

Effects of Compatibility of Organizational Cultures on Post-merger Synergy of Higher Education Institutes in Asia

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ABSTRACT

When human capital becomes a symbol of economic power, the performance of higher education institutes in each country is considered as a measurement indicator of international competitiveness. Jansen (2002) and Sehoole (2005) pointed out that merger could enable organizations to solve the problems of crowding-out of internal re-sources and threats of external competition. Several researches also cited rich history of mergers among higher education institutes in past decades in Australia, Britain, Germany, Sweden, Holland, USA, Norway and African countries (Gamage, 1992; Fielden & Markham, 1997; Skodvin, 1999; Norgard & Skodvin, 2002; Harman & Harman, 2003; Sehoole, 2005), even in China and Japan. It is evident that colleges over the world are enhancing their educational depth and breadth through mergers. However, few researchers had done the quantitative study in order to understand what really makes the successful merging of higher educational institutes. Many researchers have described that organizational culture cannot be ignored for the success of merger in business and that the synergy is the core value of merger (Simonin, 1999; Kale, Singh & Perlmutter, 2000; Panchal & Cartwright, 2001; Harman, 2002; Weber & Camerer, 2003). Therefore, this research aims to develop a suitable instrument of the compatibility of organizational culture for higher education institutes and to explore the effects of the compatibility of organizational cultures on the synergy of higher education institutes after merger. We adopted the survey approach in this study. Chiayi University which is the only successful merger case in Taiwan was investigated. Some universities in China and in Japan which merged with in three years are selected. We had sent and e-mailed out the questionnaire to entire sampling population. The returned and valid samples were 162.

The major contents of questionnaire included two parts, one was the compatibility of organizational cultures (the COOC) that included 22 questions in 11 aspects (process or result-oriented, open or close, emphasize on internal or external and stability or ad-venture etc.). Those questions are modified from the questionnaires of Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv & Sanders(1990) and Kale & Barnes(1992). The reliability of the COOC was .7673. 12 questions are deleted.

Another part was those questions about the synergy after the mergers. The contents included reasons and purposes of the merger of higher education institutes such as academic complements, common prospects, regional dominance, effectiveness or efficiency enhancement and improvement of graduates quality that were mentioned in the researches by Fielden & Markham(1997) and Skodvin(1999) and Harman & Meek(2002). The reliability of the synergy after the merger was .9453.

The results of this research confirmed that the compatibility between organizational cultures had significant effects on the synergy after merger. Open or close is the core compatibility effecting on the synergy after the merger of higher education institutes. Because the research is an exploratory study with the only few cases in Asia, we suggest to have follow-up researches that is to continue to explore more detailed questions concerning the compatibility and to collect more merger cases of higher education institutes in different countries.

Keywords : organizational culture、 the compatibility of organizational culture、 higher education institute、 merger、 synergy

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