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Organizational culture and its role in developing the relationship between organizational health and organizational symmetry

Peran budaya organisasi dalam mengembangkan hubungan antara kesehatan dan simetri organisasi

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ABSTRACT

Rapid changes in education require institutions to improve internal alignment and adaptability. In Iraqi higher education, understanding the relationship between organizational culture, health, and symmetry is important to foster faculty engagement and institutional performance. This study aims to examine the interactive role of organizational culture in developing the relationship between organizational health and organizational symmetry, and to assess the level of these three variables among Dhi Qar University lecturers. A quantitative approach was used with descriptive and associative survey methods. A total of 206 lecturers from purposively selected faculties participated in this study. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher, which measured aspects of organizational culture, health, and symmetry. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis were used to process the data. The results showed that the levels of organizational culture, organizational health, and organizational symmetry were in the high category. This study combines organizational culture, health, and symmetry in an integrated model that reflects the dynamics of higher education institutions in developing countries. Data from universities in Iraq indicate that internal organizational conditions affect staff alignment, performance, and communication. The findings provide practical guidance for academic leaders to strengthen cohesion, internal communication, and strategic alignment.

Key words: Organizational culture; organizational health; organizational symmetry.

Perubahan cepat dalam pendidikan menuntut institusi meningkatkan keselarasan internal dan adaptabilitas. Di pendidikan tinggi Irak, pemahaman hubungan antara budaya, kesehatan, dan simetri organisasi penting untuk mendorong keterlibatan dosen dan kinerja institusi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran interaktif budaya organisasi dalam mengembangkan hubungan antara kesehatan organisasi dan simetri organisasi, serta menilai tingkat ketiga variabel tersebut di kalangan dosen Universitas Dhi Qar. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan metode survei deskriptif dan asosiatif. Sebanyak 206 dosen dari fakultas yang dipilih secara sengaja berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terstruktur yang dirancang oleh peneliti, yang mengukur aspek budaya, kesehatan, dan simetri organisasi. Analisis statistik deskriptif dan inferensial digunakan untuk mengolah data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat budaya organisasi, kesehatan organisasi, dan simetri organisasi berada pada kategori tinggi. Studi ini menggabungkan budaya, kesehatan, dan simetri organisasi dalam model terpadu yang mencerminkan dinamika institusi pendidikan tinggi di negara berkembang. Data dari universitas di Irak menunjukkan bahwa kondisi internal organisasi memengaruhi keselarasan staf, kinerja, dan komunikasi. Temuan ini memberikan panduan praktis bagi pemimpin akademik untuk memperkuat kohesi, komunikasi internal, dan keselarasan strategis.

Kata kunci: budaya organisasi; kesehatan organisasi; simetri organisasi.

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INTRODUCTION

The world is witnessing steady and rapid developments across all areas of life economic, political, scientific, cultural, and sports which require modern institutions to adapt and evolve by adopting methods and strategies that foster excellence and creativity in their operations (Al saleh, 2024). Culture, defined as the accumulation of knowledge over time represented through practices, plays a central role in this transformation. Organizational culture, as a subset of general culture, significantly influences the formation of individual personality, values, motives, attitudes, and behaviors, shaping the behavioral framework within organizations (Leerssen, 2021). As the education sector undergoes major transformations, it becomes imperative for institutions to adapt, since such changes influence employee behavior, habits, and expectations. Every organization thereby develops its own unique identity whether strong, flexible, supportive, innovative, or conservative which is reflected in its internal dynamics (Gowher Hassan, 2023). Within this context, organizational symmetry emerges as a modern management concept that represents the behavioral alignment of individuals with their institutions, often leading employees who identify with their organizations to develop self-concepts that align with shared values and beliefs (Alsharifi, 2021). Another critical concept is organizational health, which organizations strive to enhance by ensuring a strong internal environment and quality educational services (Kismono et al., 2024).

The central research problem addressed in this study lies in the essential role of organizational culture as the foundation for internal and external coordination within institutions (Aktaş et al., 2011). Particularly in educational institutions, which are productive organizations aiming to deliver educational services, there is a constant drive to improve (Latorre-Medina & Blanco-Encomienda, 2013). This study investigates the extent to which college departments at the University of Dhi Qar adopt values of improvement and change within their organizational culture, and how this adoption affects the availability of organizational health dimensions, employee performance, goal alignment, and integration of personal aspirations. Barrick et al. (2015) The problem is not the mere presence of these variables, but in recognizing, applying, and integrating them correctly to foster loyalty and affiliation among faculty and drive meaningful changes in their performance and behavior.

To address the identified issues, this study aims to explore several key questions related to organizational dynamics within the colleges of the University of Dhi Qar. Firstly, it seeks to determine the level of organizational culture present in the colleges studied. In addition, the study examines the degree of organizational health within these institutions (Xenidis & Theocharous, 2014). Furthermore, the research assesses the level of organizational symmetry among faculty members, which reflects the alignment between individual and

institutional values. The investigation also focuses on the nature and strength of the relationships between organizational culture and organizational symmetry, as well as between organizational health and organizational symmetry (Stojanović et al., 2020). Moreover, the study analyzes the extent to which organizational health directly impacts organizational symmetry, alongside the influence of organizational culture on this alignment. Finally, the research explores the interactive effect of organizational culture on the relationship between organizational health and organizational symmetry, aiming to understand how these variables synergistically contribute to the overall performance and stability of higher education institutions (Jigjiddorj et al., 2021).

The novelty of this research lies in its integrated approach to examining the interactive effects between organizational culture, organizational health, and organizational symmetry concepts that are often studied separately. By focusing on higher education institutions in a developing country context, this study offers a localized understanding of how internal organizational factors influence faculty behavior and institutional performance.

The purpose of writing this article is to explore and clarify the relationships between these three organizational dimensions and identify practical insights that can help educational institutions strengthen their internal structures and employee engagement.

The main contributions of the study include: (1) providing empirical evidence from an underrepresented regional context (Dhi Qar, Iraq), (2) proposing a conceptual model that links culture, health, and symmetry in academic institutions, and (3) offering actionable recommendations for university leaders to improve organizational alignment, faculty commitment, and institutional performance.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach that integrates the often separately studied concepts of organizational culture, organizational health, and organizational symmetry. Prior studies, such as Leerssen (d'Oliveira, 2018), have highlighted the role of organizational culture in shaping employee behavior, while Kismono et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of organizational health in institutional effectiveness. Mtana and Tsuma (2024) introduced the concept of organizational symmetry as crucial for alignment between individuals and institutions. By concentrating on higher education institutions within a developing country context, this study provides a contextualized perspective on how these internal factors influence faculty behavior and overall performance. The aim of this article is to examine and elucidate the interplay among these three dimensions, building on the foundational works mentioned, while offering practical insights that can assist educational institutions in reinforcing their internal frameworks and enhancing

employee engagement. The key contributions of the research are: (1) presenting empirical findings from a region that is typically underrepresented in academic literature (Dhi Qar, Iraq), (2) developing a conceptual framework that connects culture, health, and symmetry within academic organizations, and (3) proposing actionable strategies for university administrators to advance organizational coherence, faculty dedication, and institutional outcomes. This grounded approach ensures the study aligns with existing literature and contributes to a richer understanding of organizational dynamics.

METHOD

Research Methodology

Choosing the appropriate approach to address the research problem is a crucial step in ensuring the success of any research endeavor. This decision depends on the nature of the problem, its clarity, and the availability of accurate information. Therefore, the researcher adopted a descriptive approach using survey and associative methods, as it was deemed the most suitable to achieve the objectives of the study (Siedlecki, 2020).

Research Design, Location, and Time

This study was conducted across several faculties at the University of Dhi Qar, including the Faculties of Physical Education, Humanities, Management, Economics, Agriculture, Media, and Engineering. The theoretical, methodological, and applicative framework of the research was developed between June 13, 2023, and October 5, 2023, while the field data collection took place from January 11, 2023, to December 12, 2023.

Population and Sample

The research population comprised 226 university faculty members. A total of 206 questionnaires were distributed, of which 201 were returned and deemed valid for statistical analysis, representing a high response rate of 95.6%. The sample was divided into three groups:

Table 1. Distribution of the sample research into study phases

Sample Group	Number of Faculty Members	Percentage (%)
Exploratory Pilot Sample	20	12.8
Scale Construction Sample	126	52.99
Main Application Sample	80	34.18
Total	226	100

Data collection tools and instruments

Data collection for this study employed a variety of tools to ensure comprehensive and reliable information gathering. These tools included

academic references and literature, personal interviews, structured questionnaires, and internet resources. Additionally, technical equipment such as a Dell laptop, a Cadeo electronic calculator, and a Canon laser printer were utilized to facilitate data processing and analysis.

To measure the key variables, three specialized scales were developed: the Organizational Culture Scale, consisting of seven dimensions; the Organizational Health Scale, also comprising seven dimensions; and the Organizational Symmetry Scale, which included three dimensions. Each dimension within these scales was rigorously validated through expert evaluation involving ten specialists. Furthermore, statistical validation was performed using the chi-square test, confirming that all proposed dimensions were retained for use in the study.

Table 2. Shows the arithmetic mean and standard deviations of the three scales

Scale	Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
Organizational culture	Values	17.5	3.032
	Symbols	17	3.42
	Beliefs	18	3.12
	Assumptions	18	4.001
	Standards	17	4.434
	Rituals and rituals	18.5	3.126
	Physical elements	17.5	3.032
	Total	123.5	24.165
Organizational health	Clarity of goals	17	3.87
	Adaptation	16.5	4.98
	Harnessing resources	16	5.97
	Balance of power	18	4.05
	Communication suitability	18.5	3.02
	Problem solving	17.5	4.03
	Independence	18	3.19
	Total	121.5	29.11
Organizational symmetry	Membership	17.6	4.345
	Loyalty	18.2	4.022
	Symmetry	17.3	4.57
	Total	53.1	12.937

Statistical Analysis

The collected data was subjected to rigorous statistical analysis to ensure validity, reliability, and suitability for further examination. Validity of the measurement scales was confirmed through expert evaluation and the chi-square test, which supported the retention of all proposed dimensions. Reliability was assessed using both the split-half method with Spearman-Brown correction and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, yielding high consistency scores across all scales (Organizational Culture: 0.842; Organizational Health: 0.796;

Organizational Symmetry: 0.764). Additionally, normality of the data distribution was evaluated using skewness coefficients, which indicated approximately normal distribution for all scales (Organizational Culture: 0.203; Organizational Health: 0.201; Organizational Symmetry: 0.208). These statistical procedures ensured the robustness of the instruments and the integrity of the data for subsequent analyses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Table 1. Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.790	0.624	0.619	3.994

Interpretation. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.624, indicating that 62.4% of the variance in organizational symmetry can be explained by the variables organizational culture and organizational health. The remaining 37.6% is attributed to other factors not included in this model.

Table 2. Anova (f-test)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3078.702	2	1539.351	96.721	0.000
Residual	1854.298	117	15.846		
Total	933.000	119			

Interpretation. The F-test result shows that the regression model, which includes both organizational culture and organizational health, is statistically significant in explaining organizational symmetry. This is supported by the F-value of 96.721 and a significance level of 0.000, which is well below the standard threshold of 0.05.

Table 3. Coefficients (t-test)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	12.960	2.336	5.547	0.000
Organizational Culture (X_1)	0.443	0.083	5.368	0.000
Organizational Health (X_2)	0.287	0.074	3.871	0.000

Interpretation. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis reveal that both organizational culture (X_1) and organizational health (X_2) exert a statistically significant and positive influence on organizational symmetry (Y).

1. The organizational culture variable (X_1) shows a coefficient value of 0.443 with a t-value of 5.368 and a significance level (p-value) less than 0.001. This indicates that for every one-unit increase in the organizational culture

score, the level of organizational symmetry increases by approximately 0.443 units, assuming all other variables are held constant. The result is highly statistically significant, suggesting a robust relationship between a strong organizational culture and the enhancement of symmetrical communication within the organization.

2. Similarly, the organizational health variable (X_2) has a coefficient of 0.287, with a t-value of 3.871 and a p-value also less than 0.001. This demonstrates that a one-unit increase in organizational health leads to an estimated increase of 0.287 units in organizational symmetry. The strength of this relationship underscores the role of a supportive, effective, and well-managed internal environment in fostering mutual communication and alignment across organizational levels.

The regression model can be expressed as follows: $Y=12.960+0.443X1+0.287X2Y = 12.960 + 0.443X_1 + 0.287X_2Y=12.960+0.443X1+0.287X2$

This equation shows that the baseline level of organizational symmetry, when both independent variables are zero, is 12.960. Each independent variable then contributes additively to the prediction of organizational symmetry based on its respective weight in the model.

Overall, the findings emphasize that both a well-established organizational culture and a healthy organizational climate are critical determinants of symmetrical communication practices. These variables work synergistically to promote balanced, open, and effective two-way communication, which is a cornerstone of a well-functioning and cohesive organization.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence that both organizational culture and organizational health have a significant and positive impact on organizational symmetry (Sharif et al., 2025). Oyioka (2023) This suggests that when an organization nurtures a robust cultural foundation and maintains a healthy internal environment, the conditions become conducive to symmetrical communication defined as open, two-way, and balanced exchange between organizational leadership and its members. Such communication dynamics are vital for achieving alignment, trust, and overall organizational effectiveness (Bucăţa & Rizescu, 2017).

A strong organizational culture, grounded in shared values, transparency, and mutual commitment, has been shown to shape communication patterns, encouraging feedback, dialogue, and mutual respect (Willis et al., 2016). When employees internalize organizational values, they are more likely to participate actively in the communication process, thus reinforcing symmetrical practices (Yue et al., 2021). The regression results of this study support this assertion,

indicating that organizational culture has the strongest positive contribution to symmetry in internal communication (Ortega et al., 2023). In parallel, a healthy organizational environment—one characterized by clear leadership, psychological safety, constructive interpersonal relationships, and a supportive infrastructure facilitates employee engagement and fosters an atmosphere where open communication can thrive (Kyambade et al., 2024). This aligns with the work of Hoy and Hannum (1997) who argue that organizational health is a critical determinant of overall effectiveness and directly influences communication climate and performance.

The findings are consistent with previous studies that underscore the interplay between internal organizational conditions and communication symmetry. For instance, Men and Stacks (2014) highlight that symmetrical internal communication is more likely to emerge in organizations that prioritize culture and health as strategic assets, ultimately enhancing employee satisfaction, trust, and organizational identification.

Despite these strengths, the study is not without limitations. First, it is contextually bound to higher education institutions in a single regional setting (Dhi Qar, Iraq), which may limit the generalizability of findings to other sectors or cultural environments. Second, the study relies heavily on self-reported data, which can introduce bias due to respondents' perceptions or social desirability. Third, while the study establishes relationships among the variables, it does not explore longitudinal effects or causal directions over time.

To overcome these limitations, future research should consider adopting a comparative multi-sectoral approach that includes other organizational contexts, such as private corporations or public service institutions, to examine the applicability of the model across different environments. Additionally, employing mixed methods or longitudinal designs can enhance the validity of results and provide deeper insights into how organizational culture and health evolve and impact communication symmetry over time. Moreover, triangulating self-reported data with objective measures such as organizational performance indicators or third-party assessments can help reduce bias and enhance credibility.

Considering these results, it is recommended that organizational leaders adopt deliberate strategies to continually strengthen organizational culture for example, by promoting shared vision and values and to sustain organizational health through leadership development, inclusive policies, and responsive communication structures. By doing so, organizations can ensure the maintenance of symmetrical internal communication, which is essential for long-term effectiveness, adaptability, and employee commitment.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that faculty members reported high perceptions of organizational culture, reflecting their recognition of the college administration's attention to cultural dimensions and their influence on organizational identity. Furthermore, organizational health was found to significantly contribute to faculty members' sense of identification and organizational belonging. Considering these findings, it is recommended that academic administrations prioritize the development of organizational culture, given its vital role in fostering positive workplace behaviors through the reinforcement of constructive values and shared beliefs. Equally important is the need to enhance internal working conditions by establishing firm foundations that support both the physical and psychological aspects of faculty roles, thereby cultivating a culture of transparency and consistency that positively shapes behavior. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of organizational health as a catalyst for institutional renewal, operational change, and improved productivity, urging college leadership to invest in practices that sustain a healthy organizational environment conducive to academic excellence.

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