

Effect of Organizational Culture on Project Delays in the Construction Industry of Pakistan: A Competing Value Framework Perspective

Awais Ahmad Khan, Yasir Ahmad, Asjad Shahzad, Afshan Naseem

College of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The construction industry holds significant importance in driving economic growth and infrastructure development. Despite this, delays in construction projects remain a persistent and pervasive challenge globally. Moreover, culture, a vital organizational component, may be associated with delays. Organizational culture is conceptualized as a framework of shared beliefs, values, and norms that shape the organization's interpretation and understanding of various factors. To investigate the causes of project delays, this study aimed to examine the intricate relationship between organizational culture and delays in construction projects, specifically focusing on the role of cultural types. These included Clan, Adhocracy, Market and Hierarchy cultures, identified through competing value framework (CVF).

Design/Methodology/Approach: Extensive research was conducted using an online questionnaire survey that comprehensively covered an essential aspect of projects i.e. identifying common causes of delays, and an in-depth assessment of organizational culture. The survey was circulated among the construction professionals, stakeholders, and project participants in Pakistan's central and northern regions. The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) and the Quinn and Cameron model were used to evaluate the organizational culture in various construction companies engaged in multiple projects. The six key dimensions used in the survey were Dominant Characteristics, Organizational Leadership, Management of Employees, Organizational Glue, Strategic Emphases, and Criteria of Success. The data collected from the survey were subjected to statistical analysis (Non-Parametric) to identify patterns, correlations, and relationships between organizational culture and project delays.

Findings/Results: The results revealed that clan culture dominated the construction industry in the target region, which is characterized by a strong sense of trust, collaboration, and shared values among individuals. However, the chi-square test results indicated that there was no significant association between the dominant organizational culture and the delays experienced in construction projects. This suggests that while there is no sufficient evidence of organizational culture influencing project management practices, there are other external and project-specific factors that might significantly impact project timelines.

Practical Implications: The research has numerous implications for the construction industry in Pakistan. For example, although Clan Culture may foster positive values, the prevalence of delays in construction projects may be influenced by external factors such as economic fluctuations, regulatory constraints, and issues with suppliers, and adverse weather conditions. Additionally, project-specific constraints (internal constraints) such as equipment failures, labour shortages, missing or incorrect data, and conflicts can significantly contribute to delays. Therefore, the focus of the organizations should be shifted to these contributing factors rather than putting efforts into changing a dominant culture. There are several limitations of the study. For example, the sample size of this study was limited to construction organizations in the central

and northern regions of Pakistan, affecting the generalizability of the results. Future research may include a more diverse sample from various regions to strengthen findings. Additionally, an approach involving different statistical techniques (parametric tests) and qualitative methods like focus groups and case studies (longitudinal), is essential to fully understand the link between organizational culture and project delays.

Originality/Value: The research study provided valuable insights into the organizational culture and its potential impact on project delays in the construction industry of Pakistan. The data analysis revealed and answered the previous calls for research by identifying the Clan Culture as the dominant culture within construction organizations. This culture emphasized trust, teamwork, and close-knit relationships among employees, often found in family-owned and operated companies where employees were often related.

Keywords: *Construction industry; Organizational culture; Project delays; Project performance*