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Towards an Organisational Culture Management Framework for Urban Local Authorities in Zimbabwe: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Anchored on the strong assumption that corporate culture globally influences the effectiveness and prosperity of companies in diverse fields, the primary objective of this research was to develop an organisational culture management framework tailored to urban local authorities in Zimbabwe with a view to improving their organisational performance. The research adopted Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to gather comprehensive data on organisational culture management in urban local authorities. Thus, the SLR identified best practices and gaps in the current knowledge. The findings from the SLR were synthesised to identify key concepts, models, and frameworks relevant to organisational culture management. Based on the insights gathered from the literature review, a comprehensive organisational culture management framework tailored to urban local authorities in Zimbabwe was developed. Therefore, the SLR identified key concepts namely organisational culture definition, importance of leadership alignment, employee attitudes and performance metrics. Furthermore, the systematic review identified several models relevant to organisational culture management namely the competing values framework, Cameron and Quinn's model, Schein's model of organisational culture and Kotter's change management model. The SLR revealed several best practices for managing organisational culture in urban local authorities. These include engagement initiatives, training programs, feedback mechanisms, recognition systems and diversity and inclusion policies. Consequently, the proposed framework developed has five

components/stages namely the assessment phase, leadership development, employee engagement, performance monitoring and continuous improvement. Thus, this comprehensive framework is aimed not only to enhance employee attitudes but also ensure alignment between leadership actions and overall organisational performance within urban local authorities in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: ***Local authorities; Organisational culture; Framework, Change management model, Continuous Improvement, Employee Attitudes, Leadership alignment***

INTRODUCTION

The research is grounded on the strong assumption that corporate culture globally influences the effectiveness and prosperity of companies in diverse fields. Globally, the performance and success of businesses in diverse industries are significantly influenced by the corporate culture (Munyoro & Phiri, 2020; Shamsudin & Velmurugan, 2023). Understanding and utilising corporate culture may have a huge impact on the efficacy and efficiency of an organisation, especially in the context of Zimbabwe's urban local authorities (Munyoro et al, 2016; Makumbe & Washaya, 2022). These organisations' distinct cultures have an impact on decision-making procedures, employee behaviour, and overall performance results in addition to reflecting the values, beliefs, and norms of the workforce (Bogale & Debela, 2024).

A thorough literature search has revealed that a strong and positive corporate culture fosters employee engagement, enhances teamwork, improves communication, and ultimately drives organisational success (Radu, 2023). As such, the importance of corporate culture in organisational performance cannot be overstated (Munyoro & Phiri, 2020; Magaisa & Musundire, 2022). Using corporate culture to its full potential is essential for Zimbabwe's urban local authorities, as sustained growth and citizen satisfaction depend on the provision of public services (Huragu & Chuma, 2019; Munyoro & Phiri, 2020).

This study explores the distinctive cultural features of Zimbabwean urban local authorities in order to determine how these features might be used to enhance performance in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, and overall quality. Gaining knowledge of the principles that guide decision-making procedures, the communication modalities that are often used in the company, and the leadership styles that are employed can be quite beneficial in improving operational results (Badarai, 2020).

It is impossible to overstate the impact corporate culture has on organisational performance and efficiency in Zimbabwe's metropolitan local government (Munyoro et al, 2016; Huragu & Chuma, 2019; Badarai, 2020). Nonetheless, there remains a gap in converting these cultural components into observable gains in organisational performance, even in spite of the importance of corporate culture being acknowledged. In summary, the goal of this study is to propose an organisational culture management framework that drives efficiency and effectiveness in Zimbabwean urban local authorities and eventually culminating in attainment of sustained success by acknowledging and utilising the cultural subtleties inherent in these institutions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this research is to develop an organisational culture management framework tailored to urban local authorities in Zimbabwe. This framework aims to address the existing issues related to employee attitudes, leadership alignment, and overall organisational performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organisational culture plays a crucial role in shaping the performance and effectiveness of any institution, including urban local authorities (Huragu & Chuma, 2019; Fastiggi et al, 2021; Munyoro et al, 2022). In the context of Zimbabwe, where urban local authorities face various challenges related to employee attitudes, leadership alignment, and overall organisational performance, there is a growing need for a tailored framework to manage and improve organisational culture.

Defining and measuring corporate culture

Corporate culture can be defined as the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that characterise an organisation according to Schein (2016), Kassem (2021) and Munyoro et al (2022). It represents the ‘personality’ of the organisation and influences how employees interact with each other, make decisions, and approach their work (Pathiranage et al, 2020; Kassem, 2021; Munyoro et al, 2022). Thus, Pathiranage et al (2020) emphasise that corporate culture is deeply embedded in an organisation’s DNA and serves as a guiding force for employee behaviour. Additionally, they note that measuring corporate culture can be challenging due to its intangible nature. However, various frameworks and models have been developed to assess different dimensions of corporate culture.

Akpa et al (2021) propose a model that focuses on four key traits of corporate culture: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. Thus, by measuring these dimensions, organisations can gain insights into their cultural strengths and areas for improvement.

It is worth noting that corporate culture is a complex and multifaceted concept that plays a crucial role in shaping organisational behaviour, values, and practices (Sackmann, 2021; Munyoro et al, 2022). Hence, various theoretical frameworks have been proposed to understand the intricacies of corporate culture and these frameworks provide valuable insights into how culture is formed, maintained, and transmitted within an organisation, ultimately influencing its outcomes. Therefore, the Competing Values Framework, developed by Cameron and Quinn in the 1980s, is one of the most widely used models for understanding organisational culture. Thus, this framework categorises organisational cultures into four types: Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy and each type represents different values and norms that organisations may exhibit. In this case, the CVF suggests that organisations need to balance competing values to be effective and successful. For example, a balance between flexibility and stability or internal focus and external focus is essential for organisational performance.

Contextualising corporate culture

The cultural context in Zimbabwe often intersects with traditional governance systems, influencing how local authorities are perceived and interact with communities. Research by Gumbo (2024) underscores the importance of aligning modern governance structures with traditional norms to enhance legitimacy and effectiveness. Cultural norms and values shape community engagement practices within Zimbabwean local authorities. Makoni (2021) explores how understanding cultural nuances can foster meaningful participation and collaboration between residents and local government officials.

Furthermore, Zimbabwe's diverse ethnic landscape adds another layer of complexity to the operations of local authorities. Hence, Chigora (2022) discusses how navigating ethnic dynamics is essential for promoting inclusivity and equitable service provision across different communities. In conclusion, Zimbabwean local authorities grapple with a range of challenges that are intricately linked to the cultural context within which they operate. Therefore, by recognising these unique

dynamics and understanding the cultural nuances at play, policymakers and stakeholders can work towards building more resilient and responsive local governance systems in Zimbabwe.

Corporate culture in Zimbabwean urban local authorities

It is significant to note that Zimbabwean local authorities face a myriad of unique challenges and dynamics that significantly impact their ability to effectively govern and provide services to their communities (Munyoro et al, 2016; Chakunda, 2023). Therefore, understanding the cultural context within which these local authorities operate is crucial in comprehending the complexities they encounter and thus, this empirical literature review will delve into the key challenges faced by Zimbabwean local authorities, highlighting the importance of cultural context in shaping their operations.

One of the primary challenges faced by Zimbabwean local authorities is political interference. Hence, research by Moyo et al (2022) highlights how political elites often meddle in local governance processes, undermining the autonomy and decision-making powers of local authorities. Whilst, financial limitations, on the other hand pose a significant obstacle to the effective functioning of Zimbabwean local authorities. Hence, studies by the National Association of Counties (2018) emphasise how inadequate funding hampers service delivery and infrastructure development at the local level.

It is a fact, that corruption and mismanagement has plagued many Zimbabwean local authorities, impeding their ability to serve their constituents efficiently (Moyo & Moyo, 2015). In this case, Nyathi (2020) discusses how corrupt practices erode public trust and hinder progress in local governance. Henceforth, providing essential services such as water, sanitation, and waste management remains a major challenge for Zimbabwean local authorities. This is supported by Mandioma (2023) who highlight the struggles faced in meeting the basic needs of residents due to resource constraints and inefficiencies.

Corporate culture and organisational performance

Corporate culture plays a vital role in shaping organisational behaviour, decision-making processes, and overall performance (Zvobgo & Do, 2020; Munyoro et al, 2022). Understanding how corporate culture influences organisational outcomes is crucial for effective management, particularly in the

context of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe (Marumahoko, 2020; Munyoro et al, 2022). Numerous scholars including Munyoro et al (2022), have highlighted the significance of corporate culture in driving organisational success. Strong corporate cultures have been linked to higher employee engagement, increased productivity, and better financial performance (Munyoro et al, 2022; Makoni, 2023). In contrast, toxic or dysfunctional cultures can lead to low morale, high turnover rates, and poor organisational outcomes (Brown-Crawford, 2022; Munyoro et al, 2022).

In the context of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe, corporate culture plays a critical role in shaping governance practices, service delivery mechanisms, and stakeholder relationships (Mapfumo, & Mutereko, 2020). Mapfumo and Mutereko (2020) emphasise the importance of a transparent and accountable culture within local government entities to foster trust among citizens and promote effective public administration. The unique socio-political environment in Zimbabwe further underscores the need for adaptive and ethical corporate cultures within urban local authorities (Muchadenyika, 2020).

Research suggests that a positive corporate culture can enhance organisational performance by fostering innovation, collaboration, and strategic alignment (Pathiranage, Jayatilake, & Abeysekera, 2020). In urban local authorities, a strong culture of integrity and service excellence can lead to improved service delivery, citizen satisfaction, and sustainable development outcomes (Mwesigwa & Oladapo, 2021). Conversely, cultural barriers such as resistance to change or bureaucratic inertia can impede progress and hinder organisational effectiveness (Mugore, 2022)

To leverage corporate culture effectively in urban local authorities in Zimbabwe, leaders must prioritise cultural alignment with strategic goals, invest in employee development programs that reinforce desired cultural traits, and actively promote a culture of transparency and accountability (Makumbe, 2020). By cultivating a positive organisational culture that values inclusivity, innovation, and continuous improvement, local authorities can drive positive change and achieve sustainable development objectives.

Corporate culture plays a vital role in shaping the behaviour, attitudes, and performance of employees within an organisation (Cherian, Gaikar, Paul & Pech, 2021). The relationship between corporate culture and organisational performance has been a subject of interest for researchers and practitioners alike. In the context of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe, leveraging corporate

culture to improve organisational performance is crucial for achieving efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability (Ngwenya, Ndlovu, Shava, Zulu, & Shonhiwa, 2022).

A strong corporate culture has been linked to several positive outcomes for organisational performance (Fidyah & Setiawati, 2020). According to Fidyah et al (2020), one key aspect is employee engagement, where employees feel connected to the organisation's values and goals. This sense of belonging can lead to increased motivation, job satisfaction, and loyalty. Productivity is another area where corporate culture plays a significant role. A positive culture that promotes collaboration, open communication, and continuous learning can enhance employee productivity levels (Lam, Nguyen, & Tran, 2021). Employees are more likely to perform at their best when they feel supported by their organisation's culture (Lam et al, 201).

Innovation is also closely tied to corporate culture. Organisations with a culture that encourages creativity, risk-taking, and experimentation are more likely to foster innovation among employees (Kahura, 2023). By creating an environment where new ideas are welcomed and rewarded, organisations can stay competitive in today's rapidly changing business landscape (Samuelson, 2021). Overall organisational performance is ultimately influenced by the collective impact of corporate culture on various aspects such as employee engagement, productivity, innovation, and other key performance indicators (Samuelson, 2021).

By nurturing a strong and positive culture within urban local authorities in Zimbabwe, organisations can drive sustainable growth and success (Shayamano, 2021). In a nutshell, the relationship between corporate culture and organisational performance is complex yet essential for the success of any organisation. By understanding how corporate culture shapes employee behaviour and attitudes, organisations can leverage their cultural strengths to improve various aspects of organisational effectiveness. In the context of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe, fostering a strong corporate culture can lead to enhanced employee engagement, productivity, innovation, and overall performance (Shayamano, 2021; Munyoro et al, 2022).

In conclusion, the literature reviewed highlights the critical role of corporate culture in shaping organisational outcomes within urban local authorities in Zimbabwe. Thus, by understanding how corporate culture influences employee behaviour, decision-making processes, and overall

performance metrics, leaders can pro-actively cultivate cultures that drive success and contribute to sustainable development goals (Munyoro et al, 2022).

Importance of Organisational Culture Management

A thorough search of literature reveals that organisational culture plays a crucial role in shaping the behaviour, attitudes, and performance of employees within an organisation. In this case, effective management of organisational culture can have a significant impact on various aspects of an organisation, including employee morale, leadership effectiveness, decision-making processes, and organisational performance (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022). A positive organisational culture can contribute to higher levels of employee morale because when employees feel valued, respected, and engaged within the workplace, they are more likely to be motivated and satisfied with their jobs (Munyoro et al, 2022). Thus, this can lead to increased productivity, lower turnover rates, and improved overall job satisfaction among employees (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022; Munyoro et al, 2022).

According to Lasrado and Kassem (2021), organisational culture also plays a critical role in determining the effectiveness of leadership within an organisation. A strong culture that aligns with the values and goals of the organisation can help leaders communicate effectively, inspire trust and loyalty among employees, and drive organisational success through effective decision-making and strategic planning. The culture of an organisation influences how decisions are made at all levels. A well-defined organisational culture that promotes transparency, collaboration, and innovation can lead to more informed decision-making processes (Munyoro et al, 2022). Henceforth, employees who understand and embody the core values of the organisation are better equipped to make decisions that align with the overall objectives of the company (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022; Munyoro et al, 2022).

Ultimately, effective management of organisational culture can significantly impact the overall performance of an organisation (Hakim, 2021). Thus, a strong culture that fosters teamwork, creativity, and continuous improvement can drive innovation, enhance productivity, and ultimately lead to higher levels of organisational performance and success (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022; Munyoro et al, 2022).

Hence, developing a culture management framework specifically tailored for urban local authorities in Zimbabwe is essential to address these issues. Accordingly, by creating a framework that takes into account the unique challenges and opportunities faced by local government entities in Zimbabwe, organisations can better manage their cultures to achieve improved employee morale, enhanced leadership effectiveness, better decision-making processes, and ultimately higher organisational performance.

Key Elements of an Organisational Culture Management Framework

It is vital to note that a well-defined organisational culture management framework is essential for fostering a positive work environment and driving overall organisational success (Aboramadan, Albashiti, Alharazin & Zaidoune, 2020). Henceforth, this literature review delves into three key elements that are crucial for the effective management of organisational culture. In this case, employee attitudes are fundamental to the success of any organisation. So, understanding and influencing these attitudes towards work, the organisation, and their roles can significantly impact employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. Therefore, research by Schein (2010) emphasises the importance of aligning employee attitudes with the core values and beliefs of the organisation to create a cohesive culture. Thus, by promoting a positive work environment where employees feel valued and supported, organisations can enhance employee satisfaction and retention rates.

In fact, leadership alignment is another critical component of an effective organisational culture management framework. Hence, Schein (2016) highlights that leaders at all levels must be aligned with the values, vision, and goals of the organisation to drive cultural change successfully. Thus, when leaders embody the desired cultural traits and behaviours, they serve as role models for employees, influencing their attitudes and actions. In fact, effective leadership alignment fosters trust, transparency, and collaboration within the organisation, leading to improved employee morale and performance.

Ultimately, the goal of an organisational culture management framework is to enhance overall organisational performance through targeted cultural interventions. Hence, Cameron & Quinn (2011) suggest that by aligning culture with strategic objectives and implementing performance improvement initiatives that reinforce desired behaviours, organisations can achieve sustainable

growth and competitive advantage. Thus, by continuously monitoring performance metrics and soliciting feedback from employees, organisations can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to drive positive change.

In conclusion, a comprehensive organisational culture management framework should focus on understanding and influencing employee attitudes, ensuring leadership alignment with organisational values, vision, and goals, and driving performance improvement through targeted interventions. By prioritising these key elements, organisations can cultivate a strong and resilient culture that supports long-term success.

Existing Literature on Organisational Culture Management

Several studies have highlighted the significance of organisational culture in driving performance outcomes. Thus, research by Hofstede (1980) on cultural dimensions and by Schein (2010) on organisational culture has provided valuable insights into how culture influences behaviour within organisations. In fact, Hofstede (1980) conducted a ground-breaking study on cultural dimensions, which laid the foundation for understanding how national cultures can impact organisational cultures. In this case, his research identified six cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint. In fact, these dimensions have been widely used to assess and compare cultural differences across countries and organisations.

The literature on organisational culture management emphasises the critical role that culture plays in influencing employee attitudes, behaviours, and overall organisational performance. Thus, by understanding and actively managing their cultures, organisations can create environments that foster innovation, collaboration and employee engagement. Overall, the works of Hofstede and Schein have significantly contributed to our understanding of organisational culture management and its impact on organisational effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The research adopted SLR to gather comprehensive data on organisational culture management in urban local authorities. A SLR (SLR) is a structured approach to identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing research findings from existing literature. In the context of organisational culture

management within urban local authorities, this method allows for a comprehensive understanding of the frameworks and practices that influence organisational culture (Kulkarni and Rao, 2016; Mengist et al, 2020). The SLR aimed to gather data on how organisational culture impacts employee attitudes, leadership alignment, and overall performance in urban local authorities, particularly focusing on Zimbabwe (Mengist et al, 2020). The SLR identified best practices and gaps in the current knowledge (Kulkarni and Rao, 2016). The findings from the SLR were synthesized to identify key concepts, models, and frameworks relevant to organisational culture management (Kulkarni and Rao, 2016; Mengist et al, 2020). Consequently, based on the insights gathered from the literature review, a comprehensive organisational culture management framework tailored to urban local authorities in Zimbabwe was developed.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The SLR identified key concepts namely organisational culture definition, importance of leadership alignment, employee attitudes and performance metrics. Accordingly, organisational culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, and practices that shape how members of an organisation interact and work together. Furthermore, it plays a crucial role in determining employee satisfaction and productivity. In this case, effective leadership is pivotal in shaping and maintaining a positive organisational culture. In addition, leaders must embody the values they wish to instill within their teams to foster trust and commitment among employees. Also, employee perceptions of their work environment significantly affect their motivation and engagement levels. In summary, a positive organisational culture can enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover rates, and improve overall performance. Moreover, the review highlighted various metrics used to assess organisational performance linked to cultural attributes, such as employee engagement scores, productivity rates, and service delivery effectiveness.

Models and Frameworks Synthesised

The SLR identified several models relevant to organisational culture management namely the competing values framework, Cameron and Quinn's model, Schein's model of organisational culture and Kotter's change management model. In this case, the Competing Values Framework (CVF) categorises organisations based on two dimensions-internal versus external focus and stability versus flexibility-providing insights into how different cultures can impact performance

outcomes. Likewise, Cameron and Quinn's Model emphasises the importance of aligning organisational culture with strategic goals through four cultural types: Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy. Whilst Schein's Model of Organisational Culture outlines three levels of culture-artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions-which help diagnose cultural issues within organisations. While, Kotter's Change Management Model, primarily focused on change management in the process highlighting the need for cultural considerations when implementing new initiatives or reforms within local authorities.

Best Practices Identified

The SLR revealed several best practices for managing organisational culture in urban local authorities. These include engagement initiatives, training programs, feedback mechanisms, recognition systems and diversity and inclusion policies. Thus, under engagement initiatives, the SLR revealed that regularly involving employees in decision-making processes fosters a sense of ownership and belonging. Additionally, training programs were found to foster continuous professional development aligned with cultural values, thereby enhancing skills while reinforcing desired behaviours among staff. Furthermore, it emerged from the findings that the SLR model can be applied in implementing robust feedback systems in urban local authorities to allow real-time adjustments to policies or practices that may not align with the intended culture. Whilst conducive to high performance can be promoted to reflect core values which promotes a positive working environment. In addition, the study indicates that cultivating an inclusive environment encourages diverse perspectives which can enhance problem-solving capabilities within urban local authorities such as Chinhoyi municipality.

Gaps in Current Knowledge

Despite the wealth of information gathered through the SLR, several gaps were identified:

- Context-Specific Studies: There is limited research focusing specifically on urban local authorities in developing countries like Zimbabwe.
- Longitudinal Studies: More longitudinal studies are needed to understand how changes in organisational culture over time affect employee attitudes and performance metrics.

- Integration with Technology: The intersection between technology adoption (e.g., digital governance) and its impact on organisational culture remains underexplored.
- Cultural Assessment Tools: There is a lack of validated tools tailored for assessing organisational culture specifically within public sector contexts.
- Comprehensive Organisational Culture Management Framework for Urban Local Authorities in Zimbabwe

The SLR framework

Based on insights from the SLR, a tailored framework was developed as follows:

Figure 1: The SLR Framework

Source: Authors

Firstly, the assessment phase of the SLR framework proposes the conducting of regular cultural assessments using surveys or focus groups. In addition, the assessment phase identifies the current cultural strengths and weaknesses relative to desired outcomes. Secondly, the leadership development phase on the other hand entails training leaders at all levels on cultural competencies and aligning leadership behaviours with desired cultural attributes through coaching programs. Thirdly, the Employee Engagement phase is meant to foster open communication channels where employees feel safe sharing ideas or concerns as well as implementing participatory decision-making processes that empower staff involvement within urban local authorities and similar organisations. Fourthly, the performance monitoring phase of the SLR framework focuses on establishing clear metrics linking cultural initiatives with performance outcomes and performing

regular reviews of progress towards achieving cultural goals alongside operational objectives. Lastly, the continuous improvement phase recommends creating mechanisms for ongoing feedback regarding cultural initiatives adapting strategies based on evolving needs or challenges faced by urban local authorities.

CONCLUSION

The proposed framework consists of five integral components or stages that collectively aim to improve employee attitudes and ensure a cohesive alignment between leadership actions and the overall performance of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe. Each component plays a crucial role in fostering a conducive work environment, enhancing productivity, and ultimately driving organisational success. This comprehensive framework aims not only to enhance employee attitudes but also ensure alignment between leadership actions and overall organisational performance within urban local authorities in Zimbabwe.

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