

The Effect of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance: A Case Study of Zambia Postal Services Corporation (ZAMPOST) in Lusaka, Zambia

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Abstract—This study investigated the influence of organizational culture on employee performance at the Zambia Postal Services Corporation (Zampost) in Lusaka. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between culture and performance within this specific context. The quantitative data, gathered from a survey of 107 Zampost employees (a 90.68% response rate from a sample of 118, calculated using the Taro Yamane formula from a population of 167), explored the relationship between various aspects of organizational culture (leadership style, communication, work environment, and organizational values and norms) and employee performance metrics. Qualitative data, derived from thematic analysis of open-ended survey responses, provided richer contextual understanding of employee perceptions and experiences. The study found a strong positive correlation between a robust organizational culture and enhanced employee performance, highlighting the significant impact of a supportive work environment, clear communication, effective leadership, and a strong sense of shared values. However, significant challenges were also identified, primarily concerning inadequate reward and recognition systems, resistance to change and innovation, and a lack of professional development opportunities. These findings underscore the need for Zampost to implement targeted interventions to strengthen its organizational culture and unlock the full potential of its workforce. The study's findings provide valuable insights for Zampost management, Zambian policymakers, and other organizations seeking to optimize employee performance through cultural enhancement.

Keywords— Culture, Organization, employee performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

The study began by establishing a strong theoretical foundation, emphasizing the critical role of organizational culture in shaping organizational success and employee performance. Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence behavior within an organization (Schein, 2010), has been widely studied as a determinant of employee performance, commitment, and job satisfaction (Denison, 1990). Several theoretical models, including Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, 1980), Schein's model of organizational culture (Schein, 2010), and the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011), provide valuable insights into the ways

organizational culture impacts work environments and productivity.

The review of literature explored global, regional, and local studies to assess prevailing trends, methodological approaches, and gaps in existing research. Empirical studies from various countries, including Indonesia (Ghani et al., 2020), Ethiopia (Tessema & Soeters, 2006), Ghana (Amponsah-Tawiah & Mensah, 2016), South Africa (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2013), Germany (Schneider et al., 2017), and Thailand (Worarak & Anussornnitisarn, 2019), demonstrate a broad consensus on the significance of organizational culture in driving employee motivation and performance. These studies have examined aspects such as the mediating roles of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), job satisfaction (Locke, 1976), and work motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959), as well as the influence of leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1993) on organizational performance.

Furthermore, recent research has highlighted how external factors, such as technological advancements and global crises, have reshaped organizational culture and employee performance. For instance, studies on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have revealed shifts in workplace dynamics, communication styles, and leadership approaches, with significant effects on organizational performance (Kniffin et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2020). The adoption of remote work and digital collaboration tools has influenced employees' sense of belonging, organizational commitment, and overall productivity (Bick et al., 2020).

To ensure contextual relevance, this study also reviewed literature specifically focusing on Zambia's public sector, examining factors that influence organizational culture and performance within Zambian organizations (Mwanza & Phiri, 2021; Simuchimba & Tembo, 2019). Zambia's unique socio-economic conditions, coupled with structural and bureaucratic challenges, play a crucial role in shaping public sector performance. While studies have assessed organizational culture's impact in general terms, there has been a gap in research dedicated to Zampost a critical public service organization in Lusaka.

This study, therefore, seeks to address this research gap by conducting a focused examination of Zampost's

Organizational culture and its effect on employee performance. Understanding this relationship within the specific institutional and socio-economic context of Zambia is crucial for formulating policy recommendations aimed at improving public sector efficiency and service delivery.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methodology section detailed the research design, approach, and procedures employed. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. This choice was justified by the complex and multifaceted nature of organizational culture and its impact on employee performance. Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, ensuring efficiency and anonymity. The simple random sampling technique was employed to minimize bias and enhance the generalizability of findings. This approach ensured that every employee within the selected population had an equal opportunity to participate, reducing potential sampling bias and increasing the study's generalizability. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-item scales measuring the dimensions of leadership style, communication, work environment, organizational values and norms, and employee performance, all using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Qualitative data were gathered through open-ended questions within the same survey instrument and analyzed through thematic analysis to obtain a deeper understanding of employees' experiences and perspectives, addressing the 'why' behind the quantitative data. The use of SPSS for quantitative data analysis (specifically descriptive statistics, regression analysis) and thematic analysis for qualitative data ensured the rigorous and systematic analysis of the collected information. The ethical considerations section emphasized that ethical approval was obtained from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee and Zampost management. Informed consent was obtained from all participating employees before data collection commenced, emphasizing voluntary participation and data confidentiality. The reliability of the measurement instruments was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding good-to-excellent reliability scores across all variables.

III. RESULTS

The results section presented the findings of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

3.1 Demographic Analysis

Below is a summary of the demographic information of the study participants.

Figure 1 illustrates the gender distribution among participants, which indicates that 53.3% were male and 46.7% were female. This representation was nearly equal, highlighting a balanced gender composition within the sample. This nearly equal distribution allows for the inclusion of both gender perspectives and experiences.

Gender Distribution

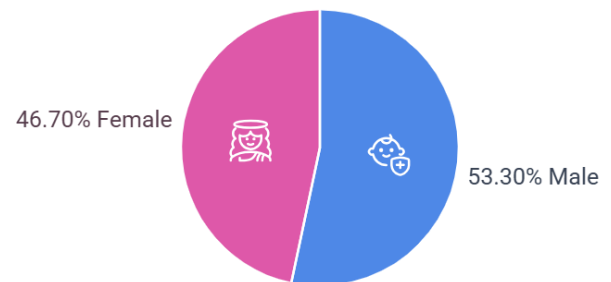


Figure 1: Gender Distribution

Age Distribution

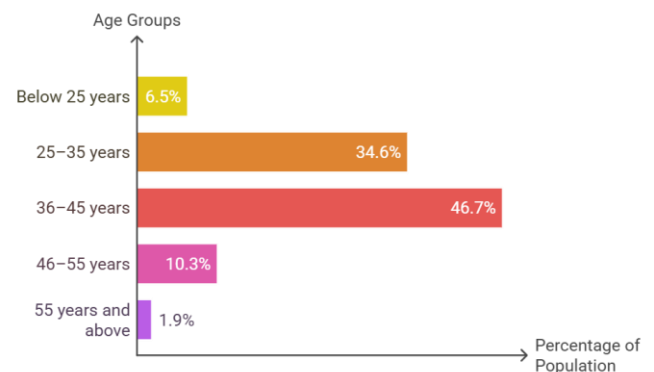


Figure 1.1: Age Distribution

Source (Author)

Figure 1.1 shows the Age distribution, of which the majority of respondents (46.7%) fall within the 36–45 age range, followed by those in the 25–35 age range (34.6%). A smaller proportion (6.5%) is under 25 years, while 10.3% are between 46 and 55 years, and 1.9% are 55 years or older.

Years of Experience

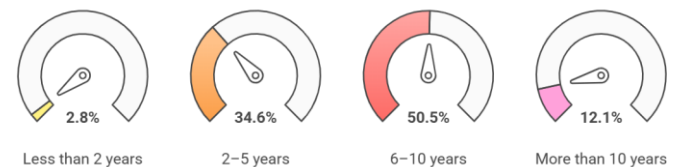


Figure 1.2: Years of experience

Figure 1.2 shows the distribution of participants based on their years of professional experience. It shows that slightly more than half (50.5%) have 6–10 years of experience, while 34.6% falls within the 2–5-year range. A small proportion of (2.8%) have less than 2 years of experience, and 12.1% have more than 10 years. This distribution suggests that the majority of respondents have a moderate to substantial level of experience. This demonstrates that the participants possess sufficient work experience to provide meaningful insights and contributions to the study.

Reliability Testing

A reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's alpha, which is a widely recognized measure for evaluating the internal consistency of composite scores derived from Likert-scale questions. Cronbach's alpha assesses how well a set of items measures a single underlying construct. The study follows the guidelines established by George and Mallery (2003). The results are interpreted as follows: an alpha (α) value of 0.90 or higher indicates excellent reliability; values between 0.80 and 0.90 signify good reliability; values between 0.70 and 0.80 reflect acceptable reliability; and values below 0.70 suggest poor reliability.

The reliability scores for the variables examined in this study are presented in Table 1. The findings reveal that all variables are above the acceptable threshold. Specifically, the Communication variable achieved an excellent reliability score with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.905. The remaining variables: Leadership Style (0.850), Work Environment (0.891), Organizational Values & Norms (0.868), and Employee Performance (0.838), all fall within the range of good reliability. This confirms that the items used to measure these constructs consistently capture their intended underlying dimensions, and the variables are subject to further analysis.

TABLE 1: Reliability Testing

Reliability Testing		
Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Leadership Style	5	.850
Communication	5	.905
Work Environment	5	.891
Organisational Values & Norms	6	.868
Employee Performance	6	.838

These results demonstrate that the collected data are consistent and reliable for further analysis. The good to excellent reliability scores indicate that the composite measures are dependable, providing a strong foundation for subsequent statistical analyses and interpretations in this study.

Detailed Analysis of Research Objectives

This section offers a detailed review of the research objectives, which focus on the examination of the organizational culture at Zampost and its influence on employee performance. The analysis is divided into three parts. The first section examines the extent of organizational culture implementation at Zampost using descriptive statistics analysis. The second investigates the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance using multiple regression analysis, which highlights the statistical connection between cultural factors and employee performance. The third section discusses the challenges encountered in maintaining a strong organizational culture. This part of the analysis draws on qualitative responses obtained from open-ended questions asked to responses.

The Extent of Organizational Culture Implementation at Zampost (Descriptive Statistics)

This objective was addressed through the use of descriptive statistical analysis, which included the calculation of the mean, standard deviation, and skewness for the 107

participant responses. The mean represents the average response, while the standard deviation indicates the dispersion of responses around the mean. Skewness describes the symmetry of the data distribution.

TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Leadership Style	107	3.4505	.81082	-.862	.234
Communication	107	3.3327	.89861	-1.012	.234
Work Environment	107	3.2860	.86531	-1.314	.234
Organisational Values & Norms	107	3.8598	.79012	-1.269	.234
Employee Performance	107	3.5374	.71679	-.992	.234
Valid N (list wise)	107				

Leadership Style (Mean = 3.4505, Std. Deviation = 0.81082, Skewness = -0.862)

The results show that employees generally view the current leadership style positively. The mean score of 3.4505 means that most employees agree that their leaders are effective and supportive. The negative skewness of -0.862 indicates that a larger number of respondents rated leadership on the more positive side of the scale. However, the standard deviation of 0.81082 shows some variation in opinions, which means that not all employees share the same experience.

Communication (Mean = 3.3327, Std. Deviation = 0.89861, Skewness = -1.012)

The findings on communication reveal a moderately positive perception, with a mean score of 3.3327. This score is slightly lower compared to other variables, which means that while employees generally view communication practices positively, there may be some areas that require improvement. The standard deviation of 0.89861 reflects a wide range of views, showing that while some employees perceive communication to be effective, others experience inconsistencies. The negative skewness of -1.012 suggests that more responses leaned toward agreement.

Work Environment (Mean = 3.2860, Std. Deviation = 0.86531, Skewness = -1.314)

The work environment shows the lowest mean score of 3.2860 among the variables measured but is relatively close to communication. This means that employees have a more neutral stance on the quality of their work environment. The negative skewness of -1.314 shows that many respondents still view the environment positively, but the relatively high standard deviation of 0.86531 indicates that experiences vary significantly.

Organizational Values & Norms (Mean = 3.8598, Std. Deviation = 0.79012, Skewness = -1.269)

The descriptive assessment of organizational values and norms had the highest mean score of 3.8598, meaning there is strong support and alignment with the organization's core principles. The standard deviation of 0.79012 reflects a relatively high level of agreement among employees. The negative skewness

of -1.269 further means that most responses were on the positive end of the scale.

Relationship Between Organizational Culture and Employee Performance (Multiple Regression)

Model Summary

Table 3 shows the model summary of the relationship between the independent variables (Organizational Values & Norms, Communication, Leadership Style, and Work Environment) and the dependent variable, employee performance. The regression analysis results indicate a coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.739, which means that 73.9% of the variability in employee performance can be explained by the four independent variables. The remaining 26.1% is attributed to other factors not included in this model.

An R Square of 73.9% is considered high and indicates a strong explanatory power of the model. This suggests that the selected independent variables play a significant role in shaping employee performance. However, it is important to acknowledge that other factors, such as individual employee motivation, financial incentives, and organizational policies, which were not captured in this study, may also influence employee performance.

TABLE 3: Model Summary
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.859 ^a	.739	.728	.37351

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Values & Norms, Communication, Leadership Style, Work Environment

Anova

Table 4 presents the ANOVA results, which test the overall significance of the regression model. The F-statistic (72.093) is statistically significant ($p < .001$), indicating that the combination of predictors significantly explains the variation in employee performance. This result confirms the model's overall fit and supports the inclusion of the four independent variables in predicting employee performance.

TABLE 4: ANOVA
ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	40.231	4	10.058	72.093	.000 ^b
Residual	14.230	102	.140		
Total	54.462	106			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Values & Norms, Communication, Leadership Style, Work Environment

Coefficients

Table 5 shows the coefficients of the regression. It highlights the individual contributions of the predictors in this model.

Firstly, Leadership Style has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.167 ($p < .05$). This indicates that a one-unit increase in Leadership Style corresponds to a 0.167-unit increase in employee performance, assuming all other variables remain constant.

Secondly, Communication is identified as a significant predictor ($p < .05$), with a high unstandardized coefficient of 0.265. This suggests that a one-unit improvement in Communication leads to a 0.265-unit increase in employee performance.

Table 5: Coefficients
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.483	.189		2.551	.012
Leadership Style	.167	.062	.189	2.715	.008
Communication	.265	.056	.332	4.767	.000
Work Environment	.131	.062	.159	2.125	.036
Organisational Values & Norms	.301	.071	.332	4.248	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Thirdly, Work Environment also showed a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($p = .036$), with a coefficient of 0.131. This implies that a one-unit enhancement in the Work Environment results in a 0.131-unit rise in employee performance.

Lastly, Organisational Values & Norms showed the strongest influence on employee performance among the predictors, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.301 ($p < .001$). A one-unit increase in Organisational Values & Norms leads to a 0.301-unit increase in employee performance.

Challenges in Maintaining a Strong Organizational Culture

The analysis revealed several common challenges that hinder the maintenance of a strong organizational culture at Zampost. These challenges emerged as common themes, which include inadequate recognition and reward systems, resistance to change and innovation, and a lack of professional development and capacity building.

Inadequate Recognition and Reward Systems

A recurring concern among respondents was the inadequacy of Zampost's current recognition and reward system. Employees reported that their efforts and contributions are seldom acknowledged, leading to feelings of undervaluation. One participant mentioned, "Our hard work goes unnoticed, and it makes us question whether excellence is truly appreciated here." This sentiment reflects broader issues within state-owned entities like Zampost, where job security often takes precedence over performance-based incentives. Some respondents also noted that financial challenges, such as inadequate working capital, limit the organization's ability to invest in effective reward mechanisms, resulting in reduced employee engagement, lower morale, and diminished productivity.

Resistance to Change and Innovation

Another significant challenge identified was the resistance to change and innovation within Zampost. Many employees expressed frustration with the slow adoption of modern practices and technologies, which they believe hampers operational efficiency. Several respondents highlighted the lack of digital solutions, such as a mobile app for real-time parcel tracking or an integrated digital payment platform,

which puts the organisation at a disadvantage compared to competitors. One participant remarked, "Our reluctance to embrace new ideas and technology is a major barrier to progress. We need an advanced technological app that lets customers and employees track parcels instantly, along with a digital system to streamline our transactions." There were also mentions of adopting cloud-based logistics management and automated workflow systems, which could improve internal communication and overall service delivery.

Need for Professional Development and Capacity Building

The need for professional development and capacity building was also identified as a critical challenge by many employees. They stressed the importance of continuous learning and greater access to development opportunities. Several respondents highlighted that limited training programmes and restricted career advancement paths hindered their ability to enhance their skills and contribute effectively to the organization's success. For example, one respondent commented, "The organization needs to promote training programs on innovation, to help bridge our skill gaps." This shortfall in investment in employee growth has resulted in noticeable skill gaps and reduced motivation.

IV. DISCUSSION

The discussion section provides a comprehensive interpretation of the findings, aligning them with established theoretical frameworks and existing literature. The strong positive relationship between organizational culture and employee performance aligns with previous research indicating that a well-defined and cohesive organizational culture fosters higher levels of engagement, commitment, and productivity (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Schein, 2010). The study's findings reinforce the argument that when employees identify with organizational values and norms, they are more likely to exhibit higher performance levels due to increased motivation and a sense of belonging (O'Reilly et al., 1991).

The positive findings on leadership style, communication, and shared values support theories suggesting that transformational and participative leadership styles contribute to enhanced employee engagement and productivity (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Effective communication within an organization strengthens employee trust, minimizes misunderstandings, and enhances collaboration (Men, 2014). The alignment between leadership practices and organizational culture was found to be a critical factor in driving performance, further supporting the notion that leaders play a pivotal role in shaping and sustaining organizational culture (Yukl, 2013).

However, the study also highlighted neutral or less positive findings related to the work environment, suggesting areas for improvement. The qualitative data provided deeper insights into these relationships, explaining how specific aspects of organizational culture influenced employee experiences. For instance, while organizational values and norms strongly correlated with employee performance, qualitative responses revealed that this was primarily due to employees feeling a strong sense of alignment with the company mission. This is consistent with Cameron and Quinn's (2011) Competing

Values Framework, which emphasizes the role of cultural alignment in improving organizational effectiveness.

Nonetheless, the qualitative responses also highlighted challenges such as the absence of formal reward systems and limited professional development opportunities. These factors contributed to feelings of undervaluation and restricted growth potential, which aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1968). The lack of adequate recognition and career advancement opportunities can lead to dissatisfaction and lower engagement levels, thereby offsetting the benefits of a positive organizational culture (Robbins & Judge, 2019). This finding underscores the importance of a holistic approach to organizational development, where positive cultural attributes are complemented by structured incentive systems and career progression mechanisms.

The findings on resistance to change and innovation were further contextualized within the broader literature on organizational change management. Resistance to change is a well-documented challenge, particularly in organizations undergoing transformation (Kotter, 1996). The study linked specific challenges encountered at Zampost to the complexities of managing organizational change, highlighting how deeply ingrained cultural elements can either facilitate or hinder innovation. Research suggests that organizations with strong learning cultures are more adaptable and open to innovation (Garvin, 1993). Therefore, addressing barriers to change requires strategic interventions, such as leadership-driven change initiatives and employee involvement in decision-making (Lewin, 1951).

In summary, while the study confirmed the strong influence of organizational culture on employee performance, it also identified areas requiring targeted improvements. Addressing issues such as employee recognition, professional development, and change management will be essential for ensuring that the positive aspects of organizational culture translate into sustained performance and innovation.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion summarized the key findings and their implications. The study confirmed the significant influence of a strong organizational culture on employee performance at Zampost. The importance of strong values, effective leadership, and open communication was reinforced. However, the challenges identified underscored the need for immediate action to address systemic weaknesses. The study's interpretivist framework proved effective in understanding the subjective employee experiences that shaped both their perception of the organizational culture and, in turn, their performance.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The recommendations section provided actionable strategies for Zampost to improve its organizational culture. It suggested developing a structured reward and recognition system, improving communication channels through feedback sessions, open forums, and digital tools, and investing in improved workplace conditions to enhance productivity and job satisfaction. Furthermore, it recommended promoting a

culture of innovation and adaptability by investing in digital transformation, modern technologies, and employee training programs. Finally, it emphasized the need for continued investment in professional development to bridge skill gaps and foster employee growth. The recommendations went beyond addressing the immediate issues, pushing towards a more forward-thinking approach that includes an organizational culture that embraces digital transformation and continuous learning. Suggestions for future research included expanding the study to other sectors and exploring additional factors affecting employee performance in greater detail.

In essence, this study provided valuable insights into the critical role of organizational culture in shaping employee performance at Zampost. It offered actionable recommendations for immediate improvement and emphasized the need for continuous investment in building a robust and supportive workplace culture. The detailed methodology, rigorous data analysis, and clear articulation of findings and recommendations position this research as a valuable contribution to the literature on organizational culture and employee performance within the specific context of Zambian public sector organizations.

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