

Original article

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STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE IN THE PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

Elif Genc-Tetik¹

¹ Ph.D., Lecturer, Hitit University, Corum, Turkey; Hitit University, Akkent Mahallesi, 3. Cadde, Akkent Cd., 19040 Merkez / Corum, Turkey; elifgenc@hitit.edu.tr;
ORCID: 0000-0002-6306-8550

Abstract. It is largely accepted that effective strategy implementation, as one of the most essential phases of the strategy making process, leads to good organisational outcomes. However, there is still very little research addressing which implementation style is associated with better public service outcomes. For public sector organisations, there is a common belief that the implementation of strategies mostly fails in practice. Another important organisational characteristic, seen as an effective tool for increasing performance, is organisational culture. While there are also numerous studies in the literature investigating the relationship between organisational culture and performance in both the private and public sectors, most of this research only investigates the direct effects of culture. This research undertakes a novel approach and explores the separate and combined effects of strategy implementation style and organisational culture on performance in Turkish local government organisations. Survey data were analysed using multiple and robust moderated regression models. The results of the study confirmed the presence of a significant positive relationship between rational strategy implementation and organisational performance and consistently positive influence of hierarchy type of culture on performance. Moreover, a rational strategy implementation style appeared to strengthen the effects of a hierarchical and a market-based culture on performance, while an incremental strategy implementation style seemed to enhance the effects of a clan-oriented culture and an adhocracy culture on performance.

Keywords: strategy implementation styles, organisational culture, Competing Values Framework, organisational performance.

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Introduction

Managing people and organizations has become increasingly difficult in today's complex and turbulent world. Strategic management ideas and tools have been brought into play to enhance organisational capacities and accomplish organisational goals in the face of such growing complexities. The vast majority of studies focus on the strategic planning and formulation stages, while less is known about the strategy implementation phase (George, 2021). As a critical phase of strategy-making where many organisational plans fail, strategy implementation is considered the most difficult part of the policy-making process compared to the formulation, planning and decision-making stages (Nutt, 1998; Hrebiniak, 2005; Cina and Cummings, 2018).

Culture is often regarded as the most fundamental element of an organisation. Due to its elusive nature, there is no consensus in the relevant literature on how to deal with it most effectively. Some researchers claim that the concept of culture needs to be examined holistically (Meyerson, 1991; Trice and Beyer 1993), others assert that it is too complicated to investigate as a whole and claim that its more tangible aspects should be studied to integrate them with other organisational components such as personnel, strategy and performance (Denison, 1990; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). By following the latter approach, this study will examine the functional aspects of organisational culture, allowing the topic to be more easily linked with concepts of organisational performance.

A need for cultural change in public organisations has also become a popular topic in public sector literature over the last three decades (Newman, 1994; Ashworth, 2010). Many initiatives have been put forward within the field as well as a variety of practices have been adopted from the private sector, all aimed at producing more innovative and better-performing services in order to determine clear strategies and establish a strong human resource team to direct all these changes (Ozturk and Genc-Tetik, 2021). Understanding and investigating organisational culture is necessary because it forms the essence of all these initiatives as part of the change process. The current study therefore aims to investigate the operational side of organisational culture in line with strategy and performance, as this is one of the most crucial but understudied relationships in contemporary public management.

Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation is the process of putting strategies into practice, which includes planning and delivering services, developing the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, and designing the organisational structures, evaluation systems

and cultures required to fit the new strategy (Hill and Jones, 2008). It is considered a difficult task that demands persistence, draws attention to details and prepares the organisation for the future (Joyce, 1999). Jenkins et al. (2003) consider that the implementation of a strategy in an organisation is akin to fighting a long and bloody battle.

Strategy implementation is seen as the most difficult phase of the whole strategy process. There is often a concern that strategic management will fail in the implementation phase (Levi and Doig, 2020). It has also been claimed that less than 50% of formulated strategies are actually implemented (Mintzberg, 1994; Nutt, 1999). The challenges and problems faced in implementing strategies and the key attributes of successful strategy implementation have been widely investigated (Alashloo et al., 2005; Elbanna et al., 2015). One of the most important reasons that makes this phase so problematic is the “implementation gap”, as formulating strategies and implementing them are frequently considered as entirely distinct processes (Noble, 1999).

The successful implementation of strategic decisions is widely considered critical to the achievement of organisational aims and objectives (Elbanna et al., 2015; Tawse and Tabesh, 2021). Boyne et al. (2010) also assert that delivering well-coordinated public services is directly related to achieving the best possible outcomes. Public sector agencies all over the world have begun to prepare strategy documents or plans to implement their policies more effectively (Desmidt and Meyfrootd, 2021). Where the process has been carried out in practice, there is a common belief that strategy implementation is a powerful determinant of organisational performance (Levi and Doig, 2020). It is extensively acknowledged that no matter whether a strategy is emergent or deliberate, planned or unplanned, it will have little effect on an organisational performance until it is implemented (Mintzberg, 1994). This means that the successful implementation of strategies depends on the particular style of implementation that an organisation decides to adopt, which in turn has important implications for organisational performance (Elbanna et al., 2020). Conceptual studies have developed alternative frameworks for categorising different approaches to strategy implementation (e.g. Mitchell, 2019).

From a rational perspective, strategic management is a deliberate policy that takes shape in a chronological sequence, culminating in the attainment of strategic targets set at the start of the process (Andrews et al., 2017). Strategies are deliberately formulated and implemented, following the classic rationale of *diagnosis followed by prescription*. An emphasis on rational implementation seems to result in better organisational performance because the clearly defined organisational goals on which it rests allows for ongoing review, control and smooth integration of activities. As a result of this evidence, a following hypothesis can be suggested:

H1a: A rational approach to implementation is positively related to organisational performance.

The learning school of thought, which mainly originated from Lindblom's seminal paper, emphasised the elements of incremental strategic decision-making processes based on a chain of small, gradual and unplanned changes taking place over time (Quaye et al., 2015). Unlike the planning school, which emphasises the importance of deliberate and pre-planned strategies, the learning school evaluates the concept of emergent strategies as “a pattern of action which develops over time

in an organisation in the absence of clear mission and goals; or sometimes despite mission and goals” (Griffin 2013, p. 207). Quinn (1978) argues that even with a well-developed strategic planning system, major strategic decisions are taken outside that planning framework because targets are often ambiguous, making their implementation complicated to measure (Hill and Hupe, 2009).

Strategy implementation should therefore take the form of a learning process focusing on continuous adaptation in order to adapt to new situations and possible scenarios arising from contingencies (Mitchell, 2019). Incremental strategy making occurs as a learning process, which automatically makes formulation and implementation identical, thereby minimising the possibility of implementation failure (Hambrick and Cannella, 1989). As a result of this evidence, another hypothesis can be suggested:

H1b: An incremental approach to implementation is positively related to organisational performance, but less so than a rational approach.

Implementation, as a critical element of strategy, is believed to have a significant impact on performance, although existing studies assume that both rational and incremental implementation styles can have positive or negative relationships with organisational performance, depending upon different parameters such as strategic stance, culture, middle manager involvement, political influence and context. Organisational culture can be especially important because it can have an impact on the characteristics and outcomes of strategic management in the public sector (Wynen and Verhoest, 2013).

Organisational culture

Whilst numerous studies over the last few decades have focused on how public service organisations and their staff can perform better, it has also become essential to work out the importance of culture in the performance of public sector organisations (Mudrak et al., 2021). In the 1980s, organisational culture in the public sector began to transform from a traditional bureaucratic culture (*rule-based, hierarchical and process-driven*) to a business-like culture (*competition-based, marketised, results-oriented*) (Newman, 1994). Though shifts in the public sector from a bureaucratic to a market culture and then to a network culture over recent decades appeared to follow a linear process, all types of cultures still coexist within public sector organisations (Cameron and Quinn, 2011).

Although there is a growing body of research on the public sector, investigations are very fragmented and their findings are insufficient in terms of providing any concrete conclusions regarding the relationship between different organisational cultures and performance (Nitzl et al., 2019). The most systematic research on this relationship has been done through the CVF (Competing Values Framework), a model which allows both topics to be examined together. The framework basically conceptualises four different types of culture and links them to relevant characteristics such as the strategic orientation of the organisation, effectiveness criteria and leadership style (Ozturk and Genc-Tetik, 2021). In this way, the CVF maps each type of culture to its most pertinent performance criteria. More specifically, it permits this study to examine the relationship between clan culture

and quality criteria, hierarchy culture and quantity criterion, market culture and citizen satisfaction criteria, and lastly adhocracy culture and innovation criterion. In Figure 1 below, the core axes along which organisations are classified in the CVF depending on whether the organisation has a predominantly internal focus/integration or external focus/differentiation and whether they aim at flexibility or discretion or stability and control (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

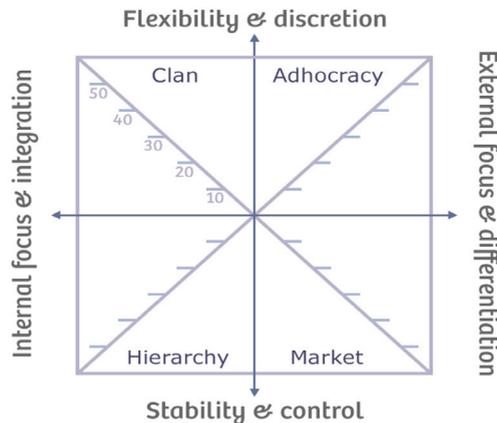


Figure 1: Competing values framework.

Source: Cameron and Quinn, 2011.

Hierarchy cultures are stability-oriented and driven by values such as efficiency, timeliness and smooth functioning (Cameron and Ettington, 1988). This means that managers in hierarchy cultures are expected to care about finishing tasks on time and performing better. It is widely agreed that public sector organisations are traditionally associated with this type of culture, which relies on formal rules and procedures as control mechanisms to ensure conformity and predictability (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). Processes in the public sector are executed mostly through rational planning, which allows the work to be completed in a smooth and timely manner. As a result of this evidence, a hypothesis can be suggested:

H2a: A hierarchy-oriented culture is more positively related to quantity than other types of culture.

In terms of public sector organisations, a market-based culture is a comparatively recent concept, which was adopted as a new organisational model that was designed to be less bureaucratic and more efficient (Ozturk and Genc-Tetik, 2021). With the adoption of market-based initiatives in the government sector, executing and delivering public services became more closely connected with better performance and meeting the needs of citizens (Macedo and Pinho, 2006). Ferrira (2014) also found that market culture is significantly and positively associated with customer. As a result of this evidence, we can suggest a following hypothesis:

H2b: A market-oriented culture is more positively related to citizen satisfaction than other types of culture.

A clan culture, oriented towards human affiliation, is driven by values such as trust, collaboration, empowerment and attachment (Cameron et al., 2011).

The values associated with this type of culture lead to a specific set of behaviours defined by teamwork, participation, employee involvement and commitment (Cameron et al., 1988; Hartnell et al., 2011). In this type of culture, common values generated within the processes are expected to be embraced by all the members of the organisations along with a sense of belonging. When personnel feel attached to organisation and responsible for other personnel, they will be inclined to produce better quality work. In this direction, the current study examines the relationship between clan culture and service quality output within the CVF model. As a result of this evidence, a hypothesis can be suggested:

H2c: A clan-oriented culture is more positively related to quality than other types of culture.

Adhocracy cultures are change-oriented and driven by values such as growth, new ideas, autonomy, and stimulation (Cameron et al., 2011; Hartnell et al., 2011). However, since government bodies inherently favour low risk-taking and stability, a need has been identified for them to adopt a culture, which enables change, improvement and innovation in their services (Manimala et al., 2006). An adhocracy culture has therefore become much more relevant to public sector organizations, especially in relation to innovation and performance (Mudrak et al., 2021). Most empirical research in CVF has found a positive relationship between adhocracy culture and innovation and related performance measures. As a result of this evidence, a further hypothesis can be suggested:

H2d: An adhocracy-oriented culture is more positively related to innovation than other types of culture.

Moderating effect of strategy implementation styles

There is a well-established canon of literature focusing on the fit between organisational strategy and culture. They represent two essential elements, that both play a role in the successful organisational performance. Brenes et al. (2008) conclude that 86% of successful organisations regard the alignment of strategy and culture as highly significant. Organisation theory generally considers that organisational strategy and culture should be intimately connected, as culture can influence strategy and vice versa (Yarbrough et al., 2011). Dobni and Luffman (2003) also claim that the specific characteristics of an organisation culture must align with its organisational strategy, and that any changes in either of these must facilitate the other in order to ensure a well-functioning organisation. More clearly, organisational culture implicitly regulates how employees and managers behave and work, and how their collective beliefs correspond to the strategic targets which directly affect organisational functioning (Quinn, 1988; Deshpande et al., 1993; Weber and Camerer, 2003; Schein, 1997; Scholz, 1987).

Some researchers assert that the congruence between strategy and culture becomes most apparent and prominent in the strategy implementation phase (Bates et al., 1995). Alamsjah (2011) and Bates et al. (1995) suggest that well-structured and well-implemented strategies can affect organisational culture positively by means of the practices, regulations and processes in which organisational strategies are practiced. Other research also concluded that one of the most important

barriers to strategy implementation is an unaligned organisational culture (Heide et al., 2002; Alashloo et al., 2005). From this perspective, a rational implementation style, which emphasises regulations, rational decisions, plans and stability, complements the hierarchy and market-oriented culture that focuses on control. It can be claimed that the artefacts of hierarchy and market-oriented culture under controlled orientation should be in close proximity to the above-mentioned characteristics of rational implementation styles in order to achieve better performance. Likewise, incremental implementation, which emphasises continuous monitoring, changes, cooperation, and openness, can be more easily associated with clan and adhocracy cultures, which are oriented towards flexibility and related outcomes. The flexibility-oriented artifacts of clan and adhocracy cultures are expected to align with the features of incremental implementation styles to achieve optimum performance. Consequently, the moderation effects of the implementation styles mentioned above can be suggested on the relationship between the four types of organisational cultures and performance. Based on these assumptions, four more hypotheses can be suggested:

H3a-3b: A rational implementation style strengthens the relationship between hierarchical/market-oriented cultures and performance.

H3c-3d: An incremental implementation style strengthens the relationship between clan/adhocracy-oriented cultures and performance.

Methodology

Data for this study were drawn from an email survey of managers in Turkish local governments. This study specifically focused on metropolitan municipalities, which represent the largest locally elected bodies in Turkey. To ensure the perceptions of performance and strategy implementation of managers at different levels of the organisation were captured, the survey was distributed to deputy general secretaries, department heads and unit heads in each metropolitan municipality, across a range of core service areas including culture, corporate, back office, distributive, fire, health, finance, police, protection, planning, transport and waste.

The total number of potential informants was 840 from 30 metropolitan municipalities, and the number of actual respondents was 157 (18.6%), of which 134 (15.9%) were complete in terms of the data necessary for this study¹. The responses covered 20 metropolitan municipalities in different regions, and the actual responses included 6 deputy general secretaries, 28 heads of departments and 99 heads of units. The 30 metropolitan municipalities (20 municipalities included in the study and 10 other municipalities not included) are shown in Figure 2. Incomplete and straight-lined questionnaires (i.e. giving identical answers to survey items) were eliminated. Having done these corrections in the dataset, non-response bias test was run, and it showed that the dataset is robust enough to do the further tests. The data normality test also revealed that the values of skewness and kurtosis of the items were within acceptable parameters and no serious viola-

¹ Cronbach's alpha value of the data is 0.87

tions of the construct were found. Eventually, Multiple Regression analyses (for 1a to 2d) and Moderated Multiple Regression analyses (for 3a to 3d) were used to test the hypotheses using SPSS 23.0, Stata 22.

This study uses a set of control variables to exclude probable alternative explanations for the findings. Expenditure, population size, population density, municipal district and poverty rate are applied in this study as control variables, as many studies focusing on local government performance have used these variables to control the analysis processes. Initially, the relevant data regarding municipal expenditure were found in performance programme reports published in 2016 and were collected from the website of each municipality. For population size, population density, municipal districts and poverty rates, the relevant data were collected from the reports released by the Turkish Statistical Institute (commonly known as Turk-Stat)², which is a Turkish government agency commissioned to produce official statistics on Turkey, its population, resources, economy, society, culture etc.

Results and analyses



Figure 2: Map of Turkey showing the metropolitan municipalities included and not included in the study

The analyses presented in the first two tables below investigate the direct effects of the variables hypothesised in the study. It presents the results of the regression analyses of the relationships between the implementation styles and the types of organisational culture as independent variables and two dimensions of organisational performance as dependent variables, including the control variables. Table 3 and 4 examine the moderating effects of implementation styles

² URL: <https://www.tuik.gov.tr/>

on the relationship between types of organisational culture and organisational performance. The results of testing the effects of the control variables on each type of organisational performance are also explored in detail.

The quantitative analysis results showed that the rational implementation style (RIS) was positively associated with organisational performance, although the impact of the incremental implementation style (IIS) was found to be statistically insignificant. In statistical terms, rational implementation showed a strong positive correlation with the performance aspects of quantity (QUAN), citizen satisfaction (CSAT), quality (QUAL) and innovation (INNOV). These effects were still present when controlling for five exogenous factors, including expenditure, population, population density (POP. DENSITY), poverty level and municipal district (MUN. DIST). However, the incremental implementation style presented no significant relationship with any of these dimensions in quantifiable terms.

The study findings are mainly consistent with previous research on the comparative benefits of the rational implementation style and the incremental style (Miller, 1997; Andrews et al., 2017). As the study examined the four culture types from the Competing Values Framework (CVF) and looked at their relationships with different types of organisational outcomes, the results of the quantitative analysis show that a hierarchical culture (HIER) has a very strong positive correlation with organisational performance. As for the results of the current study on market-oriented culture (MRKT) and citizen satisfaction, the analysis discovered no significant relationship between market culture and citizen satisfaction. When considering the relationship between the adhocracy culture (ADHC) and innovation, the CVF specifies innovation as the primary performance criterion of the adhocracy-oriented culture, explaining this relationship in terms of taking risks, being innovative, encouraging the development, and provision of new ideas and services. Regarding the relationship between clan-oriented culture and quality, the quantitative analysis found no statistical correlation.

The study hypothesised that strategy implementation styles would positively moderate the relationship between the types of organisational culture and organisational performance. Regarding the moderation effects, four hypotheses were generated, and the models included types of organisational performance as dependent variables, organisational culture types as independent variables, strategy implementation styles as moderator variables and control variables. Four separate moderator variables were generated by mixing implementation styles with the different types of organisational cultures.

The results linked the rational implementation style with the relationship between hierarchy culture and performance. Strong links between rational and top-down implementation styles and hierarchy culture in Turkish public administration (Kesik and Canpolat, 2014; Ozturk and Genc-Tetik, 2021) could imply that the results of the study are consistent with the way local government administrations already function in Turkey. This study also investigated the impact of rational implementation on the relationship between market-oriented culture and performance and the findings showed a positive relationship for this interaction. Overall, there were no explicit results for this type of interaction, although it can be said that the most significant impact of rational implementation

is specifically on the relationship between market-oriented culture and citizen satisfaction compared to quality, quantity and innovation outcomes. Regarding the moderation effect of incremental implementation on adhocracy culture and performance relationship, the analysis found a strong connection. The benefits of incremental implementation on the relationship between clan-oriented culture and performance were proved by the quantitative analysis.

Table 1

Strategy implementation styles, organisational culture types and quality – Innovation

PREDICTOR	QUAL	QUAL	QUAL	QUAL	INNOV	INNOV	INNOV	INNOV
RIS		.571***		.291*		.497***		.249
IIS		.052		-.148		.082		-.119
CLAN			.548	.436			.304	.204
ADHC			-.267	-.166			.091	.177
MRKT			-.097	-.193			-.202	-.282
HIER			.528**	.493***			.452**	.420***
REGULATORY	-.206	-.223	-.208	-.231	-.147	-.157	-.160	-.179
DISTRIBUTIVE	-.270	-.236	-.163	-.136	.121	.145	.176	.197
SAFETY	-1.01	-.713	-.584	-.529	-.920	-.654	-.548	-.502
POP.	-.157	-.347	-.109	-.268	-.592	-.752**	-.543*	-.678**
POP. DENSITY	-.057	-.180	-.114	-.123	.091	-.021	.047	.038
MUN. DIST	.038	.037*	.022	.030	.068**	.067***	.052**	.059**
POVERTY RATE	.044	.000	.029	.024	.114	.073	.069	.065
EXPENPER1000 CAP.	-1.36	4.85	1.38	3.55	-7.15	-1.60	-3.87	-2.00
CONSTANT	7.48	7.61*	3.38	5.47	11.95***	11.88***	8.49**	10.26**

Notes: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.1. Sources: Completed by the author (- hereinafter).

Table 2

Strategy implementation styles, organisational culture types and quantity – Citizen satisfaction

PREDICTOR	QUAN	QUAN	QUAN	QUAN	CSAT	CSAT	CSAT	CSAT
RIS		.434***		.199		.452**		.198
IIS		.125		-.074		.151		-.072
CLAN			.519	.430			.352	.262
ADHC			-.055	.010			.115	.181

PREDICTOR	QUAN	QUAN	QUAN	QUAN	CSAT	CSAT	CSAT	CSAT
MRKT			-.336	-.395			-.356	-.414
HIER			.456**	.424**			.539**	.506***
REGULATORY	-.071	-.073	-.054	-.067	-.211	-.210	-.209	-.221
DISTRIBUTIVE	-.139	-.127	-.059	-.046	-.193	-.184	-.129	-.117
SAFETY	-1.20	-.962*	-.794	-.761	-.803	-.543	-.384	-.352
POP.	.466*	.333	.447	.341	-.537	-.674*	-.534*	-.640*
POP. DENSITY	-.293*	-.400*	-.315*	-.324*	.154	.040	.129	.119
MUN. DIST	.004	.001	-.007	-.002	.053**	.049**	.038**	.044*
POVERTY RATE	-.011	-.052	-.034	-.039	.102	.057	.059	.054
EXPENPER1000 CAP.	1.18	6.26	4.32	5.83	-4.33	1.04	-6.97	8.01
CONSTANT	0.61	0.29	-2.04	-0.65	11.18***	10.74***	8.15**	9.52**

Notes: ***p < 0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1.

Table 3

Hierarchy culture and market culture x Rational implementation

PREDICTOR	QUAL	INNOV	QUANT	CSAT	QUAL	INNOV	QUANT	CSAT
RIS	-.138	-.093	-.179	-.140	-.490	-.436	-.571	-.597
IIS	-.115	-.093	-.045	-.046	-.083	-.061	-.010	-.005
CLAN	.479	.239	.468	.297	.475	.239	.469	.303
ADHC	-.173	.171	.004	.175	-.203	.144	-.026	.142
MRKT	-.246	-.325	-.442	-.456	-.899*	-.901**	-1.091**	-1.132**
HIER	.183	.172	.149	.261	.599***	.512***	.528***	.613***
RIS X HIER	.084	.067	.074	.066				
RIS X MRKT					.148*	.130**	.146**	.151**
REGULARITY	-.214	-.165	-.051	-.207	-.128	-.089	.034	-.116
DISTRIBUTIVE	-.088	.235	-.004	-.079	-.042	.280	.046	-.020
SAFETY	-.491	-.471	-.727	-.322	-.488	-.466	-.720	-.310
POP.	-.240	-.656**	.365	-.618**	-.160	-.583**	.447	-.530
POP. DENSITY	-.140	.024	-.340**	.106	-.170	-.002	-.371**	.072
MUN. DIST	.027	.057***	-.004	.041**	.022	.052***	-.010	.035**
POVERTY RATE	.018	.060	-.044	.050	.004	.047	-.059	.033
EXPENPER1000 CAP.	5.06	-7.93	7.17	1.99	6.27	3.84	8.51	3.56
CONSTANT	6.54	.286	10.36*	11.11**	6.96*	.808	11.03**	11.56**

Notes: ***p < 0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1.

Table 4

Clan culture and adhocracy culture x Incremental implementation

PREDICTOR	QUAL	INNOV	QUANT	CSAT	QUAL	INNOV	QUANT	CSAT
RIS	.332**	.275**	.232*	.229	.315**	.262*	.219*	.217
IIS	-1.00**	-.677	-.763*	-.735*	-.924**	-.568	-.710	-.714*
CLAN	-.217	-.220	-.094	-.242	.601**	.300	.565	.399
ADHC	-.302	.088	-.098	.075	-1.088**	-.356	-.744	-.582
MRKT	-.233	-.308	-.427	-.445	-.226	-.301	-.422	-.442
HIER	.710***	.561***	.598***	.674***	.696***	.537***	.589***	.674***
IIS X CLN	.159**	.103*	.127*	.123*				
IIS X ADHC					.152**	.088	.124	.126*
REGULARITY	-.119	-.106	.023	-.134	-.152	-.133	-.001	-.155
DISTRIBUTIVE	-.058	.248	.016	-.056	-.071	.235	.006	-.063
SAFETY	-.599	-.548	-.817	-.406	-.590	-.537	-.810	-.402
POP.	-.262	-.674**	.346	-.635**	-.236	-.660**	.367	-.613**
POP. DENSITY	-.129	.034	-.329**	.115	-.129	.035	-.330**	.114
MUN. DIST	.024	.055***	-.007	.039**	.025	.056***	-.006	.039**
POVERTY RATE	.057	.086	-.012	.080	.045	.077	-.022	.071
EXPENPER1000 CAP.	6.83	1.36	8.47	3.34	5.65	-7.85	7.55	2.54
CONSTANT	7.83**	1.24	11.35**	11.80***	7.41*	0.92	11.12**	11.38**

Notes: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.1.

Conclusion and discussion

This research investigated the relationships between strategic implementation styles, organisational culture and performance in Turkish local government departments. It specifically explored rational and incremental implementation styles and their separate and mutual relationships with types of organisational culture and performance. The study was based on a survey of Turkish local government managers and the quantitative analyses largely supported the proposed hypotheses.

The results of the study on Hypotheses 1a and 1b demonstrate that rational implementation style is positively associated with organisational performance, although the impact of incremental implementation appeared to be statistically insignificant. These results are consistent with previous research on the comparative benefits of a rational implementation style (Miller, 1997; Parsa, 1999; Schaap, 2006; Schaap, 2012; Andrews et al., 2017) and an incremental style (Miller, 1997). Most of the related research states that provisional plans such as roadmaps, projects and action plans that define work in terms of targets were seen as essential for successful implementation (Hrebiniak and Joyce, 1984; Pinto and Prescott, 1990;

Chustz and Larson, 2006; Fernandez and Rainey, 2006). Moreover, Ansoff (1991) argues that a rational implementation style facilitates the control and review of clear strategies. An incremental style of strategy implementation leads to more effective learning within organisations and can be more responsive to situations in the field (Mintzberg, 1994; Montgomery, 2008). Andrews et al. (2011) argue that incremental implementation can lead to continuous adaptation of strategies as they are adjusted throughout the implementation process.

The Hypotheses 2a-2b-2c-2d proved that different types of organisational cultures correspond to particular organisational outcomes in Turkish local government. Many previous studies support this culture-performance relationship in the public sector (Argote, 1989; Zimmerman et al., 1993; Brewer and Selden, 2000; Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2003; Scott et al., 2003; Martin et al., 2006), but the question of which type of culture leads to better outcomes remains fundamentally undetermined because of the insufficient number of studies on the relationships. The results in this study showed a consistency with past research (Acar and Acar, 2014; Gerowitz et al., 1996; Davies et al., 2007), all of which correspond to elements of hierarchical culture and its relationship with quantity studied in the current research. In terms of market-oriented culture and organisational performance, no significant relationship was found in the quantitative analysis, as previous studies were dispersed and even in some cases reached contradictory results (Cameron and Freeman, 1991; Gerowitz et al., 1996). The quantitative analysis of the relationship between adhocracy type and performance found no relationship, in contrast to some existing research indicating a positive relationship (Cameron and Freeman, 1991; Gerowitz et al., 1996; Moynihan and Pandey, 2004; Jacobs et al., 2013; Ferreira, 2014). Previous studies suggest that the relationship between clan-oriented culture and organisational performance depends on improvements in quality (Scott-Cawiezell et al., 2005); quality of care (Van Beek and Gerritsen, 2010); quality improvement initiatives in healthcare (Wicke et al., 2004). Regarding the relationship between clan-oriented culture and quality, the analysis in this research found no statistical relationship.

Finally, the Hypotheses 3a-3b-3c-3d addressed the effects of the interaction between strategy implementation styles, organisational culture, and performance. Despande and Webster (1989) argue that a hierarchy-oriented culture must work hand-in-hand with rational processes in order to achieve better performance as this study confirms the positive moderation effect of rational implementation on the relationship between a hierarchy culture and performance. The current study also propounds that rational implementation influences relevant organisational outcomes in a market-based culture. Regarding the moderation effect of incremental implementation on an adhocracy culture and performance relationship, the analyses of the research identified a strong connection. The literature also supports these findings showing that more flexible strategies should perform better in an organic structure to facilitate changes in the organisations (Su et al., 2011). Lastly, the effect of incremental implementation on the relationship between clan-oriented culture and performance was proved by the quantitative analysis.

Summary of hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Relationship	Results
H1a	RIS → Organisational Performance	Supported
H1b	IIS → Organisational Performance	Not supported
H2a	HIER → Quan	Supported
H2b	MRKT → Csat	Not supported
H2c	CLAN → Qual	Not supported
H2d	ADHC → Innova	Not supported
H3a	RIS * Hier → OP	Supported
H3b	RIS * Mrkt → OP	Supported
H3c	IIS * Clan → OP	Supported
H3d	IIS * Adhc → OP	Supported

Some theoretical contributions of this paper can be addressed. There are only few studies examining organisational performance together with implementation styles in the public sector (Bantel, 1997; Hickson et al., 2003; Andrews et al., 2011; Schaap, 2012; Elbanna et al., 2020; Mitchell et al., 2021) and organisational cultures (Shortell et al., 2004; Davies et al., 2007; Jacobs et al., 2013; Moynihan and Pandey, 2004). This study is the first to examine implementation styles, organisational cultures and performance concepts in a public sector setting with the direct and moderated effects.

The findings of the study should be considered alongside their potential limitations. The study surveyed senior managers from 11 different departments in 20 metropolitan municipalities. However, there are more departments in 30 metropolitan municipalities throughout Turkey and as the sample size of the study is also limited, the results cannot be generalised to all departments in all of Turkey's metropolitan municipalities. There is also no consensus on which set of performance variables should be taken into consideration while examining public sector organisations. It is also possible to consider other performance criteria such as effectiveness, efficiency, equity (Andrews et al., 2017), value for money (Walker and Andrews, 2015), productivity and staff satisfaction (Brewer, 2005) as criteria used in the literature.

A number of promising directions for future research can be considered. Since cross-sectional design did not allow the study to establish causal associations between the variables, prospective research could take advantage of testing the construct of the present study through a longitudinal research design which would examine causal relationships. There are other factors that have been characterised as important elements of successful implementation, such as external

stakeholders, provision of adequate resources, communication, strategic mind-set and alignment with the plan (Stewart and Kringas, 2003; Fernandez and Rainey, 2006; Andrews et al., 2011; Elbanna et al., 2020; George, 2021). Future studies could also attempt to measure objective performance attributes, which could help to obtain more impartial results, which capture the actual output of Turkish municipalities.

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