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# ORGANIZATION CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR UNIVERSITIES

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## ABSTRACT

Culture is a vibrant component of effective & efficient administrative practices in higher education institutes (HEIs) and is linked with progress and success. This research examines the impact of organization culture on organization performance in public and private sector universities of district Peshawar and presents a comparison of the impact in both the sectors. Impact of the three levels of cultural analysis, Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs & Values and Basic Underlying Assumptions on Organization Performance is measured and discussed. Schein Model of Organization Culture (Schein, 2004) and Balance Scorecard (BSC) for non-profit organizations (Kaplan, 2001) are used to examine the relationship between organizational performance (as dependent variable) and organizational culture (as independent variable). The research establish that organization culture have a strong positive impact on organization performance and that in public sector universities the 'Artifacts' and in private sector universities the 'Espoused Belief and Values' have greater impact on organization performance.

**Keywords:** Organization Culture, Organization Performance, Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs and Values, Basic Underlying Assumptions.

## ÖRGÜTSEL KÜLTÜR ve PERFORMANSA ETKİSİ: KAMU ve ÖZEL SEKTÖR ÜNİVERSİTELERİ ARASINDA KARŞILATIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA

### ÖZET

Kültür, yüksek öğretim kurumlarındaki etkili ve verimli yönetim uygulamalarının en önemli parçalarından bir tanesidir ve gelişim ve başarı ile de çok yakından bağlantılıdır. Bu araştırma, Peshawar'da bulunan kamu ve özel sektör üniversitelerinin örgütsel performanslarında örgüt kültürünün önemini incelemekte ve aynı zamanda kamu ve özel üniversitelerdeki etkilerin karşılaştırmasını sunmaktadır. Artefaktlar, inançlar ve temel kabullerin altında yatan değerler olmak üzere kültürün üç temel seviyesinin örgüt performansını nasıl etkilediği ölçülmüş ve tartışılmıştır. Örgütsel performans (bağımlı değişken) ile örgütsel kültür (bağımsız değişken) arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için Schein'in örgüt kültürü modeli (Schein, 2004) ve kar amaçsız örgütler için Dengeli Skorkart (Kaplan, 2001) kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları örgüt kültürünün örgütsel performans üzerinde güçlü olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, kamu üniversitelerinde "artifağtlar" özel üniversitelerde olduğundan daha fazla, diğer yandan "inançlar ve değerler" ise özel üniversitelerde daha etkili bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Örgüt Kültürü, Örgüt Performansı, Artefaktlar, İnançlar ve Değerler, Temel Kabuller

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## Introduction

Abundant associations have been established between performance and culture of an organization through decades of empirical research. Culture of an organization is a complex issue that comprises of values and beliefs shared by members of an organization, their attitudes, artifacts, behavioral norms and assumptions (Ogbonna & Lloyd, 2002). Culture can be considered as ‘software’ in an organization that delivers better or even the best means of thinking and/or feeling that can assist managers to take better decisions (Shili, 2012). The term ‘organization culture’ was used by Pettigrew (1979) in academic research for the first time and stated that organization culture is important for organizational effectiveness, and management should recognize values and customs of the members of organization and the organization itself. Schein Model of organization culture (Schein, 2004) discuss in detail the concept, formation and evolution of organization culture. Performance and effectiveness of organization is widely investigated matter since the introduction of organization theory (Jean-Francois, 2004). In Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) culture is a vibrant component of effective & efficient administrative practices and is linked with progress and success (Osman et al., 2010). Recent global progression of universities has led to the varying nature of HEIs. Each facet of all types of organizations is affected by the shifting political, societal and financial aspects, which made it imperative to research the culture of HEIs (Osman et al., 2010).



This research investigates the impact of organization culture on organization performance in HEIs and uses three levels of cultural analysis (Artifacts (ART), Espoused Beliefs & Values (EBV) and Basic Underlying Assumptions (BUA)) described by the Schein Model of Organization Culture (Schein, 2004) and the four perspectives (internal process, learning and growth, customer and financial) of Balance Scorecard Balance Scorecard (BSC) for non-profit organizations (Kaplan, 2001) to examine the relationship between

organizational performance (as dependent variable) and organizational culture (as independent variable). Course of the current study is to discover the situation of organization culture in public and private sector universities and analyze its impact on organization performance and present a comparison of the impact in both the sectors.

### **Literature Review**

Numerous factors are ascribed as key elements for organization success and culture is among those listed at the top. Through decades of research, scholars (Schein 1990, 2004, Denison & Mishra, 1995, Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008) have established numerous links between various facets of organization culture and performance. Modern organizations are now aware of the fact that culture can be vital factor for acquisition of competitive edge (Schein, 2004). Culture is comprised of a group's communal beliefs and values, attitudes, behavioral norms, assumptions and artifacts (Hofstede, 1980). According to Owens (1987) and Schein (1990) the organization's culture is an integration of shared values and beliefs which produce behavioral norms that help organizations to solve their problems. A firm's beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors are key sources which can be used to take competitive advantage from other firms (Hall, 1993, Peteraf, 1993) and facilitates organization to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently (Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008). According to Bagraim (2001), organization culture has no single accepted definition and this has been directed to a great deal of conceptual difficulties in literature. Organizational cultures can be differentiated by means of numerous dimensions. The Competing Values Framework conceptualized by Cameron & Quinn (2006), propose four different "organizational types" namely Adhocracy, Clan, Market and Hierarchy. Grondahl & Martinsson (2011) offered a version of the competing value framework that bring together interpersonal, political, institutional and strategic aspects of organizational settings. They combined the original framework with additional four kinds of major models; developmental, group, hierarchical and rational

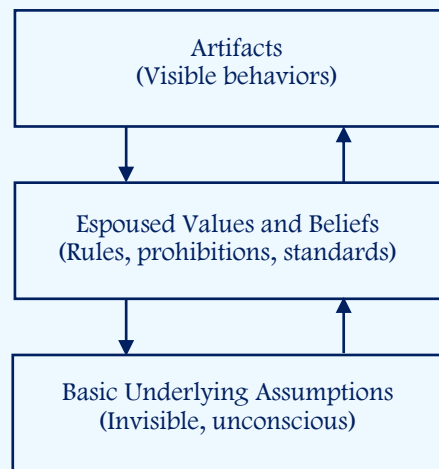




culture models. Likewise, Organizational Culture Inventory (Cooke & Lafferty, 1986) categorize organizations on the basis of culture into three different types: Passive, Aggressive and Constructive.

Recently, scholars are enthused to have insight into organizational theory to provide management effectiveness in academia. In HEIs culture is now linked with progress and success (Osman et al., 2010). Recent global progression of universities has led to varying sort of HEIs. Each facet of organizations is affected by the shifting political, societal and financial aspects, which made it imperative to research the culture of HEIs (Osman et al., 2010). Universities globally have experienced growing pressures through the preceding two decades to adapt to swiftly varying forces originating from external environment (Bartell, 2003). Culture of university is a distinctive form of organization culture where beliefs, values and basic underlying assumptions are to greater extent common in all universities (Salonda, 2008). According to Fralinger & Olson (2007), HEIs Cultures which support teamwork as well as individual accomplishment appear to be most effective. Osman et al., (2010) noted that there are three sources from which university culture originates; assumptions, beliefs and values, that comes from organizations creators and learning of the group members with the evolution of their organizations. Schein (2004) proposed several levels for culture ranging from profoundly embedded, unconscious assumptions to the perceptible manifestations and exhibitions that are visible and can be felt. Basic Underlying Assumptions, Espoused Beliefs and Values and visible Artifacts are major levels of cultural analysis. Artifacts include visible products of a group, Espoused Beliefs and Values are expressed and openly announced ideologies and standards that a group is striving to achieve and when solutions to problems repeatedly prove to be useful they are taken for granted and turned to Assumptions.



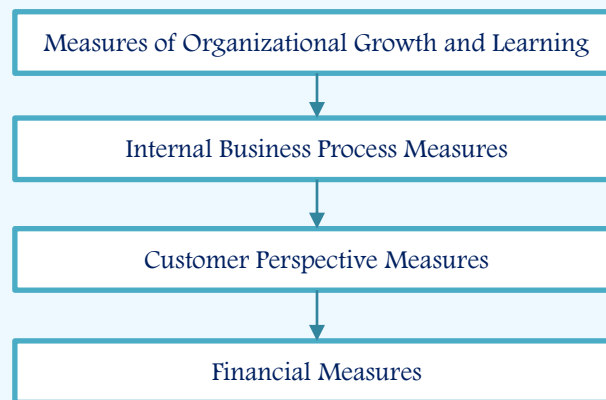


**Figure 1:** Levels of analysis of organization culture (Source: Schein, 2004)

Organizational effectiveness/performance is one of the most widely studied issue since inception of organization theory (Jean-Francois, 2004). Corporates are equated in standings of stock prices, revenues, incomes, debt ratios, efficiency and market proportion (March & Sutton, 1997). Organizations generally use financial indicators for performance measurement. According to Jyoti et al., (2006) such indicators may be deprived of forecasting and predicting function, might not emphasize on the processes but only the operative outcomes, and never explain the cause and effect of operative outcomes. Non-profit organizations lack the simple elegance of fiscal measure to evaluate their performance and have difficulty in developing surrogate quantitative measures of organizational performance (Kaplan, 2001). For assessment of performance exam scores, rankings and grading by magazines, research output and standing of faculties are used by universities (March & Sutton, 1997). Cunha & Miller (2012) reported that a single measure might not aggregate such diverse and dynamic dimensions accurately, therefore, a group of indicators is required for quantitative measures of institutional performance. Carton (2004) is of the opinion that performance measurement is inherently situational as different organizations have different set of circumstances and in most



facets of academic research a few studies have directly addressed the issue of measuring overall organizational performance. Emphasis of most of the performance measurement schemes for non-profit organizations is financial measures. Effectivity and efficiency in meeting the requirements of their constituencies should be a measure of success for not-for-profit organizations. To fill this gap, Kaplan (2001) put forth a system of performance management termed as “Balanced Scorecard (BSC)—for private sector organizations”. This newly proposed system also make use of financial measures but supplemented these with measurements from other perspectives as well. Theme of the proposed Balance Scorecard is that accomplishment for not-for-profit organization cannot solely be measured using financial measures. Performance assessment methods for such organization should also consider other factors such as internal process, learning and growth and customer perspective.



**Figure 2:** Balance Scorecard for non-profit Organization (Source: Kaplan, 2001)

### Conceptual Model & Hypothesis

Figure 3 present the conceptual model used for this research. Independent variables are Artifacts (ART), Espoused Beliefs and Values (EBV) and Basic Underlying Assumptions (BUA) and dependent variable is Organizational Performance (OP). As population for the study is Universities of district Peshawar, therefore, the Balance Scorecard for

non-profit organizations proposed in (Kaplan, 2001) is used. In measuring Organizational Performance (OP) more consideration is given to dimensions other than financial dimension. However, some measures for financial perspective are also used.

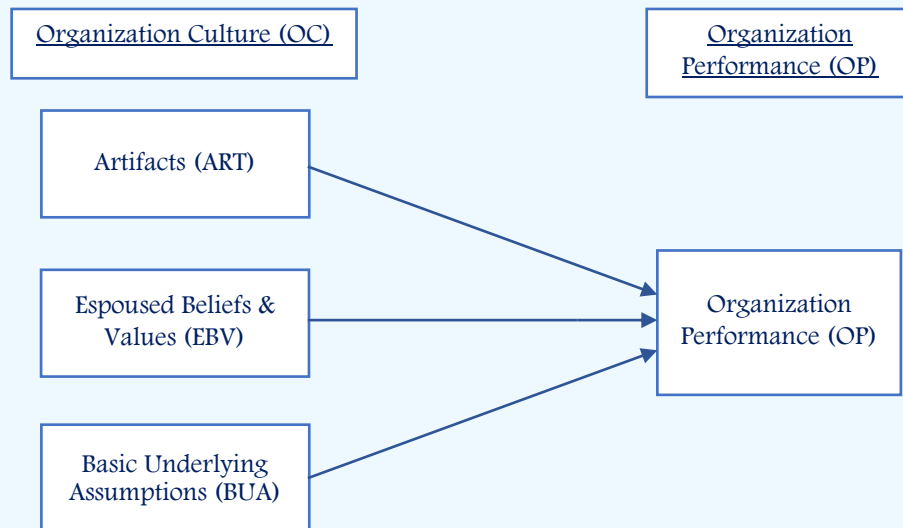


Figure 3: Research Model



Based on the conceptual model following hypothesis are proposed.

- H1<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Artifacts (ART) and Organizational Performance (OP).
- H2<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Espoused Beliefs & Values (EVB) and Organization Performance (OP).
- H3<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Basic Underlying Assumptions (BUA) and Organizational performance (OP).
- H4<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Organizational Culture (OC) and Organizational Performance (OP).

### Research Design

This research study follows a causal-hypothetical model, due to the nature of association between the variables. The research is an empirical testing of analyzing the impact of organization culture on

organization performance and nature of the research is quantitative, and hypothesis have been approved by the application of statistical techniques. Target population comprised of Grade-17 and/or above teaching faculty and administrative employees of public and private sector universities of Peshawar, Pakistan having at least 3 years of job experience in the university. Stratified random sampling is used to first select the sample of 6 universities from the total 15 universities of public and private sector (three from each sector). A sample of 250 employees (125 employees of 3 public sector universities and 125 employees of 3 private sector universities) is selected through random sampling. Primary data is gathered through a survey instrument i.e. questionnaire, designed based on the items derived from various studies discussed in literature review.

### Data Analysis & Findings

To test the relationship among variables and to find out the strength of relationships, multiple regression is employed. Regression analysis is used to find out the association between Organization Culture and Organization performance as dependent variable with the help of coefficients and  $R^2$ .

### Bivariate Correlation

Table 1 presents bivariate correlation matrix for each variable. Pearson correlation is the measure used to sort out that how well the variables are related to each other.

**Table 1: Bivariate Correlations**

		ART	EBV	BUA	OP
ART	Pearson Correlation	1	.519**	.345**	.689**
EBV	Pearson Correlation	.519**	1	.518**	.613**
BUA	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.518**	1	.313**
OP	Pearson Correlation	.689**	.613**	.313**	1



## Impact of Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs & Values and Basic Underlying

### Assumptions on Organization Performance

Table 2 presents the results of the statistical analysis. For relationship between Organization Culture OC (ART, EBV and BUA) and Organization performance (OP) in public sector universities of district Peshawar the value of correlation coefficient (R) and the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) indicated a strong positive relationship between the said variables and that the model is best fit. F-statistic indicated a significant relationship and the regression model indicated a positive relationship between the said variables and defined that all the three variables are related positively to OP. The slopes of the model indicated that for a unit change in ART, the value of OP will change by 0.646 units while for the unit change in EBV, the value of OP will change by 0.593. Also, for the unit change in BUA, there will be a change in OP by 0.436 units.

**Table 2: Results of statistical analysis**

	Statistics	Public Sector	Private Sector
<b>Relationship between OC (ART, EBV &amp; BUA) &amp; OP</b>	R	0.837	0.782
	$R^2$	0.700	0.612
	F	94.045	63.700
	Regression Coefficient (ART)	0.646	0.532
	Regression Coefficient (EBV)	0.593	0.624
	Regression Coefficient (BUA)	0.436	0.391
	P	0.00	0.00

While, for relationship between Organization Culture OC (ART, EBV, BUA) and Organization performance (OP) in private sector universities of district Peshawar the value of correlation coefficient (R) and the





coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) indicated that a positive relationship exists between the said variables indicated and that the model is best fit. F-statistic indicated that significant relationship and the regression model indicated a positive relationship between the said variables and defines that all the three variables are related positively to OP. The slopes of the model indicated that for a unit change in ART, the value of OP will change by 0.532 units while for the unit change in EBV, the value of OP will change by 0.624 and for the unit change in BUA, there will be a change in OP by 0.391 units.

Thus overall organization culture has a significant positive impact on organization performance in both public and private sector universities. The regression models indicated that all the three levels of organization cultural analysis (artifacts, Espoused beliefs and values and basic underlying assumptions) effect organization performance positively. However, in public sector universities artifacts has greater impact on organization performance than the other two levels. Espoused beliefs and values have smaller impact than artifacts but greater impact than basic underlying assumptions. While in private sector universities espoused beliefs and values have higher impact on organization performance than artifacts and basic underlying assumptions and the impact of artifacts on organization performance is greater than basic underlying assumptions.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Among the levels of cultural analysis, the artifacts have greatest impact on organization performance in public sector universities of district Peshawar. Thus leadership and management of public sector universities should pay more and more attention to their equipment and products, architecture of physical environment, language, arty creations, emotional displays, compartments of address, stories and myths, published lists of values, rituals and rites and other artifacts. Making the artifacts more and more visible and ensuring their proper



usage will lead to improvement in organization performance. Although smaller than the artifacts but espoused beliefs and values do have an impact on organization performance in public sector universities, therefore developing and disseminate a value system having explicitly articulated values and implementation of moral and ethical rules will also lead to improved performance.

In private sector universities, among the constituents of organization culture, the espoused belief and values have greatest impact on organization performance. Thus major consideration for leadership and management of private sector universities is to pay more and more attention to their value system, beliefs and moral and ethical rules. In order to enhance performance, they must have explicitly articulated values that must be known and followed throughout the organization. The impact of artifacts may be smaller than espoused beliefs and values due to the reason that great infrastructure or physical environment and the use of state of the art technology are not expected from private sector universities. But artifacts do have an impact on organization performance and private sector universities should also strive to develop better artifacts and making them visible at every level of organization. Being highly invisible, basic underlying assumptions have smallest impact on organization performance. This means that no matter how good the basic underlying assumptions are, unless they are not represented in publically articulated values and visible artifacts increased performance cannot be guaranteed. As it is evident from the results of this research that organization culture positively affects organization performance, the regulatory bodies in higher education should establish a system to evaluate organization culture of universities.

### **Future research**

The results of the current research indicate the statistical significance of various bivariate relationships relating to organization cultural and



organizational performance. Future research can extend the findings of this research in several areas. A considerable future research area involves expanding the population of the study to provincial and/or national level. This may help in confirming and generalizing the findings of this study. Additional area of future research involves to investigate the influence of individual artifacts or set of artifacts on organization performance and to isolate the artifacts with more impact and significance than the ones with less impact. An area for future research is to find out appropriate set of values and proposed a value system for HEIs that better serve to enhance their performance. Another area of future research is to propose and/or recommend a system for assessment and evaluation of organization culture prevailing in HEIs to better understand their culture.



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