



**TECHNIUM**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES JOURNAL**

**Vol. 12, 2020**

**A new decade  
for social changes**

[www.techniumscience.com](http://www.techniumscience.com)

ISSN 2668-7798



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# The Role of Organizational Culture in Improving the Performance of Human Resources in Higher Education

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**Abstract.** An organizational culture development will be successful if it is accompanied by efforts to optimize positive behavior and minimize negative behavior. For this reason, it is necessary to reform the organizational culture in universities. An organizational culture in a university will provide a set of norms needed by members of the organization, so that it can provide a strong meaning to what the human resources in the university are doing. The purpose of this study was to find answers on how organizational culture is applied in a higher education institution and what factors drive the improvement of the human resources performance in higher education. This research applies a case study approach from qualitative research design. In this study a semi-structured interview is used to get the perspectives of the employees of organizational culture and performance. The research proved that an organizational culture that is well socialized to the entire academic community will provide a thorough understanding to each employee so that it can be applied in daily activities and the improvement of performance quality can be increased by creating good work environment, training, motivation, reward and coercive. clear job descriptions and periodical job evaluations.

**Keywords.** Employee performance, higher education institution, human resources, organizational culture

## 1. Introduction

In an organization, corporation or institution, the human resources (HR) factor plays an important role, including in universities, which are known as the education personnel. HR management plays a very important role, because it determines the activities of institutions. The Decree of the Minister of Education No.232 / U / 2000 in Chapter II article 2 states that the aim and direction of higher education in Indonesia is to prepare students to become members of society who have academic abilities in applying, developing, and enriching science, technology or art, as well as disseminating and endeavoring to use it to improve the standard of life and enrich the national culture<sup>1</sup>.

The era of globalization always brings about changes that cause people's mindsets and patterns of life to change to make adjustments. In the world of education, these changes must be faced by education leaders through certain strategies. In order to create graduates who are able to compete in the global realm, one of the things to make this happen is a qualified organizational

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<sup>1</sup> Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia No. 232/U/2000 tentang Pedoman Penyusunan Kurikulum Pendidikan Tinggi dan Penilaian Belajar Mahasiswa

culture that is able to support and prepare students to answer challenges and fill this era of globalization.

Even though various institutions do not have the resources and wealth in the form of money, if they have skilled, disciplined, diligent human resources who are willing to work hard, and have a work culture, they will achieve enormous progress for the institution and opportunities will open up [1]. If the business world changes and makes organizational culture improvements but the world of education is not moving, a country will not develop. For this reason, organizational culture reform in higher education needs to be carried out. It is not sufficient if a higher education makes changes and structural development, but organizational culture fostering the human resources is not given priority.

Several researchers have conducted research related to organizational culture. One of them is [2] with the title *A Survey on Organizational Cultural Based on Stephan Robbin's Theory (A Case Study at Mashhad Electric Energy Distribution Company, Iran)*. This research uses descriptive method with reliability test analysis (Croach Alpha). The independent variable is Organizational Culture (X1) and the dependent variable is Employee Performance (Y). The results obtained are that the organizational culture that occurs at Mashhad Electric Energy Distribution Company has a significant influence on employee performance where the  $\alpha$  results of the variables in the Robbins theory of organizational culture range from 0.689 to 0.731 where employee participation in decision making strengthens a sense of belonging, loyalty, identity, and also reduce conflict within the organization.

Another researcher who has also studied organizational culture is [3], with the research title *Analysis of the Influence of Organizational Culture and Motivation on Employee Performance of PT. Telekomunikasi Indonesia Region IV Central Java-DIY*. The research method used is Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. The results of his research indicate that organizational culture and motivation have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The similarity between the two studies above with this research is that both of them examine organizational culture and employee performance, but the difference is that the above studies use quantitative methods and this research uses qualitative methods.

Another researcher who also uses qualitative methods is [4] with the research title *The Role of Organizational Culture in Marketing Strategy in Achieving Company Success (A Study at the Yogyakarta Margaria Group)*. This research uses descriptive qualitative research. The similarity with this research is that both studies examine organizational culture with qualitative research. The above thesis discusses the role of organizational culture, how marketing strategies, and the influence of organizational culture to achieve success in the Margaria Group Yogyakarta while this study examines the role of organizational culture in improving the performance of education personnel in a private university in Jakarta.

The purpose of this research is to find answers on how organizational culture is applied in a private university and what factors encourage the improvement of higher education human resources performance. This research makes a significant contribution to science in the field of HR management and the development of HR performance in tertiary education.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Definition of Organizational Culture*

Culture comes from the Sanskrit word "budhayah" as the plural form of the root word "budhi" which means reason or anything related to the mind, values and mental attitudes. [5] Culture is always social in the sense that it is a continuation of the traditions of a group of people whose material aspects are historically transferred and absorbed by generations according to the prevailing "values". The values here are the highest measures of human behavior. Meanwhile,

organizational culture is defined as a habit that is repeated by employees in an organization. There is no strict sanction in violating this habit, but morally organizational actors have agreed that this habit is a habit that must be adhered to in order to carry out work to achieve goals [6]. Triguno in his book *Human Resource Management* explains that work culture is a philosophy based on a view of life as values that become traits, habits, driving forces and culture in the life of a community group or organization that is reflected in attitudes into behavior, beliefs, ideals, opinions and actions that manifest as work [7]. An effective institution has an internal culture and it can be stronger because of the excellent quality of the organizational culture itself [8].

[9] states that there are eight main cores that become the basis or core of organizational culture. The values that form the basis or core of organizational culture can be measured as follows: (a) The principle of objectives, indicating how far members understand the goals the organization is trying to achieve; (b) the principle of consensus, showing how far the organization provides opportunities for members to participate in the decision-making process; (c) The principle of excellence, shows how much the ability of an organization to grow the attitude of its members to always be the best and achieve better than what has been done; (d) The principle of unity, shows an attitude carried out by the organization towards its members, namely by means of the organization being fair and not taking sides with certain groups in the organization; (e) The principle of achievement, shows the attitude and treatment of the organization towards the achievements of its members; (f) The principle of Empirical, indicating the extent to which the organization is willing to use empirical evidence in decision making; (g) The principle of familiarity, showing the conditions of social interactions among members in the organization and the quality of relationships among its members; (h) The principle of integrity, indicating the extent to which the organization is willing to work sincerely, honestly, reliably, has strong principles and beliefs in working to achieve organizational goals.

[10] states that culture performs a number of functions within an organization, including: (a). Culture has a role to define boundaries, meaning that culture creates clear differences between one organization and another; (b). Culture provides identity for organizational members. This means that each member of the organization has his own attitude and personality and character in accordance with the scope of their respective organizations; (c). Culture facilitates the emergence of a broader commitment to individual interests. This means that with the organizational culture, individuals have the opportunity to optimize their capacity and thinking for organizational goals; (d). Culture increases the stability of the social system. This means that a social system will be greatly influenced by the prevailing culture; (e). Culture is a meaning-making and control mechanism that guides and shapes employee attitudes and behavior. This means that employee behavior is strongly influenced by the culture of the organization in which he is located.

## *2.2 Definition of Human Resources Performance*

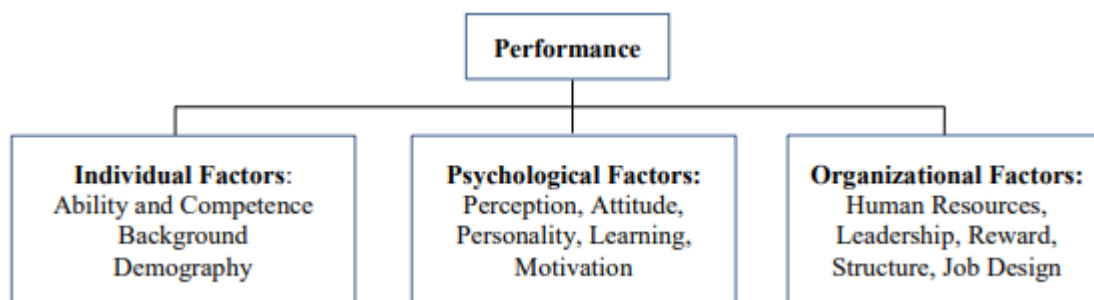
Performance or work performance is the result or level of success of a person as a whole during a certain period in carrying out a task compared to various possibilities such as work standards, targets, predetermined and mutually agreed criteria as stated by Rivai in [11]. [12] provides an understanding that performance is the result of work that has a strong relationship with the goals of organizational strategy, customer satisfaction and economic contribution. According to Kusriyanto in [13] performance is a term that comes from the word Job Performance or Actual Performance (actual work performance and achievements achieved by a person), namely the quality and quantity of work (output) achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties accordingly with the responsibilities assigned to him. According to Sedarmayanti in [14]

performance indicators are used to ensure that the day-to-day performance of the organization / work unit concerned shows the ability to achieve predetermined goals and objectives.

To measure individual employee performance, there are six indicators put forward by Robbins in [14] namely: (a). Work quality as measured by employees' perceptions of the quality of work produced and the perfection of tasks on employee skills and abilities. (b). Quantity of work is the amount produced and expressed in terms such as units, the number of activity cycles completed. (c). Punctuality is the level of activity by maximizing the time available. (d). Effectiveness is the level of use of organizational resources (manpower, money, technology, raw materials) that is maximized; (e). Independence is the level of an employee who will later be able to carry out his work functions; (f). Work Commitment is the level where employees have a work commitment to the agency and employee responsibilities to the office. [18] in [14] states that performance is influenced by three factors, namely: (a). Individual factors (Abilities and Skills, Background, Demographics); (b). Psychological factors (Perception, Attitude, Personality, Learning, Motivation); (c). Organizational factors (Resources, Leadership, Awards, Structure, Job Design).

Figure 1

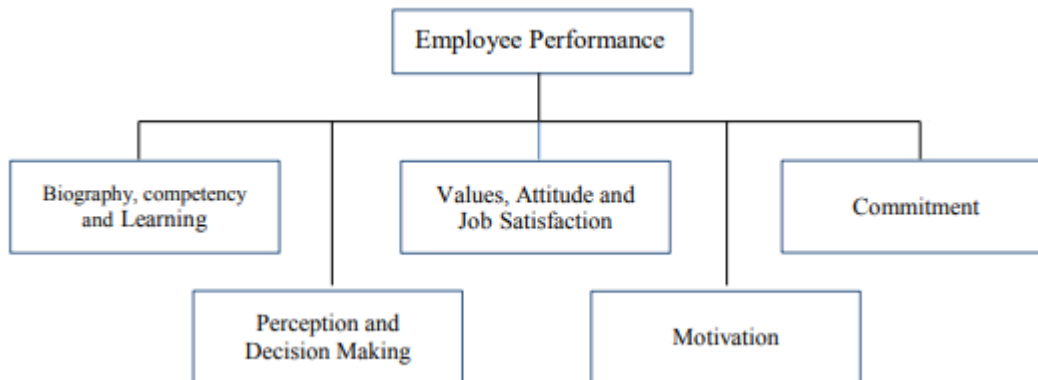
Factors affecting Performance



Source: Simamora in Mangkunegara (2009:14)

Meanwhile, [15] states that employee performance is influenced by a number of factors, including: (a). Basics of individual behavior which include biographical characteristics, abilities and learning. (b). Values, attitudes and job satisfaction. (c). Commitment (d). Perceptions and Involvement of individual decision making process. (e). Motivation.

Figure 2  
Factors affecting Employee Performance based on Robbins (1996)



Source: Robbins (1996)

Meanwhile, to be able to measure employee performance, [14] uses 4 indicators, namely: Quality of Work, Quantity of Work, Reliability, and Attitude. Another researcher, [16] states that performance appraisal is a process by which organizations evaluate the implementation of individual work. Performance appraisal indicators according to [16], namely: (a) Loyalty where every employee who has a high level of loyalty to the company will be given a good position; (b) Morale (a conducive atmosphere must be created by the institution); (c) Leadership (Employees must be included by in making decisions so that they have the opportunity to convey their ideas and opinions); (d) Cooperation (Institutions need to instill kinship and cooperation among employees, for all levels of positions); (e) Initiative (needs to be nurtured and owned both within employees and within the institution); (f) Responsibilities (must be owned by every employee); (g) Achievement of Targets (with specific strategies).

Meanwhile [17] propose 6 primary criteria that can be used to measure performance, as follows: (a) Quality (the degree to which the process or results of the implementation of activities approaching perfection or approaching the expected goals); (b) Quantity (the amount generated, for example: the amount of rupiah, number of units, number of activity cycles completed); (c) Timeline (the rate at which an activity is completed at the desired time by taking into account other output conditions and the time available for other activities); (d) Cost Effectiveness (the extent to which the application of human, financial, technological, material resources is maximized to achieve the highest results, or reduction of losses for each unit of resource users); (e) Need for Supervisor (the extent to which an employee can do his job with minimum supervision); (f) Interpersonal Import (the extent to which employees maintain self-esteem, good name and cooperation between colleagues and subordinates).

### 3. Methods

This research is a qualitative research with a case study approach. Qualitative research is a process of research and understanding based on methodology that investigates social phenomena and human problems, emphasizing the nature of reality that is socially constructed, the close relationship between the researcher and the subject under study [18]. The characteristic of a case study is that it can identify a “case” for a study, is a “system bound” by time and place, uses multiple sources of information in data collection, the case study approach focuses on the context or setting for a case [19].

This study took place in a private university in Jakarta. Due to the ethical issues and objections of the participants, the name and participants' data are not mentioned in this paper. Data

collection in this study used semi-structured interviews and documents. The total number of participants was 10 educational personnel who were interviewed by comparing the situation and conditions when they joined the university about 5 years ago and the current situation after they had worked at the university for 5 years. It is very important to see whether in the past 5 years there have been changes made by the university in an effort to improve the performance of its employees. The data analysis technique used in this study was analysis from [20]. [20] stated that there were three kinds of qualitative data analysis activities, namely: Data Reduction, Data Modeling (Data Display) and Conclusion Drawing.

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

From the data obtained, information was obtained that five years ago when new staff joined the university, organizational culture had not been well socialized to the entire academic community so that what became the principles and organizational culture was not well understood by all staff. As a result, the implementation does not run optimally because employees do not fully understand the organizational goals. Employees also do not understand that attitudes and behavior will affect employee performance and achievement. Thus it will be difficult for every employee to have integrity to the institution in which they work [9].

However, changes in this institution were seen after interviewing staff who have worked for 5 years. The organizational culture has begun to be socialized intensively to all employees and the academic community so that with an understanding towards the organizational culture, its application in everyday life can run optimally.

From the interviews conducted regarding the factors that drive performance quality improvement, the following data were obtained:

- (a) *Good working environment or atmosphere.* The work environment is all conditions that are around the workers, so that either directly or indirectly it can influence him in carrying out the assigned duties [21]. Environmental factors can come from outside the institution and from within the institution. From outside the institution, for example, are factors of education, work experience, cultural environment, and health. Meanwhile, factors within the institution are government regulations, leadership, as well as relationships among employees as stated by Parold in [22]. Five years ago, the work environment or atmosphere was not conducive. Good communication between employees, as well as communication between superiors and subordinates is very rigid so that good teamwork is not created. However, after 5 years working at the university, the staff felt a significant change so that teamwork could be realized.
- (b) *Training.* Training is learning provided to improve performance related to the work that is currently being done according to Chan in [23]. To boost the work performance of employees who are considered to be less than good, companies need to hold special training. Five years ago, the university did not conduct periodic training for its staff. Even if there is only for certain positions, especially those related to services. Meanwhile, other fields such as communication training, leadership, both in class and outbound training are almost never carried out. However, currently, there has been a very significant change because the training program has been given a special schedule regularly for each division in order to improve employee performance. In addition to increasing employee performance that was initially bad to what the company expected, employees who have performed well who have participated in the training program will also develop their knowledge and skills.
- (c) *Providing motivation.* Basically, motivation can spur employees to work hard, so they can achieve goals. This will increase employee productivity and performance, so that it can

- affect the achievement of institutional goals. Motivation is a series of attitudes and values that influence individuals to achieve specific things in accordance with individual goals [10]. The purposes of giving motivation as stated by [24] are: a). Encourage passion and morale of employees b). Improve employee morale and job satisfaction c). Increase employee work productivity d). Improve discipline e). Maintaining employee loyalty and stability. Five years ago, it was very rare for leaders in each division to motivate their staff either individually or collectively through employee meetings, but nowadays every division head has an obligation to motivate his staff as they learn from leadership training.
- (d) *Reward and Coercive*. Appreciating employees means appreciating individually, as a form of appreciation for an achievement and as a form of humanizing employees. Like competition, companies need to provide rewards and coercive for employees who excel and for employees who make mistakes. Technically, this activity can be held periodically within a certain period, and of course after seeing and evaluating the performance of each employee, so that it can motivate and spur an effective enthusiasm for employees to compete to improve performance. Coercive is an act that is unpleasant, in the form of punishment or sanctions that are given to employees consciously when there is a violation so that they do not repeat it again. If reward is a positive form, coercive is a negative form. However, according to M. Ngalim in [25] if it is given properly and wisely, it can be a tool to stimulate employees to improve their performance. Several years ago, universities still prioritized coercive over reward. Employees who make mistakes or are not maximal in their work are immediately given sanctions to correct them, but employees who are already working well and showing good quality work. No reward is given because according to the institution it is the obligation of all employees to work with good results.
- (e) *Clear Job Description*. The clarity of job description will have a positive and significant effect on performance. This is a job breakdown that contains comprehensive information about the duties / obligations, responsibilities, and conditions needed if the work is done as stated by Sastrohadiwiryo in [26]. A clear job description and a job placement that matches the employee's expertise will greatly affect employee performance. When compared with several years ago, the job description for each employee is very clear, including work targets and final results that must be accounted for so that this will encourage employee performance improvement.
- (f) *Scheduled Job Evaluation*. Performance evaluation / appraisal is a process carried out in order to assess employee performance. From the results of the performance evaluation, the company will get a performance appraisal and recommendations so that it can be used as consideration for future performance improvements. According to [27], in the evaluation stage, companies should involve various parties so that the assessment can be objective. Currently, employee work evaluations have been carried out periodically with a clear schedule. Evaluation is not done every six months or once a year but every month, every 3 months, six months and every year end. Thus, if there is an error or imperfection in the employee's job, it can be corrected immediately.

## 5. Conclusion

From the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that the application of organizational culture in higher education is very important. An organizational culture that is well socialized to the entire academic community will provide a thorough understanding to each employee so that it can be applied in daily activities. From the analysis above, it can also be concluded that factors encourage the improvement of the employee performance quality are the work environment, training, motivation, reward and punishment, clear job descriptions and periodical job

evaluations. For future research, the researcher recommends to conduct a study related to the performance of education personnel in state universities with a different approach.

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