

A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AT ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY IN IRAN

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Abstract: Organizational culture is comprised of the shared values and attitudes of an institution's members, and effective organizational culture is a necessary aspect of any successful institution and its governance. Often the term is used in a corporate context, but the concept is an equally important element of academic life and management.

Islamic Azad University (IAU) in Iran, established in 1982, is among the primary cultural-educational participants in the crucial task of growing Islamic culture and humanistic development among faculty members, students, scholars and staff at more than 400 branches nationwide and internationally. Clearly, the effectiveness of the organizational culture of IAU will affect its relative ability to achieve this task. Thus, the objective of this study was to determine the dominant organizational culture type based on perceptions and preferences of faculty members at Islamic Azad University (IAU) branches in Iran. This is a descriptive and exploratory research enacted through a nationwide survey. Based on the competing values framework (CVF), Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was employed to assess the research objective. By using random sampling, 357 questionnaires were distributed among 7 selected IAU branches and 329 were considered to be valid. The findings revealed that that the current dominant organizational culture type at IAU branches in Iran was hierarchy culture and the preferred dominant culture type was clan. Furthermore, the current culture type was reasonably congruent. The findings also indicated that there were no significant mean score differences among current organizational culture types and demographic characteristics with respect to gender, marital status and work experience; however there were mean scores differences between current organizational culture types and demographic characteristics with respect to age, education, position, and work fields.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Competing Values Framework (CVF), Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), Islamic Azad University, higher education

Introduction

Organizational culture has been defined and addressed in various ways in the literature, yet the importance of the shared ideas has been a constant (Cameron &

Quinn, 1999). Organizational culture is a dynamic concept which can be defined as a collective and shared pattern of values, beliefs, attitudes, symbols, norms and regulations which influences all levels of organizational vision, missions and employees. It can influence personal and professional goals, as well as employee engagement and individual performance, both consciously and subconsciously. Schein (2004) defined organizational culture as "a pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (p.17). He also declared that organizational culture, which is based on regulations, values, rules and norms, is created by leadership style, and it is further shaped by interactions among the people in an organization. In accordance with this, Cameron (1991) believed that leaders can create and shape certain dynamic culture to develop effective new capacities for action to fulfill organizational objectives. Many studies have indicated that organizational culture is positively and significantly associated with organizational success and the effectiveness of leaders (Bikmoradi et al., 2008; Cameron & Quinn & Degraff, 2007; Chin_Loy & Mujtaba, 2007; Chin_Loy, 2003, Martin, 2002; Deshpande and Webster, 1989; Daft, 2001; Rahimnia & Alizadeh, 2010; Tierney, 1999). According to Robins and Judge (2009) the core functions of any organizational culture are to create a sense of identity within the organization, to improve stability in the community structure and to operate as the social glue to hold the organization together. Cameron et al. (2007) noted that organizational culture creates both stability and adaptability by acting as glue; and continuity and consistency by fostering a clear set of agreed shared values in the organization.

Organizational culture in higher education is not a new concept; it was posited by Burton Clark more than forty years ago (Toma et al., 2005). Clark (1980) defined academic culture in specific disciplines, academic professions, institutions, and national systems of higher education, and concluded that the strength of academic culture varies in line with the size, cohesiveness and age of the institution. According to Norton (1984) academic culture plays an important role in defining the characteristics of institutions. Austin and Gamson (1983) believed that higher education institutions were places where a collective of administrators, faculty members and staff

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provided society with knowledge by their contributions to the academic development of students. He further believed that the organizational culture of each campus was unique based on their distinctly shared values and ideologies. Maassen (1996) stated that academic culture presents a group of academics with a set of attitudes and values, and it was affected by the academic profession, discipline, academic employees and national context. According to Bartell (2003) culture in higher education can be defined as values and beliefs of the university's stakeholders who are board members, administrators and support staff, faculty members and students. These values and beliefs normally shape individual and organizational behaviors which are based on underlying assumptions and beliefs understood through communication and institutional norms (Cameron et al., 1999). Many studies such as those of Birnbaum, (1992) and Maassen (1996) defined academic culture as being hierarchical or bureaucratic, faculty-centered or collegial, and managerial. In addition, as universities are designed to produce and disseminate knowledge in society, the cultural environment of higher education institutions should be based on the importance of academic freedom, autonomy, innovation, and creativity (Amin Mozaffari et al., 2008). Deficiencies in these areas can promote dissatisfaction and tension between faculty members and academic leaders and reduce the effectiveness of their performance in teaching and research fields (Bikmoradi, et al. 2008).

Islamic Azad University in Iran

One of the top priorities of Iranian higher education in the era of global competition has been the cultural and ethical applications of modern science based on Islamic science and Islamic ideas of knowledge in order to foster constructive and productive knowledge in society. In this respect high quality scientific teaching and research, social responsibility and ensuring women's participation in higher education are key issues and perspectives in the mobilization of the power of Islamic culture in Iranian higher education under the name of "The Islamization of Knowledge"; that is, providing guidance to scientific research to be directed toward achievements in the best interest of humankind. In accordance with this idea, Islamic Azad University (a private chain of universities) established in 1982, currently with more than 400 branches nationwide and internationally, is guided by the principle of Iranian aspiration for globalization considered as the great cultural-educational achievement of the Islamic Republic during the past 30 years. IAU, with more than 1.3 million students, about 30,000 faculty members and 31,000 supporting staff, has had great impact on

growing Islamic culture and humanistic development among its stakeholders in order to expand frontiers of knowledge in achieving scientific development (Hamidifar, 2011).

IAU's comprehensive vision and mission has been directed by Islamization in order to craft achievable objectives to establish productive technological and scientific solutions to the problems and needs of Iranian society. As such, IAU, with thousands laboratories, workplaces, libraries, and research centers is considered as one of the biggest educational complex of the world, and provides a huge resource to the Islamic society of Iran (see www.iau.ac.ir). There have been no budget limitations for cultural activities at IAU branches to discover various dimensions of Quranic and Prophetic teaching from cultural dogmatism to focus on morality, facilitation, decentralization and encouragement of cultural innovation (see www.intl.iau.ir/images/infinity/vol22.pdf). As Dr. Jassbi, a member of the IAU board of directors and the former university president who is now a member of Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, mentioned in his interview with this researcher, "*The IAU had made outstanding achievements in scientific research, education and academic papers nationwide and internationally, but in order to compete with top universities worldwide more improvements have to be made to enhance high quality research activities, academic education and training of faculty members to boost the IAU reputation and to put a halt to the brain drain situation in Iran.*"

Research Objective

The present study set out to determine the dominant current and preferred organizational culture of Islamic Azad University in Iran by employing the Persian version of Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999).

The conceptual theoretical structure of this research was based on the Competing Values framework (CVF), which is known to be an effective way to determine different type of organizational behaviors, organizational cultures, and the major indicators of organizational effectiveness (Lincoln, 2010; Amin Mozaffari et al., 2008). It provides different categories of cultural values which reflect current and desired situation characteristics of organizational operation. It consists of two dimensions of demand for flexibility versus stability and a focus on internal upholding versus external condition. These dimensions generate four different set of values related to four kinds of organizational culture which are clan or collaboration; adhocracy or creativity; market or competitiveness; and hierarchy or control. In clan culture, effectiveness derives from team building,

employee commitment, loyalty, morale, human resource development and open communication. In adhocracy culture the focus is on proactiveness, entrepreneurship, creative solutions and continuous improvement. In market culture, achievement, task accomplishment and productivity are the core values. Hierarchy culture emphasizes order, uniformity, fostering stability and efficiency. Quinn and Cameron (1999) also distinguished six key aspects of an organizational culture, namely: dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, and management of employees, organizational glue, strategic emphases, and criteria of success. The Competing Values Framework (CVF) suggests that based on commonality, adhocracy and market cultures both reflect an external focus and differentiation of the organization orientation, whereas clan and hierarchy cultures reflect internal issues and integration.

The OCAI based on CVF as an instrument allows diagnosis of the overall profile of organizational culture, which refers to the dominant organizational culture of the sample; strength of culture, which refers to scores awarded to specific kinds of cultures; and, congruence of culture, which refers to the harmony among different cultural dimensions (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

Research Methodology

Although culture is a difficult concept to assess, many researchers have evaluated organizational culture by both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This study was based on a quantitative approach, and a descriptive and exploratory method was utilized. The instrument used in this study was the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999), which measures four types of organizational culture: clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy. It is a functional instrument in an educational field to differentiate the different types of culture which exist in higher education institutions (Bennett, 2010). The questionnaire was designed in two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consists of six questions with four alternative statements which represent the different types of culture based on the Competing Values framework (CVF). There are 24 statements in six parts which measure dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, and management of employees, organizational glue and strategic emphases. Participants were asked to divide 100 points among these four alternatives depending on the extent to which each alternative was similar to the culture of their organization. The right response column for the instrument was labeled *preferred* and the left column was labeled *now*. The second part comprises 7 questions about the demographic

characteristics of the participant such as gender, age, marital status, education, work experience, position and work field. The researcher used the standard Persian version of OCAI (Amin Mozaffari et al., 2008).

The researcher used three criteria for selecting the sample from IAU branches: 1) the selected IAU branches had to have undergraduate and graduate and professional or/and specialized PhD. programs; 2) the number of faculty members of the selected branches had to be more than 400; 3) the total number of students of the selected branches had to be more than 20,000. There were seven IAU branches in Iran which matched these criteria: IAU of Central Tehran, IAU of Tehran Science and Research Campus, IAU of Tehran South Branch, IAU of Tehran North Branch, IAU of Karaj, IAU of Tabriz, and IAU of Mashhad. The target population was 4,747 from which the sample size of 357 was calculated using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. The sample was drawn randomly from the 7 selected IAU branches and consisted of current faculty members with at least five years' work experience. The questionnaires were distributed to faculty members randomly from the IAU central office in Tehran and each university had three months to return completed questionnaires. Only sealed envelopes were accepted by the research assistant at the end of February 2012. The completion of the questionnaires was completely voluntary and anonymous. The resulting sampling contained 329 valid questionnaires.

The data collected from the survey were analyzed by utilizing SPSS statistical software, Version 16 and Microsoft Office EXCEL; descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (ANOVA) were the methods used to analyze the collected data.

Results and Analysis

Many researchers have used the OCAI as an instrument to measure types of organizational culture in many different kinds of organizations. There is a great many indications, evidence and studies to support the high level of face and empirical validity of CVF in a wide range of countries' higher education institutions (Abassi et al., 2010; Amin Mozaffari et al., 2008, Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Yeung, Brockbank, & Ulrich 1991; Zammuto & Krakower, 1991). Moreover, Cameron and Quinn (1999) recognized the CVF to have high degree of reliability in the social and organizational sciences.

Table 1: Reliability Test Result or Cronbach's Alpha

Culture Type	Reliability Coefficient for Current Situation	Reliability Coefficient for Preferred Situation	No. of Items	No. of Respondents
Clan	0.72	0.79	6	329
Adhocracy	0.74	0.76	6	329
Market	0.82	0.78	6	329
Hierarchy	0.83	0.82	6	329

Cronbach's Alpha was employed to examine the internal consistency of the instruments as shown in Table 1; the findings of the reliability test indicated a satisfactory level of reliability for the measurement instrument. The Highest Cronbach's Alpha score was .83 for the current hierarchy culture and the lowest was .72 for the current clan culture.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Current and Preferred Situations of Culture Type at IAU

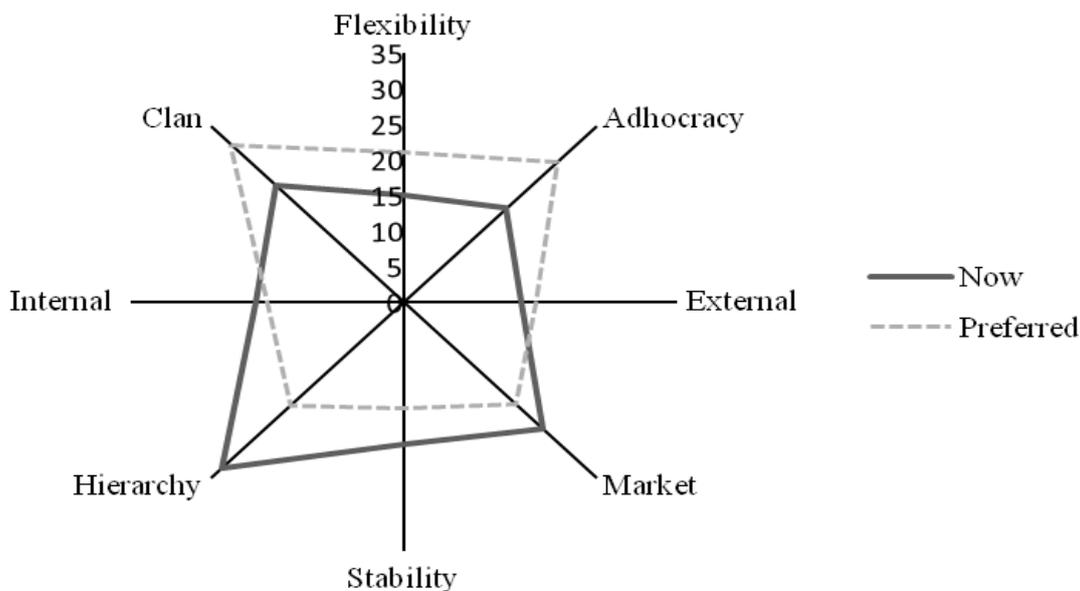
Culture type	Current situation		Preferred Situation	
	Means	S.D.	Means	S.D.
Clan	23.23	7.75	31.75	10.38
Adhocracy	18.58	5.07	27.37	6.04
Market	25.17	9.01	20.27	5.72
Hierarchy	33.02	12.63	20.61	6.67

Mean scores range from 0- 100, representing a percentage of 100

The results from Table 2 reveal that the dominant current organizational cultures were hierarchy with the highest mean score of 33.02 and market with a mean score of 25.17, clan with a mean score of 23.23 and adhocracy by a mean score of

18.58, respectively. The Table also illustrates that the dominant preferred organizational cultures were clan with the highest mean score of 31.75 and adhocracy with a mean score of 27.37, hierarchy with a mean score of 20.61 and market with a mean score of 20.27, in that order. According to the findings, the highest mean score belongs to current hierarchy culture and lowest mean score belongs to current adhocracy culture which supported by the findings of Amin Mozaffari et al. (2008) and Cameron & Quinn, 1999.

Figure 1 shows that the dominant current culture type in IAU branches is hierarchy and the dominant preferred culture type is clan. The hierarchical culture with a high mean score of 33.02 indicates significant usage of formalized regulation and policies in the long term planning of the organization. The market culture with a 25.17 mean score shows high association with centralization and result-oriented organization, whereas the clan culture with a 23.23 mean score signifies moderate teambuilding and human resource involvement; the adhocracy culture with the lowest mean score of 18.85 implies a low creative work place and flexibility.

**Figure 1: Current and Preferred Organizational Culture at IAU Branches in Iran**

The findings of this study indicated that the current dominant organizational culture of IAU identified as being hierarchy which meant dominant characteristics of the organization were controlled through formal procedures. And a management style led by leaders tasked as coordinators and efficient organizers, led to a clear line of decision-making authority and standard rules. Formal policies bonded the organization together, and the most important concern was stability and efficiency. Higher education institutions with hierarchy or control culture proved not to excel in any dominance dimensions' performance (Cameron and Quinn, 1999), as there were too much management (do things right) and little

leadership (do the right thing right).

The preferred dominant organizational culture was recognized as being clan, which signified facilitation and development of human resources, high performance teamwork, empowerment of employees, commitment and loyalty of employees. Cameron and Quinn (1999) presented evidence that institutions with clan culture were more effective due to high degrees of morale, satisfaction, supportiveness and internal communication.

Table 3 presents a summary of descriptive data analysis in terms of demographic characteristics and dominant culture type in current and preferred situations.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics and Dominant Culture Type in Current and Preferred Situations at IAU

Category	Current Situation				Dominant culture	Preferred Situation		
	No.	%	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	Dominant culture
Sex								
Male	186	56.5%	33.80	13.94	Hierarchy	29.68	9.49	Clan
Female	143	43.5%	32.02	10.66	Hierarchy	34.44	10.88	Clan
Age								
25 -35 yrs	40	12.2%	32.90	11.88	Hierarchy	30.83	10.31	Clan
36 - 45 yrs	168	51.1%	33.65	13.21	Hierarchy	33.11	11.44	Clan
46 - 55 yrs	88	26.7%	31.07	11.34	Hierarchy	30.07	8.78	Clan
56 yrs or above	33	10%	35.21	13.63	Hierarchy	30.40	10.33	Clan
Marital status								
Single	33	10%	32.98	13.57	Hierarchy	32.55	10.45	Clan
Married	284	86.3%	33.31	12.64	Hierarchy	31.63	10.48	Clan
Divorced	10	3%	26.50	8.51	Hierarchy	33.25	8.61	Clan
Widowed	2	0.6%	32.50	14.14	Clan	30.83	10.60	Adhocracy
Educational Levels								
Master's degree	65	19.8%	29.43	8.51	Hierarchy	35.01	11.26	Clan
Doctorate degree	257	78.1%	33.80	13.26	Hierarchy	30.84	9.90	Clan
Post Doc	7	2.1%	37.85	16.10	Hierarchy	34.76	13.69	Clan
Work Experiences								
5 -10 yrs	67	20.4%	33.80	13.17	Hierarchy	28.87	6.69	Adhocracy
11 -15 yrs	152	46.2%	33.44	11.64	Hierarchy	34.17	11.47	Clan
16 - 20 yrs	73	22.2%	31.73	13.55	Hierarchy	29.04	9.51	Clan
21-25 yrs	19	5.8%	26.92	8.20	Hierarchy	31.88	5.67	Clan
26 -30 yrs	18	5.5%	38.33	16.49	Hierarchy	32.91	7.99	Clan
Academic Ranks								
Professors	24	7.3%	35.79	15.83	Hierarchy	30.00	7.95	Clan
Associate professors	42	12.8%	31.28	14.23	Hierarchy	32.61	11.29	Clan
Assistant professors	205	62.3%	33.84	12.83	Hierarchy	30.73	9.96	Clan
Lecturers	58	17.6%	30.28	8.21	Hierarchy	35.46	11.30	Clan
Work Fields								
Humanities	211	64.1%	32.00	11.68	Hierarchy	32.62	10.57	Clan
Basic science	62	18.8%	34.94	14.68	Hierarchy	32.17	11.62	Clan
Technical and engineering	34	10.3%	36.87	14.44	Hierarchy	29.80	8.44	Adhocracy
Agriculture and veterinary	18	5.5%	31.71	9.30	Hierarchy	29.39	9.49	Clan
Arts	4	1.2%	30.70	19.76	Hierarchy	35.00	9.88	Adhocracy

Mean scores range from 0- 100, representing a percentage of 100

Table 4: Highest Mean Scores on the Organizational Culture Dimensions at IAU

Dimensions	Current Situation		Culture Type	Preferred Situation		Culture Type
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
Dominant Characteristics	34.53	19.97	Hierarchy	30.87	10.34	Adhocracy
Organizational Leadership	32.74	15.49	Hierarchy	31.46	16.53	Clan
Management	31.76	15.21	Hierarchy	30.91	12.94	Clan
Organizational Glue	35.27	19.30	Hierarchy	33.85	14.32	Clan
Strategic Emphases	32.20	16.93	Hierarchy	32.31	14.79	Clan
Criteria for Success	31.68	16.47	Hierarchy	33.01	14.17	Clan

Mean scores range from 0- 100, representing a percentage of 100

The dominant current culture type in group categories labeled as gender, age, marital status, education, experience, academic rank and work fields was hierarchy according to the analysis of highest mean scores and the dominant preferred culture type was mostly clan and adhocracy.

As shown in Table 4, six facets of the OCAI were analyzed by using the competing values framework. The dominant culture type was hierarchy based on the number of the points awarded. The highest mean score in the current dominant culture type was for organizational glue with a mean score of 35.25 and the lowest was criteria for success with a mean score of 31.68. In preferred situation, the highest mean score was the organizational glue with a mean score of 33.85 while the lowest was dominant characteristics with a mean score of 30.87.

The dominant current culture type for the six facets was hierarchy and in the dominant preferred culture type was clan for five facets and adhocracy for one dimension. Accordingly, after analyzing six dimensions, it could be proposed that the current dominant culture was convincingly fit or congruent which meant different characteristics of this organizational culture were aligned. In all six facets which were dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management, organizational glue, strategic emphases, criteria for success, hierarchy was the dominant current culture type at IAU in Iran. Many studies have indicated that the high performance and long-term effectiveness of an organization is associated with cultural congruence (Kotter, 1996; O'Reilly, et al., 1991; Kotter, et al., 1992; Whetten, et al., 2005). Based on the findings, the type, the strength and the congruence of the IAU dominant culture profiles were hierarchy.

In Table 5, the results concerning current organizational culture types and demographic characteristics revealed that there were no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) between organizational culture

types (clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy) and demographic characteristics in terms of gender, marital status, and work experience; however, there were differences ($p < 0.05$) between organizational culture types and demographic characteristics in terms of age, education, position and work fields.

Table 5: ANOVA Result between Current Organizational Types and Demographic characteristics

	Clan	Adhocracy	Market	Hierarchy
Gender	0.987	0.616	0.175	0.208
Age	0.010*	0.414	0.044*	0.323
Marital	0.305	0.891	0.135	0.337
Education	0.047*	0.218	0.720	0.026*
Experience	0.234	0.809	0.213	0.066
Position	0.009*	0.115	0.103	0.136
Field	0.158	0.031*	0.038*	0.177

* = Sig $p < 0.05$

Discussion and Conclusions

Exploring academic culture is one way of learning about institutions and their stability in the social system. Acknowledging the existence of culture reveals that one culture is not necessarily better than the others as a fitting culture for an organization, since the best fit depends on organizational operating objectives and strategies (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Lincoln, 2010). This study is a dynamic effort to determine the type of organizational culture in the current and preferred situations at IAU branches in Iran. It is important for any institution to know the culture type because effectiveness and success of any organization depends on the organizational culture matching the demands of the internal and external environments of the organization; moreover, it explains the current state of the organization. Empirical findings based on the CVF model proposed

that higher education institutions which had adhocracy or creative organizational culture were more successful in achieving human resource performance than other institutions with different types of cultures (Cameron et al., 2007; Peterson et al., 1991).

Adhocracy culture supports adaptation, innovativeness, and experimentation, which can lead to new directions for growth. These values are important to advance the quality of research, teaching and administration of higher education since the effectiveness of higher education depends on having creative spirit, flexibility, understanding and caring, adaptation to change through operating systems and human resource development, and delegation decision-making (Mosadeghard, 2006; Twati, et al., 2006; Zammuto & Krakower, 1991).

Findings of this study indicated that the current dominant culture at IAU branches was characterized by hierarchy, followed by market, clan and adhocracy which had the lowest mean score. These results signified an overemphasis on long term goals such as order, stability, regulations, uniformity, hierarchical authority, job description, efficient operations and control. The IAU also benefits from a market culture which can be interpreted as a culture which is goal oriented, productive and efficient.

The IAU hierarchy organizational culture can reflect the Iranian national culture of power rules and power distance which rooted in the structure of family and position of elderly as total power for many years. Reviewing Iranian history indicates that Iranian culture always considers high level of respect for power and practicing high power distance; moreover Iran ranks as 7th highest in terms of performance oriented culture (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). However Islamic values in general are based on the egalitarian principles which support the equality in the family and society. Therefore, a gap can be recognized between Iranian culture and Islamic values (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003); and a need can be acknowledged to identify and implement Islamic value system in the organizational context and managerial performance, as it gives new perspectives to protect integrity of all individuals in the organization.

Globally many studies have supported the idea of leaders needing to display all four types of culture and managerial styles as long as it is contingent on the current situation (Cameron et al., 2007; Cameron, 1991; Hooijberg, 1996; Zafft, Adams, & Matkin, 2009) in a model called behavioral complexity. Leaders with the ability to balance their competing roles in different situations are considered to be effective in their performance (Cameron et al., 2007; Hooijberg, 1996). Academic leaders in Iranian higher education institutions in the public and private sectors are subject to a high degree of interference by

politicization, conservatism, centralization and bureaucracy (Bikmodari et al., 2008), and these issues compel them to execute the ideas of hierarchical structure through their administration in order to meet the demands on their institutions. The former president of IAU, along with many other chancellors, displayed the behavioral complexity to be able to expand and develop IAU branches nationwide despite the socio-cultural and political turbulences. During the 30 years of the IAU existence, it has almost completed three stages of utilizing scattered capacities of higher education, upgrading these capacities and advancing the quality of higher education. However, to advance effectively the quality of teaching and research despite the existence of macro and micro turbulences and challenges, IAU's academic leaders should enforce a dynamic cultural environment for faculty members to emphasize trust and loyalty, participation and teamwork, empowerment, commitment and self-managed work group to create a clan culture which was the preferred culture type found among faculty members at IAU branches in Iran in this study. And this cultural environment would encourage them to have creative spirit, flexibility, understanding and caring, adaptation to change and innovativeness to perform effectively with consensus.

The findings of this study revealed that IAU faculty members perceived the institution as having a hierarchy culture, which signified stability, monitoring, standardization, dependability, reliability and a structured workplace; whereas, their preference was for clan culture, which is related to personal involvement, cohesion, developing levels of trust, morale and loyalty, which represents a friendly place to work (Zammuto & Krakower, 1991). By addressing the IAU current and preferred culture types, the gap between these two reveals the needs and demands of faculty members and helps to determine what cultural aspects should be changed to reach their consensus by considering the cultural features in CVF model. In order to achieve that preferred culture, values should be recognized thoroughly in order to avoid the pitfalls in implementing necessary steps to change the culture, and progress should be continuously monitored until all the changes are in place.

Based upon the results, the researcher proposed a number of recommendations for top line IAU academic leaders to develop clan culture at the IAU branch level and faculty level. They are as following:

- regularly assessing the performance of IAU leaders in managerial positions as well as of faculty members;
- plan workshops for professional development in facilitating group building skills;

- systematically monitoring progress;
- involve faculty members in decision making;
- provide training workshops for administration middle - managers to meet needs;
- continuously monitor the operational planning problems in managerial and faculty levels;
- facilitate each team's work by supporting their needs; and
- set an effective reward system to enhance trust and loyalty.

In conclusion, exploring the type of academic organizational culture reveals the efficacy of the university's administration and governance at a practical level. Likewise, it provides better understanding for institutional development and effective management decision making. Moreover it reflects the social behavior and Iranian culture which is distinguished by individualism, strong in-group collectivism, high power distance, rationalism and pragmatism, hierarchical, high performance orientation, and male orientation (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003; Bar, 2004).

In this study, identifying a big picture of current and preferred organizational culture allowed academic leaders to clarify necessary changes for the future to balance between authority and autonomy in order to create academic freedom. Moreover, the findings of this study corroborated that academic leaders at IAU branches should be aware that faculty members' preferred culture type was the clan in order to have more opportunities for empowerment, teamwork based on morale, trust and loyalty for developing collaborative research and effective teaching. Therefore, creating an organizational structure on the basis of Islamic principles and ethical values to support the human relations and promote interactions and creativity were the most important concerns at IAU branches suggested by this study to develop clear and effective communication systems in order to increase the academic autonomy of faculty members and academic administrators.

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