

# Leadership Effectiveness in Chinese Universities: The Significance of Organizational Culture

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## ABSTRACT

In the modern world, or the era of globalization, a successful manager must be sensitive enough to arrange any strategic opportunities, be the architect of the organization, and motivate staff members toward this new change by applying and practicing not only intelligence quotient but also emotional and spiritual quotients. Managers with good personal traits could be defined as leaders or managers who are aware of social responsibility and emphasize it in their processing activities. Even though the leaders having the capabilities, it would not be effective if it's not associated with organizational culture. There are a number of reasons why the idea of organizational culture has gained popularity and momentum in the recent years. This study's goal is to investigate the high relation between organizational culture (Clan Cultures, Adhocracy Cultures, Hierarchical Cultures, and Market Cultures) and leadership effectiveness among leaders in higher education institutions in China. For a better understanding of the study, which strives to explain the concept of leadership and its behavior in order to achieve effectiveness in the education industry, the following objectives are outlined. Clearly, the researcher intends to comprehend the notion of organizational culture in order to contribute to the growth of knowledge using Process Leadership Theory and the integrative conceptual framework for this study. This study's discussion indirectly will be able to improve the leadership capabilities and effectiveness of Chinese managers at HEIs. The authorities of the education system and administration will benefit from this study by getting a knowledge of the leadership competency of each university's administrators and being able to incorporate this data into training and competency modules.

*keywords: leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, China, higher education institutions (HEIs)*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Certain managers or leaders believed that their achievement was exclusively attributable to themselves, with no assistance from their staff members or other nearby individuals. It appears that there are issues with how supervisors and subordinates communicate, as well as how employees interact with the general public. As interaction with others and the environment will facilitate the processing of production, relationships between managers, subordinates, employees, and societies outside of businesses are essential (Sharin, Hanafi, & Ahmad, 2020). However, in order to shield society and the environment from negative effects and problems, an integrated relationship is required. In truth, many companies and businesses benefit substantially from their efforts and become richer over time. But societies and the areas around them are sucked into poverty (Rizeanu & Momanu, 2022).

In the modern world, or the era of globalization, a successful manager must be sensitive enough to arrange any strategic opportunities, be the architect of the organization, and motivate staff members toward this new change by applying and practicing not only intelligence quotient but also emotional and spiritual quotients. Managers with good personal traits could be defined as leaders or managers who are aware of social responsibility and emphasize it in their processing activities (Sadler, 2003). Effective managers ought to be aware, self-assured, self-directed, decisive, continually expressing new ideas, and getting along with others, especially subordinates and employees who serve as the followers of their organization (Gallos, 2008). Leadership effectiveness continues to receive a lot of attention in both research and popular publications (Akter, Ahmed, Sentosa & Hizam, 2022).

This interest has only grown in response to the challenges posed by the global economy and growing globalisation. But figuring out what makes for great leadership has proven to be a challenging task. The dispute has ranged from the idea that leadership is a variation in executive leadership could account for up to 45% of an organization's success (Fleenor & Bryant, 2002). Even though the leaders having the capabilities, it would not be effective if its not associated with organizational culture. There are a number of reasons why the idea of organizational culture has gained popularity and momentum in the recent years. Tayeb (1994) asserts that (1) cultural values and attitudes vary from society to society, sometimes even in absolute terms, (2) that different cultural groups behave differently in similar situations due to variations in their underlying values and attitudes, and (3) that culture has a significant impact on the formation of work organizations and other social institutions.

Prior scholar has looked into organisational culture and potential connections to organisational performance more and more over the past 20 years (Gordon, 1985). As the workplace has gotten more unstable, this research has become more and more important. According to Denison (1990), mergers, a decline in productivity, and international rivalry have all brought attention to organisational cultures and their effects on effectiveness. While poor leaders typically cause harm to a business, effective leaders can offer a variety of advantages. The people in charge of directing, maintaining, and running organizations are known as managers. It suggests that managers are the foundation of their organizations and have the power to take any action necessary to increase profitability at their own workplaces (Putra & Sentosa, 2018).

Being a good manager who can handle every duty is challenging. The majority of managers think they have control over their workplaces (Bisson & Folk, 2000). To accomplish tasks that are occasionally necessary to reach individual or organizational goals, managers put the process of getting things done through people into action. It means that good management by managers produces a successful company at the top, much to the joy of stockholders, but pays little attention to the organization as a whole (Kellerman, 2010). As a result, numerous research has been conducted on the competence of leaders and managers inside a company. No matter if the organization is in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors, the required competences and the capacity to handle an objective problem can be utilized to assess a person's level of competence (Brown & May, 2012).

This study's goal is to investigate the high relation between organizational culture (Clan Cultures, Adhocracy Cultures, Hierarchical Cultures, and Market Cultures) and leadership effectiveness among leaders in higher education institutions in China in light of such issues and discussions. For a better understanding of the study's objectives, which include comprehending the concept of leadership and its behaviors in order to be effective in the education industry, refer to the following illustrations. It goes without saying that the researcher wants to understand organizational culture and all of its facets in order to enhance knowledge.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Organizational Culture**

In [Zawawi's \(2008\)](#) research, she investigates the cultural characteristics of Indonesian workers. She examined the similarities and variances of cultural values among Indonesian management personnel. Her research relies heavily on a case study of Nestle in Indonesia, one of the country's largest international corporations. Her study included a qualitative methodology in which thirteen management workers were questioned. Several new patterns of cultural values are emerging among Nestle employees in Indonesia. Her research has contributed to the literature by enhancing our awareness of cultural value issues in Indonesian society. In [Zawawi's \(2008\)](#) conclusion, she also stated, "Although the cultural values cannot be generalized to the entire population in Indonesia, new patterns in terms of the choices and their perceptions of the significance of these cultural values appeared to be occurring among the community members. In a country characterized by a range of subcultures stemming from the presence of distinct racial groups, recognising these cultural values is particularly crucial for organisations.

To determine the success of an organisation, it is vital to execute organisational activities in accordance with these changes to guarantee that the results of these activities have the greatest possible impact on employee performance. [Bashayreh \(2009\)](#) has also done similar research but with the concentration on academic industry. His study is to examine and to gain an in-depth of the significant relationships between the dimensions of organizational culture and employees' job satisfaction among the academic staff at University of Indonesia. It was done among 135 lecturers at University of Indonesia. The main methodologies are descriptive and inferential statistic. Whereas frequency and percentage were the type of statistic descriptive and statistic inferential used were multiple regression and Pearson correlation.

Bashayreh's (2009) result showed that no significant between reward and performance oriented and job satisfaction. However, there are significant between organizational culture dimensions (supportiveness, innovation and stability, and communication) and job satisfaction. Bashayreh (2009) has recommended future research in others organizational culture dimensions such as consensual, entrepreneurial, bureaucratic and competitive using a similar approach. Besides, he also proposed that future researchers should investigate the relationship of organizational culture and job satisfaction in public and private sector. This kind of investigation would help explain the comparison

among the facets of organization culture in developing job satisfaction. The findings also could tell how the public and private working environment contributes to the future findings.

Cameron and Freeman (1991) have investigated the relationship between congruence, strength and type of organizational cultures and organizational effectiveness. According to Cameron and Freeman (1991), past literature is filled with propositions that strength and congruence of an organization's culture are associated with high levels of performance. In Cameron and Freeman's (1991) research, they have distributed the surveys to 334 institutions of higher education's staff, which revealed that no significant differences in organizational effectiveness exist between those with congruent cultures and those with incongruent cultures, or between those with strong cultures versus those weak cultures. Their research did point out, however, that the types of culture possessed by institutions are clan, adhocracy, hierarchy or market has an important relationship with effectiveness than were congruence or strength. In their study, the institutions of higher education with highly congruence cultures were compared to those with highly incongruent cultures on nine dimensions of organizational effectiveness. No significant differences were found on any of the dimensions (Cameron and Freeman, 1991).

Cameron and Freeman (1991) has also mentioned that this supports the claim of this study that is being assessed, rather than more obvious organizational attributes, and that congruence of culture is not the distinguishing attribute that should dominate future research as it has in the past. Nonetheless, Cameron and Freeman's (1991) findings showed insignificant relationship in the strength culture between culture and effectiveness. Besides, there is no significant differences were found between institutions with strong cultures and those with weak cultures on other organizational characteristics such as structure, strategy, environment, and demographics (Cameron and Freeman, 1991).

According to the findings, the conventional notion that congruence and strength of culture lead to excellent performance is not supported. In accordance with Cameron and Freeman (1991), the study identifies culture type as a significant, but previously overlooked, aspect of culture that has a correlation with efficacy. Their research indicates that the organisational culture typology comprises of clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market. According to the research, the majority of institution processes had a few of these cultural characteristics, although a minority of the institutions had blatantly dominant cultures. Clans were the most prevalent facet in the institution, followed by hierarchies, adhocracies, and then markets. In conclusion, the most crucial and significant cultural distinctions across the institutions in this study were type-based, not strength-based or congruence-based.

## **B. Clan Cultures**

Clan cultures are sometimes referred to as group, cohesiveness, participation, teamwork, sense of family, attachment, morale and a genuine concern for organizational (Zammuto & Krakower, 1991, Quinn and Spreitzer, 1991). There is an internal focus on unity and integration as the clan cultures leader style display characteristics like mentor, facilitator and parent-figure. Nonetheless, the clan culture focus on its bonding with employees where the bonding style are more likely to be loyalty, tradition and interpersonal cohesion. To achieve these positive outcomes,

there is a long-term emphasis on personnel practices, including training, skill development, reward equity, trust and empowerment (Tata & Prasad, 1998). Besides, clan culture strategic emphases are more toward developing human resources; commitment and morale as it focusses on internal maintenance more (smoothing activities, integration).

### **C. Adhocracy Cultures**

Adhocracy cultures are sometimes referred to as developmental cultures because they are centred on the need for creativity and innovative individuals who are prepared to take risks in developing new products and ideas to ensure that they are the first to market (Dastmalchian et al., 2000). Adhocracy cultures are dominated by entrepreneurialism, innovation, and adaptability, and are centred on organisational values based on adaptation. These traits are aimed toward an external focus in external positioning, namely competitiveness and distinctiveness. This culture has been linked to greater employee satisfaction (Simangunsong, Hutasoit & Sentosa, 2020), morale (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991), and quality of life (Quinn and Spreitzer, 1991). In addition, adhocracy cultures have been demonstrated to have a favourable link with quality, performance, operational results, and customer satisfaction because they often have an outward focus (Dellana and Hauser, 1999).

### **D. Hierarchical Cultures**

The major characteristics of hierarchical cultures are order, norms, and homogeneity (Dastmalchian et al., 2000; Quinn & Spreitzer, 1991). This emphasis necessitates the adoption of clear standards, procedures, and minimal autonomy and choice over work processes to guarantee that personnel are always compliant (Cameron and Freeman, 1991; Dellana & Hauser, 1999). The leader type is more likely to be coordinator and administrator, resulting in a top-down bonding style with rules, policies, and processes to adhere to. Strategic priorities are stability, predictability, and efficient operations. Hierarchical cultures have been demonstrated to have a detrimental impact on the attitudes of employees, resulting in decreasing satisfaction, morale, and commitment while increasing conflict, absenteeism, and turnover (Zammuto & Krakower 1991).

### **E. Market Cultures**

Market cultures are sometimes referred to as rational cultures because they are focused on control and planning, goal-oriented, productive, and competition in order to succeed. They are also concerned with competitiveness and goal achievement. Market cultures are focused on getting the job done, being competitive, gaining market leadership, and having a reputation that promotes long-term success because there is an external focus (Dastmalchian et al., 2000). Therefore, it has been discovered that market cultures are negatively related to employee attitudes, such as low morale, a greater desire to leave, intensifying conflict, and increasing absenteeism and turnover (Harris & Mossholder, 1996). This is typically caused by a lack of engagement because the emphasis is on control and lowering costs and boosting efficiency will result in low satisfaction. The strategic priorities of market cultures include dominance in the market and competitive advantage.

## F. Leadership Effectiveness

The force of change has always been and will continue to be leaders. To know what bad leaders should avoid, the dynamic organisation should be aware of the traits and abilities of weak leaders (Aker, Ahmed, Sentosa & Hizam, 2022). Each industry has additional standards and demands for its executives. According to Szczepa 'nka-Woszczyna and Gajdzik (2016), the uniqueness of corporate activities determines the leadership competencies and talents. Building an environment in which Industry 4.0 firms may learn from one another through collaboration requires a number of key elements, including face-to-face interaction, positive correlation, interpersonal skills, and group behaviour. The idea might also present a way for group members to get what they need and help strengthen their bonds. In times of danger, effective leadership benefits the country. Additionally, it helps the corporate organisation succeed and makes it easier for the nonprofit organisation to carry out its objective. Effective parental guidance helps kids grow up, stay healthy, and become responsible people who contribute to society (Simangunsong, Hutasoit & Sentosa, 2020). This study will concentrate on the factors that contribute most to creating a high-quality and effective leader in order to ensure complete success in any leadership capacity.

It is challenging to foresee the qualities leaders will have in about ten years. However, for a long time, leadership has been defined by strategic vision, team building, inspiration, assiduity, dialogue, and loyalty (Kwiatkowska et al., 2022). The definition of "lead" in the Webster dictionary is "to direct down a course." A leader is also described as "one who leads and possesses commanding authority or influence" in the dictionary. Aside from that, "The position of head of a group, organisation, or institution" is the definition of leadership. the ability or power to take charge of others " (Surji, 2015). According to the definitions given above, leadership is the process by which a person encourages a group to achieve a shared goal. Since influence is a necessary component of leadership, it cannot exist without it. Each organisation chooses its own transformational strategy, particularly while pursuing Industry 4.0. (Gajdzik, Grabowska & Saniuk, 2021). The market's extreme dynamism, the rising significance of employee motivation to meet organisational objectives, and the constant search for new sources of competitive advantage are all factors in the growing importance of leadership in modern enterprises (Grout and Fisher, 2011).

The researcher formulates several hypotheses based on the corroborating literature as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** Clan Culture confirm as a significant measurement of organizational culture among manager in China HEI's.

**Hypothesis 2:** Adhocracy Culture contribute to the construction of organizational culture among manager in China HEI's.

**Hypothesis 3:** Hierarchical Culture positively measured as an observer variable of organizational culture among manager in China HEI's.

**Hypothesis 4:** Market Culture significantly indicated as a dimension of latent construct organizational culture among manager in China HEI's.

**Hypothesis 5:** Organizational culture positively contributed to the leadership effectiveness among manager in China HEI's.

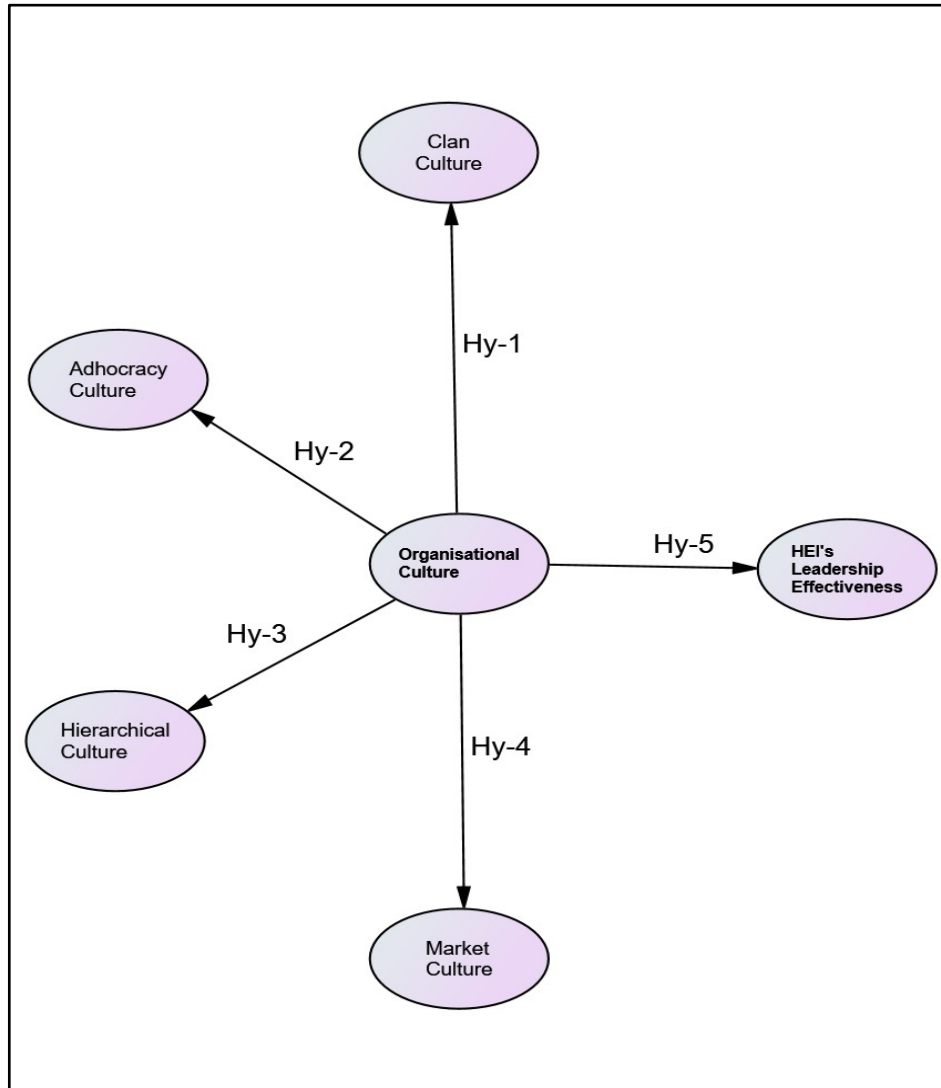
### III. CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

The study of leadership appears to be moving in a clear direction. The study of leadership has evolved since its founding from a concentrate on natural talents and privileges to one on professional skills and styles to one on contextual factors and interpersonal forms of leadership (Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991) to one on the function of groups and group mechanisms to one on the communication of the group's members, with a focus on individual and institutional moral advancements (Yammarino, 1999). The chosen theory is appropriate for use in this situation since the researcher is interested in how the idea of organizational culture influences leadership effectiveness. Process Leadership Theory serves as the overarching theoretical foundation for this study, according to the researcher. A rising number of leadership theories emphasize the steps leaders take to accomplish their objectives. These include charismatic leadership, principal-centered leadership, learning organizations, and servant leadership. Greenleaf made servant leadership fashionable at the beginning of the 1970s.

Since the early 1990s, the idea of "servant leadership" has been reviewed with increasing attention. The advice given to leaders who embrace a servant attitude is to pay close attention to the worries of their followers and to show them that they care about and support them. A normally docile person was given the responsibility of leading the group. Servant leaders put the needs of their followers first and endeavor to boost their intelligence, independence, and freedom. The servant leader cares more about the "have-nots" and views them as equals than the "haves" (Greenleaf, 1996). Instead of becoming the employees' masters, organizational leaders should act as stewards of the organization's vision. Leaders in organizations that are constantly growing and changing try their hardest to develop a vision that is greater than themselves. The group's or community's general aims and values are aligned with the leaders. These theories of process leadership, as well as others that have emerged, tend to suggest that a leader's main responsibility is to advance the welfare of their followers (Schein & Schein, 2016).

Figure 1 demonstrates how this research lays the foundation for a theory of organizational culture and how it relates to the efficacy of leadership. To assess the importance of exogenous elements (Clan cultures, Adhocracy cultures, Hierarchical cultures, and Market cultures) to the endogenous variable, the researcher presented a second-order construct approach (leadership effectiveness). The study's methodology also considers how Chinese higher education institutions may participate in order to raise the standard of their institutional performance and service delivery. Adopting a holistic viewpoint makes it easy to comprehend and explain complicated and well-organized occurrences, in which all parts have significant relationships with one another and contribute significantly to the whole. Chinese managers at HEI are the population of interest in this study, thus data will be gathered from them in order to create a sample. There is a clear distinction between the various elements in terms of their capacity to manage resources and achieve the objectives of the company. This framework is compatible with all types of

management systems and is easily adaptable to new ones. This framework can be used extensively in the social sciences and managerial disciplines.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

#### **IV. DISCUSSION AND RECOMENDATIONS**

This study has essential and significant implications for human resource practitioners, human resource management departments, and academics interested in increasing corporate culture and leadership performance. Nonetheless, this study recognizes the paucity of existing research on the influences of organizational culture in general on leadership performance; thus, the potential for more research is substantial. To analyze the outcomes of this study using quantitative research, it is necessary to provide a clear direction for future research efforts in this sector. This will allow for a better understanding of the effects of organizational culture compatibility on leadership effectiveness, particularly in the context of Chinese higher education institutions. This study did not investigate the interrelationships between the specific dimensions of organizational culture, common organizational culture, and

leadership effectiveness, and how they interact to determine the extent and magnitude to which the organizational culture would improve in different industry sectors and across different sized organizations.

This study can be duplicated in numerous industry sectors that include small and medium-sized businesses, as well as in other nations with similar economic conditions, but in different locations. This is also a potential route for future research. The proposed framework reinforces the idea that the driving factor of education system performance is a complex interplay between the entire system of institutions, from the top to the bottom. The status quo from the past should not serve as a pattern for the future, according to proponents of effective leadership (Sentosa, Shamsudin & Sharin, 2021). This framework has the potential to be used as a complete method for evaluating the effectiveness of educational systems and addressing impediments and issues in education. The development of a road map for China's educational path is essential.

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