

Organizational Culture and Performance of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office of Albay

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Abstract: This study determined the organizational culture and performance of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay. It answered the following problems: 1. What is the level of the organizational culture in terms of shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system, and policies?; 2. What are the performance appraisal ratings of the different divisions in the last rating period for Calendar Year 2023?; 3. What are the challenges encountered that affects organizational culture and performance?; and 4. What administrative plan may be proposed to address the challenges? The researcher tested the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between organizational culture in terms of shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system, and policies and performance in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness.

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I. INTRODUCTION

An institution's organizational culture has a significant impact on how its members behave, think, and perform. Since it increases efficiency, agility, employee engagement, and creativity, it encompasses much more than the common values, beliefs, conventions, and purpose that constitute the institution's or organization's identity. Leaders and managers who want to establish a productive and positive work environment must have a thorough understanding of how organizational culture affects performance. A strong and positive culture can help an organization to thrive, but it takes work to create and maintain. It is considered the beating heart of an organization, shaping the behavior and attitudes of everyone who works within it. However, a negative culture can have a detrimental effect on employees' morale and well-being, leading to high turnover rates and decreased productivity, which were supported in several studies.

By examining the relationship between culture and performance, organizations can leverage their cultural strengths to drive innovation, enhance employee engagement, decision-making processes, adaptability, and ultimately achieve their strategic objectives. The study aims to provide insights into how a strong and positive culture can drive

improved productivity, efficiency, and competitive advantage. Additionally, the study seeks to identify key elements of a healthy organizational culture that fosters a supportive and empowering work environment. Thus, it sets the stage for exploring the intricate connection between organizational culture and performance, shedding light on the critical factors that contribute to organizational success.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Edgar Schein's (1980) theory of organizational culture explores how workplace culture influences an organization's operations, with a focus on learning and group dynamics. According to Schein, organizational culture evolves as employees respond to changes, tackle external challenges, and solve problems, ultimately shaping their attitudes and behaviors within the workplace.

Schein's model consists of three levels that represent varying degrees of cultural depth: artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. Artifacts are the most visible components, such as office design, dress codes, and employee conduct, but they offer only a superficial understanding of culture. Espoused values go a step deeper, encompassing formally stated principles like mission statements and

organizational charters, which can be adjusted to influence cultural direction. The deepest level consists of underlying assumptions—unconscious beliefs regarding work, success, and failure that profoundly shape organizational culture but are rarely documented.

This theory provides valuable insights into how workplace culture affects employee motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction, ultimately impacting organizational performance.

Ludwig von Bertalanffy's (1968) Systems Theory is an interdisciplinary framework that examines the interconnectedness and interdependence of various components within a system. The theory asserts that a system is composed of multiple interrelated and interdependent parts, where changes in one component can create ripple effects throughout the entire system. It also highlights the importance of understanding not only the interactions and relationships among these parts but also how the system as a whole interacts with its surrounding environment.

In organizational management, Systems Theory has been applied to analyze how organizations operate as complex systems, where various departments, processes, and individuals interact and influence one another. This perspective is beneficial for enhancing organizational performance by recognizing the interconnected elements that contribute to overall effectiveness.

Institutional Theory, a sociological framework, explores how organizations are shaped by institutional pressures such as shared values, norms, and expectations within their external environment. It highlights the influence of social, political, and cultural forces on organizational structures, behaviors, and practices. Initially introduced by John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan (1977), this theory was further developed to explain how organizations exist within broader institutional frameworks and adapt to external demands for legitimacy and compliance with established norms. Institutional Theory has been widely utilized in organizational studies, particularly in management, sociology, and organizational behavior. It offers key insights into how organizations align with external expectations, how shared values shape behavior, and how institutions influence organizational practices.

Milton Rokeach (1973) developed the Theory of Shared Values, which asserts that organizations perform more efficiently when employees' values align with those of the organization. When there is value alignment, employees are more engaged, motivated, and dedicated to achieving organizational objectives. This theory suggests that shared values foster a sense of unity and purpose, strengthening employee commitment and contributing to a more cohesive and productive workplace culture.

In the context of organizational culture, the Theory of Shared Values emphasizes that collective beliefs within an organization shape employees' sense of belonging and shared understanding of priorities. This mutual understanding is crucial, as it directly influences how employees view their roles, their dedication to organizational objectives, and their overall job performance. The theory underscores that organizational culture is not merely an abstract idea but a powerful force shaping employees' thoughts, emotions, and actions in the workplace.

The origins of this theory can be traced back to Edgar Schein's work in 2010, where he stressed the role of leadership in shaping organizational culture. Schein argued that leaders play a pivotal role in establishing core values, beliefs, and assumptions that define how things should be done within an organization. This leadership function is essential in laying the foundation for the organization's identity, guiding employee behavior, and steering the organization toward collective goals.

Building upon these theories, the researcher developed a new theoretical perspective, proposing that both organizational culture and performance are influenced by the challenges employees face within the workplace. These challenges stem from both internal and external factors present in their work environment as they carry out their responsibilities and strive to meet organizational objectives.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study determined the organizational culture and performance of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay. These employed the system approach consisting of the subsystems such as input, process, output and feedback. The input of the study was the status of the organizational culture in terms of shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system and policies; the performance appraisal ratings of the different divisions in the last rating period; and the challenges encountered that affects organizational culture and performance.

The process sub-system was made up of the content validation of the research instrument, which is a survey questionnaire. First, the instrument had undertaken the face and content validation. The face validation was done by members of the thesis committee through examination of the instrument thereon. In like manner, four (4) external validators were asked to improve the questionnaire. All the suggestions of the two (2) groups of validators were incorporated in the final copy of the instrument. Next, the researcher personally administered the validated instrument to the respondents. In the administration of the research instrument, the researcher considered health and safety. The researcher informed the respondents that the gathered data would only be used for educational research. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality and security of the individual responses they

provided. Third, the gathered data were entered in a master tally sheet, tabulated, analyzed, subjected to statistical treatment, and interpreted using different statistical measures. The output of this study would be an administrative plan to resolve the challenges encountered that affect organizational culture and performance. Lastly, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Provincial Office of Albay demonstrates a mission-driven culture that supports its mandate of land reform and agrarian justice, fostering teamwork and public service orientation among employees. However, challenges such as limited adaptability to policy changes, underutilization of modern technologies, and gaps in employee engagement can impact overall performance. Strengthening accountability and transparency systems is also essential to building stakeholder trust and improving service delivery. To address these issues, the office can invest in capacity-building initiatives, implement feedback mechanisms to encourage inclusivity, and establish recognition programs to motivate employees. By aligning its culture with these improvements, the DARPO of Albay can enhance performance and better fulfill its mission.

IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

The study conducted by De Chavez, B. C. et al. (2015) found that while IM Digital Philippines Inc. offered a favorable working environment, there were still areas that required improvement. As a result, the study proposed a recommended action plan. The previous research on the Effects of Work Environment on the Health and Productivity of Workers at IM Digital Philippines, Inc. is closely related to the current study, as both employed a descriptive survey research method. The findings in both studies were evaluated using adjectival descriptions, with overall assessments of the work environment being rated as Good or High. However, certain health concerns and workplace issues still needed to be addressed. A majority of respondents rated the quality and quantity of work output as good, with scores of 79.52% and 78.02%, respectively, or very satisfactory. The study recommended an administrative plan to resolve the identified concerns.

Despite these similarities, a key difference between the two studies lies in the target respondents. The previous study focused on the workers of IM Digital Philippines, Inc., while the present study examines the employees of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay.

Similarly, the study by Abun, D. et al. (2021) revealed that the bureaucratic work environment was rated high, while the humanistic and entrepreneurial aspects were rated moderate. In terms of employee engagement, the findings indicated that work engagement was high. The study also established a significant correlation between the work environment and employee engagement, leading to the acceptance of the research hypothesis.

The study by Abun, D. et al. on Work Environment and Employee Engagement in Catholic Colleges in the Ilocos Region, Philippines, is related to the present research because both explore the impact of the work environment on employee performance. Both studies used questionnaires for data collection and employed a descriptive assessment and correlational research design, utilizing weighted mean and Pearson r correlation for data analysis.

However, the two studies differ in their scope and respondent groups. While the previous study focused on employees from Catholic Colleges in the Ilocos Region, the present study is conducted among employees of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay.

Diocos, C. (2023)⁴¹, revealed in her study that the institution had a high level of managing change, achieving goals, coordinating teamwork, customer orientation, and cultural strength. She also added that the management was highly tasked, relationship-oriented, and change-oriented. Furthermore, the results indicated a significant relationship between managing change and change-oriented dimensions. Significant relationships were also noted between achieving goals and task-oriented, relationship-oriented, and change-oriented dimensions. There was a significant relationship between customer orientation and change-oriented dimensions, and cultural strength and change-oriented dimensions were also significantly related.

The study conducted by Diocos, C. on Organizational Culture and Management Performance in a State College in the Philippines is closely related to the present research, as both utilize a descriptive-correlational research design to analyze organizational culture and management practices within the Philippine context.

The two (2) studies, however, differed on the research measures used to gather the data, target respondents, and setting of the study. The study used an already validated research tool of Organizational Culture Assessment Questionnaire (OCAQ) of Sashi and Rossenbach (2013) and Management Practices Scale developed by Yukl, Gordon, and Taber (2002); and respondents and setting of the study were the randomly selected employees during the school year 2022-2023 of Iloilo State College of Fisheries, a state higher institution in the Province of Iloilo, Philippines. On the contrary, the present study used a self-structured questionnaire; and the respondents and setting of the study were the regular employees of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay in the province of Albay.

Alvarez, M. C. B. et al., (2022)⁴² revealed in their study that negative and positive corporate politics were a norm in the workplace. In terms of existing practices, the employees practice teamwork and effective communication but

undesirable practices, such as using one's power in a negative way, exist and were prevalent in the organization. In terms of conduct, the employees treat each other in a good manner, and they also have utmost respect towards managers or leaders. In terms of values, the existing values in the organization were hard work and respect. The positive factors that also affect individual performance include a friendly working environment, close interaction with co-workers, and an increase in one's self-esteem through the leaders, recognition, and training. However, there were also negative factors that affect individual performance: unappreciated employees, being tired at work, and having a bad relationship with the bosses. Positive factors may help improve the organization, and negative effects should be avoided. Similarly, there must be an action with regard to the said factors.

The study of Alvarez, M. C. B. et al., entitled *An Exploratory Research of the Influence of Organizational Culture on Individual's Performance: The Experiences of ABC Company* is related to the present study because both studies used a self-developed interview guide in gathering data. The instrument underwent pre-testing and validation by experts to ensure the validity of the qualitative research. Field-testing was undertaken to ensure that the research questions would produce the desired data to answer the research objectives; and the field-testing of the interview guide also served as a training ground for the researchers in preparation for the actual administration. It only differed on the target respondents of both studies. The respondents of the above study were the employees of ABC company while in the present study were the regular employees of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay in the province of Albay.

Bautista, M. P. J. T & Uy, C. (2023)⁴³, in their study, identified that organizational culture affects performance from both the company and personal perspectives. Leadership style affects the personal perspective of performance. Thus, management must consider that the culture and the leadership style can be the source of the organization's sustainable competitive advantage. The study would help business leaders to understand the importance of developing the right organizational culture that encouraged the members of the organization to be resilient in times of crisis and the kind of leadership style that would make the organization not only survive but also thrive.

Bautista, M. P. J. T. & Uy, C. (2023) conducted a study that highlighted how organizational culture influences performance from both a company-wide and individual perspective. Their research also found that leadership style plays a crucial role in shaping employees' personal performance. As a result, the study emphasized the importance of cultivating an organizational culture and leadership style that can serve as a foundation for long-term competitive advantage. It provided insights for business leaders on fostering a workplace culture that encourages resilience during

crises and implementing leadership strategies that enable the organization to not only endure but also thrive.

Their study, "The Effects of Organizational Culture and Leadership Style on Organizational Performance in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic," aligns with the present research as both examine the impact of organizational culture on organizational performance. In their study, survey questionnaires were distributed to 161 employees from the telecommunication industry who had at least five years of work experience. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze employees' perceptions of company culture, leadership style, and overall performance.

Despite these similarities, the two studies differ in performance variables and statistical analyses. Bautista and Uy applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to measure the impact of culture and leadership on performance, considering both company and personal perspectives. In contrast, the present study employs the Pearson r correlation to assess the relationship between organizational culture and performance, measuring performance through quantity, quality, and timeliness.

A study by Fajilan, L. F. et al. (2021) revealed that while organizational culture and leadership style were significantly related, no significant correlation was found between organizational culture and employee engagement or work performance. Among the variables examined, organizational culture was identified as a predictor of employee engagement and leadership style but not of work performance. The researchers suggested conducting a more in-depth analysis of this aspect.

Their research, "The Impact of Organizational Culture on Employee Engagement, Leadership Style, and Work Performance of Laboratory Workers in Selected Clinical Laboratories in Metro Manila," is related to the present study, as both explore how organizational culture influences employee engagement and performance. However, the studies differ in respondent groups and research settings. The participants in Fajilan et al.'s study were medical professionals working in clinical laboratories in Metro Manila, while the present study focuses on employees of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) in Albay, a government institution in Legazpi City.

Francisco, N. P. et al. (2022) found a significant relationship between job burnout and employee performance based on statistical analysis. Their study, "The Job Burnout and Its Impact on Employee Performance Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic," is partly similar to the present research since both examine how employee well-being affects job performance. Both studies employ a descriptive-correlational research design to analyze data and derive meaningful insights.

However, the two studies differ in respondents and primary data sources. Francisco et al.'s study focused on white-collar professionals such as nurses, doctors, engineers, lawyers, accountants, teachers, and architects across various industries in Luzon. They utilized the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to measure burnout levels and the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) to assess employee performance. In contrast, the present study examines employees in a government setting and applies different measures to assess organizational performance.

Quiambao, V. G. Jr. (2021) explored the lived experiences of teachers in relation to organizational performance, highlighting themes such as excellence for global competitiveness, a well-defined organizational culture, and the role of leadership in shaping attitudes and commitment. His study, "Teachers' Quest on Organizational Performance: A Phenomenological Inquiry," aligns with the present research as both examine organizational performance and how individuals strive to achieve it.

Both studies involve narrative accounts collected through in-depth interviews and focus groups, utilizing an interview guide to explore participants' perspectives. However, they differ in respondents and research methodology. Quiambao's study involved tertiary educators from private higher education institutions in Region 12 (SOCCSKSARGEN), employing a phenomenological approach. The present study, in contrast, focuses on government employees and takes a quantitative research approach.

In 2019, Cabaron, Jennifer conducted a study that revealed higher education institutions in the Philippines performed very well across various areas, including vision-mission-goals-objectives (VMGO), faculty, curriculum and instruction, student support, research, extension, library, physical facilities, laboratories, and administration. While institutions exceeded minimum government accreditation standards, the study identified key areas for improvement, such as community alignment, faculty workload monitoring, resource allocation, and campus safety. The study emphasized the need for continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Her research, "Organizational Performance of Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines," is similar to the present study in that both assess organizational performance within the Philippine context. Both studies employ a descriptive research design and utilize frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores for data analysis. However, they differ in terms of respondents and research settings. Cabaron's study examined higher education institutions in Zamboanga del Norte, while the present study focuses on a government office in Albay.

The research conducted by Duodu, Enoch et al. (2019) found that both organizing practices and organizational

performance were rated high. The study established a strong positive correlation between organizational practices and business performance, emphasizing the importance of having a structured system to enhance customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness. The researchers recommended that businesses prioritize efficient organizing practices as a means of improving performance and suggested further research on additional variables related to organizational success.

Their study, "The Influence of Organizing Practices on Organizational Performance of Five Selected Small, Medium, and Large Businesses in the Philippines," is related to the present research because both examine the impact of organizational practices on performance. Additionally, both studies apply the Pearson correlation coefficient for statistical analysis and use the mean for descriptive evaluations. However, they differ in research participants and setting. Duodu et al. focused on small, medium, and large enterprises in the Philippines, while the present study investigates employees within a government institution in Albay.

V. METHODOLOGY

The researcher in this study utilized the mixed research method, for he integrated data from both quantitative and qualitative sources. This method according to Creswell, (2009)¹, is an approach to inquiry whereby it associated and combined both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involved the mixing and analysis of both approaches in the study so that the overall strength of the study was greater than either qualitative or quantitative research.

This study is a mixed research for it used qualitative data sources from the item statements obtained through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conduct that described the organizational culture practices and challenges encountered by employees along organizational culture and performance. Webster (2016)², conveyed that focus group are group interview, involving a small number (sometimes up to ten) of demographically similar participants. Their reactions to specific researcher/ evaluator-posed questions are studied.

Similarly, it used quantitative data sources from the self-structured questionnaire utilized to determine the level of the organizational culture in terms of shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system, and policies; the performance ratings of the different divisions in the last rating period for Calendar Year (CY) 2023; and the frequency of the challenges encountered along organizational culture and performance. Likewise, it also conducted a pilot survey to determine the validity and reliability of the research instrument and used descriptive statistics to interpret the gathered data thereof. Webster defined a pilot experiment, pilot study, pilot test, or pilot project as a small-scale preliminary study conducted to evaluate feasibility, duration, cost, and adverse events to

improve upon the study design prior to the performance of a full-scale research project.

VI. FINDINGS

- The computed average in organizational culture is lifted with the adjectival description in terms of *shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system, and policies*. In terms of *shared values*, the highest average weighted mean is obtained from; *I coordinate with responsible employees in our agency to facilitate inter agency/ office transactions* with 4.68, followed by *set of beliefs* with 4.85 obtained from; *I treat my co-employees with respect, attitudes* with 4.65 obtained from; *I follow the flow of command in our organization; system* with 4.32 obtained from; *Memorandum and issuances are immediately forwarded to guide us how to tackle organization's issues and problems;* and lastly *policies* with 4.63 obtained from; *I strive for the continual implementation of an effective Quality Management System to improve the services of the office*. The composite average has a value of 3.40 which also a had *high* adjectival description.
- In the performance appraisal ratings of the different divisions in the last rating period, the rating score are the following, to wit: Office of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Program Officer (PARPO) with 4.63; Office of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Adjudicator (PARAD) with 4.60; Legal Division with 4.47; Support to Operations Division with 4.88; Land Tenure and Improvement Division with 4.03; and Program Beneficiaries and Development Division with 4.68. All the rating scores have an adjectival description of *very satisfactory*. The combined average has a value of 4.55, which also had a *very satisfactory* adjectival description.
- In the challenges encountered that affect organizational culture and performance, the results are ranked according to the perceptions of the respondents. The ranking for the organizational culture are the following: *Disparities in distribution of work* ranked first; *Overlooks talents, abilities, and skills* ranked second; and *Restraints to feedback and suggestions* ranked third. While the ranking for the performance are the following: *Stressors and health issues* ranked first; *Multi-tasking and lacks recognition* ranked second; *un-openness and being reserved of some co-employees and inadequate feedback and communication* both ranked third.
- An administrative plan was proposed to address the challenges encountered along organizational culture and performance.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

- The level of organizational culture in terms of shared values, set of beliefs, attitudes, system, and policies is *high*.
- The average rating of the performance appraisal ratings of the different divisions in the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay is *very satisfactory*.
- The *disparities in the distribution of work* and *Stressors and health issues* were the most encountered challenges that affect organizational culture and performance, respectively.
- The administrative plan may address the challenges encountered that affect the organizational culture and performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The level of organizational culture of Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay may be raised to a high level by implementing strategic programs and activities that would help employees improve their personal and professional growth as well as their workplace environment.
- The performance rating of the Department of Agrarian Reform Provincial Office (DARPO) of Albay should be elevated to an outstanding rating by providing the employees with the necessary resources, both material and financial, to seamlessly execute the goals and objectives of the organization, thereby satisfying the needs and expectations of clients and stakeholders.
- The discussed challenges encountered by employees along organizational culture and performance must be discuss and in executive committee (EXECOM) meeting.
- The administrative plan must be strictly enforced and funded by incorporating it during the Budget Execution Document (BED) planning for the ensuing years to come so that the encountered challenges will be minimized if not totally eliminated.

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