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Effect Of Organisational Culture on Employee Performance in Public Water Companies in Coastal Kenya

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Abstract

The study investigated how organizational culture (adhocracy, clan, market, and hierarchical) affects employee performance in seven public water companies in Coastal Kenya. It was guided by dynamic capabilities theory, job-embeddedness theory, and bureaucratic theory, and used a descriptive research design. The target population was 428 employees; a sample of 207 was drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling with Slovin's formula (e = 0.05). Data were collected via a structured questionnaire whose validity and reliability were confirmed through a pilot test of 21 respondents (10% of the sample). Findings showed that all four culture types significantly influenced employee performance, but with different strengths: hierarchical culture (structured systems, formal procedures, clear authority) was the strongest positive predictor of performance; market culture (performance orientation, targets, competitiveness) had a notable positive effect; clan culture (supportive, family-like environment, teamwork) showed a moderate but statistically significant positive relationship; and adhocracy culture (innovation, creativity, risk-taking) produced a smaller yet meaningful influence and was the weakest predictor among the four. Recommendations: public water companies should balance and leverage all four cultures—promote clan features (support, teamwork), strengthen adhocracy (space for innovation and calculated risk-taking), embed market practices (clear goals, accountability), and sustain hierarchical elements (well-defined processes and leadership) that provide stability and clarity. The study also calls for comparative research across other regions and sectors (e.g., healthcare, education, transport) to test generalizability and reveal any sector-specific cultural dynamics.

Key Words: T clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, hierarchical culture, employee performance

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1. Introduction

The public water companies in Coastal Kenya have experienced poor employee performance, with significant indicators of underperformance. For example, the Mombasa

Water Supply and Sewerage Company recorded 50% dormant water connections for three consecutive years, while Kilifi–Mariakani Water and Sewerage Company and Kwale Water and Sanitation Company were among the worst-performing public water companies in the country during the 2018–2019 financial year (WASREB, 2019/2020). Similar operational inefficiencies and workforce productivity challenges have been reported in other developing economies, where cultural misalignment between organizational values and employee behaviours significantly hampers service delivery (Al-Matari et al., 2022; García-Sánchez & García-Morales, 2020). Given these underperformance trends, it is essential to investigate whether organizational culture within these companies has a positive or negative impact on employee performance, as culture is a recognized driver of workforce effectiveness globally (Hogan & Coote, 2014; Alessa & Alhazmi, 2021).

Misigo et al. (2019) conducted a study on organizational culture and performance in Kenyan public water companies. However, their work primarily examined the effect of culture on overall organizational performance rather than specifically addressing employee performance, which is a fundamental determinant of institutional outcomes. Similarly, Omondi (2020) examined organizational culture at Kisumu Water and Sewerage Company, focusing on corporate-level outcomes while overlooking workforce-level performance indicators. Comparable research from other regions, such as the study by Kim and Chang (2019) in South Korea's utility sector and Ahmad et al. (2021) in Malaysia's water industry, also highlights that while organizational culture influences overall performance, a direct link to individual employee productivity remains underexplored. While some research has explored the effect of organizational culture on performance in public water companies, there is limited comprehensive investigation specific to the Coastal Kenya region. For instance, the findings by Misigo et al. (2019), which focused on Malindi Water and Sanitation Company and 16 other public water companies in non-coastal counties, cannot be generalized to the coastal context due to distinct regional cultural and operational dynamics. Moreover, their study emphasized the effect of adhocracy culture on organizational performance, overlooking other cultural dimensions such as clan, market, and hierarchical cultures. This study therefore aims to address these gaps by examining the influence of adhocracy, clan, market, and hierarchical cultures on employee performance across six public water companies in Coastal Kenya, thereby providing regionally relevant insights while contributing to the global discourse on organizational culture and workforce performance (Denison et al., 2018; Li et al., 2020).

1.2 Research Hypothesis

H01: Clan culture has no significant effect on employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya.

H02: Adhocracy culture has no significant effect on employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya.

H03: Market culture has no significant effect on employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya.

H04: Hierarchical culture has no significant effect on employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded in the dynamic capability's theory, job embeddedness theory, and Max Weber's bureaucratic theory, which are commonly used to understand organizational culture and its impact on employee performance.

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic capabilities theory, proposed by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997), evaluates an organization's ability to develop, streamline, and reconfigure its internal and external resources in response to dynamic business environments (Wogwu, 2019; Abbas, Hafiez & Ibrahim, 2018). This theory emphasizes the swiftness and alignment of resources with emerging market demands and opportunities. It posits that organizational culture is a strategic asset that enhances competitiveness and performance in turbulent environments. Dynamic capabilities theory aligns with adhocracy culture, which fosters innovation, experimentation, and employee-driven creativity—essential traits for adaptability in rapidly evolving contexts. It promotes a culture that supports employee learning, mentorship, and flexibility, thereby boosting performance (Abbas et al., 2018). Furthermore, the theory supports market culture, which is focused on competitiveness, results orientation, and achieving measurable performance outcomes. It encourages both internal competition among employees and external competition with rival firms, which drive continuous improvement and market relevance (Mohd, 2016). Therefore, this theory is applicable to the current study as it provides a theoretical framework for understanding how both adhocracy culture and market culture influence employee performance. These cultures empower innovation and competitiveness, which are critical for enhancing employee outcomes and organizational excellence in public water companies.

Job Embeddedness Theory

Job embeddedness theory, developed by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Erez in 2001, explains why employees remain in or leave organizations, and how organizational tenure impacts employee commitment and performance (Liu, 2018). It focuses on three core elements: fit (alignment between personal and organizational goals), links (interpersonal connections at work), and sacrifice (what would be lost if the employee leaves) (Darrat, Burton & Bennett, 2017). This theory directly supports clan culture, which is characterized by a family-like work environment emphasizing teamwork, employee involvement in decision-making, open communication, and shared values. Such a culture enhances employee attachment to the organization and builds a sense of ownership and belonging, which boosts performance (Liu, 2018). The theory also implies that deeply embedded employees with multiple organizational relationships and roles tend to be more committed and productive, as they have higher stakes in the organization's success (Setthakorn et al., 2019). Thus, this theory underpins the influence of clan culture on employee performance by showing how strong social and value-based connections within the workplace can lead to improved employee commitment and results.

Bureaucratic Theory

Max Weber's bureaucratic theory, developed in the early 19th century, describes organizations as structured systems with formalized rules, clearly defined authority levels, and impersonal management practices (Mohammed, 2017; Berend, Paula & Berk, 2018). The theory views bureaucracy as essential for efficiency, discipline, and control in large organizations. This theory corresponds with hierarchical culture, which emphasizes order, formal procedures, centralized decision-making, and structured authority. In such cultures, employee behaviour is closely monitored, career paths are well-defined, and performance is linked to compliance with rules and achievement of defined roles (Hakami, 2022). While hierarchical culture can enhance performance through accountability and clear expectations, overly rigid systems may suppress creativity and demotivate employees if perceived as exploitative or overly controlling (Nganga, Maru & Korir, 2017). Accordingly, this theory is relevant to the study as it provides insights into how hierarchical structures and strict rule enforcement—key features of hierarchical culture—impact employee performance, both positively and negatively, depending on how the structure is perceived and managed.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework embraced four predictor variables and one contingent variable. The independent variables consisted of clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchical culture, which are the categories of organizational culture, while employee performance was the dependent variable. Accordingly, the study sought to establish how the stated independent variables impacted the contingent variable in the public water companies in Coastal Kenya.

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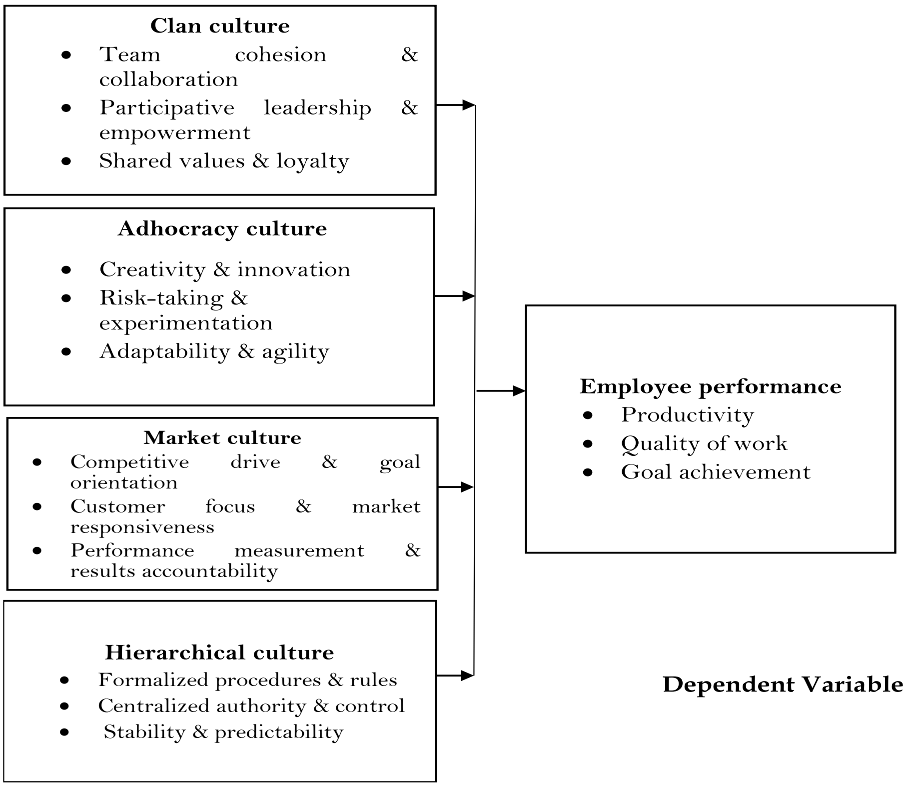

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical Review

Studies across different contexts have examined the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance, focusing on the four dominant culture types in the Competing Values Framework. Clan culture, characterized by teamwork, collaboration, and mutual support, has been found to enhance employee engagement and productivity. Kanyangi and Maingi (2022) reported that in Kenyan manufacturing firms, a strong clan culture was associated with higher job satisfaction and lower turnover. Similar findings were observed in China, where Wang et al. (2020) noted that participative leadership within clan cultures strengthened employees' sense of ownership and commitment. However, Mwangi and Muraguri (2021) caution that in highly structured settings, excessive informality can lead to role ambiguity, while Liu et al. (2022) argue that overemphasis on consensus may result in groupthink, reducing innovation.

Adhocracy culture, emphasizing innovation, adaptability, and risk-taking, has also been widely studied. Zhang et al. (2021) found that in high-tech firms, adhocracy cultures fostered creativity and accelerated problem-solving, driving competitive advantage. Misigo et al. (2022) observed similar results in Kenyan ICT companies, where adaptability contributed to market responsiveness. Nonetheless, Jansen et al. (2020) highlighted that its fluid structure can cause role uncertainty, and Yang et al. (2022) linked constant change to employee burnout. Otu et al. (2023) adds that while calculated risk-taking improves performance in dynamic markets, unchecked experimentation can waste resources (Gachagua & Kinyua, 2022).

Market culture, which prioritizes competitiveness, goal achievement, and customer responsiveness, has been associated with improved performance metrics. Fikadu (2020) found that Ethiopian financial institutions with a market-oriented culture achieved higher customer satisfaction scores. Ibrahim and Tsado (2022) reported that performance accountability in Nigerian firms boosted productivity, while Chen et al. (2020) found similar patterns in U.S. service organizations. However, Huang et al. (2021) warn that excessive performance pressure may lead to burnout, and Owuor (2021) notes that a short-term results focus can undermine long-term sustainability. Omondi (2020) further observes that overemphasis on individual competition can erode teamwork.

Hierarchical culture, defined by structured procedures, formal authority, and stability, is valued for its ability to enhance efficiency and consistency. Owino and Kibera (2018) found that in Kenyan public institutions, hierarchical cultures ensured procedural compliance and service delivery stability. Omondi (2020) similarly notes that clear role definitions reduce operational errors. Internationally, Zehir et al. (2021) found that such cultures improved quality control in manufacturing. However, Gachagua and Kinyua (2022) caution that centralized authority may stifle innovation, and Misigo et al. (2022) add that resistance to change can limit adaptability in turbulent environments.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A research design refers to the systematic approach used by a researcher to conduct a scientific investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study employed a descriptive research design because it enabled the researcher to obtain accurate and detailed information about the current state of organizational culture and employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya. The design was particularly suitable for this research as it allowed for the observation, description, and analysis of existing relationships without manipulating variables (Rahi, 2017). Additionally, it facilitated the use of both qualitative and quantitative data, making it effective for capturing respondents' perceptions through structured questionnaires. Its cost-effectiveness and efficiency also made it practical for fieldwork in geographically dispersed locations.

3.2 Target Population

Marshall and Rossman (2016) define a population as a collection of individuals or items that form the basis of consideration in any field of investigation and share a common characteristic. In this study, the target population comprises 428 workers from seven public water companies in Coastal Kenya. These employees represent a diverse workforce engaged in various roles within the water service sector, making them relevant for analysing

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organizational culture and performance. The unit of analysis in this study is the public water companies in Coastal Kenya, as the research seeks to examine how organizational culture influences employee performance within these institutions. The study focuses on understanding trends, structures, and dynamics at the organizational level that impact employees' work behaviour and overall performance. The unit of observation is the individual employees working in these public water companies. These employees provide first-hand data on how organizational culture affects their motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity. Their responses will form the basis of the study's findings and conclusions. Respondents will be selected from the 428 employees working in the seven public water companies in Coastal Kenya. The breakdown of the population size per company is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population Size

Public Water Company	Population Size	Management Staff	Technical Staff	Administrative Staff
1.Mombasa Water Supply and Sanitation Company	109	25	50	34
2.Malindi Water and Sanitation Company	64	15	30	19
3.Lamu Water and Sewerage Company	53	12	25	16
4.Kilifi - Mariakani Water & Sewerage Company	59	14	28	17
5.Kwale Water and Sanitation Company	57	13	25	19
6.Tavevo Water and Sewerage Company	47	10	20	17
7.Tana River Water and Sanitation Company	39	8	18	13
Total	428	97	196	136

Source: HR Departments, Selected Public Water Companies in Coastal Kenya, 2023.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1 Correlation Results

To assess the linear relationships between organizational culture types and employee performance, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The results, presented in Table 2, reveal important associations that help to understand how different cultural orientations influence employee outcomes. Correlation coefficients range from −1 to +1, where values closer to +1 or −1 indicate stronger positive or negative relationships, respectively. A positive correlation implies that as one variable increases, the other also increases, while a significant p-value (typically < 0.05 or < 0.01) indicates that the relationship is statistically meaningful and not due to chance.

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Table 2: Correlation Results

		Clan Culture	Adhocracy Culture	Market Culture	Hierarchical Culture	Employee Performance
Clan Culture	Pearson Correlation	1				
Adhocracy Culture	Pearson Correlation	.204*	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012				
Market Culture	Pearson Correlation	.081	.216**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.321	.008			
Hierarchical Culture	Pearson Correlation	.031	.098	.446**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.705	.234	.000		
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.398	.228**	.458**	.645*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.045	.005	.000	.000	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results in table 2 show that clan culture is positively correlated with employee performance (r = .398, p = .045). This indicates a moderate, statistically significant relationship, suggesting that a work environment characterized by teamwork, participation, and a sense of belonging is associated with better employee performance. While this relationship does not confirm direct influence, it suggests that stronger clan culture tends to align with higher levels of employee performance within the organization. This is supported by Cameron and Quinn (2011) who argue that clan culture nurtures loyalty, employee involvement, and morale, all of which are essential drivers of performance. Furthermore, Denison and Mishra (1995) found that internal cohesion and supportive work environments promote employee satisfaction and output, aligning with the present findings. Adhocracy culture also demonstrated a significant positive correlation with employee performance (r = .228, p = .005). Though weaker than the correlation with clan culture, this result confirms that innovative and risk-tolerant environments, which emphasize flexibility, creativity, and adaptability, are associated with better performance outcomes. According to Zheng et al. (2010), when employees are empowered to experiment and respond to dynamic challenges, they are more likely to be innovative and productive. This supports the notion that adhocracy encourages autonomy and creative problem-solving, both of which are linked to high performance.

The analysis further reveals a strong, significant positive correlation between market culture and employee performance (r = .458, p = .000). This is the strongest correlation among the culture types (excluding hierarchical culture), suggesting that goal orientation, competitiveness, and customer focus have a particularly notable impact on employee outcomes. These findings are in line with Kotter and Heskett (1992), who argued that market-oriented cultures drive performance by emphasizing accountability, targets, and productivity, especially in results-driven organizations. Similarly, Jaworski and Kohli (1993) emphasized the importance of external focus in driving both individual and organizational success, reinforcing the implications of this result. Hierarchical culture shows the strongest correlation overall with employee performance (r = .645, p = .000), indicating a very strong and statistically significant relationship. This suggests that structured environments characterized by rules, stability, and control mechanisms are strongly associated with performance outcomes in this context. While hierarchical culture is often criticized for stifling creativity, in settings that demand predictability, compliance, and process efficiency, it can enhance performance. This finding aligns with Weber's bureaucratic model, where formalization and defined roles reduce ambiguity and increase consistency. Moreover, Schein (2010) posits that in certain industries or organizations, hierarchy provides the order necessary for effective task execution, especially in roles requiring high coordination and regulation. It is also worth noting the inter-correlations among the culture types. For instance, adhocracy culture and market culture are positively correlated (r = .216, p = .008), suggesting that organizations promoting innovation often also value competitiveness and results. Similarly, market culture and hierarchical culture show a strong inter-correlation (r = .446, p = .000), indicating that performance-oriented structures may incorporate both goal-focus and standardized processes, particularly in hybrid or complex organizations.

Interestingly, clan culture's correlation with market culture (r = .081, p = .321) and hierarchical culture (r = .031, p = .705) is weak and not statistically significant. This implies that the values embedded in clan culture—such as interpersonal relationships and consensus—may not align closely with the more structured or competitive features of the other cultures.

The correlation analysis confirms that organizational culture significantly influences employee performance, but the strength and direction of influence vary by culture type. Specifically: Hierarchical culture has the strongest positive impact, emphasizing the importance of structure, stability, and role clarity. Market culture closely follows, highlighting the value of goal setting and performance tracking. Clan and adhocracy cultures also contribute positively but to a moderate extent, underscoring the importance of team cohesion and innovation respectively. These results suggest that blending elements from multiple cultures—particularly structure from hierarchy, drive from market culture, and human-centric practices from clan and adhocracy—may create optimal conditions for sustained performance, as supported by Cameron & Quinn (2011) and Denison et al. (2004). Therefore, managers should seek a balanced cultural approach, aligning structural controls with innovation, competitiveness, and supportive team dynamics to achieve superior employee outcomes.

4.2 Multiple Linear Regression Results

To further examine the influence of organizational culture dimensions on employee performance, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. This technique allows for an assessment of how multiple independent variables—in this case, clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchical culture—collectively and individually explain variations in the dependent variable, Employee Performance. The results of the regression model are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.686[a]	.470	.456	.22549

a. Predictors: (Constant), Clan Culture, Adhocracy Culture, Market Culture, Hierarchical Culture
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

In table 3, the model yielded an R-value of 0.686, which indicates a strong positive correlation between the combined set of independent variables (the four types of organizational culture) and employee performance. This implies that the selected cultural dimensions have a substantial linear relationship with employee performance outcomes. In statistical terms, this is a meaningful finding because it demonstrates that organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping employee behaviour and results. The R Square value was 0.470, meaning that 47.0% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by the four organizational culture types included in the model. This suggests that nearly half of the observed changes in employee performance levels are attributable to variations in culture, while the remaining 53.0% may be influenced by other factors such as leadership style, individual capabilities, motivation, training, or external environmental dynamics. According to Hair et al. (2010), an R^2 value between 0.3 and 0.5 in social sciences reflects a moderate to strong explanatory power, making the current model notably effective for organizational behaviour research.

Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value was 0.456, which slightly adjusts the R^2 for the number of predictors in the model. The closeness between R^2 and Adjusted R^2 confirms the reliability and generalizability of the model. This minor decrease (from 0.470 to 0.456) suggests that all four variables contribute meaningfully and that the model is not overfitted or inflated by irrelevant predictors. This supports the assertion by Cohen et al. (2003) that a well-adjusted model should show minimal reduction when adjusted for multiple predictors.

The standard error of the estimate was 0.22549, indicating that the observed values of employee performance deviate from the predicted values by an average of approximately 0.23 units. This relatively low error value suggests that the regression model offers a precise

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estimation of the dependent variable. From a theoretical perspective, these results reinforce the centrality of organizational culture in influencing performance, as suggested by Cameron and Quinn (2011) in their Competing Values Framework. The framework posits those different cultures shape employee attitudes, motivation, and behaviour in distinct ways. The findings in this study provide empirical support to this assertion by demonstrating that a combined cultural context, comprising clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchical dimensions, accounts for nearly half of employee performance outcomes.

Additionally, the findings are consistent with Denison's Organizational Culture Model (1990), which identifies adaptability, involvement, mission, and consistency as cultural traits that directly impact organizational effectiveness. The current results suggest that blending flexibility (clan and adhocracy), goal-orientation (market), and structure (hierarchical) enhances employee performance, pointing to the value of a multi-dimensional cultural approach. The regression results have significant implications for managers and policymakers. First, they underscore the importance of strategic cultural development: organizations should not rely on a single dominant culture but instead cultivate a balanced mix of cultural traits that reinforce both stability and adaptability. Second, by explaining 47% of employee performance variance, organizational culture emerges as a strategic lever for performance improvement. This highlights the need for culture-focused interventions, such as participatory decision-making, innovation incentives, customer-driven targets, and clear rule enforcement, all of which align with the four cultural dimensions studied.

4.3 ANOVA Results

The ANOVA results revealed the significance of the presented regression models for the regression coefficients. This significance was determined by a p-value lower than the 0.05 threshold score (p-value= 0.000). Besides, the F-statistic also ascertained the joint effect of the predictor variables on the dependent variable. Table 4 captures the results of the ANOVA test performed on the regression coefficients.

Table 4: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.584	4	1.646	42.31	.000[b]
Residual	7.425	191	0.039		
Total	14.009	195			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Clan Culture, Adhocracy Culture, Market Culture, Hierarchical Culture
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The ANOVA test results in Table 4 demonstrate the overall significance of the regression model that examines the joint effect of organizational culture dimensions—clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchical culture—on employee performance. The F-statistic value of 42.31 with a significance level (p-value) of .000 confirms

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that the regression model is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that the set of independent variables collectively explain a significant proportion of the variance in employee performance, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis that all regression coefficients are equal to zero. As highlighted by Field (2013) and Cohen et al. (2003), an F-ratio significantly greater than 1, coupled with a p-value below 0.05, validates that the regression model has predictive power. In this case, the high F-value and very low p-value (.000) indicate that the model is highly effective in explaining employee performance using the identified cultural constructs. Thus, these results reinforce the findings from the R^2 value of 0.470, confirming that organizational culture accounts for 47% of the variability in employee performance, while the remaining 53% may be influenced by other unexamined factors such as leadership, motivation, or external organizational dynamics.

4.4 Regression Coefficients

The regression analysis sought to examine how various dimensions of organizational culture influence employee performance within public water companies in Coastal Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on four key cultural constructs—clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchical culture—using multiple linear regression to determine their individual contributions to employee performance. The results presented in Table 5 provide the regression coefficients that define this relationship.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.453	.351		1.291	.199
Clan Culture (CC)	.219	.043	.027	5.093	.001
Adhocracy Culture (AC)	.106	.052	.129	2.038	.042
Market Culture (MC)	.187	.071	.182	2.634	.009
Hierarchical Culture (HC)	.584	.071	.550	8.225	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The analysis in table 5 revealed that clan culture has a positive and statistically significant influence on employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.219 and a p-value of 0.001. This implies that for every one-unit increase in clan culture, employee performance increases by 0.219 units, holding all other variables constant. This result supports existing literature, particularly the work of Cameron and Quinn (2011), which emphasizes that clan culture fosters collaboration, employee involvement, and a sense of belonging—factors that enhance motivation and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved performance. Similarly, Denison and Mishra (1995) argue that organizations with

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strong internal cohesion and participatory work environments tend to experience better individual and collective outcomes.

Adhocracy culture also demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.106 and a p-value of 0.042. Although the magnitude of this effect is smaller than that of clan culture, it is meaningful, especially in dynamic organizational settings. Adhocracy culture is characterized by innovation, adaptability, and risk-taking. The findings align with literature that underscores the importance of an innovative work environment in enhancing employee effectiveness. Zheng et al. (2010) and Deshpandé et al. (1993) observed that organizations that encourage creativity and experimentation benefit from increased employee initiative, problem-solving capabilities, and responsiveness to change—all of which contribute to improved performance outcomes.

Market culture was also found to have a significant positive effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.187 and a p-value of 0.009. This result indicates that organizations that emphasize results, competition, and customer orientation tend to achieve higher levels of employee performance. According to Kotter and Heskett (1992), market culture promotes accountability and a clear focus on objectives, which helps employees remain results-driven and efficient. The external orientation of market-oriented organizations enables employees to align their efforts with broader strategic goals and customer expectations, enhancing both individual and organizational productivity.

Among the four cultural dimensions, hierarchical culture emerged as the most influential, with a regression coefficient of 0.584 and a highly significant p-value of 0.000. This finding suggests that in the context of public sector organizations, such as water companies in Coastal Kenya, structure, control, formal procedures, and stability play a dominant role in shaping employee behaviour and performance. While some literature critiques hierarchical structures for potentially stifling creativity, in regulated environments where compliance and standardization are critical, such structures can enhance clarity, reduce ambiguity, and support consistent task execution. This finding is supported by Weber's (1947) theory of bureaucracy and Schein's (2010) work on organizational culture, both of which highlight the efficiency and reliability associated with well-defined rules and authority systems.

In conclusion, the regression analysis demonstrates that all four organizational culture dimensions—clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchical—positively influence employee performance, albeit to varying degrees. The strong predictive power of hierarchical culture suggests that structure and control are particularly effective in the public service context, while the contributions of clan and market cultures highlight the importance of teamwork and results orientation. adhocracy culture, though less influential, still plays a critical role in fostering innovation and adaptability. These findings reinforce the theoretical foundations of the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011), which advocates for a balanced cultural approach to achieve optimal organizational performance. Organizations are thus encouraged to develop and maintain a strategic mix of cultural attributes to enhance employee outcomes and overall institutional effectiveness. In this light, the model capturing organizational culture influence on employee performance was:

$$Y = 0.453 + 0.219\ CC + 0.106\ AC + 0.187\ MC + 0.584\ HC + \varepsilon$$

Where:
CC= Clan culture
AC= Adhocracy culture
MC= Market culture
HC= Hierarchical culture
ε = Error term.

4.5 Discussion of Findings and Implications

Clan culture and employee performance

The results of this study revealed that clan culture had a moderate and statistically significant correlation with employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya ($R = 0.398$, $p = 0.045$). Furthermore, the regression analysis indicated that a unit increase in clan culture led to a 0.219 increase in employee performance, with a beta coefficient of 0.219 and a p-value of 0.001. These findings suggest that clan culture exerts a meaningful and positive influence on how employees perform in their roles. This observation is consistent with recent literature over the past five years, which has highlighted the importance of clan culture in enhancing employee outcomes, particularly in public and service-oriented organizations.

Recent empirical studies have emphasized that clan culture—characterized by a family-like work environment, shared values, teamwork, employee involvement, and strong interpersonal relationships—has a strong bearing on organizational success through its influence on employee behavior and motivation. For instance, Kim and Chang (2020) found that clan culture enhances psychological safety within organizations, leading to increased employee engagement and improved performance in public institutions. Similarly, Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2021) concluded that organizations with internal cohesion and a focus on human relations tend to foster innovation, job satisfaction, and commitment, all of which are positively linked to employee performance.

The findings of Mwangi and Waithaka (2022) within Kenyan state corporations support the current study, as they observed that clan culture improves communication, enhances teamwork, and boosts morale, which collectively contribute to better individual and team performance. Al-Khalifa and Abou-Shouk (2023) also noted in their cross-industry study that clan culture is significantly associated with job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors, which are key predictors of enhanced performance. These studies provide a regional and global context that aligns with the current study's findings and reinforces the argument that clan culture can be a valuable strategic asset in public service delivery.

Moreover, Chege et al. (2023) emphasized that in bureaucratic and resource-constrained environments, such as public utilities in Sub-Saharan Africa, employee-centric cultures like the clan model play a compensatory role by promoting internal solidarity and emotional commitment among employees. This finding mirrors the relatively high beta coefficient of clan culture observed in this study, suggesting that clan culture remains a significant determinant of employee performance even when compared to other cultural dimensions. Ahmed and Omar (2021) further elaborated that in collectivist cultures such as Kenya, the clan cultural model aligns well with societal values and therefore provides a conducive framework for mobilizing employee effort and aligning personal goals with organizational missions.

Adhocracy culture and employee performance

The study findings revealed that adhocracy culture had a small but statistically significant positive influence on employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya. The average respondent score of 3.402 indicated a moderate consensus on the presence of Adhocracy culture in these organizations. A correlation coefficient of $R = 0.228$ ($p = 0.005$) suggested a modest yet meaningful relationship between Adhocracy culture and employee performance. Further, the regression analysis showed that a 0.106 increase in adhocracy culture predicted a unit increase in employee performance, with a beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.106$ and standardized beta of 0.129. Despite ranking fourth among the predictors, the culture's influence was statistically significant ($p = 0.042$), warranting the rejection of the null hypothesis. These results underscore the increasingly acknowledged importance of adhocracy culture in enhancing employee performance in the public utility sector.

Recent literature over the past five years has echoed these findings, particularly in dynamic and innovation-sensitive environments. Adhocracy culture, which emphasizes flexibility, creativity, autonomy, and risk-taking, has been identified as a catalyst for driving innovation and improving individual and organizational performance. For instance, Zainab and Zulkiffli (2021) found that in public organizations undergoing transformation, adhocracy culture fosters a proactive mindset among employees, leading to improved responsiveness and performance outcomes. Similarly, Omari and Ndirangu (2022), in their study of Kenyan public institutions, concluded that adhocracy-oriented cultures enabled employees to experiment with new approaches, ultimately improving service delivery and internal efficiency.

In the context of utilities and public service entities, where innovation is often constrained by bureaucracy, scholars have noted that cultivating elements of adhocracy culture can introduce much-needed agility and creative problem-solving. Munene et al. (2023) argued that while such organizations may not fully embrace risk, integrating aspects of adhocracy—such as allowing autonomy in project management or encouraging initiative—can significantly boost morale and productivity. This aligns with the current study's results, where even a relatively modest application of adhocracy culture showed statistically significant influence on performance.

Additionally, Kariuki and Mugambi (2020) reported that the adoption of adhocracy culture in select county water boards in Kenya led to enhanced employee engagement and

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faster resolution of service issues, suggesting that such a culture nurtures accountability and ownership among staff. Musa and Achieng (2021) also demonstrated that in service organizations, Adhocracy culture promotes a performance-driven environment by encouraging employees to think innovatively and adapt to changing conditions, both of which are essential for public water companies facing climate and infrastructure-related challenges.

The standardized beta value of 0.129 in this study further supports these assertions, as it implies that adhocracy culture contributes uniquely to the variance in employee performance. Although not the most dominant predictor, its role remains crucial—especially in promoting individual initiative and adaptive responses in traditionally rigid public institutions. This is supported by Hassan and Wario (2023), who emphasized that small shifts toward a more flexible, entrepreneurial culture can create performance gains even in hierarchical public organizations.

Market culture and employee performance

The results of the study indicated that market culture is actively and purposefully practiced among public water companies in Coastal Kenya, with an average score of 3.63 from respondents. The correlation analysis revealed a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship between market culture and employee performance ($R = 0.458$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that employees who operate within a performance-oriented, goal-driven cultural environment tend to demonstrate higher levels of performance. Regression analysis further confirmed this relationship, with a beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.187$) and a standardized beta of 0.182, indicating that a one-standard-deviation increase in market culture leads to a 0.182 standard deviation rise in employee performance. This marked market culture as the third most influential variable, reinforcing its notable role in shaping employee outcomes.

These findings align with recent literature from the past five years, which increasingly emphasizes the relevance of market culture in enhancing employee performance, especially in public service and utility organizations that are striving to become more results-oriented and efficient. Market culture is typified by a focus on competitiveness, productivity, goal achievement, and measurable outcomes—traits that are particularly vital in-service delivery organizations that face pressure to justify performance and meet stakeholder expectations.

For instance, Ngugi and Wekesa (2021) found that market culture significantly improves performance in Kenyan public enterprises by instilling a sense of urgency and result orientation among employees. Their findings showed that employees in organizations with strong Market culture often demonstrate improved efficiency, stronger focus on objectives, and higher accountability. Similarly, Nabwire and Otieno (2022) observed that public sector organizations adopting performance-driven cultures achieved better employee output, reduced absenteeism, and greater service satisfaction among clients.

Furthermore, Okeyo et al. (2023) reported that in utility sectors, especially water service boards in Kenya, integrating market culture helped shift institutional focus from bureaucratic compliance to service delivery excellence. Employees in such environments were found to respond positively to performance targets, incentive systems, and competitive benchmarks. This resonates with the current study's findings, where market culture emerged as a significant driver of employee performance.

Barasa and Kibet (2020) also argue that in environments where employees are constantly monitored, evaluated, and rewarded based on performance metrics—as is common in market cultures—motivation levels tend to rise, translating to improved task execution and accountability. The authors emphasize that introducing Market culture in traditionally hierarchical and slow-moving public institutions can stimulate innovation, initiative, and focus.

The influence of market culture as the third strongest predictor of employee performance, as observed in this study, also aligns with Mwenda and Kinoti (2022), who established that while clan and adhocracy cultures provide strong support and creativity respectively, market culture introduces discipline, efficiency, and measurable goal orientation, which are critical in translating strategy into results. These studies collectively suggest that market culture serves as a critical performance enabler, especially in sectors like water service provision where efficiency and service quality are under increasing public scrutiny.

Hierarchical culture and employee performance

The study findings indicated that Hierarchical culture is actively utilized among public water companies in Coastal Kenya, with a mean respondent score of 3.249. More significantly, hierarchical culture demonstrated the strongest and most statistically significant positive correlation with employee performance ($R = 0.645$, $p = 0.000$), highlighting a robust relationship between a structured, control-oriented culture and employee outcomes. Regression analysis further reinforced this influence, showing that a 0.584 increase in hierarchical culture resulted in a unit increase in employee performance. The culture also recorded the highest beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.584$) and the largest standardized beta ($\beta = 0.550$), confirming it as the most influential predictor of employee performance among all studied variables. This strong association led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, affirming that Hierarchical culture significantly impacts employee performance in the context of Kenyan public water companies.

These findings are strongly supported by recent literature from the last five years, which has increasingly acknowledged the functional role of hierarchical culture in maintaining order, consistency, and accountability—especially in public sector institutions. Hierarchical culture, often characterized by clear authority lines, formal procedures, and stability, has been shown to contribute positively to employee performance, particularly in environments where service delivery depends on regulation, control, and adherence to established standards.

For example, Otieno and Ndungu (2021) found that in Kenyan public utilities, hierarchical systems foster operational discipline and role clarity, which translate into improved task efficiency and reduced conflict. Their study emphasized that when roles and reporting structures are well defined—as is the case in Hierarchical cultures—employees are better able to focus on job performance, leading to improved outcomes.

Similarly, Koech and Bett (2020) observed that public water and sanitation companies with strong hierarchical structures exhibited better employee productivity, largely due to well-enforced rules and standardized workflows. Employees in these environments reportedly appreciated the predictability and stability offered by such a culture, which helped reduce uncertainty and support performance expectations.

Mugambi and Githongo (2022) further supported these findings by demonstrating that in public service organizations, especially in infrastructure and utilities, Hierarchical culture facilitates control, compliance, and uniformity in performance expectations. This culture reduces ambiguity and enhances coordination, making it easier for employees to align with institutional goals.

Moreover, Tuyishime and Kamau (2023) highlighted those Hierarchical cultures are especially effective in regulating employee behavior and enforcing performance benchmarks in bureaucratic organizations. Their study of East African public entities found that a structured, rule-bound culture improves accountability and monitoring, which are essential for delivering consistent and measurable performance.

The current study's findings are also in line with those of Chege and Njuguna (2021), who noted that in environments with limited flexibility or innovation capacity, such as many public utilities, hierarchical structures offer employees the stability they need to operate efficiently. Their research argued that despite criticisms of rigidity, hierarchical cultures promote professionalism and reduce decision-making errors, contributing to better overall performance.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

This section provides a summary of the key conclusions drawn from the study based on the analysis and interpretation of the research findings. It reflects on how the various dimensions of organizational culture—clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchical—affect employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya. The conclusions align with the study objectives and highlight the significance of the findings in addressing the specific objectives.

Clan culture

It can be concluded that clan culture significantly influences employee performance in public water companies in Coastal Kenya. The study demonstrated that when organizations foster a work environment characterized by trust, collaboration, and employee involvement, staff are more likely to perform effectively. The moderate but significant correlation and regression results support the idea that nurturing interpersonal relationships and teamwork leads to increased motivation and productivity. Therefore, enhancing Clan culture by promoting openness, shared values, and supportive leadership can positively impact employee performance in public service organizations.

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Adhocracy culture

The findings lead to the conclusion that adhocracy culture has a positive, albeit relatively modest, effect on employee performance. The culture's emphasis on innovation, adaptability, and employee initiative contributes to improved performance, even in traditionally rigid public institutions like water companies. Although its influence was the weakest among the four cultures examined, it remains statistically significant, suggesting that encouraging creativity and risk-taking—within manageable limits—can help employees respond more dynamically to challenges. Public utilities should therefore consider integrating elements of adhocracy culture to enhance responsiveness and adaptability among their workforce.

Market culture

From the results, it is concluded that market culture plays a significant and impactful role in promoting employee performance. The moderate correlation and relatively high regression coefficients suggest that when organizations emphasize competitiveness, target-setting, and accountability, employees are more focused, results-driven, and efficient. This culture supports a performance-oriented mindset that aligns well with the increasing demand for measurable outcomes in the public sector. Hence, public water companies can benefit from reinforcing market culture by setting clear expectations, recognizing performance, and aligning individual goals with institutional objectives.

Hierarchical culture

The study concludes that hierarchical culture exerts the strongest and most significant influence on employee performance among all the cultural dimensions assessed. The findings indicate that structured work environments, clear reporting lines, and adherence to formal procedures provide employees with stability, clarity, and operational consistency—factors that contribute to better performance. This culture is particularly effective in public institutions, where compliance, regulation, and accountability are paramount. Therefore, maintaining and strengthening hierarchical culture appears essential for sustaining employee efficiency and achieving performance goals in public water companies.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends:

1. Public water companies should foster an inclusive, family-like work environment by promoting team-building, open communication, and mentorship. Leadership should emphasize empathy, participative decision-making, and staff empowerment to build trust, loyalty, and cooperation.
2. Management should encourage innovation and calculated risk-taking through idea-generation platforms, innovation teams, and suggestion schemes. Training in creativity,

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adaptability, and technology should be provided, alongside rewards for innovative contributions and flexibility in work processes.

3. Organizations should set clear performance targets and accountability systems, implement robust appraisals linked to rewards and career growth, and maintain a results-oriented culture. Leaders should regularly communicate goals, monitor outcomes, and recognize high achievers to drive productivity.
4. Companies should preserve clear structures, procedures, and reporting systems by providing detailed job descriptions, SOPs, and compliance guidelines. Training should cover procedural discipline, ethical conduct, and internal control systems, while balancing structure with responsiveness to enhance service delivery.

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