

ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Afiqah AMIN

Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei
nurulafiqah1304@gmail.com

Abstract

A large variety of organizational culture are evident in the public sector during the strategy implementation process. The Competing Values Model was used to investigate organizational culture and its influence on strategy implementation to understand this better. This study found that a culture that facilitates strategy implementation in the public sector includes character traits such as being flexible, discrete, external focus, and differentiate. In contrast, the hierarchical culture that includes characters requiring top-down control and formal rules for decision-making hinders strategy implementation.

Keywords: organizational culture, public sector, strategy, strategic management

1. INTRODUCTION

Even though culture has been an interest of researchers to understand different groups around the world, it is only recently that researchers in the area of management have begun to discover the close connections between culture and organizational outcomes such as organizational performance (Warrick, 2017). Other than that, organizational culture is also linked to employees behavior and attitudes, such as their goal orientation and self-control (Tsui et al., 2006; Warrick, 2017). As Hellriegel *et al.* (2001) stated, the right organizational culture can enhance organizational performance through the employee's problem-solving skills. It can also help an organization obtain competitive advantages (Madu, 2012). Jacobs & Roodt (2008) also discovered an association between organizational culture and other organizational outcomes such as knowledge sharing, organizational commitment, individual turnover intentions, and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, it can be said that organizational culture is used as an accurate instrument to assess the effectiveness of an organization's management (Karpova, Ardashkin, and Kabanova, 2015).

Among many different organizational outcomes, organizational cultural dimensions also impact how a team works to successfully implement an organization's strategy (Reddy & Scheepers, 2019). This is especially significant in the public sector as the right organizational culture is needed for stakeholder interactions in a strategic management process to ensure a smooth-running implementation process. Even though there are signs of a possible relationship between strategy implementation and organizational culture in general, limited studies discuss whether there is a relationship between the public sector's organizational culture and strategy implementation. This notion confirms by several studies that indicated a limited empirical understanding of culture in public organizations (Brenyah & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017; Harrison & Baird, 2015; Parker & Bradley, 2000). The objective of the study is to fill this gap. It is hypothesized that a certain organizational culture may influence strategy implementation in the public sector, whether positively or negatively. Similar to other study such as of Parker & Bradley (2000) that conceptualized and operationalized organizational culture using the Competing Values Framework (CVF), this study also used a similar approach to understand the relationship between different types of organizational culture and strategy implementation in the public sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Organizational Culture in the Public Sector

Organizational culture is described differently by various authors. It can be defined as beliefs and values shared within an organization to shape the behavior patterns of employees (Dess et al., 2008; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). It can also be described as a collective process of the mind in an organization that makes it distinctive from

other organizations (Robbins, 2003). Organizational culture is also the assimilation of all the members of an organization to perceive, judge, and solve problems (Schein, 2004). In addition, it can be the determinant of employees' performance and the organization's success resulting from the employees' different backgrounds working in unison towards the same goal (Judge & Robbins, 2008). From all these definitions, organizational culture can be summarized as the behavior of employees working collectively in an organization to attain organizational objectives. As there are many definitions of organizational culture, the perspectives of organizational culture are also fragmented, each reflecting different organizations. For instance, the culture can be bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive (Wallach, 1983). Daft (2005) categorized organizational culture as adaptive, bureaucratic, achievement-oriented, and clan culture. However, the most prominent typology of organizational culture developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999) has suggested that the four main organizational cultures, consisting of clan, adhocracy, market-oriented, and hierarchical dimensions, can evaluate the effect of organizational culture on an organization's outcomes. Therefore, these cultural dimensions appear to be quite relevant and, upon further investigation, could each offer advantages for strategy implementation in the public sector.

Likewise, an appropriate organizational culture is necessary for the public sector, as the public sector faces incredible pressure to adjust to the evolving demands of their communities (Schraeder et al., 2005). Moreover, organizational culture in a public organization is vital in shaping employee motivation (Panagiotis et al., 2014). Generally, the public sector has mainly practiced a hierarchical culture based on rules, procedures, and stability (Parker & Bradley, 2000). However, it was argued that for the public sector to become more efficient, the organizational culture should be moving towards an entrepreneurial one (Quinn & Courtney, 2016). Adopting an organizational culture that reflects flexibility and entrepreneurialism in the public sector can lead to managerial reform (Parker & Bradley, 2000), while an innovative and result-oriented culture has proven its significance in implementing and embedding management initiatives (Harrison & Baird, 2015b).

Moreover, organizational culture in a public organization is important in shaping employee motivation (Panagiotis et al., 2014). Another study has identified that a clan culture has a more positive outcome in the public sector (Panagiotis et al., 2014). In sum, an appropriate organizational culture is necessary for the public sector to achieve organizational outcomes, particularly strategy implementation.

2.2 Organizational Culture and Strategy Implementation

Among other factors that are commonly observed, such as resources, organizational structure, and leadership, organizational culture is recognized by many studies to have a progressive effect on strategy implementation, both in the public and private sector (for example: Chemwei et al., 2014; Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008; Heide et al., 2002; Koseoglu, Barca, & Karayormuk, 2009; Rajasekar, 2014). In strategy implementation, organizational culture is the employees' values, beliefs, and behaviors to achieve organizational goals (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004) and can directly enhance their intrinsic motivation to work towards the achievement of the organization's strategy (Alamsjah, 2011). Therefore, from a strategy perspective, organizational culture can drive an organization to attain desirable strategic development (Lapina et al., 2015). The literature review indicated substantial studies that prove the significance of organizational culture in strategy implementation (Chemwei et al., 2014; Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008; Heide et al., 2002; Koseoglu, Barca, & Karayormuk, 2009; Rajasekar, 2014). However, an organizational culture that mirrors the behavior of particular management may not be suitable for another organization (Yozgat & Şahin, 2013). Therefore, using the organizational culture dimensions developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999), namely clan, adhocratic, market-oriented, and hierarchical, can improve organizational culture as a basis for public sector strategy implementation.

2.3 Organizational Culture Dimensions

A very well-known culture typology developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999) called Competing Values Framework argues that organizational cultures have two dimensions. The first is based on various flexibility and control behavior, while the second distinguishes between the company's internal and external orientation. Together, these two dimensions form four clusters, each representing a well-defined set of organizational effectiveness indicators, namely clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy culture, as shown in figure 1. Each of

these dimensions can coexist and in also one dimension can be apparent as the dominant one, rather than being mutually exclusive to each other. Therefore, assessing organizational culture using this typology can determined which culture can ensure the success of strategy implementation, even though the culture can be characterized by more than one dimension.

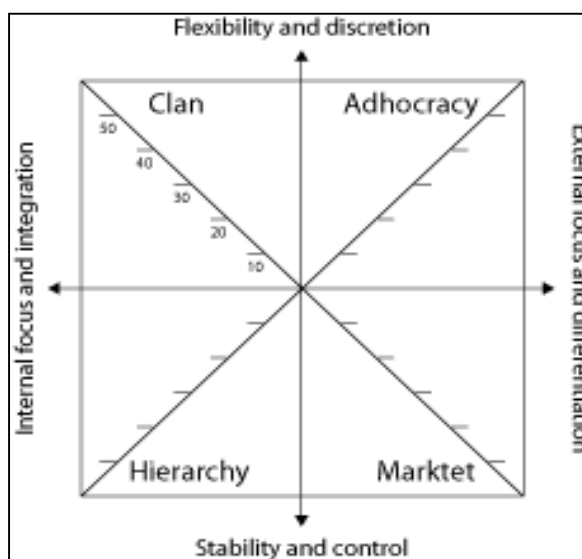


FIGURE 1 – COMPETING VALUES FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED BY CAMERON AND QUINN (1999)

2.3.1 Clan culture

The first dimension, clan culture, represents a friendly working environment, similar to a large family. The organization is held together by loyalty and traditions. Clan culture is open to communication, and the employees share their information, experiences, and expertise among themselves. In addition, clan culture emphasizes long-term human resources and supervisor support. It has been proven that clan culture has a positive impact on organizations by increasing employee engagement (Bakker et al., 2007; Crawford et al., 2010) is also strongly associated with an employee's attitude toward producing quality products and services (Hartnell et al., 2011), the commitment of the employees towards the organization (Herminingsih & Gozali, 2014), and entrepreneurial orientation (Cherchem, 2017). It can also foster an environment that stresses collaboration, which enriches the human development process through employee capacity building (Sensuse et al., 2015). It is argued that the government applied policies that favored a clan culture in the political system (Gërkhani & Schram, 2000). This indicates that a clan culture is preferred and utilized in the public sector for any activities. Thus, it can be hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Clan culture positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

2.3.2 Adhocracy culture

Adhocracy culture, the second dimension represents a dynamic and creative working environment with a future-forward posture. It promotes the initiative and freedom of individuals, shaping the employees as innovators and risk-takers. Past studies have proven that an adhocratic culture has a positive influence on the strength of cohesion, freedom, value, creativity (Khurosani, 2013), and innovation (Rosario et al., 2017). Moreover, an adhocratic culture has a positive effect on an organization's competitive advantage, by increasing employee performance through their ability to leverage resources (Jogaratham, 2017). Strese, Adams, Flatten, & Brettel (2016) stated that this type of culture inspires employees to pursue their projects, which will resultantly increase their commitment and flexibility in the organization. This is perhaps the reason why adhocracy is seen to be the most dominant culture in the private sector, but the weakest in the public sector (Bhatnagar & Bhandaris, 1998). Despite its perceived weakness in the public sector, an adhocratic culture does lend positive effects

towards an outcome or goal in any organization and should be investigated on its application on strategy implementation in the public sector. Hence, the next hypothesis is developed:

Hypothesis 2: Adhocracy culture positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

2.3.3 Market Culture

A market culture reflects a results-based organization that stresses finishing work and achieving goals. Market culture focuses on the organization's relationship with external stakeholders, such as their customers and suppliers. They emphasized on competitiveness and productivity through partnerships and positioning. This kind of culture that reflects a result-oriented behavior in strategy making requires continuous improvement and learning (Thakur et al., 2018). Although this kind of culture seems beneficial to an organization, evidence has shown that market culture is non-existent in public sector organizations. For instance, Bhatnagar & Bhandaris (1998) stated that the strong result orientation, competitive spirit, and significant market orientation are not seen as a key concern in the public sector. However, when a market culture is adopted in the public sector, Walker et al. (2011) mentioned that adopting a market-oriented mindset enhances citizen satisfaction. These findings need to be validated in a different and specific public sector-focused context of strategy implementation. Therefore, having recourse to the above supporting evidence, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: Market culture positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

2.3.4 Hierarchal Culture

Hierarchical culture-driven organizations share similarities with large, bureaucratic corporations. The culture is defined by stability and control through rules, standard operating procedures, and specialized job functions in authority and decision making. Even though a hierarchical culture is associated with low performance (Deshpande et al., 1993) and a low level of employee motivation (Panagiotis et al., 2014), it can also improve the quality of decisions regarding the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities (Jansen et al., 2006; Martin et al., 2006). Weber (1947) 's classical attributes of bureaucracy have shown that public sector organizations adopt a hierarchical culture. This is mirrored by Cameron & Quinn (2011), who stated that a hierarchical culture is predominantly found in government-run institutions where strict rank-based discipline is practiced. In public sector organizations, a hierarchical culture is portrayed as having stability, regulations, predictability, and hierarchy (Panagiotis et al., 2014). This indicates that a hierarchical culture that focuses on centralization, formal rules, and clear policies to ensure standardization and predictability is beneficial for strategy implementation. Therefore, the following statement can be posited:

Hypothesis 4: Hierarchical culture positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

3. METHODOLOGY

The limitation of studies on strategy implementation in the public sector has enabled this study to build on mixed-method approach through a sequential explanatory; quantitative–qualitative method research design. While the quantitative perspective attempts to generalize the relationships between the organizational culture with strategy implementation, the qualitative perspective is used to understand the results from the quantitative results.

The context of the study is the Brunei Darussalam's public sector. The country's civil servant, those who are working for the government accounts to 24.1% of the total working population in the country, making it the largest employer in Brunei. The public sector in Brunei practices modern bureaucracy, with a 'monarchy culture' instituting the government system (Yapa, 2014). Traditionally, the five-yearly national development plans had functioned as strategic plans for the Brunei Darussalam government (Haji Mohd Yunos & Milojević, 2016). Then, at the beginning of this century, a strategic planning system was put in place to attain the country's Vision 2035, which is a long-term development plan with different strategies that were developed to adopt to the new public management (Haji Mohd Yunos & Milojević, 2016). The strategy includes fostering good governance practices of government organizations in their decision-making and implementation processes through the

adoption of modern administrative, legal and regulatory systems and frameworks. Both survey and interview were conducted to the implementers in Bruneian public organizations during June through December 2018.

Quantitative methods through survey questionnaires were disseminated to the senior public officials and middle management officers with responsibilities for the strategy implementation in Brunei Darussalam. Following this, within the context of the Brunei Darussalam public sector, considering only the individuals who were explicitly involved in strategy implementation, only 182 employees fit the criteria of the sample, with 140 completed questionnaires were collected, resulting in 76.9% response rate. The survey was organized into two parts. Strategy implementation questionnaires were adapted from Andrews, Beynon, & Genc (2017), focusing on strategy implementation in public sector organizations. Organizational culture is measured using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) developed by Cameron & Quinn (2011). This instrument has been employed frequently in past studies (for example Lau & Ngo, 2004; Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Sanz-Valle, 2016), however, to better suit the context of this study, this study used a 5 point Likert scale, a change from the usual format of OCAI. This kind of testing has already been used in numerous studies (for example Helfrich, Li, Mohr, Meterko, & Sales, 2007; Heritage, Pollock, Roberts, Shook, & Randall, 2014; Ubius & Alas, 2009; Zahari, Mohamed, & Shurbagi, 2012).

The qualitative study was conducted on 19 participants, ranging from middle to upper management, using semi-structured interview ranging from middle to upper-level management in four public sector organizations (Organization A- D). The study utilized a manifest data analysis developed by Bengtsson (2016) to investigate the statements made from the interview. Manifest data is the tangible or concrete surface data from the interview findings. It involves data from the interview findings being described as closely as possible to what the participants said by using the obvious and visible texts of the participants for the qualitative results (ibid). Thus, this type of analysis enabled the researcher to preserve as much as possible the original meanings and contexts of the participants' responses. This study identifies the components of organizational culture that facilitates or hinders strategy implementation in the public sector.

4. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Principal component matrix was conducted on the items with varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO= 0.858. An initial analysis was used to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Five factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explain 62.5% of the variance. However, only four factors were retained as multiple factors with loadings greater than 0.4 were eliminated, following the exclusion criteria in EFA by Maskey, Fei, & Nguyen (2018). The elimination criteria resulted in the earlier identified variables being deleted, recategorized and renamed, wherein an initial five variables were deducted to four variables by the factor analysis. From this result, strategy implementation and hierarchy culture variables are retained while items from clan and adhocracy culture and items from adhocracy and market culture were combined as factor analysis recognized the items to share some common ground. This has led to some changes in the hypotheses of the adhocracy and market culture relationship with strategy implementation, whereby the hypotheses now are:

Hypothesis 1: Culture that is family-oriented and discrete positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

Hypothesis 2: Culture that is external focus and differentiate positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

Hypothesis 3: Hierarchical culture positively influences strategy implementation in the public sector

Next, scale reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The results of alpha coefficients range from 0.611 to of 0.904, suggesting a very satisfactory degree of internal consistency. Problems of bias and distortion were mitigated by assuring the strict confidentiality of responses and reversing scale anchors in several places through the pilot study. The means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alphas, and correlations among the variables are presented in table I. All the correlation coefficients among independent variables are below 0.6. The relatively moderate correlations provided evidence of discriminant validity.

TABLE 1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS

| Variables | Mean | SD | Alpha | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|------|-------|-------|---|---------|---------|---------|
| 1.Strategy Implementation | 3.69 | 0.71 | 0.904 | 1 | 0.428** | 0.401** | 0.334** |
| 2.Family-like and discrete culture | 3.72 | 0.58 | 0.833 | | 1 | 0.316** | 0.413** |
| 3. External focus and differentiate culture | 3.45 | 0.655 | 0.780 | | | 1 | 0.517** |
| 4. Hierarchal culture | 3.73 | 0.54 | 0.611 | | | | 1 |

The next step in analyzing the data was to test the hypothesized model using regression analysis (see table II for results). Pertaining to the public sector evaluation of the organizational culture, the R² is 0.514, indicating that organizational culture is accounted for 51.4% of the variation in strategy implementation. The results also showed significant F change (F (4, 136) = 15.6 p < 0.00), indicating that the inclusion of independent variables improved the model significantly. A Durbin-Watson value of 1.77 also indicated a positive autocorrelation between the three dimensions of organizational culture and strategy implementation. From the analyses, flexible and discrete culture ($\beta=0.31$, $p<0.05$) and external focus and differentiate culture ($\beta=0.267$, $p<0.05$) were determined to be significantly and positively related to strategy implementation, while hierarchal culture ($\beta=0.066$, $p>0.05$) is not significantly related with strategy implementation.

TABLE 2: RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

| | Std β |
|--|-------------|
| Family-like and discrete culture | 0.317** |
| External focus and differentiate culture | 0.267** |
| Hierarchal culture | 0.066 |
| R | 0.514 |
| R ² | 0.264 |
| Adjusted R ² | 0.247 |
| F change | 15.6 |
| Significance F change | 0.00 |
| Durbin Watson | 1.77 |

Note: **significance at the 0.05 level

5. QUALITATIVE RESULTS

After the results of the quantitative analysis are obtained, the second stage of the study was approached qualitatively as to double-check and cross-validate the aforementioned quantitative findings. Table III compiled the findings from the qualitative analysis based on the themes consolidated from the quantitative analysis, namely family-like discrete culture, hierarchal culture and external focus and differentiate culture.

TABLE 3 – CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE FACILITATING AND HINDERING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

| | Facilitate Strategy Implementation | Hinder Strategy Implementation |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Family-like and discrete culture | - Friendly work environment - Interpersonal bonds | - Maintaining group harmony |
| Hierarchical culture | - | - Maintaining status quo |
| External focus and differentiate culture | - Taking opportunities and tackling challenges - Innovative, creative and dynamic working environment - Results-oriented - Assertive | - |

5.1 Family-like and discrete culture

It appears that a friendly work environment and interpersonal bond, reflecting a family-like culture are embedded in the organizations, which were found to influence strategy implementation positively. However, a discrete culture which reflects the participant in preserving group harmony was found to hinder strategy implementation.

5.1.1 Friendly work environment

The participants highlighted the importance of having a friendly work environment within their organization as well as with other organizations in order to implement strategy. This is because having a friendly work environment enables them to feel comfortable working with each other, thus facilitating strategy implementation. Statements supporting this culture are illustrated by the middle and lower management in mostly organization A and B as follows:

The office is a second home. We spend most of our day here, and of course we share everything. This is also embedded in our national culture that we have to respect each other. For example, I don't call my boss, a boss, but instead I call her 'kaka' (older sister), same goes to the clerk as well, I still call her 'kaka.' We are like sisters and brothers. So it is best to make ourselves comfortable. [INT7, Officer in Organization B]

We tend to have lunch together. You know like what they said 'when you break bread together with people you work (with), you become closer.' [INT1, Deputy Director in Organization A]

5.1.2 Interpersonal bond

Having a friendly working environment enables employees to build interpersonal bonds. Interpersonal bonds allow them to increase trust and consensus not just among each other, but also with other implementing agencies they collaborate with, hence facilitating strategy implementation. On these points, the following quotations are from leaders and subordinates who elaborated:

People work together here. There is cooperation even from one end to the other end. We blend (in) with each other. We also respect each other. We also help each other. I do believe the core is cooperation within each employee (which) will drive the department or ministry. Just imagine a boat, if only one person goes to left, and others go to right. It will not go anywhere. So, it is the same in this department, if only the leader wants to go forward but the others do not want to join in, it will not proceed. [INT17, Officer in Organization D]

If given one task, our bond is strong. We do things in a matrix form as well, although the task is not within our core business, people from different sections will also be involved in it. [INT9, Officer in Organization B]

5.1.3 Maintaining group harmony

A friendly work environment enables the growth of interpersonal bonds among colleagues, as well as promoting group harmony. However, an officer argued that the need to maintain group harmony may hinder strategy implementation. For instance, it becomes frustrating for the owner of the initiative to compel the other organizations to complete their tasks, while maintaining group harmony. One officer was open in describing the issue briefly, stating:

But last time, when we were too friendly, when we try to communicate with the other focal (of other implementing agencies), they will tend to say 'It is hard... I have a lot of things to do...' and they don't take it as their own initiative. So, the thing is they give excuses and treat it like it's nothing... [INT5, Officer in Organization B]

5.2 Hierarchical culture

A hierarchical culture is defined by stability and control through rules, standard operating procedures and centralized decision making. One particular behavior of a hierarchical culture was found in strategy implementation, which is the culture of resistance to change. The interview has determined that there is a culture of resistance to change that reflects the tendency of people to avoid alternative ideas when strategy is being implemented.

5.2.1 Resistance to change

During the implementation of strategy, some of the interviewees mentioned a prevailing resistance to change towards the initiatives and activities to be executed. In the face of increasing pressure for strategy to be implemented, the public sector is obliged to embrace the process required transformation in executing the initiatives and activities in order for strategy to be implemented. However, the findings indicate that employees are comfortable with the present state of affairs and workflow, and status quo, thus delaying strategy implementation. This issue was highly stressed by interviewees of all job levels, as shown:

Since introducing the strategy is quite new, it's important for us to do a socialization plan. But we sort of expected that it will not be agreed by some people and we understand that and that when we do the socialization plan, we sort of expect that it will not be agreed by the civil servants and they might be reluctant to change... [INT18, Assistant Director in Organization D]

So as (having) an experience being the implementer, it has not been forthcoming. Meaning, they say 'yes', but it will always go back to square one, so I just need to be patient. [INT10, Assistant Director in Organization C]

5.3 External focus and differentiate culture

In this study, it was found that the public sector is routinely subjected to external factors, from limited resources to resistance from its stakeholders and differing or conflicting priorities to the higher levels of government in the ministry. However, the employees tend to be amenable towards their surroundings and the challenges of strategy implementation. According to the interview findings, the public sector tends to respond to these externalities by taking opportunities and tackling challenges constructively, being innovative, and having a creative and dynamic working environment. The participants acknowledged the importance of having traits that reflect flexible culture, such as being results-oriented to accomplish the tasks required to implement strategy. The participants also indicated their assertiveness when being flexible through as getting their initiatives and activities approved, due to the high level of centralization of authority in the ministry.

5.3.1 Result-oriented

Strategy is comprised of activities and initiatives that themselves are directed by more concise and focused plans. Thus, the participants acknowledged the importance of having a results-oriented personality to accomplish the tasks given. The participants expressed that:

The ministry wants to know if we are able to achieve the strategy or not. They (the higher level of government) want something that can be seen as a result. So, we try to accommodate that and we will adjust our activities to achieve that target. [INT19, Officer in Organization D]

Our role as a public service provider is important. If we do our work, we must be dedicated to it; we do it for the benefit of the people that get the service from us. [INT18, Assistant Director in Organization D]

5.3.2 Assertive

Other than having a results-oriented personality, some of participants expressed a different and interesting opinion, in which they have to be assertive in order to implement strategy. This is due to the slow decision-making process resulting from the concentration of authority in the ministry. The upper management, particularly in Organization C, indicated the need to be insistent in order to obtain approval for their initiatives and activities. They stated as follows:

We want efficiency, but we have to work hard in getting their (higher level of government) attention. We were asked about why we want to see the minister, but that is just the thing that we need to do to speed things up. If not, the tasks cannot go on. [INT13, Head of Unit in Organization C]

The pace of work must be fast because we are chasing and adopting and pushing it through the globalization and trend. We are responsible for equipping people with global competence. Otherwise, Brunei will be left behind and it will impact on how the civil service runs. [INT11, Director in Organization C]

5.3.3 Opportunities and Challenges

As mentioned previously, the public sector is subjected to various constraining external factors which are beyond the implementers' control, but they can be mitigated or overcome by having leaders who can realise possible opportunities from these challenges. Strategy implementation provides them an exploration of opportunities and options for reducing challenges, including through the process of being adaptive and resourceful employees. These traits are reflected in statements by both upper and middle management in the organizations. The statements below expressed the view that:

The no-go from the ministry has an impact to the strategy. Just imagine that we have to look at 51,000 officers in the civil service, if plan A doesn't work, we go for plan B or C or D. In this case, we will need to learn to maneuver our way to implement the strategy. [INT11, Director in Organization C]

Working under a ministry means that we have to try as much as possible to adjust.... We try to accommodate that, at the same time, we make sure that we achieve our target by adjusting our activities. [INT19, Officer in Organization D]

From my experience, it is only due to different perspectives. For us, we only see it from one version, but since this involves a bigger picture, (and) management, our idea is perhaps only good in theory, but in terms of implementation, maybe it does not work. So when the management says it does not work, we will find different alternatives. [INT7, Officer in Organization B]

5.3.4 Innovative, creative and dynamic working environment

Some of the participants mentioned the terms "innovative" and "dynamic", rather than being adaptable when inquired regarding the kind of characteristics instilled in them when there are issues beyond the implementers' control. Below, the participants stated:

Innovative in the sense that we aspire to generate and formulate new ideas, plan and move the civil service to a higher dimension of productivity and efficiency. To be dynamic is our initiatives and readiness to adapt and adopt changes in policy, process, and procedures in administration to ensure continuous good governance in the civil service. [INT15, Director in Organization D]

"When proposing a project, we find the opportunity to build ourselves and also the project that we proposed. When the proposal is rejected, we will try to bring it differently, we will change and develop it until it goes through". [INT11, Director in Organization C]

6. DISCUSSIONS

In this study, organizational culture defines the behavior of employees working collectively to implement a strategy. An appropriate organizational culture is necessary for the public sector, as it faces incredible pressure to adjust to the evolving demands of its communities (Schraeder, Tears, and Jordan, 2005). In addition, organizational culture is central to the functioning of an organization (Schraeder, Tears, and Jordan, 2005). Previous studies have proved that an appropriate organizational culture is associated with strategy implementation (for example Chemwei et al., 2014; Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008; Heide et al., 2002; Koseoglu, Barca, & Karayormuk, 2009; Rajasekar, 2014). Furthermore, in the strategy implementation stage, several researchers (Abdul Rashid et al., 2004; Balthazard et al., 2006; Mello & Stank, 2005) emphasized the importance of culture in affecting (positively or negatively) organizational change and promoting and implementing organizational initiatives.

It is evident that various behaviors can be exhibited by an organization. However, to understand organizational culture in a simpler manner further, organizational culture can be investigated through a tool developed by Cameron and Quinn (2006) called Competing Values Framework which utilizes two dimensions that firstly, entails a continuum of flexibility and control and secondly, distinguishes between the company's internal and external orientation. The two dimensions form four clusters: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy culture. These typologies were used to identify the appropriate culture that fits strategy implementation in the public sector. Despite following the Competing Values Framework, the result from this study found that a combination

of clan and adhocracy culture, forming a family-like and discrete culture, and the combination of adhocracy and market culture, forming external focus and differentiate culture have a significant positive relationship with strategy implementation in the public sector. Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2 are accepted. Hierarchical culture variable, on the other hand is retained but was found to have an insignificant relationship with strategy implementation, showing that hypothesis 3 is rejected. This result is important for the development of organizational culture in the area of strategy implementation in the public sector as the marriage between the components of clan, market and adhocracy culture may be beneficial for strategy implementation in the public sector. This study has found that rather than isolating the organizational culture dimensions, they rather coexist with each other in order for the strategy to be implemented.

The significant positive relationship of a family-like culture with strategy implementation in Brunei Darussalam's public sector found in the quantitative result is consistent with the qualitative findings, which mirrors clan culture. The majority of the respondents, especially within the middle and lower management, perceived that the culture of a friendly work environment that exists in their organization has led to build an interpersonal bond and mutual trust as an important component in strategy implementation. This is because there is cooperation from one end to another when getting a consensus about work-related matters for the best solution. A friendly work environment also allows informal communication, as day-to-day contact and work floor experiences from employees become easier through this culture. In addition, the culture benefits the public sector, where a friendly working environment between the implementing agencies creates better coordination and a stronger bond. These findings are similar to earlier studies, whereby clan culture promotes a collaborative organizational environment in strategic planning (Sensuse, Cahyaningsih, and Wibowo, 2015). As a result, clan culture has a more positive outcome in the public sector (Panagiotis, Alexandros, and George, 2014).

Despite its advantages, it is important to note that the need to maintain group harmony to avoid conflict, reflecting a discrete culture can create a negative aspect towards strategy implementation. As indicated in the findings, despite the increasing pressure for strategy to be implemented, some of the employees are comfortable with the present state of affairs and workflow and status quo, thus delaying strategy implementation. The employees then feel that they are forced to embrace the required transformation in executing the initiatives and activities to implement the strategy. However, to preserve group harmony, it is necessary to avoid confrontation, eventually leading to ingenuine respect that may result in conflict. This perception has been proved in a study by Pg Hj Idris (2021) in which the employees in Brunei tend to keep themselves in the background due to being polite and respectful. This has led subordinates to avoid revealing the truth, which has made it difficult to resolve issues (ibid). This culture is also practiced during strategy implementation, thus, agreeing previous studies that indicated conflict resolution is achieved by avoiding confrontation to preserve harmonious group relations in Brunei Darussalam (Black, 2001; Low, 2008; Pg Hj Idris, 2021).

It is also crucial for the public sector to focus externally, particularly towards finishing work and achieving goals related to strategy implementation. Perhaps, the need to finish work and achieve goals is due to the nature of strategy implementation, which comprises activities and initiatives based on a shorter and focused plan. As reflected in this study, most of the middle and lower management employees in Brunei Darussalam's public sector revealed characteristics of the market-oriented value such as being result-oriented during the strategy implementation process in focusing externally. This is because strategy implementation is made up of activities based on shorter and focused plans. Other than that, the need to be assertive is highlighted among the implementing agencies due to the slow decision-making process in the centralized structure. This has obligated the upper management to insist on obtaining approval for their initiatives and activities for strategy implementation, especially since the administrative structure is strongly centralized, and trivial decisions have to be referred to a higher level for resolution. Furthermore, employees can strengthen their behavior through being results-oriented, taking the initiative and having an uninhibited expression of proposals that allow them to cultivate an outcome-based environment, further removing the risk of the bureaucratic nature of the public sector. Therefore, it is important to note that the strength of being external focused is despite the centralized structure in the public sector. The findings of this study are more consistent with Quinn and Courtney's (2016) study that mentioned public sector culture should be more forward-thinking, goal-oriented and results-driven. These findings also further supported the idea of Harrison and Baird (2015), who stated that results-oriented culture had proved significance in implementing and embedding management initiatives. In addition, the

findings of this study are more consistent with Quinn and Courtney's (2016) study that mentioned public sector culture should be more forward-thinking, goal-oriented and results-driven. Therefore, it debunked Harrison and Baird (2015) that mentioned culture reflecting outcome orientation lags behind in public sector organizations of government departments and agencies.

Being different is also a culture that is highlighted in this study in order to implement strategy. In this study, to be adaptable and creative, reflecting being different were arise as a response to the challenges occurring within the organization. As observed in this study, the public sector appeared to be confronted by structural constraints, such as centralized decision-making. Other than that, limited resources, resistance from stakeholders and different priorities from higher levels of government also appeared to be challenging for the implementing agencies. When these challenges occur, the director and their subordinates see this as an opportunity to become adaptable and creative in finding ways to implement the strategy. This finding is in accordance with previous studies that emphasize that flexible and different culture produces creativity (Khurosani, 2013), innovation (Rosario, Patricia, & Rene, 2017), the ability to leverage resources (Jogaratnam, 2017), and increased commitment and flexibility in pursuing projects (Strese et al., 2016). While a study by Richards (1991) claimed that work-related values in Brunei are not receptive or conducive to effective problem-solving and to effective organizational performance, this study proved an opposing view, whereby it is evident that the being differentiate brings a positive influence towards strategy implementation in the public sector. A study by Al Athmay (2008) stated that the public sector in Brunei aims to move from rules-governed practices to an output orientation. This literature shows that even though Brunei Darussalam's public sector is routinely subjected to challenges due to institutional constraints and the external environment during strategy implementation, taking opportunities and tackling challenges constructively towards their surroundings has become an advantage.

This study also revealed that hierarchal culture is not significantly related to strategy implementation in the public sector. Even though hierarchal culture commonly exists in the public sector due to its top-down control, formal rules, coordination and stability, it seems that this culture does not work with strategy implementation. This is because, in reality, the middle and lower management are the key positions in strategy implementation projects and initiatives (Alamsjah 2011; Kiehne et al. 2017; Waldron, Vsanthakumar, and Arulraj, 1997). During the interview, the participants implied how some stakeholders refused to comply with the execution of initiatives and activities related to the strategy implementation. As strategy implementation often involves executing new strategic initiatives and activities, the potential impacts of change on people working in the organization are significant. Hence, employees sometimes choose to maintain their status quo, indicating that hierarchal culture hinders strategy implementation. In the same vein, Morshed Alom (2021) stated that bringing desired changes will require conscious and deliberate efforts, as the employees in a hierarchal culture prefer to remain in their comfort zones. This proved to be a barrier to strategy implementation, as the process requires adopting strict new strategic initiatives and activities for the performance of the organization (Rani, 2019). Even though Haji Rashid and Haji Said (2018) pointed out that the hierarchal culture in the Brunei Darussalam public sector may benefit strategy implementation by making employees obey when there is an instruction from the central authority to carry out the implementation, the aspect of maintaining status quo proved to be an obstacle towards strategy implementation. Hence, hierarchal culture has no fit with strategy implementation, as the existence of this culture makes it difficult to adapt to a challenging environmental requirement.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The Competing Values Framework developed by Cameron and Quinn (1996) can be understood more through the components that make up the clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy culture. As such, this study found that the combination of clan and adhocracy culture forms family-like and discrete culture, and the combination of adhocracy and market culture, forming external focus and differentiate culture deems to be more appropriate when it comes to strategy implementation in the public sector. Perhaps, the public sector is routinely subjected to challenges due to the institutional constraints and external environment during strategy implementation; the marriage of different behaviors can facilitate the process as employees tend to be amenable by taking opportunities and tackling challenges constructively towards their surroundings. Furthermore, employees can strengthen their behavior through being results-oriented, taking the initiative, and having an uninhibited

expression of proposals that allow them to cultivate a dynamic and creative environment, further removing the risk of the bureaucratic nature of the public sector.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Rashid, Z., Sambasivan, M., & Abdul Rahman, A. (2004). The influence of organizational culture on attitudes toward organizational change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(2), 161–179. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410521831>
- Al Athmay, A. A. A. R. A. (2008). Performance auditing and public sector management in Brunei Darussalam. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 21(7), 798–811. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513550810904578/FULL/PDF>
- Alamsjah, F. (2011). Key success factors in implementing strategy: Middle-level managers' perspectives. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 1444–1450.
- Andrews, R., Beynon, M., & Genc, E. (2017). Strategy Implementation Style and Public Service Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Equity. *Administrative Sciences*, 7(1), 4.
- Bakker, A. B., Hakanen, J. J., Demerouti, E., & Xanthopoulou, D. (2007). Job resources boost work engagement, particularly when job demands are high. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(2), 274–284. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.2.274>
- Balthazard, P. A., Cooke, R. A., & Potter, R. E. (2006). Dysfunctional culture, dysfunctional organization: Capturing the behavioral norms that form organizational culture and drive performance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(8), 709–732. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940610713253>
- Bengtsson, M. (2016). How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. *NursingPlus Open*, 2, 8–14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.NPLS.2016.01.001>
- Bhatnagar, D., & Bhandaris, L. (1998). Organizational Culture in the Changing Environment. *Vikalpa*, 23(1), 83–92.
- Black, A. (2001). Alternative Dispute Resolution in Brunei Darussalam: The Blending of Imported and Traditional Processes. *Bond Law Review*, 13(2), 5378. <https://doi.org/10.53300/001c.5378>
- Brenyah, R. S., & Obuobisa-Darko, T. (2017). Organisational Culture and Employee Engagement within the Ghanaian Public Sector. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 5(3). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2315-7844.1000233>
- Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (1999). *Diagnosing and Changing Organisational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*. Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.
- Cameron, Kim S., & Quinn, R. E. (2006). *Diagnosing and changing organizational culture : based on the competing values framework*. Jossey-Bass.
- Cameron, Kim S., & Quinn, R. E. (2011). *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture : Based on the Competing Values Framework*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Chemwei, B., Leboo, C., & Koech, S. J. (2014). Factors that Impede the Implementation of Strategic Plans in Secondary Schools in Baringo District, Kenya. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(51).
- Cherchem, N. (2017). The relationship between organizational culture and entrepreneurial orientation in family firms: Does generational involvement matter? *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 8(2), 87–98.
- Crawford, E. R., LePine, J. A., & Rich, B. L. (2010). Linking job demands and resources to employee engagement and burnout: A theoretical extension and meta-analytic test. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95(5), 834–848. <https://doi.org/10.1037/A0019364>

- Crittenden, V. L., & Crittenden, W. F. (2008). Building a capable organization: The eight levers of strategy implementation. *Business Horizons*, 51(4), 301–309.
- Daft, R. (2005). *The leadership experience*. Thomson South-Western.
- Deshpande, R., Farley, J. U., & Webster, F. E. (1993). Corporate Culture, Customer Orientation, and Innovativeness in Japanese Firms: A Quadrant Analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 23.
- Dess, G. G., Lumpkin, G. T., & Eisner, A. B. (2008). *Strategic management: creating competitive advantages*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Gërzhani, K., & Schram, A. (2000). Albanian Political-Economics: Consequences of a Clan Culture. *Development and Transition*, 4, 5–14.
- Harrison, G. L., & Baird, K. M. (2015). The organizational culture of public sector organizations in Australia. *Australian Journal of Management*, 40(4), 613–629. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0312896214529440>
- Hartnell, C. A., Ou, A. Y., & Kinicki, A. (2011). Organizational Culture and Organizational Effectiveness: A Meta-Analytic Investigation of the Competing Values Framework's Theoretical Suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 677–694.
- Heide, M., Grønhaug, K., & Johannessen, S. (2002). Exploring barriers to the successful implementation of a formulated strategy. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 18(2), 217–231. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0956-5221\(01\)00007-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0956-5221(01)00007-0)
- Helfrich, C. D., Li, Y.-F., Mohr, D. C., Meterko, M., & Sales, A. E. (2007). Assessing an organizational culture instrument based on the Competing Values Framework: exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. *Implementation Science : IS*, 2, 13.
- Hellriegel, D., Woodman, R. W., & Slocum, J. W. (2001). *Organizational behavior*. South-Western College Pub.
- Heritage, B., Pollock, C., Roberts, L., Shook, C., & Randall, K. (2014). Validation of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. *PLoS ONE*, 9(3), e92879. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0092879>
- Herminingsih, A., & Gozali, F. (2014). Organizational Culture Typology for Competitive Private University. *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 2(4), 321–325.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: the GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Sage Publications.
- Jacobs, E., & Roodt, G. (2008). Organisational culture of hospitals to predict turnover intentions of professional nurses. *Health SA Gesondheid*, 13(1), 63–78.
- Jansen, J. J. P., Van Den Bosch, F. A. J., & Volberda, H. W. (2006). Exploratory Innovation, Exploitative Innovation, and Performance: Effects of Organizational Antecedents and Environmental Moderators. *Management Science*, 52(11), 1661–1674. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.1060.0576>
- Jogarathnam, G. (2017). How organizational culture influences market orientation and business performance in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 211–219.
- Judge, T. A., & Robbins, S. P. (2008). *Organizational Behavior*. Pearson.
- Karpova, A. Y., Ardashkin, I. B., & Kabanova, N. N. (2015). Organizational Culture in Focus of Measurements. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 166, 246–253.
- Khurosani, A. (2013). Adhocracy Culture Support and Leader's Working Creativity. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 3(4), 411–415.
- Koseoglu, M. A., Barca, M., & Karayormuk, K. (2009). A study on the causes of strategies failing to success. *Journal of Global Strategic Management*, 6, 77–91.
- Kotter, J. P., & Heskett, J. L. (1992). *Corporate Culture and Performance*. Free Press.

- Lapina, I., Kairisa, I., & Aramina, D. (2015). Role of Organizational Culture in the Quality Management of University. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 213, 770–774.
- Lau, C., & Ngo, H. (2004). The HR system, organizational culture, and product innovation. *International Business Review*, 13(6), 685–703.
- Low, K. C. P. (2008). The Typical Conflict Resolution Ways of a Bruneian. *Conflict Resolution & Negotiation Journal*, 1, 106–121. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343396033004003>
- Madu, B. C. (2012). Organization culture as driver of competitive advantage. *Journal of Academic and Business Ethics*, 5, 1–9.
- Martin, J., Frost, P. J., & O'Neil, O. A. (2006). Organizational culture: Beyond struggles for intellectual dominance. In T. B. Lawrence & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational studies* (pp. 599–621). Sage Publications.
- Maskey, R., Fei, J., & Nguyen, H.-O. (2018). Use of exploratory factor analysis in maritime research. *The Asian Journal of Shipping and Logistics*, 34(2), 91–111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.AJSL.2018.06.006>
- Mello, J. E., & Stank, T. P. (2005). Linking firm culture and orientation to supply chain success. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 35(8), 542–554. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09600030510623320>
- Morshed Alom, M. (2021). Public Sector Organizational Culture: Experience from Frontline Bureaucracies. In *A Closer Look at Organizational Culture in Action*. IntechOpen. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.91177>
- Naranjo-Valencia, J. C., Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Sanz-Valle, R. (2016). Studying the links between organizational culture, innovation, and performance in Spanish companies. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, 48, 30–41.
- Panagiotis, M., Alexandros, S., & George, P. (2014). Organizational Culture and Motivation in the Public Sector. The Case of the City of Zografou. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 14, 415–424.
- Parker, R., & Bradley, L. (2000). Organisational culture in the public sector Organisational culture in the public sector: evidence from six organisations. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 13(2), 125–141.
- Pg Hj Idris, P. S. R. (2021). Cultural Values and Its Influence on the Enactment of Leadership in Public Sector Organisations: A Case Research in Brunei. *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management*, 12(4), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJABIM.20211001.0a1>
- Quinn, M., & Courtney, R. (2016). The Public Sector as an Entrepreneur? In J. Liddle (Ed.), *New Perspectives on Research, Policy & Practice in Public Entrepreneurship (Contemporary Issues in Entrepreneurship Research, Volume 6)* (pp. 127–146). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2040-724620160000006006>
- Rajasekar, J. (2014). Factors affecting Effective Strategy Implementation in a Service Industry: A Study of Electricity Distribution Companies in the Sultanate of Oman. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 5(91).
- Rani, P. (2019). Strategy Implementation in Organizations: A Conceptual Overview. *Management*, 14(3), 205–218. <https://doi.org/10.26493/1854-4231.14.205-218>
- Reddy, M., & Scheepers, C. (2019). Influence of Organisational Culture on Strategy Execution In A South African Organisation. *The Journal of Applied Business Reseaech*, 35(4), 109–128.
- Richards, D. (1991). Flying against the Wind? Culture and Management Development in South East Asia. *Journal of Management Development*, 10(6), 7–21. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02621719110005465>
- Robbins, S. P. (2003). *Organizational behavior*. Prentice Hall.

- Rosario, R.-S. del, Patricia, S.-M., & René, D.-P. (2017). Eco-innovation and organizational culture in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 65, 71–80.
- Schein, E. H. (2004). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (3rd ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Schraeder, M., Tears, R. S., & Jordan, M. H. (2005). Organizational culture in public sector organizations Promoting change through training and leading by example. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 26(6), 492–502. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730510617681>
- Sensuse, D. I., Cahyaningsih, E., & Wibowo, W. C. (2015). Knowledge Management: Organizational Culture in Indonesian Government Human Capital Management. *Procedia Computer Science*, 72, 485–494.
- Strese, S., Adams, D. R., Flatten, T. C., & Brettel, M. (2016). Corporate culture and absorptive capacity: The moderating role of national culture dimensions on innovation management. *International Business Review*, 25(5), 1149–1168.
- Thakur, R., Hale, D., & AlSaleh, D. (2018). Manager's report: organizational culture & strategy association. *Foresight*, 20(4), 375–392. <https://doi.org/10.1108/FS-02-2018-0015>
- Tsui, A. S., Zhang, Z.-X., Wang, H., Xin, K. R., & Wu, J. B. (2006). Unpacking the relationship between CEO leadership behavior and organizational culture. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(2), 113–137.
- Übicus, Ü., & Alas, R. (2009). Organizational Culture Types as Predictors of Corporate Social Responsibility. *Engineering Economics*, 61(1), 90–99.
- Walker, R. M., Boyne, G. A., Brewer, G. A., & Avellaneda, C. N. (2011). Market Orientation and Public Service Performance: New Public Management Gone Mad? *Public Administration Review*, 71(5), 707–717. <https://doi.org/10.2307/23017438>
- Wallach, E. (1983). Individuals and Organizations. *Training and Development Journal*, 44, 134–143.
- Warrick, D. D. (2017). What leaders need to know about organizational culture. *Business Horizons*, 60(3), 395–404. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2017.01.011>
- Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organization*. Oxford University Press.
- Yapa, P. W. S. (2014). In whose interest? An examination of public sector governance in Brunei Darussalam. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 25(8), 803–818. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.CPA.2014.03.003>
- Yozgat, U., & Şahin, S. (2013). Perceived Managerial and Leadership Effectiveness Within Turkish Public Sector Hospitals. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 99, 216–221.
- Zahari, I. Bin, Mohamed, A., & Shurbagi, A. (2012). The Effect of Organizational Culture and the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction in Petroleum Sector of Libya. *International Business Research*, 5(9). <https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v5n9p89>