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Abstract

This study explores how organizational culture shapes the operations and performance of Emirates Airlines, with a particular focus on how cultural frameworks help the company navigate complex multicultural environments and overcome internal and external challenges. Drawing on theories such as Schein's levels of culture, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, and Handy's typologies, the analysis illustrates how Emirates' strongly hierarchical structure influences communication, decision-making, and employee behavior. The study also examines key organizational practices—including leadership development, recruitment and training, and gender empowerment—which contribute to the airline's sustained success in a diverse global industry. Furthermore, a PESTEL analysis highlights the political, environmental, and technological factors affecting Emirates' external environment. The paper concludes by proposing recommendations to enhance organizational performance, such as increasing communication flow, decentralizing decision-making, and expanding intercultural training. Overall, the work demonstrates the critical role of organizational culture in driving operational efficiency, employee engagement, and strategic development within Emirates Airlines.

1. Introduction

The following work aims to illustrate and discuss the impact of Cultural Organizations on the airline company Emirates Airlines. On its official website, Emirates Airlines brings us the timeline from the idea, the first flight and the following years after its creation. Therefore, in 1984, o Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum a member of Dubai's progressive royal family. asked Sir Maurice Flanagan, then managing director of dnata, to look into starting an airline (Emirates Airlines 2025). on 25 October 1985, Maurice Flanagan thus making the company realized first flight, Emirates operated its flights from Dubai to Karachi (Emirates Airlines 2025). However, the goal of the work is also to get up points for questioning and illustrating how the Cultural Organization influences within the company to overcome cultural barriers and bringing theories that are related to the company's situation. The following work will be used Gibb's reflective Cicle.

2. Organisational Culture

2.1 Concept of Culture

To discuss the subject, it is first necessary to understand the meaning of Culture. Culture is a set of meanings, behavioral norms, and values used by members of a particular society, as they construct their unique view of the world.” (Alarcon, Foulks, & Vakkur, 1998 apud National centre for Cultural competence).

Also in another text We can say that "A culture is a configuration of learned behaviors and results of behavior whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society", (Linton, R. 1945 apud University of Minnesota).

Therefore, it can be said that Culture is the set of customs, traditions, knowledge and characteristics of a certain group or members of people, which are passed down through time.

2.2 Concept of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture, conventionally defined as the ensemble of beliefs, assumptions, values, norms, artifacts, symbols, actions, and language patterns shared by all members of an organization. In this view, culture is thought to be an acquired body of knowledge whose interpretation and understanding provide the identity of the organization and a sense of shared identity among its members. This approach assumes clarity and organization wide consensus among members and discounts ambiguity. (Richard H, ND).

3. Company Structural

Emirates Airlines, on its website, tells us about the company's organizational structure, which consists of a President and an Executive Management team that sets the strategic direction and long-term objectives of the Emirates Group (Emirates Airlines 2025). In addition, it also has a support team that helps in the execution and monitoring of the achievement of the Group's objectives, as well as several other subsequent departments.

Therefore, looking at the organizational structure of Emirates Airlines, it can be said that it is a hierarchical structure since in its structural body it demonstrates characteristics that are in tune with this type of structure. Therefore, when analyzing the Hierarchical Structure, it is understood that it is a type of organizational culture that places a strong emphasis on structure, order, and rules. In this type of culture, the organization is structured in a hierarchical manner, with a detailed hierarchy system that defines positions, functions, and levels within the organization. Employees are expected to follow the rules and procedures set by top management, with a top-down flow of information and communication (Digital Leadership, 2023).

However, it is noted that the characteristics of the chain of command of Emirates Airlines are totally linked to the characteristics of the Hierarchical Cultural Organization, since it has characteristics such as:

3.1 Emphasis on job titles, roles, and levels within the organization

Highlight in positions, functions and levels within the organization One of the characteristics in hierarchical organizations, positions and position levels are clearly defined, thus requiring employees to follow, rules and procedures that are passed on through the company's larger position, thus creating a place with more structure and an environment with more efficiency in activities.

3.2 Strong emphasis on order and rules

Hierarchical cultures place a strong emphasis on structure and order, with rules and procedures that dictate how things should be done. This creates a sense of predictability and stability within the organization. The strict adherence to rules ensures that all employees are aware of their responsibilities, allowing for efficient task completion and a streamlined workflow.

3.3 Top-down flow of information and communication

Other issues involving hierarchical culture are related to the way in which information and communication are passed on, in the case of EA they are issued from the top down. Therefore, senior management makes the decisions that are then passed on throughout the chain. This type of

structure can lead to a lack of communication between areas of the company, since decisions are made without the knowledge of those who are not part of the top of the high command.

3.4 Focus on individual achievement over team effort

In a hierarchical culture, individual achievement is often prioritized over teamwork, with employees competing against each other for promotions and recognition. This can lead to a lack of collaboration between employees, reducing the effectiveness of teams. Furthermore, it can create a culture of fear and resentment, with employees competing against each other instead of working together towards shared goals.

3.5 Rigidity

Hierarchical cultures can be rigid and resistant to change. This can make it difficult for the organization to adapt to changing market conditions or new technologies. The emphasis on rules and procedures can also limit employee creativity and innovation, as employees may be hesitant to deviate from established norms. Additionally, a lack of communication between management and employees can result in a lack of awareness of changing market trends, further hindering the organization's ability to adapt.

4. Types of Culture

4.1 Schein's Three Levels of Organisational Culture

1- Artefacts. These describe any overt, visible, describable aspects of the organisation. Think things like branding and logos, office design, dress code, policies and tools. Things that you can see. Emirates Airlines has several artifacts, they are visibly in its uniforms, airports, lounges, these types of elements make the experience in the company tangible (Psych Safety 2023).

2- Values defended. Emirates Airlines has a strong campaign in emphasizing safety, multicultural hospitality, and excellent service. These include missions, goals, value statements, and social contracts.

3- Underlying assumptions. These are elements that are not exposed or said, that are within the company. Include the "real" but unstated goal of the organization, some examples are, "to enrich the owners, or to serve the government".

4.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework for understanding how cultural values shape behavior in societies and organizations. It identifies six key dimensions that highlight differences between countries. Businesses, educators, and researchers use it to navigate cultural diversity and improve communication across cultures (Charlotte Nickerson, 2025). Some of the cultural dimensions that apply to Emirates Airlines are:

High power distance: refers to EA's high chain of command and its rigid command.

High aversion to uncertainty: Relationship to operational procedures and a strong culture of compliance.

Performance orientation: EA has a high excellence in service and appreciation of its professionals.

Coexistence of collectivism and individualism: it is noted that EA values the performance of its professionals by valuing the team spirit of its crew.

4.3 Handy's theory

Handy's theory focuses on four management styles or cultures, often found in the workplace. His theory observes how each organizational culture can motivate employees by providing distinct standards, behaviors and values that must be upheld (Max Freedman, 2025).

Power culture

The culture of power is based on the Greek god Zeus, the company's structural framework shows that there is a strong centralized decision making and emphasizes centralized or top-down power and influence.

Role culture

The role culture is based on Apollo and is bureaucratic, run by strict procedures, narrowly defined roles and precisely delineated powers. Although this culture uses predictability and stability to help employees understand their role in the organization, it can also prevent businesses from adapting. As previously discussed, Emirates Airlines is made up of positions ranging from the president to the company's base employee, respecting a company hierarchy.

Task culture

The task culture is based on Athena and is small-team-focused, results- and solutions-oriented, and characterized by flexibility, adaptability and a culture of empowered employees. A team immersed in a task culture leverages its expertise to focus on end results. Through problem-solving and high levels of creativity, the task culture fosters deeper employee engagement across the group. However, staff must be motivated and open to workplace collaboration for it to succeed.

A workplace example of task culture would be a software development company where cross-functional teams are assembled for specific projects, with team members from different departments collaborating to deliver solutions. Each team has the autonomy to determine how best to achieve its objectives without rigid hierarchical oversight.

Task culture is highly relevant today, particularly in technology companies, consulting firms, and innovative industries where agility and expertise are crucial for success. This culture aligns well with contemporary trends toward project-based work and remote collaboration.

Person culture

The person culture is based on Dionysius and focuses on the individual, prioritizing organizations working toward the betterment of their people. Such organizations are values-oriented, people-focused and geared toward meeting individual employees' self-actualization needs by utilizing

each staffer's unique talents. However, because the culture relies heavily on self-motivation, it can be challenging for businesses to implement effectively.

A workplace example of person culture would be a professional services firm, like a law firm or consulting company, where individual expertise and personal relationships drive success. Partners operate with significant autonomy, and the organization exists primarily to support individual professionals in serving their clients.

Person culture remains highly relevant in knowledge-based industries and organizations focused on talent retention and employee well-being. This culture has gained renewed importance as companies compete for top talent and prioritize work-life balance initiatives today.

5. Organisational culture and barriers for the affective function

The Organizational Cultural can be a challenge for the effective functioning of Emirates Airlines, as the culture adopted by the company is a rigid culture. Although in my point of view it is also what makes the company a success.

Therefore the employees are essential assets in many businesses and even more vital in the hospitality industry. Hospitality organizations interact with customers and provide services for profitability. In such industry, diversity and inclusion is a vital goal and relates to the retainment and development of highly qualified employees (Furkan A. at all, 2023).

5.1 Leadership Development

To cope with the extant leadership challenges of the industry, EA collaborated, recognized, and engaged with global learning. In collaboration with schools via Global Business Consortium, Emirates aimed for leadership development via London Business School and executive level

leadership via Warwick Business School. The program aspires to develop future talent for the Emirates brand and the rest of the aviation industry (Furkan A. at all, 2023).

5.2 Recruitment and Training

EA's recruitment and training procedures are extremely important and a vital part of the company's success. EA seeks in its process to find people to occupy the correct positions. In this case, the company values cultural knowledge and understanding to better relate to its global customer base. EA emphasizes the importance of these processes, as they spare no effort for the rapid and expansive growth of the company. Therefore, recruitment and training require great focus and attention so that the company's objectives are achieved. Such an example would be 50 campaigns that were highly successful where the company conducted several interviews via Video Call in 2016 (Furkan A. at all, 2023 apud, Emirates, 2016a).

5.3 Gender Empowerment and Reward Recognition

Empowerment is commonly understood as an employee involvement initiative aimed at increasing participation in work tasks and fostering attitudinal change (Wilkinson, 1998). Emirates Airlines has emphasized the importance of gender equality and empowerment practices (Emirates, 2019b), acknowledging the need to advance and support women's rights (Furkan A. at all, 2023).

Recognizing women's competencies, EA seeks to hire qualified specialists to fill key roles across its operations. The aviation sector relies on highly trained professionals—such as pilots, aircraft engineers, mechanics, and maintenance and repair technicians—and women represent a substantial portion of these positions. Emirates (2019a) reports that more than 29,000 women from over 150 nationalities account for nearly 44% of its workforce, contributing significantly to the airline's achievements over the past 31 years. The proportion of female employees at EA surpasses that of several regional competitors (Barr, 2018). These women come from a wide range of backgrounds: female flight deck crew members alone represent 24 nationalities and range in age from 20 to 59. Importantly, the first female Airbus A380 captain was an Emirati, and EA was the first airline in the region to employ female A380 pilots (Furkan A. at all, 2023 Apud Emirates, 2019a).

6. Organization External Environment (PRESTEL ANALISES)

Aviation is an area that involves several situations, problems and regulations for its operation. The EA in this case is also not free from these situations, so making an analysis you can observe several external factors that affect the operation of the company, for this make a PESTEL analysis of the subject.

Therefore, one of the external factors that influence the operation of the company is the Political factor, as the company depends a lot on the political stability of the United Arab Emirates, since it needs several agreements between countries to maintain its security and good functioning.

Another factor is the Environment, since the world is moving towards a less polluted environment, this is something that all airlines face, such as investing and making their aircraft pollute the environment less.

However, another factor is the Technological, the company always seeks to improve and invest in the purchase of more up-to-date and safer aircraft, in addition to all advanced technology for the smooth running of its operating system that involves the chain of operations. In addition, the company holds a lot of data and content from its customers, thus also needing to invest more in Cybersecurity.

7. Organization Culture and Organizational performance recommendation

Therefore, the word change brings us a certain fear, doubt or deconfinement, but only by taking risks can we know the success that awaits us. In the case of EA, which is an extremely hierarchical organizational structure, these changes can occur more slowly. Therefore, in my point of view, some recommendations are:

Balance hierarchy with open communication: in the current EA model, communication can be slow and time-consuming, as employees have no voice, order comes from the top down, I think that in this case, giving more freedom and reducing communication barriers between the bottom and the top would decrease communication time and help in the speed of changes and response time for tasks or procedures required by the top of the chain of command.

Another case to analyze would be the empowerment of EA's own employees, such as developing a greater decentralization of power and decision-making between the crew and employees who are on the front line, thus encouraging the resolution of many problems, as employees with more autonomy tend to increase efficiency in solving tasks or problems to be solved.

No less important would be the promotion of intercultural knowledge. EA could promote more cultural knowledge training for its employees, thus increasing the crew's knowledge for various adverse situations that may arise when it comes to a company that is faced with different cultures on a daily basis.

8. Conclusion

Portanto pode se dizer que a Organizacao Cultural influencia diretamente para o sucesso da Emirates Airlines, e que estes aspectos se encontram em várias áreas e partes da companhia, desde antes da sua criação ate os dias de hoje, seja por simbologia, culturas antepassadas, costumes e pensamentos, estes que vem quebrando barreiras para chegar ao patamar de hoje. A organização cultural. Sendo assim os fatores culturais apesar de

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