresses the internal environment elements that determine the organizational culture as the subject of production, the technology used in the institution, employees and managers.

In order to analyze organizational culture, the elements that make up the concept must be well understood. Schein (2010, p. 219) links the formation of culture in institutions to the values and assumptions that the founding names believe, the experiences of the employees, and the new beliefs, values and assumptions brought by the newly recruited members and leaders. Demir (2007, p. 29) includes rites, ceremonies, language, tales, customs, habits, beliefs, legends, stories, and assumptions into the elements of organizational culture. In Ozcan (2011) the elements of organizational culture are norms, values, assumptions, symbols, language, ceremonies, rituals, stories, leaders and heroes.

Values represent the desired ideals (Sabuncuoglu and Tuz, 1998). It is necessary to create key values that will provide motivation when shared, create a powerful resource around which all employees will gather (Erdem, 1996, p. 38). Language used in organizations, in addition to providing internal communication, is also essential in terms of ensuring the continuity of culture by providing transfer to future generations (Pala, 2009, p.18). Symbols, defined as objects, or actions that serve to convey and share ideas, values and feelings (Terzi, 2000, p. 55), are also a crucial element of culture. Logos, slogans, songs, titles, clothing, architecture of buildings, office arrangements, etc., which may be taken as signs of culture, are among the examples that make the reproduction of organizational culture possible (Bakan, 2004, p. 59). Ceremonies are generally considered as activities that aim to celebrate, reinforce cultural values and increase loyalty among employees (Bakan et al., 2004, p.60). They also aim to maintain the organizational order, give a message to the internal and external environment, and strengthen the sense of commitment (Fairholm, 1994, p.84). Rituals, which is another cultural element, is a set of rules that regulate people's daily attitudes, behavior and lifestyles. Meeting formats, correspondence format, applications in daily workflow, etc. are practices that give culture a tangible quality (Arslan, 2014, p. 36-37). Stories that contribute to the formation of organizational culture are stories based on real events in the history of the organization and shared by the members of the organization and transferred to new employees (Daft, 1992, p.319). Finally, leaders are expressed as pioneers, models and representatives who reflect the basic values and beliefs that form the infrastructure of organizational culture in their own personalities (Farnham, 1997, p.17).

There are various studies aimed at understanding, measuring and creating typologies of organizational culture. Bill Schneider, Miles and Snow and Toyohiro Kono's organizational culture classifications are the studies included in the analyzes within the scope of this study.

Schneider (1988) classified the culture formed in organizations under four headings as control, cooperation, talent and development culture. The purpose of the control culture is to ensure, protect and improve the

success of the organization. In the decision-making processes, a central and analytical way is followed in communication and information flow, where authority and rules are dominant (Schneider, 2000, p. 27). Collaboration culture related to synergy is based on closeness and even dedication to the target audience. Decision-making processes are more informal and human-oriented in this culture where target audience goals are a priority. Collaboration culture, which has a deep commitment to its employees, is focused on gaining the trust of the employees. Success in talent culture is to establish an organization composed of people with the highest competence and to benefit from these employees. Intellectual and technical skills are encouraged in institutions with this culture (Schneider, 1995, p.12-16). What is important in the development culture is the belief of employees in high values and continuous improvement. This culture requires trusting the employees and the organization. When individuals believe that their work is valuable, they can achieve organizational goals as their own. Excessive control and prohibition do not work. It is accepted that mistakes can be made from time to time and this should be considered normal (Schneider, 1995).

In another organizational culture classification by Miles, Snow, Meyer and Coleman Jr., (1978), organizations are grouped under four titles as protective, developer, analyzer and responsive, based on the traditions, habits and strategy formations they have. In a protective culture organization do not like risk and they operate in safe markets. It is a conservative structure. Stability is maintained by values and beliefs. However, there is a risk of being ineffective in responding to major changes in the environment and missing opportunities (Miles et. al., 1978, p.550-551). In the developing culture adopted by innovative organizations, institutions are courageous to take risks and make new breakthroughs. Managers can apply development and growth strategies in changing environments by not avoiding competition (Akinci, 1998). Analyst culture, which is a combination of developing and protective culture types, tries to keep the profit high and minimize the risk. The application of different approaches together in the protective organizational culture, where change and balance coexist, can sometimes create difficulties (Miles, et. al., 1978, p.553-557). In the reactive/reactive culture, the pressure of change from the environment and competitors is important for organizations. However, managers cannot respond effectively (Eren, 2012). Strategies are as significant as the adjustments made in order not to go bankrupt and survive (Yildiz, 2008, p.20).

The last of the organizational culture classifications considered is the culture typology of Kono (1992). According to Kono grouping; cultures are classified into categories as dynamic culture, leader-oriented and dynamic culture, bureaucratic culture, stable culture and strong leader-oriented stable culture. In a dynamic culture, the hierarchy and the social distance between the subordinates is low; interactive, innovative, horizontal and vertical communication are seen together, and there is a customer- and employee-oriented family feeling (Okay 1999, p.229). In a leader-oriented dynamic culture, a strong leader who is the founder of the organization is a role model. Employees trust and follow the leader. As long as it is active in management, this type of culture is highly functional. However, when the administration gets old or starts to make wrong decisions, it becomes stagnant in the culture (Kono, 1992). The type of culture in which rules and procedures are dominant and employee behaviors are limited within this structure is bureaucratic culture. It is generally seen in old and massively operating institutions (Bakan, 2004, p.103). When it comes to static culture, it is expressed as a type of culture that is closed to innovation and does not react to changes in the environment, and one where old behavior patterns are repeated. It is more common in public institutions or institutions operating in monopoly markets (Kono, 1992). Kono's final culture typology is stable culture with a strong leader axis. In this culture, autocratic top management expects employees to obey rather than asking for opinions. Even if the leader makes wrong decisions, they must be implemented. In this type of culture, institutions cannot develop because they have remained in the same position for many years (Akinci, 1998).

## **Problem Statement**

Organization culture is a phenomenon that can be shaped differently depending on the public, private sector, production or service sector distinctions. The academic institutions covered in the research aim to provide higher education service to the public either they are public or privately funded; thus, their contexts deserve a unique attention. The organizational culture perspective into understanding the relationships or patterns in higher education contexts has been quite popular in the fields of both management and education. One of the most influential of these works is by Bergquist (1992), who identified four distinct

cultures in American higher education, recognizing that each culture can only be understood in the context of its historical roots and its multiple representations in the campus. These cultures are: collegial culture, managerial culture, developmental culture, and negotiating culture. Cultural elements in all these types may differ in many respects, from objectives within the organization to human resources, from ways of doing business to communication styles. However, the organization in question is neither a traditional campus university nor a conventional faculty with a departmentalised structure in which faculty are grouped together under disciplines. That is why there is a need to investigate its uniqueness and from a qualitative perspective.

Berberoglu et al. (1998: 40) define academic institutions as non-integrated and fragmented organizations. Instructors tend to perceive themselves as a part of the profession rather than as a member of the organization they work for; and individual career goals may be a priority in their scientific studies, rather than organizational goals. Evidence is essential to understand whether the non-integration and fragmentation of goals is also apparent in this culture. There is a need to investigate how culture manifests itself in this particular organization as it is not a mainstream public academic institution but has a unique organizational design which is far different from that of a conventional faculty of a university.

The features that support organizational culture in academic institutions are scientific working environment, level of competition, informal communication channels, teamwork, cooperation, coordination, flexibility and communication with the target audience. In a study using interview data by Kuo (2008) with the purpose of investigating how faculty in a US university perceive and construct their relationships from an organizational culture perspective, findings suggested that in general the relationships between academic staff and administrators are professional and based on collegiality, interpersonal dynamics, professionalism and open dialogue; and underscore the importance of appreciating how cultural subjectivity, diversity and complexity can have a direct impact on the evolution of relationships between academic staff and administrators. Evidence might help designing open higher education institutions especially mega ones in a more effective way and build more collegial, open and professional relationships both between the administrators and the faculty and among the faculty.

In this research, a huge academic organization within the realm of public institutions is discussed in terms of its organizational culture. The context of the study; Anadolu University Open Education Faculty is the first practitioner of distance education in Turkiye, operating with a history of more than 40 years and a well-established system. Thus, the main purpose of the article is to reveal the functioning of the elements that make up the organizational culture of the Open Education Faculty as a public academic institution and the types of culture that are seen as dominant in the organization. To this aim, the following research questions are sought:

- 1) How do the elements that make up the organizational culture in a public mega open education institution function?
- 2) How do the culture typologies manifest themselves in a public mega open education institution?

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study which aims to analyze organizational culture in a unique academic institution has been designed as a qualitative case study. Case study is preferred in examining phenomena when direct observation of the concept being studied and interviews with the persons involved in the phenomena are possible (Yin, 2009). Smircich (1983) emphasizes the need to use non-standard measurement tools in studying organizational culture, since each organization has a unique culture, and underlines the preference for qualitative methods instead of quantitative methods. Combined with this perspective of Smircich on how to investigate a unique culture, the strength of case study in its potential to deal with a variety of evidence such as interviews and documents together caused the researchers to design the study as a qualitative case study, the scope of which is Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. The uniqueness of the organization under scrutiny in its ecosystem makes way for a single-case design in order to determine the precise nature of the organizational culture.

## Data Collection

While examining organizational culture, one or more of the methods such as observation, interview, questionnaire, focus group interviews, document analysis can be used together (Bahar, 2020). Data collection methods used in this study are face to face semi-structured interviews and review of institutional documents. Interviews were conducted with faculty who held important administrative positions throughout the history of the institution; as it is significant in case studies to collect interview data that focuses directly on the case study topic. Insightful and perceived causal inferences and explanations made (Yin, 2009) by those who have been directly observing and experiencing the culture is a strong source of evidence in this case study. The document analysis is carried out on the printed material named 'The Birth of Open Education', which is narrated by Prof. Dr. Yilmaz Buyukersen, the founding figure. The semi-structured interview protocol was prepared by the researchers, and reviewed by both an expert and a peer researcher for feedback. Upon this review, the questions in the protocol were grouped under themes from the literature. These themes are organizational structure, collaboration, support and trust, the relationship between school and its environment, integration and sense of belonging, professional orientation, and the quality of the learning/teaching environment. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for the purposes of data analysis. Because the researchers are actively involved in the data generation, the questions used in the interview become part of the text as they set some of the functional context for the answers. Therefore, the interviews were transcribed verbatim rather than just the responses of the interviewee.

## Data Analysis

All documents and the transcripts of all interviews were analyzed through content analysis, the steps of which are, initial reading, scaffolding, doing the interpretation, and identifying patterns within or across groups or within or across features. Bahar (2020) states that it would be more accurate to develop formulations specific to each organization instead of standard applications in measurement forms related to organizational culture. Therefore, the collected data were subjected to content analysis on the elements and culture types that make up the organizational culture. Content analysis is an analysis method that provides understanding and interpretation of the relationships between categories and codes determined by directly dealing with texts or transcripts (White & Marsh, 2006, p. 30-31).

## Research Quality

Several measures were taken to ensure quality criteria mentioned in Yin (2009). Construct validity was ensured by using multiple sources of evidence and have key informants review the draft case study report before final composition. Internal validity was ensured by triangulation and consensus formula. Triangulation is the examination and evaluation of the data obtained within the scope of the findings by more than one person (Guion, 2002, p.2). Within the scope of this study, coding was also done by a field expert other than the two researchers. According to the consensus formula of Miles and Huberman, the average reliability was calculated as 91% in the evaluation of organizational culture elements and culture types. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p.278-280), a ratio above 70% is sufficient to qualify the research as reliable. A very important way to enhance validity, which was also used in this study to enable the readers to have a more realistic and richer feel of the experiences of faculty members, is using rich and thick descriptions while discussing the findings. Another technique to further the internal validity of the study was peer reviewing of both the interview protocol prepared by the researchers, and the data analysis process as a whole, as well as consulting expert judgement. Peer reviewing is critical because it requires other people than the researcher to ask questions about the study so that the accuracy of the account is enhanced (Creswell, 2009).

## Limitations of the Study

Since the research is a situational study, it has limitations in generalization. For this reason, analyzes and evaluations are made on the basis of the institution as the application area.

## FINDINGS

The categories and codes determined within the scope of the research were grouped under two themes extracted from the literature. These categories are called the elements that make up the organizational culture and the types of organizational culture. While the elements include leader, stories, language, rituals, values, ceremonies and symbols, in the culture types, Schneider, Miles and Snow and Kono's classifications were determined as themes, which were depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Wordcloud of themes and categories that emerged from findings.

### How Do Elements of Culture Manifest Themselves in This Organization?

The first category of codes emerged from the data in this study which aims to analyze the organizational culture of the Open Education Faculty is the leaders. It was seen that there were processes in which a lot of effort took place throughout the history of the institution. As the leader, the founder of the faculty, Prof. Dr. Yilmaz Buyukersen, who was mostly addressed as 'Yilmaz Hoca' by the participants stands out.

A participant coded as K2 mentioned Yilmaz Hoca as the leader as in: "*When Anadolu University was founded, open education faculty was also established. Yilmaz Hoca was prepared mentally... he had a closed-circuit television system installed in 1974 or 75*". This indicates that the founder had prepared the technical infrastructure before the system was put into practice. In the same way, in the publication titled 'The Birth of Open Education', Yilmaz Hoca wrote: "*a camera, tape recorder and a television receiver became our first devices. ... We wanted to turn the biggest hall on the top floor of the two-storey building, which was built as an academy during the time of Orhan Oguz, into a studio. But we had neither money nor much knowledge. ... we built ourselves a nice little closed-circuit training system.*" This statement strengthens the response of the participant coded K2.

Another participant's remarks support the leader's significance in the initiation and foundation, but also clarifies the starting point of the idea of open education in Turkiye. "*The idea of open education was shaped and born under the leadership of the university rector, Yilmaz Hoca. We had a role model during the establishment process, a British open university. The British Open University, which was established for those who could not continue their education due to World War II, has been an important role model for us.*" (K4) Yilmaz Hoca approves this in his book by "*The idea of open education came to my mind in 1966 when I was in England. .... During the Second World War, discussions began to give British Citizens the opportunity to study, who could not find higher education. This was the initial idea at the British Open University. In the same years, a mass of students who could not enter universities in Turkiye asked the state to solve this problem. I was thinking this could be applied in a slightly different way for Turkiye.*" (Document 1). Another participant (K6) underpins the influence of Yilmaz Hoca as a founding leader and a great inspiration on the organization through "*Prof. Dr. Yilmaz Buyukersen has a great influence on the establishment of this system and the development of its culture. Hoca has*

*a charismatic leadership. I can say that the units he founded made a great contribution to the Open Education System, even though their names have changed today.”* This means that the same understanding of teamwork created in the workflows is still reflected in the present. As well as establishing a team based organizational structure, his efforts in creating resources, technical progress, following the bureaucratic processes, and explaining the idea of open education to the public are also noteworthy among the contributions of Hoca to the establishment process.

*“I could only do this job with my young friends. I gathered my young friends. We immediately formed a book writing team, a science team, a program team, and an examination team. In the recruitment process, we employed assistants on the one hand and technical people such as cameramen on the other. In the meantime, I was applying to State Planning Organization to get their support and to Higher Education Board to ensure the legal foundation of the project and at the same time writing articles in daily newspapers for public support and recognition”* (Document 1).

The leader figure also has a crucial place in the stories told throughout the history of the organization. *“The story we heard from Yilmaz Hoca tells that Germans sold color TV to Turkiye and the first color TV studios were established in Eskisehir. That the system started with 29500 students while 10000 people had been considered as an unrealistic dream is a second story. In a higher education system as Turkiye’s where professors write and sell books for their classes, there have been many stories and firsts in the design process such as the use of television in education. Forget Turkiye, conducting supervised exams in Europe or in many parts of the world and ensuring its supervision are different stories. Behind all this lies a strong will and leadership. This is already in the culture of this university.”* (K3) With these statements, he emphasized the exciting firsts in the history of the institution and the success stories behind mass organizations. Another participant recalls *“What we call a legend is that we delivered many educational programs and saved a stock of learning materials in those six years.... There was no such thing as overtime. While we were getting things done, we always had Yilmaz Hoca on our heads. He was constantly under control. Of course, there was a lot of spiritual motivation.... The pioneers and the most famous names of the disciplines were invited to work in our system as content developers and shoot TV programs in the studio. The most prominent persons of the disciplines were invited to deliver lectures. This has caused a multicultural and interdisciplinary perspective to grow within the culture.”* (K2).

Regarding the remarkable events that took place in the history of open education, one of the participants recited the significance of organizing face to face examinations all around the country. *“There were great financial difficulties at that time. In order to overcome these, foundations and companies were established... It is an extraordinary event that in 1994 exam responsibility was transferred to us from the state and exam organizations were made across the country... As employees who visit other universities had the opportunity to compare this place with them, their ownership to the institution has increased, which has fed our institutional culture.”* (K4).

Another important dimension of organizational culture is language. One of the interviewed participants’ words reveal how language is taken both as an institutional and also as an academic issue as the foundation of the organization also marks the foundation of the distance education discipline in the Turkish academy. *“The language issue has emerged over time. As the discipline deepened, our terms emerged and now we have a terminology of ours together with our own theories and approaches. We have set up the open and distance learning dictionary to preserve the language. It is accessed online from anywhere in the world. There are over 2200 words. We are increasing this every day.”* (K1). Other participants also perceived language in association with disciplinary language of distance education. *“Language has emerged naturally. We initially modeled the British open university. It took a while. Of course, a lot of translation was done during these studies.”* (K2). Another participant’s statements support the idea that language of the organization is generalized as the language of the academic discipline as he/she emphasized the academic journal that the organization publishes (TOJDE) and the dictionary of distance education terminology as critical factors in the establishment of an organizational language. *“All research being conducted and every research paper written and published is significant in sustaining this language”* (K2). *“Language is an interdisciplinary dimension for us. Support is received from areas such as administrative sciences, education and communication. It also has an international dimension. What is England doing? What kind of developments are happening in the world in the name of open and distance learning. The language of open education is formed as a result of their follow-up and the interaction of all stakeholders.”* (K4). The factors

affecting the formation of organizational language stand out as communication with the environment and stakeholders as well as other disciplines of thought. *“As part of this communication, joint studies are being conducted with other universities as well as international audit companies in order to exchange information. International open and distance learning conferences are regularly being held by our organization”* (K4), which as a whole contribute to the development and conservation of the organizational language.

Another important element of organizational culture is rituals. *“What is routine is recording or shooting radio and TV programmes, writing coursebooks and producing testing materials in our testing unit. In the testing unit there is a never-ending activity of producing exam questions. For a long time in the history people worked to accumulate all these materials day and night, without taking any weekend breaks.”* (K2). *“There are so many different units in the system with varying roles and responsibilities but all serve the same purpose of operating the system. For example organizational communication unit takes care of social media entries and graphic design of institutional announcements”* (K6). Another participant emphasized the interdisciplinary and multitask-oriented nature of the rituals in the system as *“Open Education System is a modern platform combining people from many disciplines. We have coursebook designers. We have people designing the digital version of these books. One book is created through the team work of editors, chapter writers, language editors, printing press, distribution, and the creation of e-learning materials.”* (K4) The participants mainly referred to routine activities that strengthen culture among employees such as sharing the high workload of conducting research and preparing open education materials at the same time. For example, one of the participants remarked *“Everyone working at this university has two jobs. In addition to their routine work such as conducting research, continuing education activities and publishing, the professors also carry out open education related jobs. In other words, faculty members write in the book, explain in the lecture, go to the exam, write the question for distance education students. If necessary, he also establishes contact with students working in the offices.”* (K3). Exam administration meetings, exam question writing meetings, book meetings, and other material preparation meetings held in short- or long-term teams are considered as organizational rituals that influence the culture of an organization.

Another dimension of organizational culture that is considered within the scope of the research is organizational values. In this context, the most frequently mentioned value is knowledge. This value is also reflected in the organization’s perceived mission by the participants as to deliver the right information to everyone and contributing to society and higher education through distance and lifelong learning. *“The fundamental value we have is to disseminate right knowledge to everyone”* (K1). *“Our central value originates from the value we add to higher education through distance education and lifelong learning”* (K4). Quality, innovation, reliability and being people-oriented are other prominent values of the institution expressed. *“Paying great attention to the work done has become a tradition and a fundamental value here. Great care is taken in preparing questions, writing books, exams and programs.”* (K2). *“Universality, being research and development oriented, and lifelong learning dedication are our organizational values”* (K3). Another participant listed the values as *“being person-oriented, innovativeness and reliability”* (K6).

Ceremonies are another of the elements and research themes that support organizational culture. The common answer given by all participants on this topic was graduation ceremonies. In the title of ceremonies, *“Meeting and dinner events held in Eskisehir for Open Education provincial coordinators and offices, as well as events held within the scope of graduation ceremonies.”* (K5). Ceremonies held to honor successful students in Open Education Faculty Offices as well as graduation ceremonies are also mentioned as being significant, as they bring together students and faculty members who are normally distanced from each other. *“Award ceremonies held in provincial offices bring together students, their families and faculty members.”* (K1) *“Students and families come together for concerts and other fun activities after these award or graduation ceremonies. Professors hand out diplomas face to face”* (K2). Another participant mentioned ceremonies that are held for the staff such as department dinners or meetings to celebrate the holidays. *“These are opportunities that academic staff come together with the administrative staff. When staff from all over the country come together for a celebration or an activity, it is like a miracle. They are geographically distanced but they are part of the same organizational culture.”* (K2) Continuous open and distance learning conferences are also events mentioned that contribute a lot to the institution and its culture.

Within the scope of symbols, which is another cultural dimension in the research, the logo of open education is to be primarily discussed. When the interviewees were asked to share their perceptions of the two logos used throughout the history of the institution, all of the participants stated that they liked the first logo more, only one found both effective. About the logo and how it feels, *“this logo symbolizes from the local to the universal. It has a structure that comes out of Anatolia to the world. Its colors emphasize its solidity and strength structure. Therefore, when you look at the institution, we can say that it is a strong institution with both its external architectural structure and this corporate logo structure, and that it has a structure that assimilates the traditional and aims for the future.”* (K3), The solidity and structure are also apparent in the architecture of the Open Education Faculty building, which has the shape of a butterfly, which was mentioned as visually symbolizing technology and innovation by one of the participants. *“When I look at the logo, it tells us our life here, both bitter and sweet. Not only to me, but to whomever you show it, it says my dear. If you show it to the gardener who works in the garden over there, he’ll say it’s my life.”* (K5). Visual materials such as books, television lecture programs, posters, videos, photographs can be expressed as symbols that create culture and feed institutional memory. The organization’s efforts in creating an archive of these visuals as well as sharing them with the public openly through a database called ‘Open Science’ were mentioned to emphasize the importance of both protecting and displaying these symbols.

The initial logo of the faculty	Revised Logo used both by the faculty and the university in general
	

**Figure 2.** The evolution of the Logo

When the people, slogans and concepts that symbolize the institutional culture of the Open Education Faculty were asked to the interviewees, among the answers received were *“working hard”* (K1); *“technology, innovation, cooperation, sharing, openness”* (K3); and *“lifelong education pioneer”* (K4). *“A pioneer because it is the first to be established, flexible due to its capacity to adapt to conditions, and a leader due to its ability to guide... When Anadolu University is mentioned outside the university, first, open education comes to mind. It means that a great organizational culture has been formed. The perception it creates is huge.”* (K5). As far as names given are concerned, Yilmaz Buyukersen, Akar Ocal, Engin Atac, Fevzi Surmeli’s names as leaders came out.

### **How Do Culture Typologies Manifest Themselves in This Organization?**

As to the second research question, coding was done according to Schneider, Miles & Snow and Toyohiro Kono’s culture types. Among the organizational culture typologies of Schneider, cooperation and control types were found dominant in Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. Open Education Faculty, which was established to benefit the learners who want to receive education unlimited by place, time or age, has received support from the cooperation and synergy provided by the employees since the beginning. The lack of resources in the early periods was compensated by additional efforts and overtime. A cultural structure in which informal communication channels are more common rather than formal relations draw attention. Regarding this issue, K3 said, *“Two-thirds of our lives were spent working here. The most important thing here is cooperation.”* *“This system was born by working in cooperation 7-24 by adding the night to the day.”* (K4). Similarly, another participant recited *“When you count the people who have worked here, you will see that all*

*of them add day and night to this system. There are many people. Their common point is that they work hard to improve themselves and reflect this to their work. We take them as an example.”* (K1).

Over time, although a cooperative culture exists in Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, due to its institutional growth and breadth of scope, it has turned into a centralized and protective structure where rules and regulations are more clearly drawn. In a way, an institutional development took place that added control culture to the initial cooperation culture. *“There is more protectionism every day than in the past.”* (K5). Another participant explained protectionism as *“because the system is big, a small change can have big results just like the butterfly effect. For this reason, managers are trying to protect the institution from risky steps.”* (K6).

As to Miles & Snow’s organizational culture types, it is seen that the developing and analytical culture types come to the fore in Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. The institution, which is known to be the first institutional implementer of distance education activities in Türkiye, is a pioneer in this context and has been capable of taking courageous decisions and making new breakthroughs. The newly opened departments and programs, the efforts to expand the scope, the efforts to create strategic cooperation are among the decisions that have resulted in organizational development and growth. In this context, a structure that is a pioneer in change and taken as an example by other institutions has been reached. *“Many exemplary practices and firsts for distance education, such as the first use of television in education in Türkiye, were experienced here.”* (K3). *“At the beginning of 90’s exam organization was taken over by the university itself for the first time. That was a very significant step in the development of the system. Countrywide exams were administered for the first time. Computer infrastructure was developed. Printing press system was constructed, and all these are proof that the organization is constantly in an effort to improve itself.”* (K4)

The existence of a developer culture is reflected in another participant’s remarks: *“While many things are not yet known in the field, Anadolu University Open Education Faculty filled the important conceptual gap here and set an example in this respect.”* (K6). With the increasing competition over time and the growth exceeding the borders of the country, it is seen that there is a return to the analytical culture as a result of the combination of the developer and protective culture in the institution. Pilot applications and SWOT analysis meetings which are held before decisions are made to keep success high and reduce risk, are the results of this effort. *“Exam information meetings are held to observe and solve problems. The structure of these meetings is continuously improved after pilot meetings are held... Anything is piloted before it is put into practice.”* (K5).

Considering the Anadolu University Open Education Faculty in terms of organizational culture types of Kono, it is seen that it started with a leader-oriented dynamic culture but a bureaucratic culture became more affluent over time. In the first years of the faculty’s establishment, because social distance was lower, horizontal and vertical communication were seen together. In addition, the creation of an atmosphere that gave employees a feeling of family rather than an institution supported the dynamic culture, while the influence of the founding leader Yilmaz Buyukersen was strongly expressed. Both academic and administrative staff mentioned that they followed the instructions by trusting the founding leader. The statements that refer to the efforts of Yilmaz Hoca in the establishment of the faculty, the establishment and training of the teams, and the effects on the establishment of the working system are the findings that underline the leadership effect. On the other hand, participants also drew attention to the dynamic culture that has emerged in addition to the leader-oriented culture. *“There was excitement during its founding years. There were groups that were constantly chasing new jobs, pursuing projects, pursuing research, and chasing innovation.”* (K2). The leader influence was emphasized by K3 as *“The design and planning of Open Education Faculty started during Yilmaz Hoca’s time.”* *“As well as university management, faculty from other universities who supported the content of the programs, television, and The Central Examination Agency have been other factors influencing the organizational culture. Developments in the ICT and the widespread cooperation of all academic staff in all universities in exam administration are other factors making the organizational culture unique.”* (K4)

Over time, with the establishment and institutionalization of the organizational form of the faculty, a bureaucratic structure dominated by rules and procedures began to emerge. Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, as an institution operating on a massive scale, has gained a central cultural structure that reduces the risk of error and embraces a more controlled development scheme with this structure that brings standards. *“After determining the work flows in general terms, the process progresses with the protocols and contracts made.”* (K6). *“An inventory for tasks of the personelle was created. After those roles and*

*responsibilities were reorganized.” (K4) “Standards emerge as opinions of internal and external stakeholders are collected. We value feedback that comes from external evaluators such as ones who give accreditation and quality certificates.” (K1)*

Findings reveal increased bureaucratic functioning through hierarchical flow and resource management in the recent years. The influence of quality and accreditation processes that the faculty and its certain departments have been going through with the pressure of internal and external stakeholders is apparent in the development of a more controlled bureaucratic culture scheme.

## DISCUSSION

For the discussion of the results of the findings shared above, firstly, the themes under the research question to reveal the elements that make up the organizational culture are mentioned. In the leader category, the founding leader of the Open Education Faculty, Prof. Dr. Yilmaz Buyukersen stands out as the main figure. Yilmaz Hoca, who developed an idea inspired by the British Open University 16 years before the open education faculty was established in Turkiye by considering the needs of the country in higher education, is a leader figure who has been able to effectively convey his vision to his colleagues and stakeholders around him. For this purpose, culture displays a transformative leadership as it plays a role in the construction of institutions, laws, fundraising, public opinions, human resources and organizational structures. Kocel (2014: 592) advocates that leaders have a vision and make their followers accept this vision and that transformative leaders prepare institutions for change and renewal. A transformative leader also impacts the employees, increases their excitement, raises their self-confidence and increases the level of commitment to the goal. Yilmaz Hoca has been found to have had a very significant role in the emergence and shaping of the organizational culture that has been shaped over the years for the Open Education faculty, and also on the adoption of this system and culture by the employees. The contribution of his and other founding figures' leadership should not be denied in the perception of 'open education' as a big family by the participants. Hellriegel et al. (1999: 616) also mentioned the qualities sought in an ideal leader as flexibility, taking initiative, being innovative, taking risks, analytical thinking, willingness to work, giving importance to quality, and being result-oriented on organizational effectiveness and a strong cultural structure; stating that under such leadership members adopt a loyal family spirit.

Another important element that builds culture within organizations is stories that are conveyed from person to person through oral transmission and strengthen the sense of belonging and adoption in employees. When we look at the history of open education, many firsts and the rapid restructuring ability after the establishment are the prominent aspects of the institution in the stories told. Stories about the efforts to prepare mass education materials for a higher number of students than expected, overcoming major exam organizations, multi-dimensional training of qualified human resources, bringing together the leading professors of the country with students, the establishment of the first color television studio, and efforts to solve the resource shortage have left their mark on the history of the institution as stories of them are constantly being told. These stories from the past of the institution have a crucial role on the ability of the Open Education Faculty to carry out mass education activities regularly and without errors, its ability to adapt to innovations and flexibility, and also its fast restructuring power. The effect of lived stories on employee behavior is expressed as being a bridge between the past and the present (Unutkan, 1995). Similarly, Gordon (2002) mentioned that stories serve as a guide for the wider diffusion of culture and values and understanding organizational activities. In Open Education faculty, the stories emphasized by the participants focus on operational affairs and success stories, conveying the functioning of the institution and at the same time fulfilling the duties of making new members adopt the culture.

One of the most important carriers of cultural transfer in institutions which is discussed within the scope of the research is organizational language. When we look at the 40-year history of the Open Education Faculty, it is seen that the terminological language of the open and distance learning discipline and the ways of doing business used in the organization has developed over time. The unique language used among employees both in administrative or academic positions started to emerge with the translations of the British Open University and other foreign resources, but has naturally developed and widely accepted today thanks to academic studies, theses, publishers, international conferences, course materials, collaborations and protocols. The

faculty has an alive and in-use language shared with all its units and staff. In addition, applications such as dictionaries, databases, archive systems are used to protect this language and transmit it to the future. The formation of the language in the Open Education faculty and the effort to protect it can be considered among the most important indicators that the members of the organization have adopted a common culture. In this regard, Robbins (1987, p.367) considers the use of corporate language by employees as an indicator for cultural adoption and an important effort for the preservation of organizational culture. When we look at how language is perceived in open education faculty, it is seen that academic terminology is mentioned rather than administrative processes, which is in line with Bailey (2004), who emphasizes that the culture in universities traditionally has an academic discipline-based content and language.

One of the most nurturing elements of culture is daily work routines. These routines, which we call rituals, are one of the elements that are taken for granted as they are repeated, taught and transferred to new members by the employees. In our findings there was an emphasis on administrative rituals related to operational activities. Book writing, preparation and shooting of television programs, exam question development, meetings and studies related to exam organizations are among the organizational rituals frequently encountered. In addition to these, there are routines related to administrative affairs and academic studies. In this context, the Open Education Faculty is an institution that applies the multidimensional business culture in its work routines. Herguner (2000) stated that cultural ideological systems in academic institutions occur at three different levels: corporate culture, professional culture and academic discipline culture. It is seen that work routines that support culture are shaped at all these levels at the same time in an inseparable way in Open Education faculty. In addition, although it has an organizational structure that is divided into units today, it is noteworthy that the institution still maintains working routines that carry out operational, administrative and academic affairs together.

Another cultural element that constitutes the organizational culture and is discussed within the scope of the research is values. Values that came primarily out from the findings are knowledge, reliability and lifelong learning whereas technology, innovation, quality and R&D also stand out among the values that aim to improve the service offered. As an institution that has broken grounds and managed to update its scope and technology infrastructure since its establishment, these values are protected and cultural transfer is taken care of. Another value that draws attention in the findings is the concept of human focus, which represents the priority of providing equal opportunity in education. For the open education faculty, which strives to provide education services to individuals from different segments of the society, human-orientedness is also seen among the values carried to the present day. Considering values, it has been determined that the officially announced values that are given importance in the promotion of the institution and the operational values that are effective on the ways of doing business might not always be in harmony with each other (Thevenot, 1986, p.96). In our findings, prominent values of the Open Education Faculty embraced by the members are parallel to official values stated and operational values coincide with Wiener's (1988) functional organizational values.

In the theme of ceremonies in which organization-specific celebrations and activities are handled, learner-oriented activities such as graduation and certificate of achievement ceremonies are expressed as priority in the codes that stand out for the Open Education faculty. The symbolic value of graduation is the bond it establishes between the teacher and the learner. Graduation ceremonies have become a tradition in the open education faculty, as the closeness between faculty members and alumni and their relatives is considered important. Smart and Hamm (1993) refer to the morale of faculty and learners and that focusing on external environment relations can strengthen the cultural effectiveness of higher education institutions. In this respect, the emphasis on graduations shared by the faculty members, learners and administrators of the Open Education faculty can be evaluated as empowering the culture. Activities that strengthen the bond of employees with each other and with the institution are as important as the learner-teacher interaction. Erdem and Isbasi (2001) state that the academic workforce is the dominant subculture for the cultural codes formed in university institutions. Bazzi (1999) also stated that the academic workforce adopts the organizational culture more thanks to organic interactive organizational structures that faculty members share with each other. Therefore, meetings, meals and feasts that support the organizational culture among the academic workforce also strengthens the bond between many offices, provincial coordinators, and representative offices of the open education faculty, which operates in a very wide geographical area. Ceremonies that bring

together employees from different provinces and even countries provide valuable contributions in terms of acting in coordination, owning a common purpose, speaking the same language, solving problems together, celebrating successes together, instilling a sense of belonging to the institution. This is seen as one of the main factors behind the open education staff's definition of the institution as a big family.

Another important element for organizational culture is symbols. Open education faculty is an institution that has many visual, printed and audio materials that could be taken as symbols themselves and are rich in symbols. In all of these materials, the most important symbol emphasized in the institution's web page, representations, exam documents, office materials and official correspondence is the logo of the institution. Looking at the history of this logo, it is noteworthy that the drawing was consciously shaped, and that the image aimed to represent the concepts supporting the mission and vision statements. In the details of the logo, it can be stated that the emphasis is placed on the local to the universal; and a visual that emphasizes the concepts of solidity and strength with its colors is preferred. It is seen that the open education faculty, which does not have a separate logo from the university, has used a logo integrated with the university by writing the faculty name under the larger institution logo. In this case, the logo is repeated more often symbolically, and it has left deeper traces in the minds of all internal and external stakeholders. The Faculty revised the logo once in a 40-year period with an aim to emphasize renewal and transformation by changing the color and writing style of the existing image, but a short time later, the old logo was readopted. When the participants were asked which logo they liked, the first logo common answer was given, and the effect of the established symbols on the employees stood out in the institution. In this context, the power of the symbolic value created by the logo for the open education faculty and the intensity of adoption can be expressed as supportive for the corporate culture. In Rafaeli and Worline (1995, p. 5), the indicator of successful symbols is explained by the unifying feature on the members of the organization. When the symbolic elements are mentioned, open education television programs, book designs, many audio and visual materials come to mind, and it has been determined that the building in the campus has a symbolic meaning. In the findings, it was emphasized that the architecture of the other buildings on the campus was different by expressing that it symbolized technology and innovation. In this regard, James (1997, p.85) argues that symbolic value can be created for culture with building forms and spatial distributions in organizations. As an institution that solves the mass higher education service with the support of technology, a connection is established between a modern and innovative building architecture and working style, far from the classical style apparent in the rest of the campus buildings. Using the architectural symbolism advocated by Willis (1996) in this regard, the open education faculty adopts an understanding that symbolizes a certain way of thinking and instills a sense of belonging to the employees with its building shape, building materials and style.

When we evaluate the research findings in terms of cultural types, the first heading that comes to the fore in Schneider's typologies is the culture of cooperation. The cooperation of many units such as testing unit, learning technologies research and development unit, computer technologies development unit, provincial offices and TV production units is essential due to the workload and work tempo of open education. Collaborative culture, as Schneider (1988) states, focuses on the experience of employees and the benefits they offer. Strengthening informal communication in the face of workload and supporting organic structures can also be seen among the indicators related to this culture. Although the institution has expanded its scope and activity content over time, it still acts in cooperation. However, it is noteworthy that today, a protectionist perspective has been added to the culture. As an institution providing mass higher education services, this is a natural result. The fact that the open education system has a settled and large structure requires multidimensional thinking of the decisions taken. Akin (2013, p.43) is one of those who argue that the controlling culture is seen more in large production and service enterprises. Open education faculty tries to prevent confusion and errors by providing control from a single center with the protectionist approach brought by growth. Before making a decision within the scope of the faculty, establishing the cause and effect relationships correctly, predicting risks, conducting meetings and pilot studies so that the system can operate without errors are practices that strengthen the protective culture. In this way, reliability in educational activities, which is an important organizational value for open education, is maintained.

Considering the organizational culture typology of Miles and Snow within the scope of the second research question, it can be stated that the prominent culture types for the Open Education faculty are the developing and analytical cultures. As an innovative institution that has been adding new programs and curricula since its

establishment, raising multidimensional human resources, finding formulas for lack of resources, enlarging its target audience with strategic protocols, pioneering the firsts in technological investments and continuing its transformation, Open Education Faculty is an institution where development is constantly supported. For this reason, it can be stated that the developmental organizational culture is seen as dominant. The transformation from a small university to a mega-university reaching millions of learners has taken place through the developmental efforts of the open education faculty culture (Daniel, 1996). Considering the responses from the participants in the research, it is noteworthy that more cautious steps have been taken in the transitional decisions with the growth of the institution over time, the expansion of the geographical scope, and the massive number of learners. When a change occurs under the influence of internal or external dynamics, instead of making immediate decisions, organizing search meetings, conducting preliminary research, conducting pilots, and taking new steps with the coordination of all relevant application units is an indication that the analytic culture has become widespread in the institution. Karaca (2022) considers analytic culture as a combination of developer and protective culture. The effect of the protective style on the previously prominent cultural types for open education has been mentioned. Emphasis is also placed on elements of a developer culture. For this reason, it is usual for the Open Education Faculty to reflect the analytic culture, which represents the combination of both types of organizations, as the faculty culture. Eren (2008) claims that analytic culture focuses on balance and change. While balance is an effort to create formal structures in the institution and increase the effectiveness of existing activities, change means adapting to environmental conditions and developing a cautious strategy. Open Education Faculty continues its development with cautious strategies due to the size of the institution. In order to support the developmental aspect of the analytic culture in the faculty; as Patt and Margarit (1999) stated, employees should be convinced of the possibility of success, research support, and supportive social norms within the organization. Thus, the developmental aspect of the faculty can be strengthened.

When we look at the organizational culture types of Kono, it has been determined that Open Education Faculty started its activities with a leader-oriented dynamic understanding, and then it shifted towards a bureaucratic culture with the effect of growth and institutionalization over time. Open Education faculty has a leader-oriented foundation story. The faculty started its activities as an institution that Yilmaz Buyukersen started as an idea and took preliminary steps for its foundation as a president of a small and newly established university in the 1960's. In addition, the influence of him as a leader on many critical issues from the design of the corporate logo to the structure of the studios, from the architecture of the buildings to the way they operate daily is acknowledged by the participants. Kose et al. (2001) consider the effective use of symbols in the formation of culture as one of the important skills of leadership. In this context, as Alvesson and Berg (1992, p.16) stated, Yilmaz Hoca has become a name that acts with the necessity of the leader to produce and work with symbols. In addition to this leader-oriented culture, Open Education faculty also maintains a dynamic culture that produces accurate information rapidly, maintains its reliability in error-free examination organizations, and continues its development in terms of human resources, infrastructure and academics, as well as its leading influence. Independent learning approach that has grown to be a recent prominent value in higher education has also asserted a dynamism into the system due to efforts to integrate quality standards and processes. However, when we look at the transformation of the Faculty over time, the power of a single decision to affect the whole system, the clumsiness brought by size and the pressure to keep the risk of error under control have led to a bureaucratic structure where the authority and responsibility flow is defined, the central management style comes to the fore, and the regulations and procedures are clearly drawn. In this case, it is normal for bureaucratic mechanisms to develop as well as dynamic aspects within the organizational culture. In the study carried out by Erdem et al. (2011) it was revealed that the type of culture that the personnel in academic institutions see in their organizations is more hierarchical and control-oriented structures, but what should be is a dynamic, flexible culture that is strengthened by cooperation between employees. Open education faculty has been established with a dynamic structure, which is seen as ideal in this context, and has turned into an institution where bureaucratic tendencies have become widespread over time. However, despite its size, it maintains its closeness to the ideal structure due to its flexibility to respond quickly to environmental changes and its cooperation culture.

Of types of organizations in general, it is seen that Open Education Faculty with a history of more than 40 years is far from a static culture. Instead, it is a dynamic institution that has adopted collaborative and

continuous work as a cultural code. The transformations experienced due to search for innovation and growth are an indication that the organization is culturally strong in terms of the developmental dimension. In time, as the open education faculty increases its geographical scope, target audience and number of programs with continuous growth, it has become more careful to take innovative steps. The faculty has gained a more bureaucratic structure due to the correct use of resources, anticipation of risks, and expansion of the area of control. This situation causes the institution to evolve towards a culture that approaches the process of making new decisions analytically and thus to protect itself from threats.

The organizational culture of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty is not shaped on a single dimension. Many aspects such as the founding leader, academics, administrative staff, managers who took part in the history of the institution, administrative units, institutions with strategic cooperation, the state, learners, scientific conferences, institutional events and ceremonies have touches on the faculty culture. As a world university that first realized distance education in Turkiye and has been successfully continuing it for more than 40 years, the organizational culture of the faculty can be considered as settled, flexible, dynamic and cautious after institutional growth. It is possible to evaluate the organizational culture of an open education faculty which provides mass education services and has such a large scope, in terms of its unifying effect on internal and external stakeholders and the level of adoption of tangible and intangible cultural elements.

## CONCLUSION

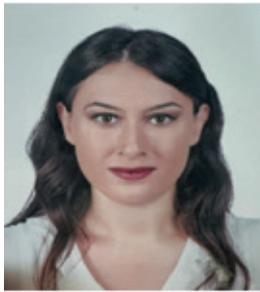
Organizational culture is a concept that makes institutions an institution and adds spirit to the structural system. Culture, which connects resources and inspires the motivation to act together towards a common goal, is in a position that affects the functioning at many macro or micro levels. Within the scope of this study, the concept of culture, which is discussed at the level of academic organizations, has been analyzed within the context of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. The categories that emerged within the scope of the content analysis carried out are grouped under two headings: elements that build culture and types of culture. In the category of elements; leader, stories, language, rituals, values, ceremonies and symbols were analyzed and in terms of culture types Schneider, Miles and Snow and Kono's typologies were included. As a result of the analysis, it was found that that Anadolu University Open Education Faculty has a strong leadership effect on its culture. Findings reveal that Yilmaz Buyukersen's leadership played an active role in the establishment of the faculty's culture and it still has significant influences. Stories of hard and devoted work during periods when faculty resources were insufficient highlight the prominence of the culture of cooperation. Today, these stories from the past being told to new members are effective in the systematic, error-free and collaborative continuation of the work. It has been determined that academic and professional terminology has come to the fore and tried to be protected instead of an institutional language in the organization. Institutional rituals are mostly seen in operational activities related to work processes. Since the faculty has a work-oriented structure, organizational values that prioritize the work done have emerged. It is noteworthy that in the ceremonies, those who teach and learn as the important parts of the subculture in academic institutions are given priority. For this purpose, within the scope of open education faculty; many organizations are held, from graduations, events, festivities, to meetings that bring together provincial representatives and offices. It is thought that the Open Education Faculty, which is a geographically comprehensive institution, strengthens the communication flow and coordination skills it provides between employees and units in different spatial conditions, by sustaining these traditional activities. When we look at what has become symbols for the Open Education Faculty, the logo, television programs, book designs and the building architecture in the campus are among the prominent topics. When the typologies in cultural studies are examined, it is seen that there is no stagnant and stable culture in the institution. Instead, there is a cultural structuring that is dynamic, with a leader effect, and where development is continuous with cooperation and hard work. When the faculty reaches a certain size and scope over time, it is seen that cultural types that are more cautious, more analytical and systematic begin to come to the fore. In conclusion; considering the success of the Anadolu University Open Education faculty in providing higher education to people from all ages and other characteristics, its stable development, its ability to adapt quickly to changing environmental conditions, its intra-organizational communication and coordination skills, it can be stated that the organizational culture it has is a strong culture adopted by its followers.

## Suggestions and Recommendations

The organizational culture that brings the employees together in the process of achieving common goals has an advantageous potential for the institution in the process of achieving the future goals of the faculty. Anadolu University Open Education faculty, which has received significant influences in this context, can have the opportunity to add new ones to its achievements in the field of distance education and maintain its competitive advantage if it continues to use this power correctly.

Further research recommendations may include looking into certain aspects of organizational culture or faculty culture more specifically in open higher education institutions, such as faculty goal orientation or shared values among faculty members.

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