ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF BANDUNG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Budaya dalam suatu organisasi merupakan elemen yang penting yang perlu mendapat perhatian para pemimpin organisasi ketika mereka akan melakukan proses perubahan. Budaya organisasi sangat erat kaitanya dengan nilai, norma, dan kepercayaan yang dianut anggota organisasi ketika mereka berprilaku dan bersikap. Oleh karena itu, proses perubahan akan cenderung gagal jika dilakukan tanpa mengubah nilai dan norma anggota organisasi tersebut. Tulisan ini mencoba menggambarkan budaya organisasi Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Administrasi Lembaga Administrasi Negara berdasarkan hasil studi kualitatif. Budaya organisasi STIA-LAN dapat digambarkan dengan model "multiple cultural configuration" dimana tiga budaya saling mempengaruhi yaitu budaya akademik, budaya komunal dan budaya paternalistic-birokratik.

A. INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that Indonesian higher education institutions play a very strategic role in accelerating the national development. Indonesian universities and colleges have been "assigned" three missions – known as *tridharma* - that function as the broad guidelines for their operations. *Firstly*, higher education institutions have the task to teach the students, and to prepare them to be qualified human resource for national development. *Secondly*, higher education institutions are required to conduct research to develop science and technology necessitated for the country. *Thirdly*, universities and colleges are expected to provide useful service for the community (Soehendro, 1996).

However, people are currently questioning the achievement of these three missions. Kompas (2000), for instance, carried out a survey and reported that most universities and colleges produced poor quality of teaching and learning and did not highly participate in research and development activities. Universities and colleges still maintained their exclusive positions and were not concerned with the practical problems of the community. In another survey conducted by Asiaweek (2001), Indonesian universities and colleges that took part in that survey were reported to be left behind in terms of their performance, compared to that of other universities in South East Asian countries.

Current efforts to improve the quality of Indonesian higher education institutions are currently considered to emphasize structural and financial perspectives. Soemarwotto (2000), for example, observes that most of the university leaders usually blame the lack of financial support from the government as the main source of the low performance of universities and colleges. He further contends that financial support is important,

yet it is not the only resource that contributes to the improvement and development processes. In addition, Supriyoko (2000) notes that most of the college leaders do not implement a comprehensive approach in solving the current problems facing by the universities and colleges. In other words, the current improvement efforts seem to implement a partial approach in developing Indonesian higher education institutions.

This essay argues that a cultural approach could be useful to provide a holistic understanding and knowledge on the working of Indonesian higher education institutions. A cultural approach is viewed as a holistic approach to engage in improving the performance of Indonesian universities and colleges. Masland (1985:35) provides three arguments for the use of culture approach in transforming the universities' performance:

1. On a theoretical level, cultural analysis is another framework for researchers and administrators. Cultural analysis does not replace but expands and complements other perspectives such as bureaucratic, political or theatre frameworks in understanding colleges and universities.
2. Organisational culture provides an avenue to explore the organisational development efforts as well as the influence on decisions and actions. Gaining this understanding can provide better information for administrators in the decision-making process.
3. Due to the inherent nature of organisational culture as the "glue that binds the organisation and people together", it will become increasingly important for the leaders and members to understand organisational culture.

It is contended, therefore, that understanding organisational culture is crucial for college and university leaders, administrators, and members. For leaders, it is vital to gain a holistic

understanding before engaging in a process of improving the teaching-learning process or creating better management systems of the higher education institutions. For members, it provides a better understanding of the current situation and environment (Harman, 1988).

This essay – a summary from the study conducted in 2002 for my Master's thesis - attempts to portray the use of cultural approach in understanding the organization of Bandung School of Public Administration. I believe that cultural approach could be a useful tool for all members of the organization to better understand their own environment. It should be kept in ind, however, that most of the data about the organization are relevant with the culture of the organization during that time.

This essay will firstly describe the theoretical framework of organizational culture, then explicates the method used in analysing the culture of the organization, and after that portray the context of organization, and finally present the result of analysis: the culture of Bandung School of Public Administration (BSPA).

B. THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Educational sociologists have studied the complexities of the universities and colleges from various perspectives. In organisational and administrative studies, for instance, the researchers have examined universities and colleges from a structural perspective, which reflects a desire for order and simplicity and promotes universities and colleges as rational and efficient organisations. This perspective is commonly called as a bureaucratic approach and has been quite dominant for a long time (Peterson, 1985).

Universities and colleges have also been compared with other types of organisations such as business corporations, or large foundations (Harman, 1988:47). Several other frameworks in

understanding universities are viewing them as "a normative organisation" (Millet, 1962), as "organised anarchies" (Cohen, 1972), and as "loosely coupled systems" (Weick, 1976). However, these perspectives have not been able to fully describe the uniqueness and the distinct nature of the universities since there are also strong and influential internal mechanisms that are often more difficult to describe such as values, beliefs, norms and symbols.

The perspective that pays attention to the values, beliefs and symbols is generally known as a cultural approach. This perspective views that, like any other social entities, higher education institutions possess distinct characteristics that are consciously or unconsciously created by the members of the institutions through their daily interactions. The cultural features of universities and colleges are generally embodied in unique events, rituals and ceremonies of the members of institutions including students, lecturers and administrative staff.

But what is meant by culture in organization? Does culture exist in every organization? Van Maanen (1979:86) explains what is meant by a cultural approach to organisation when he states that:

> There has come of age the significant realisation that the people we study (and often seek to assist) have a form of life, a culture that is their own and if we wish to understand the behaviour of these people and the groups of organisation of which they are part, we must be able to both appreciate and describe their culture

Thus, organisations does have culture and people commonly refer to it as "organisational culture. A cultural approach, therefore, is considered very useful since it requires the leaders

or managers of the organisation to pay more attention to the personal values and meanings of the members of the institution. Employees are not machines that can be trained to execute monotonous tasks over time. They are complete human beings who bring their own beliefs and values to the organisation. A cultural approach offers access to deeper values and beliefs of the members of organisation. These beliefs and values often become a determinant factor in the working life of the employees and, in turn, influence the performance of the organisation (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Deal & Peterson, 1990; Hoy & Miskel, 1996).

This cultural approach to organisation is also supported by the fact that each institution has its own distinctive features. Anyone who has been working for different companies or schools usually finds out that each institution has a different atmosphere, ways of doing things and personality. Handy (1981:176) confirms this notion when he said that:

> ...organisations are as different and varied as the nations and societies of the world. They have differing cultures – sets of values and norms and beliefs – reflected in different structures and systems. And the cultures are affected by the events of the past and by the climate of the present, by the technology of the type of work, by their aims and the kind of people that work for them.

1. Defining organizational culture

Definitions of organizational culture vary according to the number of experts researching this subject. Jay Lorsch (1985:84), for example, defines organisational culture as "the beliefs of top managers in a company about how they should manage themselves and other employees and

how they should conduct their business". Alan Wilkins and Kerry Peterson (1985:265) refer to organisational culture as "what people (and managers) believe what works and what does not work in an organisation".

Others define organisational culture based on an understanding of organisational symbols, myths, and values. Pettigrew (1979), for example, defines organisational culture as symbols, languages, ideology, belief, ritual and myth. William Ouchi (1981:14) points out that organisational culture can be defined as "symbols, ceremonies, and myths that communicate the underlying values and beliefs of that organisation to its employees". Another definition, from Edwards (1991:7), states that organisational culture is "the shared values and norms which provide the crucial foundations of an organisation and which bind a group of people over time". Henry Mintzberg (1989:98) defines organisational culture as "the tradition and beliefs of an organisation that distinguish it from other organisations and infuse a certain life in to the skeleton of its structure".

Howard Schwartz and Stanley Davis (1981:33) regard organisational culture as "a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organisational members that produces norms that powerfully shape the behaviour of individuals and groups in organisation". Beare *et al* (1989: 177) maintain that organisational culture is "shared meanings, cognition, symbols and experiences that are expressed in the behaviours and practices of the members of a group". Hoy and Miskel (1996:114) refers to organisational culture as " shared orientation that hold the unit together and give it a distinctive identity.

Schein (1992) provides quite a comprehensive definition of organisational culture. He states that organisational culture is:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p.12).

2. Paradigm on researching culture

It is generally noted that current studies (including the definitions above) on organisational culture and especially in higher education institutions can be divided into two broad paradigms: *positivist and interpretive* (Riley, 1983; Alvesson, 1993). The first paradigm views organisational culture as a means of promoting more effective managerial action. Advocates of this view believe that it is important to show causal relationships between culture and organisational performance to produce knowledge that increases the chance of affecting cultural phenomena (symbols, rites, values, and norms) that are considered beneficial for universities and colleges (Bergquist, 1992).

According to this paradigm, organisational culture is an influential factor in improving the performance of higher education institutions (Clark, 1972, 1983); Austin, 1992). Based on the findings of his study, for instance, Clark (1972) asserts that outstanding colleges generally develop "a collective understanding of unique accomplishment" among the organisational members in their daily operations (p.178). Tierney (1988) also highlights the crucial role of cultural frameworks in changing elements in the institution. Furthermore, researchers who adopt this view

employ a cultural approach in order to produce an effective management tool to manage universities in turbulent and uncertain conditions (Dill, 1982; Tierney, 1988).

The second paradigm, known as *interpretive*, views culture as a point of entry for a broader understanding of higher education institutional life and work. This approach assumes that a rich and holistic understanding of the workplace can lead to an appreciation of both the positive and the negative features of organisational life (Alvesson, 1993). From this perspective, cultural studies are intended to provide holistic insight for the members, which in turn can contribute to their critical reflection on the current traditions. Thus, the purpose of cultural studies is to understand "the many colours of a rainbow" of organisational life (Smircich, 1983:339) and to engage in efforts to "liberate human potential", and to encourage critical reflection on beliefs and values of the social life in higher education institutions (Alvesson, 1993:7).
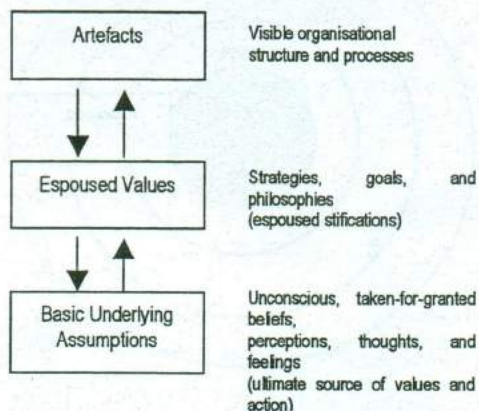
3. The Element of Organizational culture

Most of the researchers seem to agree that the elements of cultures generally range from the *tangible manifestations*, which can be seen, felt, and heard to the *intangible manifestations* that are difficult to decipher. The tangible cultural manifestations are embodied in the form of artefacts, clothes, buildings or the products of the culture, whereas the intangible manifestations are deeply embedded in the form of basic assumptions, values and beliefs of the members of the organisation.

According to Schein (1992:17), culture in an organisation can be analysed into three levels or elements: *artefacts, espoused values and basic underlying assumptions*. The first visible element of culture is artefacts, which are the manifestations of basic assumptions and shared values within an

organisation. Artefacts can be embodied in the observable behaviour of people, languages and symbols in the organisation. Schein simply defines artefacts as all of the phenomena that "one sees, hears, feels" when one encounters an organisation with an unfamiliar culture (p.17). He describes the three elements of culture as follows:

Fig.1: Schein's model of cultural elements

| Artefacts | Visible organisational structure and processes |
| Espoused Values | Strategies, goals, and philosophies (espoused stifications) |
| Basic Underlying Assumptions | Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings (ultimate source of values and action) |

Other researchers who propose the analysis of the levels of culture are Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohavy and Sanders (1990:286). They identify two broad elements of organisational culture: *cultural practice (tangible manifestations) and values (intangible elements)*. The first level is cultural practice that can be seen, felt, and heard. Cultural practice consists of three elements: *symbols, heroes or heroines, and rituals*. Symbols are manifested in verbal words, pictures or objects that carry a particular meaning within a culture. Heroes or heroines are persons, alive or dead, real or imaginary, who are highly prized in the culture and serve as a model for behaviour. Rituals are collective activities that are technically superficial but socially essential within that culture. These three aspects are generally accessible and quite

easy to observe. However, in interpreting these practices, researchers should refer to values as the foundations or the bases for these practices. They describe the elements of culture as follows:

Figure 2: Hofstede's model of cultural elements
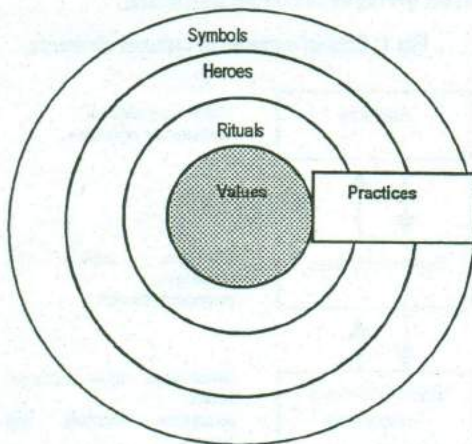
It can be concluded that the elements of organizational culture can be divided into two broad manifestations, namely:

1. *Tangible manifestations* that can be seen, heard, or touch in the organization. In my opinion this manifestation can be classified into two:
   - Artefacts: cultural manifestations that are concrete, something that you can see or touch such as building, flag, picture, etc.
   - Verbal manifestations: cultural aspects that are embodied in words or stories, something that you can hear or languages that are spoken by the members of organization.
   - Behavioral manifestations of culture refer to the patterns of attitude and behavior of the members of organization.

2. *Intangible aspects* of culture that are deeply rooted in the values, beliefs, and norms shared by the members of organization. These beliefs shape and form the thinking process as well as the attitude and behavior of the members or organization. It is the beliefs and values of organization that underlines the manifestations of culture in the form of artifacts and verbal manifestations.

C. THE METHOD

This research employed a qualitative case study as its method. Qualitative research is defined as the method to gain holistic understanding of the object of the research through intense involvement between the researcher and the people being researched. In other word, the researcher should attempt to understand "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994:114). A qualitative approach is considered as the appropriate and acceptable method in researching organisational culture, because:

1. The fundamental content of culture is unconscious and highly subjective.
2. Interactive probing is required to access otherwise inaccessible and unconscious cultural material.
3. Each culture is idiosyncratic and unique and requires non-standardised assessments. (Rosseau (1990:166),

The target population of this study was all members (from the chairperson to the cleaning service workers) of BSPA. Since this study is a qualitative one, the sampling procedure employed was *the purposeful or theoretical sampling technique* (Patton, 1990; Cresswell,1994; Mertens, 1998). With this technique, I could select *information-rich cases and people*, meaning that the individuals, events, sites and documents that

were selected provided rich information concerning the culture of the organisation. For semi-structured interviews, I selected informants who were able to provide rich information about the culture of the college. The selection process was based on several factors, such as, tenures, positions in the organisation, and educational background. The selection was also to ensure that the sample of interviews comes from different levels within the college, such as, managers, staff members and students. I conducted the filedwork for two months in the institution.

The framework for analysing data in this research was taken from Miles and Huberman (1994). Data generated from semi-structured interviews, participant observations and document analysis were analysed using three stages: data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion and verification. Data reduction referred to simplifying, and redu-cing the transcription and field notes into a summary and codes that were manageable for analysis. Data display was conducted using a conceptual ordered matrix in order to enable the analytical process. Drawing conclusions and verification were carried out by contrasting, comparing and refining the main cultural concepts that emerged from the data.

D. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF BSPA

1. The Context

Bandung School of Public Administration (BSPA) was established in February 1965, named as the Academy of Public Adminis-tration (APA) based on the decree of the director of NIPA in Jakarta. From very humble beginnings, the college has grown to the point where it is now a well-established and recognised college within the government sectors in Indonesia. Today the roll is appro-ximately 1300 with an academic staff of 187,

a dramatic increase from the less than fifty students and just a few staff with which the College began.

In August, 1973, along with the increasing number of the students, the school changed its status from "academy" to "college" (*sekolah tinggi*). The name of APA was then altered into BSPA. With the new status as a college, the school could not only offer a diploma's degree but also an undergraduate degree programme (*sarjana's degree* equal to bachelor's degree) to its students.

These changes have influenced the structure and functions of the host institution of BSPA as well as the implementation of the education and training for civil servants. To fulfill demands for changes, the government issued the Presidential Decree No.100 in 1999, which renewed the tasks and functions of the three public administration schools including BSPA. According to the decree, the college has been given greater autonomy to improve the quality of the school to meet the demands of the 21st century.

The school also set up the strategic planning book that explicates the visions, missions and a long-term plan for the college. The school has a vision to be a high quality and excellent college, and three missions, i.e. to carry out a high quality teaching and learning process, to conduct research on public administration science and to provide service for the community in public administrative affairs. The core values that under-pin this vision and mission are: *to follow all govern-ment rules and regulations, to be committed to honesty, integrity, professionalism and innovation.*

2. BSPA's Artefact

My observation of the BSPA's artefact was focused on the building, the administrative offices, library, classrooms, canteen, prayer room, and the hall. One of the significant cjharacteristics of BSPA artefacts is that the display of the Sundanese gamelan next to the main lobby of the building. In

some events, the employees play this gamelan together to produce Sundanese music.

Another indicator is the display of the previous leaders of NIPA in the meeting room. This arrengement is meant to give respects for them and to encourage employees to remember them as their leaders. The office arrangement is divided into two: the special rooms for the managers (echelon IV and III) and rooms for administrative staff and other lecturers. In BSPA all lecturers occupy the same room together and each lecturer only has a table as his or her play for work.

The classrooms of BSPA are quite representative in terms of facility and learning equipments. In each classroom there is an OHP and white-board for teaching learning process. The institution also provides computer lab and language laboratory for all students. Another artefact is the prayer room for all Moslems to conduct their prayer. This Mushola is used also for religious occassions such as commemorating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Sacrifice Day, and the Ascencion of the Prophet. All lectures and employees are invited to join these events.

All these artefacts, I believe, reflect something that make BSPA as a distinct institution which has specific culture. The main cultural concepts that are generated from artefacts displayed as follows:

Table 1: Main Cultural Concepts Reflected in the Physical Environment and Facilities (Artfacts)

Main Cultural Concepts	Evidence Reflecting the Concepts
1. Recognising the history and maintaining the tradition The college fosters a sense of identity and a sense of belonging for the college members	• Display photos of the previous leaders of the college in the meeting room. • Display of the *Sundanese gamelan* in the lobby as the sign that the institution is the guardian of the *Sundanese* tradition.
2. Bureaucratic room arrangement Structural positions determine what facilities and equipment the members get.	• The institution pays more attention to those with structural positions and provides them with more facilities and equipment with their own rooms. • The teaching staff do not have their own room
3. Integrating religious (Islamic) practice in the college life The staff can practise their religious duties while working	• The college provides the room for practising the religious duties (prayers). • The college also gives time for conducting these religious duties
4. Valuing teaching and learning processes Students are ensured to have comfortable and complete facilities for teaching and learning processes	• The college provides comfortable facilities for teaching and learning processes • The college's management always attempts to upgrade and modernise the classroom facilities

3. BSPA's Verbal manifestations

The data on verbal manifestations reveal important meanings and messages that are practiced within the college. The words or expressions used to describe the dynamics of BSPA, for example, represented an important concept that directed members to behave as a big family. The language spoken among the members also signified the nature of interactions and relationships between the staff members and managers. Here are some excerpts from inteviews:

I think the advantage of working here is we help each other. We can work together with our colleagues. I think we feel that we are **a big family here**. We help each other, and we are familiar to each other (INT-14).

When I am in the office, I treat my friends here as my colleagues. But when we are out of this office, I treat them as my family members. With my superiors, I treat them as **my parents who can guide me** when I make mistakes. When I talk to my boss, I feel that I talk to my parents (INT-16).

In the past, members of the college used to visit each other, had meals together at the weekends. When we went home, we usually brought something as a gift from the host. Even when there were guests from Jakarta or overseas, we never brought them to restaurants. We just invited them to have lunch or dinner in one of our houses. Ibu ibu (wives of staff) used to cook together for this occasions. And we were accountable for the budget for this occasion too. For instance, we even included the price for one onion in the budget book! (INT-2).

Bu Nina often told me: " Neng, you should learn this book, that subject and this topic". When I answered that I just want to focus on one topic – human resource management -, she really disagreed. "As a lecturer of the college", she said, " you need to learn a lot, about any subjects related to administration" (INT-13).

The following summarises the cultural concepts that were reflected in verbal manifestations of the college members.

Table 2: Main Cultural Concepts Identified
from Verbal Manifestations

Aspects of verbal manifestations	Cultural Concepts Identified
• Words to describe the whole organisation • Words to describe the relationship between staff and leaders • Stories that are commonly heard • Languages	• The metaphor of the college as a big family • The metaphor of the leaders as parents and staff as children • Stories that perpetuate strong familial relationship and good behaviour of students and good image of the school • The importance of using polite words and languages

4. BSPA's Members' Behavior

The cultural concepts of behavioural manifestations in this study are mainly taken from the participant observation data. There were eleven events and activities observed for this study, from the lunch breaks to the organisational meetings held by the college. The analysis from these eleven activities reveals three general patterns of interactions among the members of the college, namely, *1) Academic behaviour, 2) Management behaviour, 3) Collegial behaviour.* Academic

behaviour is the attitude related to the academic affairs such as teaching and learning processes, seminars and examinations. Management behaviour is the attitude of the members concerning the management practice such as the attitude of the staff towards the managers, or vice versa. Collegial behaviour refers to the attitude towards the staff within the same structural levels such as the attitude among the staff. Table 4.2 summarises the classifications of the behaviour derived from these eleven activities.

Table 3: Patterns of Behaviour in the College

Patterns of Behaviour	The Events Reflecting the Pattern
"Academic behaviour"	Research proposal seminar, thesis oral examination, students' written examination, and students' registration (OBS-2, 3, 8, 12, 13)
"Management behavioural"	Managers' weekly meetings, full staff meetings, and managers' and researchers' meetings (OBS-4, 9, 11)
"Collegial behavioural"	Staff and managers' lunch breaks and Friday sport exercises (OBS-1, 7, 10, 15)

5. BSPA's Cultural Beliefs and Values

Beliefs and values are the bedrock of organisational culture. Beliefs are convictions and notions of what is important in human life, whereas, values are the criteria against which people decide or reflect upon

their actions and the priorities people place upon things. Thus, beliefs and values can be considered as normative criteria that provide the facts to answer the "Why" questions and they become directional and ideological for the group members. "Directional" is represented with the ability to direct members' behaviours to go towards certain

destinations whereas "ideological" is embodied in the absolute, taken for granted assumptions, which influence the way the members frame reality in organisations (Hodgkinson, 1978; Deal & Kennedy, 1999).

Cultural beliefs and values are classified as *intangible, non-observable* aspects of organisational culture. This aspect is difficult to reveal, yet it is central in understanding the cultural manifestations of organisations. This section is intended to describe the cultural beliefs and values of BSPA. The description is mostly based on the main cultural concepts identified from the artefacts, behavioural and verbal manifestations. After analysing these main cultural concepts, it was found that there were three dominant beliefs and values embraced by the members of the college. Table 4.5 shows these three beliefs and values and their evidence from the data:

Table 4: Main Cultural Beliefs and Values in BSPA

Main Beliefs and Values Identified	Evidence reflecting the beliefs and values
• Familial beliefs and values	• Observation on various activities such as lunch breaks, daily interactions, and patterns of communication • Most of the interview respondents view that familial relationship is dominant in the college • From the documents, it is found that the top manager emphasised and implemented these familial values
• Structural and paternalistic beliefs and values	• Observations on the relationship between staff and managers reveal these values • Some interview respondents confirm the existence of these values • The documents describe the college as the public institution that should follow government regulations
• Academic beliefs and values	• Observation on certain events show these values • Some interview respondents view that the college implements these values • The core beliefs and values in the document signify these beliefs and values

E. THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE MAIN CULTURAL CONCEPTS

As shown in the previous explanation, each cultural manifestation of the college reflected several main cultural concepts. The behavioural manifestation demonstrated in the daily operations, research proposal seminars and oral examinations, for example, reflected the cultural concepts of a familial relationship among the staff members, the importance of harmony and togetherness and the valuing of the learning processes. The

analysis on the relationships is aimed at finding out the general patterns or "over-arching themes " (Rubin &Rubin, 1995:295) of culture that are easily recognised and identified by outsiders. To carry out this analysis, all of the cultural concepts are placed in the table below to find the commonalities emerging from them. The following table summarises the main cultural concepts from artefacts, behavioural and verbal manifestations and cultural beliefs and values.

Table 5: The Three Cultural Patterns of BSPA

Aspects of culture General Patterns	Artefacts	Behavioural	Verbal	Beliefs and values
Familial values and practices	• Recognising the history and maintaining tradition • Religious values and practice	• Maintaining harmony and togetherness • Familial relationship	• The metaphor of college as a big family • Stories about strong familial relationship	Familial beliefs and values
Scholarly values and practices	Valuing teaching and learning processes	• Academic behaviour • Valuing learning processes	Stories about the good image of the college	Academic beliefs and values
Bureaucratic values and practices	Bureaucratic office arrangement	Structural and paternalistic practice	The importance of using polite words and languages	Structural and paternalistic beliefs and values

From the table, it appears that there are three general patterns of commonalities as a result of the analysis and examination from all the cultural concepts identified, namely *familial, scholarly, and bureaucratic values and practices.* These three patterns seem to form their own distinct characteristics that are demonstrated in the different cultural concepts adhered to each pattern. The familial pattern, for instance, possesses its own values (familial values), metaphor (a big family) and behaviour (familial relationship).

To understand the existence of these three over-arching themes at BSPA, it is necessary to refer to the notion of a *multiple cultural configuration* model from Alvesson (1993). (See also Chapter 2 p. 24) This model assumes that organisations can be understood as "shaping local versions of broader societal and locally developed cultural manifestations in a multitude of ways" (p.118). Thus, organi-sational culture should be viewed neither as unitary wholes shared by all members nor as established sets of subcultures within the institution. Rather, organisational culture is a mixture of cultural manifestations of different levels and kinds since members are connected to different degrees with organisation, profession, social class or ethnic group.

It seems that this model is appropriate in explaining the existence of the three cultural values and practices of BSPA. The reason is that these cultural characteristics stemmed from a broader cultural setting of the college (further explanation is discussed in the next section of this chapter), yet they also had been developed internally and become the distinct characteristic of the college. It is contended as well that these three characte-ristics *cannot* be regarded as three *subcultures* since there is no organisational group or unit within the college that consistently practised one cultural characteristic (e.g. family values and

practice). For the sake of clarity, there-fore, it is contended that these three cultural characteristics probably can be termed as "*three cultural patterns*" of BSPA. Each cultural pattern is discussed as follows:

F. THE CULTURAL MODEL OF BSPA

To gain a holistic understanding of the three cultures of the college, it is of importance to look at the broader cultural setting that has influenced the organisational dynamics and processes of BSPA. As discussed in the literature review, several researchers have discussed the interplay between organisations and society, such as cross-cultural studies from Hofstede (1983,1994), and Czaeniakawska-Jorges (1988), and studies relating organisations to national culture from Beck and Moore (1985). However, in my observation, the study that can be regarded to comprehensively and critically analyse the relationship between the dynamics of internal organisa-tions with its wider setting is from Alvesson (1993) and, especially for higher education institutions, is the study from Clark (1984).

From his intensive studies on the cultural issues in higher education institutions, Clark (1984:42) proposes "*a multiple cultural membership*" view for the members of university and college institutions. He states that academic community members in university or college are shaped and influenced by many social settings surrounding the university organisation. These diverse social settings bring their own values and beliefs that influence the work of academic men and women. In other words, each setting provides "an interpretive framework" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988:13) for the college members to understand and appreciate events and actions. These interpretive frameworks, in which the college members live and work, affect them in all they do as they

organise and establish goals for their work, interact with students and balance their diverse responsibilities (Austin, 1992). In Clark's views, there are four cultures that generally affect the life of the college members; namely, the culture of the institutions, the disciplines, the academic or scholar professions and the higher educational sistem.

This multiple cultural membership model is supported by Alvesson's work (1993) based on his research on the organisational culture of a university department. As mentioned previously, Alvesson proposes *a multiple cultural configuration model* that views organisations as having a local version of culture that had been and is being developed and influenced by a wider societal culture. Organisational culture is, then, understood not as unitary wholes or as stable sets of subcultures but as mixtures of cultural manifestations from different levels and kind of groups. This is caused by the fact that people are connected to different levels of interaction and communication inside and outside organisations such as their profession, educational background, gender, ethnic group or nation.

Viewing the BSPA's culture from the framework of a multiple cultural configuration and membership perspective brings two significant notions. First, *internally*, the college is considered as having distinct and unique cultural characteristics as the result of the interaction of the members inside the organisation, and second, *externally*, the culture of the college is partly shaped and influenced by a broader societal culture surrounding the college. The unique characteristics of the college culture were embodied in the members' behaviour that demonstrated "the mixture of the thre cultures" and became "the identity" of the college that is different from any other organisation. The cultural influence from extra-organisation origins can be traced from the wider cultural setting that has shaped and determined the college development.

In my observation, there are three broader cultural settings that have affected the culture of BSPA. *First,* since the college is located in Indonesia, the nation and ethic group (*Sundanese*) culture greatly influenced the values and behaviour of the members of the college. It is noted that most of the members of college are from a *Sundanese* ethnic origin and several others are from *Javanese* ethnic origin. *Second,* the culture of the college is also influenced by the nature of the relationship between the college and its host institution – NIPA Regional Office - where until now, this institution still administers and manages the college. This close relationship was represented by the fact that the director of the college is also the director of the NIPA Regional Office as well. *Third,* the culture of the college was also affected by the college's *triple role* as an academic institution; i.e. to carry out teaching, research and community service. These roles underline the college's tasks to implement teaching, learning and research as the main reason for the college's existence.

The interplay of the cultures inside and outside the BSPA could be portrayed in Figure 3. The picture shows that there are three big circles that intersect each other and shape the small circle in the middle of the three circles. The three big circles represent three broader cultures that have affected the organisational culture of BSPA. These three wider cultural settings are *the culture of the Indonesian society, the culture of the academic profession and the working culture. of the government institutions.* These circles, then, overlapped each other and formed the small circle located in the centre of the three big circles. This small circle is where the organisational culture of the college is located. There are three dots of colours in this small circle that function as a symbol of the three cultural patterns of the college; namely, *family, scholarly and bureaucratic cultures*

Fig.3: A Cultural Model of BSPA
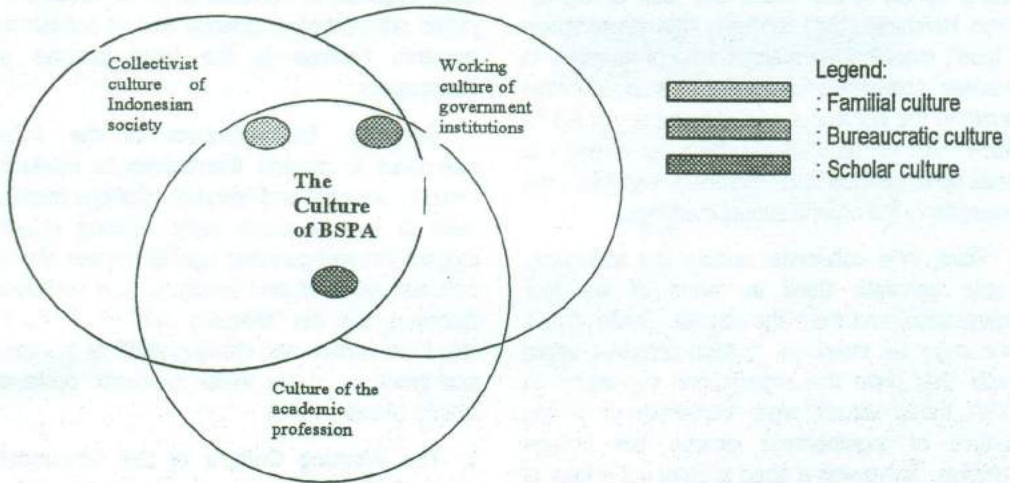
1. Collectivism: the culture of the Indonesian society

It is contended that the familial culture, as one of the three significant cultures of BSPA, originated from one of the cultural characteristics of the Indonesian society: *collectivism*. Indonesian (Asian) communities are mostly well known as collectivist societies in which people are strongly integrated into a strong, cohesive and emotional group (Hofstede, 1983,1994). There are three arguments supporting the view that collectivist culture has produced familial culture in BSPA.

First, it has been observed that in Indonesian society people are integrated into groups that have strong emotional relationships. The groups can consist of one ethnic origin, one region, one village or one organisation. They generally view their fellows with the same origins (village or regions) as "relatives" or as extended family members

(Hofstede, 1983). This view is influenced by the collectivist beliefs that, behind every employee, there is a family that demands time, attention and money and this situation encourages the institution to "include" the family members in the activities of the organisation. The events of "*dharma wanita*" or *arisan*" in BSPA seemed to demonstrate that the college has attempted to involve the family members of the employees as the members of the college as well.

Second, there is a need for harmony and preservation of face in the collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1983). In Indonesian society, there is great value attachment in the maintenance of formal harmony in personal relationships. Issues where conflict might arise are not discussed openly but only privately. This pressure required the college members not to discuss the sensitive

issues that might have triggered conflicts among the members and caused the other members to feel embarrassed or hurt. Hurting someone's feeling openly could cause the loss of dignity, which Hofstede (1983:39) calls "the preservation of face", meaning the maintenance of harmony to preserve someone's dignity. This notion was shown in the behaviour of the members of BSPA where most of the staff members felt hesitant to speak up or criticise other members, especially the managers in the organisational meetings.

Third, in a collectivist culture like Indonesia, people generally think in terms of *we* (our organisation) and *they* (the others). These values encourage the members to form cohesive social bonds that unite the organisation together. In BSPA these values were implemented in the practice of togetherness among the college members. There was a need to carry out a form of collective helping (*gotong royong*) among each other. When there are "individualist" members who did not behave as expected by the group, these people were "excluded" from the group members and were labelled negatively as egoists, money oriented persons or dissidents.

2. The Culture of the Academic Profession

The members of BSPA were also affected by the culture of the academic profession. This culture refers to the beliefs, values and practices that are distinct and unique among scholarly professions across institutions and countries. These values affect both the self-concepts and expectations of college and university members and the practices and policies of higher education institutions (Rice, 1986; Clark, 1984).

The "scholarly culture" of BSPA demonstrated some of these characteristics. The following explanation attempts to support this argument. *Firstly,* several activities of the college, such as the research proposal seminars, were underpinned by the primary values to discover, produce and transmit knowledge. The members of the college were required to conduct a lot of research on public administration science and to publish their research findings in the local journals and newspapers.

Secondly, the members of the college attempted to commit themselves to intellectual honesty, integrity and fairness. College members were to treat students fairly, utilising objective judgements and guarding against misuse of power between students and lecturers. It is contended, therefore, that the "scholarly culture" of BSPA is "the local version and development" of the values and practices of the wider academic profession culture (Austin, 1992)

3. The Working Culture of the Government Institutions

The third broader culture that has influenced the work of the college members is the working culture of the government organisations in Indonesia. As mentioned previously, BSPA is still considered as one of the departments in the government institution - NIPA Regional Office. It has been observed that the current working culture of most of the Indonesian government institutions, including NIPA Regional Office, is more bureaucratic rather than democratic or collegial (Gumelar, 2001).

The culture of bureaucracy that influenced BSPA is represented in at least three aspects: *the decision-making processes, the nature of the work and the career promotion* (Etzioni, 1961). *The first* aspect was shown by the fact that, in most of the government institutions, the decision-making processes are carried out exclusively by the senior managers or the leaders. There is an assumption that the leaders or managers are well-informed

and have necessary resources to make decisions. The staff members are assigned to implement the decisions. *The second* feature was the nature of the work, which was formal and structured with many rules and regulations. The Indonesian government institutions generally are not flexible and quick in responding to the demands from the environment. This is caused by the communication channels that are mostly hierarchical through many layers in the organisational structures. *The third aspect* was the career promotion that was based more on structural positions rather than skills and competence. It was observed that career promotion in the Indonesian government was automatically conducted every four years regardless of staff achievements and competencies.

CONCLUSION

The first conclusion of this study confirms that the cultural characteristics of the college are quite complex with the existence of the three cultures that were simultaneously operating in the college. This complexity leads to portray the cultural characteristics of BSPA as the "the rainbow" that illustrates the mixtures of colours in the organisational life. The current "rainbow" of the college consisted of three recognisable "colours" of culture. It is noted that the process of mixing these three colours had been conducted for a long time by the previous members and leaders. These three colours of culture are also being shaped and influenced by the current members of the college.

The second conclusion from the research findings is the importance of viewing the organisational culture of the college from a multiple cultural configuration model. This perspective considers each organisation as having unique cultural characteristics as the result of the two processes: the internal dynamics of the organisational members and the external interactions with broader societal cultures (Alvesson, 1993). Organisational culture then is viewed not as unitary wholes or as sets of subcultures but as mixtures of cultural manifestations from different levels of interactions among different kinds of groups of people. This is caused by the fact that the members of organisations are connected to different levels of interactions and communication inside and outside of their organisations.

Understanding the multiple cultural configuration of BSPA will hopefully encourage the leaders and managers of the college to carefully engage in the quality improvement efforts of the college. This essay concludes that a holistic understanding and knowledge on the daily working of BSPA is required to get a successful efforts in improving the performance of BSPA.

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