

Corporate Culture in the Accounting Service Firms in Hanoi -Application of Theory of Cameron & Quinn (1999)

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ABSTRACTS:The accountants in the accounting service firms in Hanoi all have a high level of education, an understanding of high socio-economic knowledge and a certain level of training can definitely show a culture commensurate with the level of knowledge of them. This research was conducted to measure the corporate culture in the accounting service firms in Hanoi based on theory of Cameron & Quinn (1999). Data were collected through a survey with 105 accountants from accounting service firms in Hanoi. With this data, we have used Cronbach's Alpha, EFA and Anova analysis to identify and measure twelve (12) attributes of corporate culture in the accounting service firms in Hanoi. The results showed that collaborate - clan culture is highly appreciated by accountants, playing a leading role, while the remaining attributes have a supporting role. Based on the findings, some recommendations are given to improve corporate culture in the accounting service firms in Hanoi.

KEYWORDS: corporate culture, accounting service firms, accountants.

JEL CODE: M14, M41, O15

1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate culture is not a new concept, but there are still many enterprises that can not appreciate its importance to their survival. In addition to capital and business strategies, the strength of corporate culture was deeply embedded in each employee, making the difference between one enterprise and another (Duong, 2018). Corporate culture could be a source of competition (Phan, 2018).

Corporate culture had a decisive impact on the morale, attitude and motivation of employees. Using corporate culture as a management tool would help enterprises become a community working based on the spirit of cooperation, trust, engagement, friendliness and progress. This spirit would help increase efficiency, productivity, and quality of work, thereby making production and business efficiency better, helping enterprises have a stronger position in the market (Phan, 2018).

The accounting service firms in Hanoi provide accounting services. These companies play an important role in assisting and advising investors and firms on the laws, regimes and financial and accounting institutions of State; guiding firms to make vouchers, bookkeeping, tax calculation and financial statements. However, most of accounting service firms were young, newly established, poor facilities, little corporate governance experience, having to compete fiercely with the larger force, which were unregistered units and individuals but still practiced in accounting service business. A number of companies that managed service quality were not scientific and had not fully issued the company's process documents (Mai, 2013). Therefore, accounting service companies needed to develop comprehensively, with particular attention paid to maintaining stable human resources; retaining good and talented employees.

Each human being in general, accountant in particular has a cultural influence from family, community and workplace to create their own character (Do et al, 2019). Therefore, improving the corporate culture to retain and increase the engagement of accountants with the accounting service firm is necessary.

2. THEORY OF CAMERON & QUINN (1999)

Cameron & Quinn (1999) classified enterprises into four main cultural categories based on four different criteria: Collaborate - clan culture, Create -Adhocracy Culture, Control - Hierarchy Culture & Compete-Market Culture.

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Collaborate - clan culture: Demonstrating elements that are focused on people such as: a harmonious working environment, prioritizing the spirit of cooperation and teamwork among employees.

Create - Adhocracy Culture: Creating elements to promote the initiative, the difference; creating creative and dynamic working environment; highly focusing on long-term results, market leadership is the core value.

Control - Hierarchy Culture: The foundation of an enterprise is based on strictly implementing the system of rules, principles and strict procedures of the enterprise. Sustainability, performance and effective functioning are long-term goals. Ensuring and predicting is the core cultural value.

Compete - Market Culture: The path to prosperity and cultural foundation of businesses comes from determining the right competitiveness, setting goals and setting requirements towards the result at all costs, leading the market is important in building a reputation and affirming success.

The authors have pointed out that there is no good or bad comparison between the cultures of enterprises, but only the cultures that are suitable for each enterprise's characteristics.

3. METHODOLOGY

The sample is the accounting service firms in Hanoi, we send surveys to accounting service firms in Hanoi through email and by post or in person. In a 5-weeks period we collect data with firms that have been sent us by making phone calls or visiting in person. We gathered about 150 questionnaires to analyze the data. We choose accounting service firms in Hanoi because Hanoi is the leading economic center of Vietnam.

Inheriting results from previous studies, we identify the corporate culture in the Accounting service firms in Hanoi included 12 attributes (indicators and scales) (see table 1).

Table 1. Attributes of the corporate culture in the Accounting service firms

| Code | Scale | Sources |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Collaborate - clan culture (CCC) | | |
| CCC1 | The working environment at the company is sociable | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CCC2 | The company encourages cooperation and teamwork among employees | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CCC3 | The company creates bonds for all members | Do et al. (2019) |
| Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC) | | |
| CAC1 | The company has measures to promote the initiative and the difference | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CAC2 | The company creates creative and dynamic working environment | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CAC3 | The company develops long-term plans to grow and expand its scale | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC) | | |
| CHC1 | The system of rules, principles and processes of the company are complete and strict | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CHC2 | The company's goal is to maintain stability, achieve high performance and improve business efficiency | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CHC3 | The company always ensures stable jobs for employees | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| Compete - Market Culture (CMC) | | |
| CMC1 | The company determines the right competitiveness | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CMC2 | The company determines the goals and sets the requirements towards them | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |
| CMC3 | The company expects to gain a leading position in the accounting service market | Cameron & Quinn (1999) |

Corporate culture in the Accounting service firms: The scales are measured by a 5-point Likert scale of 1 which is strongly disagrees and 5 are strongly agreed.

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Analytical techniques: Assessing reliability of scales: The reliability of the scale used in this study is Cronbach's coefficient Alpha. After cleaning, the collected data is entered into the computer via SPSS 22.0 statistical software is 105 questionnaires. After coding and cleaning the data, it is acceptable since according to Hair et al. (2014) using a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.6 or more is desirable.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Respondents by Gender, Job Description, Work Experience

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 27 | 25.7 | 25.7 |
| Female | 78 | 74.3 | 100.0 |
| Job description | | | |
| Accounting staff | 50 | 47.6 | 47.6 |
| General accountants | 43 | 41.0 | 88.6 |
| Chief accountants | 12 | 11.4 | 100.0 |
| Work Experience | | | |
| Less 1 year | 30 | 28.6 | 28.6 |
| Over 3 years | 31 | 29.5 | 58.1 |
| From 1 to 3 years | 44 | 41.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 120 | 100.0 | |

Information of data collected is shown in Table 2. It shows that among the 105 respondents, about 25.7% were male while the remaining 78 (74.3%) were female. Among the respondents, accounting staffs accounted for 57.6%, general accounting accounted for 41.0%, while the remaining 11.4% or 12 respondents were chief accountant. Of these, 28.6% of the participants have work experiences less 1 year, 29.5% of the participants have work experiences over 3 years and from 1 to 3 years accounted for 41.9%.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Attributes of Corporate culture in the Accounting service firms in Hanoi

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----|---------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Collaborate - clan culture (CCC) | | | | | |
| CCC1 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.67 | .828 |
| CCC2 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.79 | .781 |
| CCC3 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.72 | .849 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 105 | | | 3.73 | |
| Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC) | | | | | |
| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| CAC1 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.65 | .635 |
| CAC2 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.56 | .720 |
| CAC3 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.54 | .636 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 105 | | | 3.58 | |
| Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC) | | | | | |
| CHC1 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.61 | .700 |
| CHC2 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.54 | .721 |
| CHC3 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.58 | .662 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 105 | | | 3.58 | |
| Compete - Market Culture (CMC) | | | | | |
| CMC1 | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.42 | .718 |
| CMC2 | 105 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 3.22 | .808 |
| CMC3 | 105 | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.26 | .760 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 105 | | | 3.30 | |

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Table 3 indicates that the respondents agree with the dependent variables of "Corporate culture in the Accounting service firms in Hanoi".

Collaborate - clan culture (CCC) including three (3) attributes were quite high with an average of 3.73 compared with the highest of the Likert 5-point scale. All these three (3) attributes were rated at an average of 3.67 or higher.

Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC) including three (3) attributes were quite high with an average of 3.58 compared with the highest of the Likert 5-point scale. All these three (3) attributes were rated at an average of 3.54 or higher.

Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC) including three (3) attributes were quite high with an average of 3.58 compared with the highest of the Likert 5-point scale. All these three (3) attributes were rated at an average of 3.54 or higher.

Compete - Market Culture (CMC) including three (3) attributes were quite high with an average of 3.30 compared with the highest of the Likert 5-point scale. All these three (3) attributes were rated at an average of 3.22 or higher.

4.2. Cronbach's Alpha

Corporate culture in the Accounting service firms in Hanoi has been measured by the Cronbach's Alpha. Results of testing Cronbach's alpha of attributes are presented in Table 4 below. The results also show that attributes of the dependent variables have Cronbach's Alpha coefficients that are greater than 0.6, and the correlation coefficients of all attributes are greater than 0.3. So, all the attributes of the dependent variables are statistically significant (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair et al. 2009).

Table 4. Results of Cronbach's Alpha Testing of Attributes

| | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Collaborate - clan culture (CCC): Cronbach's Alpha: .839 | | | | |
| CCC1 | 7.51 | 2.098 | .745 | .732 |
| CCC2 | 7.39 | 2.279 | .715 | .765 |
| CCC3 | 7.46 | 2.212 | .649 | .829 |
| Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC): Cronbach's Alpha: .810 | | | | |
| CAC1 | 7.10 | 1.479 | .646 | .753 |
| CAC2 | 7.19 | 1.271 | .673 | .729 |
| CAC3 | 7.21 | 1.456 | .665 | .734 |
| Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC): Cronbach's Alpha: .829 | | | | |
| CHC1 | 7.12 | 1.571 | .669 | .781 |
| CHC2 | 7.19 | 1.444 | .734 | .714 |
| CHC3 | 7.15 | 1.669 | .660 | .790 |
| Compete - Market Culture (CMC): Cronbach's Alpha: .829 | | | | |
| CMC1 | 6.48 | 1.983 | .695 | .758 |
| CMC2 | 6.68 | 1.760 | .694 | .758 |
| CMC3 | 6.64 | 1.906 | .676 | .774 |

4.3. Anova analysis

ANOVA test helps us perform a comparison for the results of the evaluation of the corporate culture in the Accounting service firms in Hanoi between the three subjects, including respondents with work experience for less than 1 year, over 3 years and from 1 to 3 years.

Table 5: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

| Levene Statistic | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| Collaborate - clan culture (CCC) | | | |
| 2.553 | 2 | 102 | .083 |
| Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC) | | | |
| .112 | 2 | 102 | .894 |
| Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC) | | | |
| .375 | 2 | 102 | .688 |
| Compete - Market Culture (CMC) | | | |
| 1.014 | 2 | 102 | .366 |

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Table 5 shows that Sig Levene Statistics are more than 0.05, which means that the variance between the options of the qualitative variable above (different work experience) is not different (Hair et al. 2009; Hoang & Chu 2008). Therefore, use the results in Table 6: Anova.

Table 6: Anova

| | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Collaborate - clan culture (CCC) | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 3.365 | 2 | 1.682 | 7.180 | .001 |
| Within Groups | 23.901 | 102 | .234 | | |
| Total | 27.266 | 104 | | | |
| Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC) | | | | | |
| Between Groups | .077 | 2 | .038 | .190 | .827 |
| Within Groups | 20.552 | 102 | .201 | | |
| Total | 20.629 | 104 | | | |
| Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC) | | | | | |
| Between Groups | .007 | 2 | .004 | .027 | .973 |
| Within Groups | 13.770 | 102 | .135 | | |
| Total | 13.778 | 104 | | | |
| Compete - Market Culture (CMC) | | | | | |
| Between Groups | .707 | 2 | .354 | 1.189 | .309 |
| Within Groups | 30.336 | 102 | .297 | | |
| Total | 31.043 | 104 | | | |

Table 6 shows that,

Collaborate - clan culture: Sig. = 0.001 is less than 0.05; which indicates that there is statistically, significant difference in the level of the Collaborate - clan culture between the mentioned three groups of work experience (Hair et al. 2009; Hoang and Chu, 2008).

Create - Adhocracy Culture: Sig. = 0.827 is more than 0.05; which indicates that there is not statistically, significant difference in the level of the Create - Adhocracy Culture between the mentioned three groups of work experience (Hair et al. 2009; Hoang and Chu, 2008).

Control - Hierarchy Culture: Sig. = 0.973 is more than 0.05; which indicates that there is not statistically, significant difference in the level of the Control - Hierarchy Culture between the mentioned three groups of work experience (Hair et al. 2009; Hoang and Chu, 2008).

Compete - Market Culture: Sig. = 0.309 is more than 0.05; which indicates that there is not statistically, significant difference in the level of the Compete - Market Culture between the mentioned three groups of work experience (Hair et al. 2009; Hoang and Chu, 2008).

5. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Collaborate - clan culture (CCC)

Working environment plays a very important role in promoting the development of enterprises. When accountants are employed in a professional working environment, they will actively contribute to the company. Most accounting service firms have created favorable conditions for accountants to maximize their capacity and earn income that is commensurate with their dedication to the business. Therefore, most accountants have a spirit of professional work - each has particular profession, employees work together, and there is no partisan.

The accounting service firms have built up a working process, a process guide; Cleared assignment to each department and accountant, cleared division of responsibilities, the arrangement and assignment of workloads reasonable with the capacity and qualifications of each employee; invested quite sufficient equipment to serve the work such as computers, printers, photocopiers, accounting software ... However, the accounting service firms need to improve collaborate - clan culture of companies, in which improving employee's income is one of the necessary measures to be implemented.

Create - Adhocracy Culture (CAC)

Leaders of accounting service firms with professional management methods: show leadership, not benefits and develop employees. The company actually considers workers as its assets, not low-cost people. Exemplary superiors take the lead in daily

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life and work; dare to take responsibility. Leaders encourage subordinates to work hard, contribute ideas at work, put initiatives. In addition, the company always encourages the promotion of the capacity of each accountant in order to achieve outstanding professional development.

Most accounting service firms have a healthy business model, protect customers' interests, show win-win spirit and social value.

Accounting service firms have developed a clear development strategy, effective business or good growth potential.

Accounting service firms should promptly record achievements, contribute accountants, and increase employee benefits. At that time, the company is a family of talented members who strive and enjoy the success of labor.

Control - Hierarchy Culture (CHC)

Accounting service firms have built a complete and strict system of rules, principles and procedures such as: Rules of working time, document circulation, payment process, reporting method, etc.

Most accounting service firms in Hanoi have set specific goals: (i) Commit to provide high quality professional services to customers, (ii) adhere to the highest professional ethics; (iii) build credibility from customers and (iv) contribute positively to society.

Accounting service firms are constantly growing in size, ensuring stable jobs for accountants. Each accountant works with independence, honesty, objectivity and confidentiality; complies with current laws, Vietnamese accounting standards and international financial reporting standards.

Compete - Market Culture (CMC)

Companies have defined their competencies and advantages over competitors in satisfying customers' requirements and determined that competition is indispensable, but healthy competition. They improve competitiveness by building the nature of corporate culture; more modern and scientific working environment; maximum benefits for customers; Getting service quality and customer satisfaction as the motivation to strive.

The accounting service firms have specific service activities: financial services, accounting, tax consultancy, so the criteria for evaluating competitiveness also have differences compared to other production and business enterprises. The main criteria for evaluating the competitiveness of accounting service companies include: (i) Company size; (ii) Quality of accounting and auditing services; (iii) Market share; (iv) Diversity of accounting and auditing services; and (v) Accounting and auditing service charges. Therefore, in order to improve the company's competitive culture, it is necessary to improve all five criteria simultaneously.

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