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Introduction

In the highly dynamic retail environment of the modern world, online shopping platforms like Amazon and eBay are at the centre of influencing consumer behaviours, workplace relationships and the overall organisational culture . The e-commerce presence in the UK alone contributes about 25-30 per cent. In the overall retail sales, which is a significant change in the times when people used to go shopping on the high-street to the digital solutions see UK market sources. As Amazon is projected to have its highest revenue made in the UK market of about US 76 billion by 2024 and eBay with about US \$ 12 billion, these two websites command considerable power in the industry. This report seeks to critically evaluate the culture and context of Amazon and eBay, evaluate their environmental positioning, as well as examine how their ethical behaviour is ingrained or constraints within their respective organisations. Through the integration of the formal analysis and conversational tone, the document shall discuss the interaction of their values, internal forces and the external forces in each other so as to formulate the behaviour of employees, organisation performance as well as change socially. In the end, the research aims to not only know what these companies are doing but also to gauge the effectiveness with which they are reacting to global capitalism and how it is affecting work in the UK.

Part 1: Critical Assessment of Culture and Context

Organisational Culture

The organisational culture is a system of mutual values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviours, according to which the employees relate to one another and to the external stakeholders as well. It is also important in the determination of decision making, operational efficiency and change management of an organisation. Here, the cultures of Amazon and eBay will be critically analysed within the context of cultural theories. The culture of Amazon places a high focus on high performance, innovativeness, and obsession with customers and therefore suits well into the Schein model of culture, particularly with respect to espoused values and the set of assumptions. Nevertheless, the culture of performance has brought into focus the issue of employee welfare and ethics. Conversely, eBay inculcates an inclusive, flexible, and collaborative

culture that aligns with more adaptation-oriented cultures such as the so-called clan or adhocracy cultures . It will evaluate the effect of such cultural practices on employee engagement, organisational behaviour and performance by conducting an evaluation of the cultures using established cultural theories.

Amazon has defined its internal company culture as Day O energy - entrepreneurial spirit of unceasing invention and proprietorship. According to its operations in the UK, the company claims that employees have the right to own and create and failure has been regarded as part of the innovation process. The company has customer obsession, high standards and operational excellence. Theoretically speaking, the artefacts , explicit values and underlying assumptions may be viewed through the prism of the model of culture that was developed by Schein .

Nonetheless, the critical surveys indicate that the culture at Amazon can be viewed as one that is highly demanding. To illustrate, a survey of Amazon employees in eight countries, which was conducted independently, has indicated that most of them felt that they were monitored too much, the demands placed on them were unrealistic, and that it was negatively affecting their mental and physical health. Furthermore, the employee review site ratings of Amazon UK show rather low ratings on work-life balance (3.2 out of 5) and culture and values (3.4 out of 5).

These results indicate a conflict in the high-performance culture of Amazon with the wellbeing of staff. Based on the dimensions of Hofstede, the culture of Amazon could be seen as high in uncertainty avoidance and maybe even high in masculinity. Such a dynamic will increase the performance but will also create the risk of employee burnout and turnover.

In their turn, eBay makes their culture centred on inclusion, teamwork and developing talents. Such as, the company states that it is aiming to help the employees to prosper according to their individual abilities and aspirations and describes comprehensive leadership development schemes. The rating of employee reviews indicates that 73 asymmetrical percent of employees will recommend employees join eBay and that the rating of culture and values is rated at 4: 0 out of 5 .

The culture of eBay focuses on excellence, results-based and inclusion. Going by the scheme of Schein, artefacts contain more open communications, values of inclusiveness and excellence as well as assumptions that employees can contribute meaningfully and develop. This culture can lead to innovation and responsiveness particularly in competitive e-commerce settings. Coming to a generic typology, eBay could be either closer to a clan or an adhocracy according to Cameron and Quinn, and not the highly hierarchical and performance-based culture of Amazon.

Overall, unlike the eBay culture in its focus on growth, employee development, and inclusion, Amazon has a higher-pressure and performance-oriented culture, but it is more focused on driving business performance through its culture. This opposition directly applies to employee experience and engagement, retention and eventually organisational performance.

Context of the Organisation

Organisational context is defined as the environment under which the organisation is operating, as both internal structure, history, resources and external environment, market, regulation, culture. It is imperative that in the explanation of the way that culture is constructed, as well as how it should respond, a proper understanding of context is pivotal.

Amazon has a global presence but gains a considerable presence as well in the UK. It has a large internal environment with a high volume operations of fulfilment, extensive logistic and technological resources and tens of thousands of employees in the UK. The company notes that it has been making large investments in upskilling, as well as inclusion and safety in its UK operations. Simultaneously, other external contextual drivers like the rise of e-commerce, regulatory pressures, labour activism and scrutiny of others affect the context of Amazon. As an example, high speed, high levels of monitoring and working conditions in Amazon warehouses have been raised on the agenda of trade unions in the UK.

So, in the case of a PESTLE lens application the environment of Amazon comprises high technological and economical forces of development, yet the social and legislative forces regarding labour and sustainability. Its culture should address that context- such as the need to

be efficient must be matched with safety and employee interest. Synergy or tension between cultures and context is clear. Amazon has a high-performance culture that suits a situation of an accelerating growth and logistics-scale-up, but will have trouble with the social and employee demands in the UK.

eBay also competes in a competitive global market, with internal context prescribed by a platform model linking buyers and sellers, comparatively leaner logistics than that of Amazon but still in need of a lot of technology and customer-facing service . On the outside, eBay is faced with fluctuating consumer behaviour, new digital entrants, fluctuating regulatory norms such as the recent data and marketplace fairness, and cost pressure.

Using context theories e.g. the environment organisation fit model, eBay with its focus on inclusive and agile culture can be considered to be appropriately designed to address a marketplace situation in which flexibility, innovation and trust to the customers enable it to succeed. Nonetheless, the pressure of costs and outside shocks diminished consumer expenditure, rival disruptor implies that eBay needs an ongoing evolution. The recent retrenchments of about 9 percent of its human resource give evidence to a situation where efficiency and strategic rebranding is needed.

Conclusively, the environment under which both Amazon and eBay operate in the UK is tricky: high growth opportunities with regulatory, societal and competition pressures. Organisation culture is based on strategic reactions of an organisation to the context eBay with its focus on flexibility and inclusion Amazon with its focus on scale and speed. The latter section of the report will further assess such organisations within the larger context.

Part 2: Evaluation of the Organisation in its Broader Environment

PESTLE Analysis

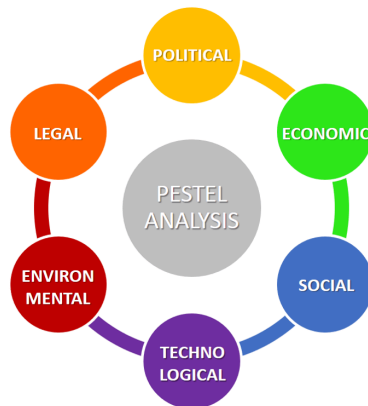
Using the PESTLE framework, we can evaluate the macro-environmental forces that influence Amazon and eBay making it possible to understand how their strategic choices need to react to their external environment.

- **Political:** Amazon faces the rising regulatory appraisal of the marketplaces and logistics companies in the UK. To illustrate, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)

launched a probe into the Amazon practice on its marketplace, such as its entry into third-party seller data . This poses political risk in terms of competition policy and any developments in the manner with which Amazon will be required to conduct business in the UK market. In terms of eBay, the political issues involve taxation laws and close attention to a seller in the country of sale; eBay business concept faces variations in post-Brexit trading relationships and reservations into imports/exports.

- **Economic:** The economic environments of both companies are that of the UK which is characterised by inflationary pressures, changing consumer spending and post-pandemic recovery. The news that Amazon intends to invest approximately £40billion in the UK (2025-2028) in the next three years can be taken as the evidence as the company is confident in the UK market and its economic prospects. As a company, weaker consumer demand and high interest rates are headwinds to eBay, as per its Q1 outlook report, eBay projected less than anticipated revenues, an indication that the firm is facing economic challenges in its market place.
- **Social:** The UK consumer behaviour is still moving towards the lines of online shopping and convenience. The percentage of retail sales in e-commerce is steadily increasing. This trend provides advantages to Amazon and eBay, but they should be prepared to meet the new demands regarding sustainability, delivery, and corporate responsibility. The social perception of working conditions and labour rights is becoming more significant, as it affects the employer brand and their image on the society.
- **Technological:** E-commerce companies are very sensitive to technology. Amazon has been investing in automation, machine-learning, delivery logistics, as well as cloud infrastructure. This provides it with a competitive advantage in the logistics and fulfillment landscape in the UK marketplace, in relation to eBay being a marketplace platform, it relies on technology to facilitate the process of matching buyers and sellers, data analytics, mobile commerce functionality and user trust platforms. The occurrence of technological change is at a high rate and the two companies need to keep abreast of the change or risk being caught .

- **Legal:** UK and EU derived legislation in areas of competition, data protection (such as the UK General Data Protection Regulation), consumer protection and employment law has an impact on Amazon and eBay. The legal risk in the operation of marketplaces is indicated in the case of Amazon when the CMA conducted an investigation of it. Besides, Amazon may have legal challenges regarding the classification of workers, health and safety, as well as unionization due to changing employment-law debates in logistics and fulfilment. In the case of eBay, the legal risks are the liability of sellers on the marketplace, fake product, and compliance in the transactions.
- **Environmental:** Sustainability is becoming relevant in the UK and international markets. The two businesses have to address issues such as packaging, emissions, returns and waste management as environmental pressures. Indicatively, UK policy of charging online marketplaces a higher amount of money to recycle electrical-waste can be thought of as a sign of regulatory environmental-pressures. To prove responsible to the environment, Amazon and eBay will be under pressure to exceed expectations particularly with the consumer and regulatory climate in the UK.



SWOT Analysis

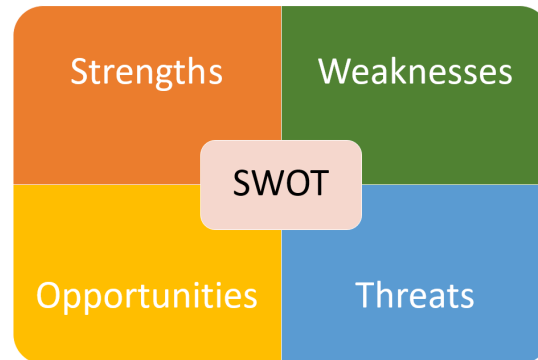
The SWOT model will enable us to determine internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats to Amazon and eBay.

Amazon

- **Strengths:** Global scale, developed logistics network, strong brand image, extensive capacity to invest heavily e.g., future large-scale investment in the UK planned at 40 billion that facilitates growth.
- **Weaknesses:** its high operations cost, overdependence on fulfilment and logistics that subject it to labour-cost and regulatory risks. Its culture of high performance can create issues of fatigue to the employees and reputational threats over working conditions.
- **Opportunities:** An increase in the penetration of e-commerce in the UK; further technological advances AI, robotics, last-mile delivery, the possibility of growth in the field of logistics, cloud services AWS and market share.
- **Threats:** regulatory CMA investigation and increasing labour and energy prices; competition with other e-commerce participants and e-commerce platforms; sustainability requirements and environmental regulation e.g., waste-electra rule.

eBay

- **Strengths:** existing marketplace model and linked buyers and sellers; is more cost-effective in terms of logistics compared to Amazon; brand strength in consumer-to-consumer C2C and second-hand marketplaces and this conforms to the sustainability trends .
- **Weaknesses:** Diluted growth rates over the last years; less control over the logistics and fulfilment than Amazon; the revenue which is aggressive all below expectations which indicates that there is a possibility of the decrease in the market momentum .
- **Opportunities:** Refurbished/second-hand segment, which has grown over the years, market: rising interest in the use of a circle economy, consumers potential to capitalise on the rising digital involvement in the UK market; partnerships and expansion of market places.
- **Threats:** Strengthening competition, Amazon, new players economic cyclical and macro risks lowering consumer discretionary spending; regulatory risk in the marketplace sellers, UK compliance and cross-border trade; pressure on technology and investment commitment.



Evaluation

Through the above analyses, it is apparent that the external environment Amazon and eBay are operating in is full of opportunities, although becoming more complex. The UK is undergoing expansion within the e-commerce sector, and the expansion is giving Amazon a strong platform to exploit its dominance and size in the market. It however has some very significant challenges that pose a threat such as regulatory scrutiny, labour related issues and environmental risks that will need a very careful strategic management that will allow the company to reduce possible damage to its reputation and operation. Conversely, eBay enjoys a social platform, as it is firmly entrenched in the category of second-hand and marketplaces, which is in line with the sustainability tendencies. However, eBay is experiencing slower growth rates and rivalry pressures that necessitate a prompt manner of responding to the market. As far as Amazon has to balance its high-performance culture with ethical issues, eBay approaches inclusivity and environmental responsibility much easier, though it will have to continue working on its competitive stance in the market .

In this case of the UK market, the two companies should align their external-environmental factors with their internal culture and their core business strategies. As an example, Amazon has to find a balance between its high-performance, speed-focused culture and growing social and legal demands regarding employee welfare; eBay has to make its culture of inclusion and talent management be accompanied by a more aggressive strategic

focus that could make the possible opportunities of external environmental forces transform into actual growth.

Part 3: Examination of Culture and Ethical Behaviour

Culture and Ethical Behaviour

Organisational culture can be defined as a set of shared principles, behaviour and unspoken rules which shape the way people behave and relate in an organisation. Ethical behaviour, in turn, comprises the morality and social norms with the help of which organisations and people operate them moral and social norms that go beyond legal adherence to responsibility towards workers, society and the environment. Essentially, the culture of a firm will be used to determine whether ethical behaviour will thrive or not. The culture that ensures true endorsement of a set of values such as integrity, respect and accountability would tend to facilitate ethical decisions and practices compared to a misaligned culture that can be underperforming even a well-articulated ethical policy.

In the case of Amazon, speed, innovation and performance are the culture of the company. It has such values as customer obsession, ownership and invent and simplify. The company has a human rights site, which says that it is dedicated to the respect of internationally recognised human rights in the course of its business operations and value chain. Culturally speaking, this is indicative of the layer of the culture-theory where Schein refers to the so-called espoused values. Amazon depicts itself as a high-performance, responsible organisation. Nevertheless, an escapism exists between the level of espousal and experience of employees. There are a number of criticisms emphasizing the employment conditions, monitoring, pace, and health and well-being issues in the UK and other countries .

On the contrary, eBay anchors its culture on inclusion, trust and flexibilities. Its marketplace format is predisposed to a more cooperative internal culture and exterior positioning- as seen by its increased emphasis on the pre-used/refurbishment market and the circular economy. As per ethical assessments, eBay is superior to Amazon in terms of climate action and sales of pre-owned goods. These cultural indicators imply an organisational ethic that insists on responsibility and adjustability.

In analysing the ethical behaviour, the formal commitments of Amazon (human rights, safe workplace) are apparent, and there are practical tensions . To illustrate, the trade-union commentary within the UK has brought up the issue of fulfilment-centre conditions and practice on monitoring. It implies that there is a disparity between policy and lived culture, whereas eBay, in its turn, although not excused, is closer to sustainable and ethical marketplace practices, with a greater focus on reuse and lower-impact operations.

The relationship between culture and ethics can be condensed into the following: The culture at Amazon promotes performance at the expense of ethical aspects of employee life and public image. eBay culture is more inherently aligned with ethical aspects- however, there are still forces of strategy that ensure the growth and competitiveness of the company.

Synergies between Culture and Ethics

The models of argumentation and decision-making should then be utilised so as to critically evaluate how culture and ethics are intertwined or in conflict at Amazon and eBay. As an example, according to the Toulmin Model, ethical decisions are based on a claim e.g., fair treatment of workers, supporting facts, a warrant or reason why it is important, supporting evidence, qualifiers and rebuttals. In the example of Amazon this may be their human-rights pledge; supporting it with policies and reports but a counterargument is the accusation of inhumane conditions . The moral claim is undermined in a sense that lived experience is not necessarily in line with the cultural expectations.

- **Claim:** Amazon and eBay treat workers in a fair manner and on the same breath, integrate ethical practices in their culture.
- **Data:** Amazon posts a human-rights commitment and policies; eBay focuses on inclusion, the development and sustainability of the second-hand marketplace.
- **Warrant:** When an organisation undertakes to treat people well and be sustainable, such ethics, in the culture of the organisation, ought to be reflected and stand.
- **Supporting:** In the case of Amazon, the reports and statements on human-rights concerns worldwide; at eBay, the level of sustainability and inclusion programs.

- **Stipulation:** But, they involve themselves in these commitments provided that daily practices are open to stated values .
- **Rebuttal:** In Amazon, employee-questionnaires and press coverage demonstrate over-monitoring, work-speed and stress issues, as no longer befitting the proclaimed culture and behavioural principles where they have a mismatch between the proclamation and reality. At eBay, there are fewer evident contradictions, though, the competition washes might put ethical culture correlation under pressure.

Applying the Pearson model of the RED a person may see in eBay a more coherent course: they identify the sustainability issue, assess the second-hand goods marketplace as the opportunity, make the choice to focus on it and perform e.g., more than 40 percent of sales on the pre-owned items. They have a culture of inclusion and flexibility that helps in making ethical decisions.

Consequently, the cultural-ethical operations are more synergetic in eBay: culture promotes ethical behaviour, and ethical behaviour promotes culture. The synergy at Amazon is weaker: sometimes culture negatively affects the ethics through its emphasis on throughput and efficiency at the potential cost of employee welfare or social expectations in general. This affects the decision-making processes of the employees and the perception of the organisation by the outside world as well as the ability of the organisation to manage reputational risk.

Regarding employee-behaviour, in those cases where the organisational culture prefers to focus on high performance and speed and does not match this advantage with any ethical protection, employees might be under pressure to strive towards the metrics without wellbeing or environment-friendly approaches . In this kind of environment, ethical issues such as safety, working hours, employment, etc. can be practiced. On the other hand, it is the culture which instills ethical norms such as that of eBay that could be more helpful in aiding the employee in decision-making where there is a balance between performance and responsibility.

Practically speaking, Amazon needs to strive towards matching culture and ethics to each other better, where employee wellbeing, sustainable operation and inclusive culture is not a constraint but an integral part of its performance strategy. eBay needs to remain with its

ethical culture being a strategic asset, responsibility should not be an addition, but a part of the strategy of operations.

Conclusion

The present report has critically discussed the organisational cultures, context and ethical behaviours of Amazon and eBay with the prism of culture and context, more encompassing environmental analysis and the interrelation between culture and ethics. In the case of Amazon, the high-performance, speed-oriented culture is well matched to a situation of fast development of e-commerce in the UK, logistical and technological investment development. However, there are serious strains associated with this conformity, employee welfare issues, regulatory oversight, and reputational danger, which indicate a lack of continuity in the correlations between cultural activities and changing societal/ethical demands. By comparison, the culture of inclusion, flexibility and collaboration at eBay seems to have a better fit in a marketplace context reflecting platform business models, second-hand/resale growth trends and sustainability trends. Although eBay has experienced minimized growth and some competitive headwinds, ethical positioning that emanates out of the culture and ethical priorities of eBay makes it more resilient. Based on the environmental analyses, both companies enjoy a positive technological and social environment in the UK such as an increasing penetration rate of e-selling of around 26-30% of retail sales. Simultaneously, both of them encounter significant external threats, namely, political/regulatory, legal and environmental, which require powerful cultural/ethical reactions.

Thus, the following were the main recommendations:

- Amazon needs to incorporate employee well-being and ethical principles into the high-performance culture - responsibility and care should be the component of the performance equation, rather than their side-effects.
- eBay can use its ethical culture as the competitive advantage, which will enhance the business growth strategy and sustainability, trust on the platform and inclusive work-practices to its own benefit.

- Both companies need to be constantly aware of their external surroundings and make sure that their internal culture will be in the process of change - the institutionalisation of flexibility, the ethical decision-making paradigms and the responsiveness to stakeholders.

After all, organisational culture and ethics is no longer luxury when dealing with a globalised economy, where social expectations, labour rights and sustainability have become more important than ever. The way through which Amazon and eBay negotiate these dimensions in the UK setting will determine not only their performance but also their social legitimacy and greater sustainability.

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