ABSTRACT

This study set out to bridge the gap in the relevant literature by exploring the relationships among organizational life cycle stages and different traits of organizational culture in the context of higher education institutions. For this purpose, perceptions were taken on both of the study variables from a total of 302 full-time senior faculty members and administrators. These employees were randomly chosen using one of the most efficient probability sampling designs i.e., disproportionate stratified. And, they were working in all 24 higher education institutions situated in Kyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Pearson correlation analysis when run on the collected data revealed that first stage of organization development substantially positive to bureaucratic culture trait. On contrary, last two stages of life cycle were highly positively associated with clan culture. Moreover, adhocracy and market types of cultures show low to moderate positive relationships to all organizational life cycle stages. Discussions of these findings including their implications followed by limitations, perspectives for future research and conclusions are presented at the end of article.

Keywords: Organization Life Cycle Stages, Organizational Culture, Competing Values Framework, Higher Education Institutions

1. INTRODUCTION

We explore different concepts in organization studies basically to learn how to improve our understanding about organizational effectiveness (Hall, 2003). Organizational culture is one among these concepts that believed in theory (e.g., Denison, 1990; Wilkins & Ouchi 1983) as well as empirically substantiated to improve managerial performance and effectiveness of an organization (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Hilal et al., 2009; Lejeune & Vas, 2009; Ouchi, 1981; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Smart, 2003). On the other hand, organizational effectiveness is deemed associated to organizational development stages (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). Therefore, some authors for example Tietz (1980) reported that cyclical acclimatization over time for all organizations is a necessary component. However, in this process he highlights cultural mix issue as core ongoing dilemmas that organization should attempt to settle. Similarly, Gupta and Chin (1994) conjecture the relationship of corporate culture and organizational life cycle and, likewise, Smart et al. (1997) proposed that
how various culture traits change over the life cycle of an organization as a potential topic for further investigation. More recently, Zheng et al., (2009) offer a dynamic view of organizational culture in terms of a four-stage framework starting from “cultural evolution, proceeding from inspiration, to implantation, negotiation, and transformation”. They further explain that “at each organizational developmental stage, although various cultural mechanisms exist, a primary cultural mechanism can be observed” (p.168).

Regardless of these recommendations there is dearth of empirical research in linking to these two key concepts. If both the concepts i.e., organizational culture and organizational life cycle can be related to each other, it could provide the administrators and owners the ability to formulate for changes, then control and create alterations that will enable the organization to survive. The present study is an empirical attempt to explore the potential connections among the organizational life cycle stages and different traits of organizational culture in order to improve our insights of these two concepts and consequently organizational effectiveness. As such, any empirical study entails in construct measurement and for this purpose literature review act as an assistant (Sekaran, 2003). Thereby, following next few pages focus on relevant literature of both of the study concepts as means to comprehend and tape them accurately.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Organizational Life Cycle Stages
The concept of life cycle has roots in different disciplines with a focus of animal and plants such as biology (Coleman 1971), in anthropology with an emphasis on social evolution (Leibowitz, 1969), the developmental psychology stressing on human ontogenetic progress (Baltes 1979) and it is also intensively used in sociology focusing on individual aging, family life cycle, and subsequently given birth to concept of organizational life cycle (O’Rand & Krecker, 1990). Despite it resided in various fields, but meaning of the concept is not too dissimilar in all domains as Gardner (1965, p.30) writes “like people and plants, organizations have a life cycle. They have a green and supple youth, a time of flourishing strength, and a gnarled old age. An organization may go from youth to old age in two or three decades, or it may last for centuries”. While more specific to management science literature, theorists define the concept of organizational life cycle depending on their internal attributes and external context in which they perform (Greiner, 1972; Merchant, 1997). These characteristics include structures, decision-making and leadership styles, information processing, and operational procedures (Lester & Parnell, 2008; Silvola, 2008). Conforming to these characteristics a very concise and appropriate definition of Hanks (1990) is used for the purpose of the conceptual foundation of this study who ascribe organizational life cycle as a “unique configuration of variables related to organizational context, strategy, and structure” (p. 27).

Moreover, the literature suggests various models that illustrate organizational development by their specific characteristics. However, these models in number of stages vary from three to ten. For instance, Smith et al. (1985) propose three stages of life cycles, while four-stage model suggested by Lyden (1975) and Kazanjian (1988). Additionally, some offered five (Churchill & Lewis, 1983; Scott & Bruce, 1987) and Adizes (1979) even recommended a framework of ten different stages of organizational life cycle.

In order to succinct this disarray in the literature Quinn and Cameron (1983) performed comprehensive review of nine different models of organizational life cycles of various writers in the field. Consequently, they identified and proposed four common stages of organizations’ development. They labeled these four development or life stages as entrepreneurial, collectivity, formulation and control stage and elaboration of structure stages. Quinn and Cameron (1983) and Robbins (2009) explain that in entrepreneurial stage an organization is typified by innovation, creativity, and marshaling of resources. Similarly, in second phase labeled as collectivity stage, high commitment and cohesion among members, face-to-face communication and informal structures, long hours of dedicated service to the organization, and an emerging sense of collectivity and mission are apparent. And, when procedures and policies become institutionalized, goals are formalized, conservatism predominates, flexibility is reduced, and the emphases on efficiency of production are the characteristics of formulation and control stage. Further, the elaboration of structure stage represent complex structure, decentralization, and emphasis is on monitoring the external environment such as flexibility, ability to acquire resources. A fifth stage of life cycle is also proposed by Robbins (2009) naming as decline stage. But, as organizations on this stage again intake the properties of first stage, moreover, most of previous studies utilized four-sage model (Baird & Meshoulam, 1988). Also, four-stage model is empirical supported (Drazin &
Kazanjian, 1990) and, therefore, four typology of life cycles of Quinn and Cameron (1983) is employed in the present study.

2.2 Organizational Culture

The concept of organizational culture emerged in early 1970s in the literature of organizational sciences (Clark, 1972; Turner, 1973; Trice et al., 1969) by the influence of conceptions like “group norms” and “climate” that have been used in psychology for a long time (Schein, 1990). Though, in past several years a considerable attention is given by both academics and practitioners in conducting conferences, symposia, special issues of journals, and a host of research reports focusing on organizational culture (Cameron & Freeman, 1991). Still, no consensus has been made yet on the definition and conception of the concept (Denison et al., 2004). For example, it is ascribed as “beliefs” and “shared meanings” (Davis, 1984; Lorsch, 1985), “assumptions” (Dyer, 1985), “myths, rituals, and symbols” (Schein, 1985), “central values” (Barney, 1986; Broms & Gahmberg, 1983), “norms and control mechanisms” (O’Reilly, 1989) and “glue that holds organizations together” (Goffee & Jones, 1996). However, in this study, we take into account the Martin (1992) view that organization culture is “the patterns of interpretations people form about the manifestations of their institutions’ values, formal rules and procedures, informal codes of behavior, rituals, tasks, jargon, and so on” (as cited in Smart et al., 1997, p.258). In this sense, “culture is reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it. It concerns decisions, actions, and communication” (Tierney, 1988, p.127).

Moreover, for the measurement purpose, a model of organizational culture has paramount importance. Fortunately, various typologies are proposed by the prominent thinkers on the subject such as Ouchi (1980) advocated a threefold typology of organizational culture i.e., “clans, markets and bureaucracies”. Similarly, Schein (1985) contends that culture exists simultaneously on three levels namely “artifacts, assumptions, and values”. Furthermore, an additional dimensional to Ouchi and Schien models a fourfold perspective to categorize national culture in terms of power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individualism/collectivism; and masculinity/femininity by Hofstede (1980) also used in organizational studies (Furnham & Gunter, 1993). More recent, Denison (1990) and Denison and Mishra (1995) classify organization culture into four different traits labeled as involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission.

However, a more comprehensive model of four types of organization culture of Cameron and Quinn (2006) is available namely Competing Values Framework (CVF). And, this framework is our interest in this article because it depicts the holistic view of culture types that are accordant to the prevalent literature on organization culture (O’Reilly & Moses, 1984; Zammuto & Krakower, 1991). Moreover, this model has been named as one of the 40 most important frameworks in the history of business (Cameron, 2006). It has been studied and tested in organizations for more than 25 years by group of researchers and practitioners from leading business schools and corporations (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Quinn, 1988). The competing values model was initially developed to evaluate the paradoxical nature of organizational effectiveness with three underlying dimensions of stability versus flexibility, internal versus external focus and means versus ends set of values (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983).

Figure 1: The Competing Values Framework

Source: Cameron and Quinn (2006)
However, later on Cameron and Quinn (2006) put it into two contrasted dimensions to measure organization culture which occupy various typologies of organization culture. The fourfold typology of competing values model is basically based on two main dimensions. Figure 1 shows these two axes in such a way that first end of axis reflects dynamism which is typified with special focus on flexibility and discretion, whereas other end of the axis reflects stability and control which is characterized in stressing on control and predictability. The second axis represents the competing demands of internal focus with short term orientation and integration verses external focus with long term orientation and differentiation.

According to Cameron and Quinn (2006) and Smart, et al. (1997) when these axes are juxtaposed to each other, they exhibit four different traits of organization culture. For instance, juxtaposing flexibility/discretion upon internal focus/integration produce clan type of culture. It is characterized by norms and values that nurture affiliation, encourage employees’ involvement in decision making, and stresses talent development as an institutional objective. Moreover, employees are inspired by trust, tradition, and their commitment to the institution. The clan’s strategic orientation is to use consensus to make decisions and interpretive strategy is utilized. Similarly, combining flexibility/discretion and external focus/differentiation form another quadrant containing adhocracy culture trait. It is typified by a focus on external positioning, a long-term time frame, and achievement-oriented activities. The entrepreneur and innovator leadership styles are dominant in adhocracy cultures. Furthermore, the bonding mechanisms stress innovation and development, and growth and the acquisition of new resources constitute the main strategic emphases.

Likewise, when external focus/differentiation is juxtaposed upon stability/control dimension of the model produce a cell comprising market type of culture. This trait has dominant properties such as, competitiveness, goal achievement, and environment exchange. Leaders exhibit styles like decisive, production- and achievement-oriented, whereas bonding mechanism emphasis on goal orientation, production and competition. Further, in this trait strategic emphases are given toward competitive advantage and market superiority. Finally, merging stability/control and flexibility/discretion create a quadrant including hierarchy/bureaucratic culture. It focuses on order, rules and regulations, uniformity, efficiency as a dominant attributes. Coordinator, organizer and administrator styles of leadership are prevalent in this trait. Moreover, its strategic orientation is to maintain stability, smooth operations and the status quo. Formally described roles dictate the activities performed by various individuals and the nature of relations among people, thereby, rules and policies are the primary bonding mechanisms in this type of culture.

### 2.3 Organizational Culture and Organizational Life Cycle Stages

As stated earlier that there is handful research available in connection to organization culture and organizational life cycle stages. However, some researchers theorize that culture actually evolves over time (Barney, 1986; Zucker, 1977). Similarly, Schein (1985a) proposes that the process for change may differ according to the stage of corporate development. More specifically, Zheng et al. (2009) assert that “at different stages of organizational development, different cultural mechanisms gain salience”. Moreover, Smart et al. (1997) speculate that newer organizations with first phase of life cycle need cultures like bureaucratic and they further leave for future researchers that “at what point in its history is an organization capable of becoming clan-like?” (p.275). Accordingly, the present study take this task and hypothesize the relationships among different life cycle stages and four traits of organizational culture according to the recommendations of above cited experts as follow:

- **H₁:** First two stages of organizational life cycle are highly positive related with bureaucratic and market types of cultures.
- **H₂:** Last two stages of organizational life cycle are highly positive related with clan and adhocracy types of cultures.

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1 Sample and Sampling

The need for choosing right and representative sample of a population for every research investigation is overstressed to prove the external validity of a study (Sekaran, 2003; Trochim, 2007). Appropriately, this study
attempted to satisfy these recommendations in such a way that a population frame of full-time senior faculty members and administrators were identified and aggregated via the respective websites of all twenty four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) situated in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. These twenty four HEIs represent 13 public and 11 private. As a result, a population frame of 1995 elements were considered as potential respondents including 1543 (public=1192, private=351) senior faculty members and 452 administrators (public=324, private=128). Further, this information of population frame with pilot study statistics in terms of standard deviation and a subjective decision (Bartlett et al, 2001) of margin of error (.01) were put into the Cochran (1977, p. 77) formula for continuous data. Consequently, this formula identified a statistically representative sample size of 290 subjects. Moreover, since we had two types of institution (public and private) and two groups i.e., senior faculty members and administrators and also there was considerable variation among the number of elements in groups. Therefore, one of the most efficient probability sampling designs in terms of “disproportionate stratified random sampling” was used to offer proper representation to each group of the study. Subsequently, sample of subjects from each stratum was drawn using simple random sampling procedure.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure
The present study utilized the assembled data that were gathered in period of five months (December, 2010 to April, 2011) for the purpose of PhD dissertation of the principal author of this study. In this process, different phases and procedures for data collection were employed. First phase of data collection was started as pilot study, so that sample size could be determined and functionality of web based survey could be verified. Next, the main phase of data collection initially took place with web based survey by sending 630 email questionnaires according to the anticipated rate (14 %) from the previous studies (e.g., Klassen & Jacobs, 2001). Though, out of total 630 questionnaires, 588 were successfully transmitted to their respective email addresses as reported by delivery status notification of their email servers. In response, surprisingly only 63 (about 11%) were returned in complete form. Thereafter, even two follow up letters returned 196 questionnaires with 33 % response rate including previous 63, however, these were less than required sample size (290) of the study. Therefore, a conventional pen and paper method of survey was adopted and a total of 300 questionnaires personally administered with the assistance of students of different HEIs. As a result, 158 questionnaires with 53 % response rate were received by researcher. In summary, both devices of data collection methods returned a total of 354 positive responses with overall 38 % response rate in the form of filled questionnaires. However, preliminary data analyses identified 52 questionnaires as invalid for further analyses and thereby skipped. The rest of 302 were complete in all regards, also fulfill the requirement of the sample size of this study and used in final analysis.

3.3 Instrument
A number of measurement tools are identified by Igo and Skitmore (2006, p.125) for taping organizational culture such as “Organizational Profile Questionnaire (OPQ), Cultural Assets Profiles. (CAPS), Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), Personal, Customer Orientation and Cultural Issues (PCOC), Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI)”. However, they recommended the tool of Cameron and Quinn’s (2006) namely Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), since it has been practiced in almost 10,000 organizations worldwide in various types of enterprises (Igo & Skitmore, 2006). Moreover, its construct validity has been tested and verified in different work settings (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Helfrich et al., 2007; Smart, 2003; Smart et al., 1997). Therefore, the same instrument was used to measure organizational culture in this study. It comprises a total of sixteen statements that represent diverse elements of organization culture. Four questions were asked to measure four components of organization culture i.e., “Institutional Characteristics, Institutional Leader, Institutional Glue and Institutional Emphases Items”. And, these four components actually identify four types of organizational culture. Each single item of a component represents a different type of organizational culture and composition of four items in such a manner that one from each component classifies a different culture type i.e., clan, adhocracy, bureaucratic/hierarchy and market culture types (see for details, Cameron & Quinn, 2006). The score for every participant on all of the four culture scales was acquired by mean of their ratings for each culture type across the four dimensions.
Further, four stages of organizational life cycle were captured by the characteristics distinguished by Robbins (2009) for each of the life cycle stage and given in the literature review section. A fixed or constant sum scale was considered apposite and used to measure four stages of life cycles by four statements according to the characteristics of each stage. The senior faculty members and administrators were asked to allocate a minimum 0 and maximum 10 points. It was explained to respondents that if a statement is very similar to the context of their institution life cycle stage assign highest value (10) and when a statement does not match at all to their institution then put up a (0) value, and if a statement was as important as some other, it was counseled to allocate twice as many points. However, total of all four statements were asked to sum up as 10. Since each dimension of life cycle consists of only one statement in the instrument, therefore no reason to think for testing its psychometric properties. Also, same scale (fixed/constant sum) was employed for measuring organizational culture as originally used by their developers. This constant sum scale can be considered as ratio because it satisfies the criteria of ratio scale as it has an absolute zero, 3 points are twice as many as 6 and has equal distance between the any two points for example difference between points 1-3 is same as difference between points 5-7 (Malhotra & Dash, 2009).

3.4 Analysis and Results
To test the study research hypotheses a popular statistical test from the category of parametric and from inferential statistics in terms of Pearson correlation is applied, inasmuch all the dimensions of both of the research variables were continuous (ratio scaled) in nature. The Pearson correlation was run at 99% confidence level (α = 0.01) using a software packed labeled as SPSS version 17.0. The correlation matrix in Table 1 shows resultant information of correlation coefficients which provides the strength of relationship and direction among variables. The correlation matrix has little unconventional look and more like contingency table, because it shows only relevant information of the study variables for ease of viewers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Clan Culture</th>
<th>Adhocracy Culture</th>
<th>Bureaucratic Culture</th>
<th>Market Culture</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurial</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.333*</td>
<td>.187**</td>
<td>.512**</td>
<td>.463**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collectivity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.211*</td>
<td>.377**</td>
<td>.121*</td>
<td>.398**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.021</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formulation and Control</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.410**</td>
<td>.353*</td>
<td>-.327**</td>
<td>.157**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<td><strong>Elaboration of Structure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.536**</td>
<td>.369**</td>
<td>-.218**</td>
<td>.104**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.002</td>
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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

It reveals statistically significant relationships among all study variables at 0.01 or 0.05 levels. Moreover, their strength varies low to moderate and even some variables showed substantial association according to the interpretation criteria given by Davis (1971). For example, from table 1 according to perceptions of the senior faculty members and administrators entrepreneurial stage of life cycle substantially positively related to bureaucratic trait of culture (r =.512, p<0.001), moderately associated to market culture (r =.463, p<0.001) and low positive connection to adhocracy culture (r =.187, p<0.001) while it has a moderate negative relationship to clan culture (r = -.333, p<0.05). These results totally validate the first part of hypothesis H1 of the study, that
first stage of organizational life cycle is highly positive related with bureaucratic and market types of cultures. Next, the collectivity stage of life cycle is positively related to all traits of culture showing moderate positive to market ($r = 0.398, p<0.001$), and adhocracy cultures ($r = 0.377, p<0.001$) followed by low positive association to clan ($r = 0.211, p<0.05$) and bureaucratic cultures ($r = 0.121, p<0.05$). The following observations partially support second part of hypothesis $H_1$ of the study, since the collectivity stage of life cycle showed high relationship to market culture while it did not validate the link with bureaucratic culture.

Further, both parts of the second hypothesis $H_2$ fully substantiated because last two stages of organizational life cycle showed highly positive relationships to clan and adhocracy instead of bureaucratic and market types of cultures. For instance, formulation and control development stage is moderately positively related to clan ($r = 0.410, p<0.001$), adhocracy ($r = 0.353, p<0.05$) and low positive association to market culture ($r = 0.157, p<0.01$) though inverse moderate relation to bureaucratic culture. Similarly, the elaboration of structure stage of life cycle substantially positively related to clan trait of culture ($r = 0.536, p<0.01$), moderately positive associated to adhocracy culture ($r = 0.369, p<0.001$) and low positive connection to market culture ($r = 0.104, p<0.001$) while it has a moderate negative relationship to clan culture ($r = -0.218, p<0.05$).

4. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
The scarcity of the empirical research has mentioned previously. However, the findings of our study are clearly in line with the theory proposed by various renowned experts in the field. For example, Schein (1985) suggests that the process for change may differ according to the stages of corporate development. Nevertheless, different attributes of organizational culture are transmitted to employees by the process of socialization. Wilkins and Ouchi (1983) propose that “socialization is a rather costly and long-term means of developing clan control”. Moreover, it is also advocated that the birth stage lasts until the organization touches the age of ten, whereas most stages, especially those of growth, maturity and revival often last ten years or more (Miller & Friesen 1984). The same is empirically observed in this study that in first or even second stage organizations were young and, therefore, showed negative of low relationships to clan culture (see Table 1). Similarly, the supposition of Smart et al. (1997) as stated earlier that younger organizations with first phase of life cycle needs culture like bureaucratic. This view is also supported since substantial positive relationship observed between first stage of life cycle and bureaucratic trait of organizational culture while it showed inverse connections to higher phases of life cycle like formulation & control and elaboration of structure (see Table 1).

Based on the literature review and the findings of this study we provide some invaluable insights for administrators and owners to improve the effectiveness of their organizations, by understanding in socializing organizational culture values that is compatible to each of life cycle stages. For example, theory as well as this research confirmed new organizations with first level of life cycle have bureaucratic type of cultures. However, in the context of higher education research in relationship to traits of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness showed a clear negative association to bureaucratic followed by market cultures. On the other hand, clan and adhocracy traits of cultures deemed as positive predictors of organizational effectiveness (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Smart et al., 1997). And, since we observed in this study that adhocracy culture is positively associated to all life cycles of organizations, therefore, besides bureaucratic culture we proposed that younger organizations in first phase of life cycle should socialize the attributes of adhocracy culture to be as effective organizations. Moreover, market culture is also not a good positive predictor of organizational effectiveness. However, it exhibit also positive linkage to each phase of organizational life cycle, thereby, we suggest that at middle and higher developmental stages organizations should more focus on the clan and adhocracy cultures to enhance their performance.

5. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES
Though, this study contributed in understanding the relationships among the phases of life cycle and culture types, yet it has some limitations as any research suffers from. These are now presented which open the doors for future researchers. First, this study limited to its scope in such a way that it takes only 24 higher education institutions. The findings may extrapolate to all of these institutions. However, caution should be made in generalizing to other reign or enterprises. Future researchers may devote their intention in conducting studies
with larger sample of institutions in Pakistani context. Moreover, it should be extended to other international setting with different enterprises so that an international perspective on these relationships can be established. Second, this study employed one approach in terms of fourfold typology in studying organizational life cycle and traits of organizational culture. Future research may focus on other models of both variables as described in literature review and their psychometric properties may be compared to identify best typology and instrument. The present study utilized the Pearson’s correlation coefficients in measuring relationship among the variables. However, this information cannot be interpreted as cause-effect relationships. Third, we studied the relationship between only two variables, while, factors like leadership and managerial strategies can also mediate the relationships and could be considered in future research.

6. CONCLUSION
The present study took the plunge to empirically test the relationships among the different development stages of organizations to several traits of organizational culture. Both of the hypotheses of this study substantiated in such a way that second hypothesis totally substantiated while first partially supported. Based on the hypotheses results, overall, the findings of this study yield potent support for the postulation that different traits of organizational culture change over time as the organizations step forward to new stage of life cycle.

REFERENCES


