Leaders’ commitment in relation to performance orientation and organizational culture in the Peruvian Army, 2023

ABSTRACT
Currently, the state of our world imposes organizations with the need to develop a solid organizational culture, correctly defined strategies, and to have the resources which make them competitive. Institutions analyze their culture in order to improve it. However, when this involves applying a methodology to manipulate organizational culture, the direct and committed participation of the organization’s strategic leaders is required. This article examines this particular aspect. The aim of the study was to describe how leadership commitment, in relation to performance orientation, helps improve organizational culture. To this end, a literature review was conducted among publications related to this problem, in order to contrast their understanding of the variables in question. The results indicate that strategic leaders’ commitment in performance orientation is crucial to make improvements in organizational culture. The conclusion reached was that all officers in strategic level positions and those on the path toward such positions must be fully aware of the importance of the topic being studied and their great responsibility for it. By reflecting on it, they will be able to generate tangible improvements for a significant impact on the organizational culture of the Peruvian Army.

Keywords: Organizational commitment; Strategic leaders; Organizational culture; Performance orientation.
INTRODUCTION

Pettigrew (1979) states that organizational culture is “el sistema de conceptualizaciones que de manera pública y colectiva en un tiempo específico son aceptados por un determinado grupo” [the system of conceptualizations which are accepted by a particular group in a public and collective manner, and during a specific time period] (p. 574). Over time, the human race has diversified the ways to increase productivity in all fields. Resulting from this demand, various schools have emerged proposing various philosophies and ideas to find a solution to this problem. In conceptual terms, organizational culture has an influence over productivity, so it acquired a significant importance within organizations, becoming the study subject for various researchers (Cújar Vertel et al., 2013, p. 351).

The complex current scenarios are characterized by their chaotic nature, caused by various crisis and sudden changes. This has forced the Peruvian Army to undergo a constant improvement process that helps the institution reach a level of competitiveness, and thus consolidate its position in society.

Vera Deizo (2019) explains that the Peruvian Army began a process of institutional transformation in early 2019. This important news did not go unnoticed among the institution members, because this process would lead to significant changes that would have an important impact on the future of the organization, as well as that of their own careers. In addition, the author states that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the meaning of an institutional transformation, leading to doubts and resistance. For this reason, it is crucial to define its meaning and differentiate it from terms such as re-engineering and modernization because, according to the author, these are often used interchangeably by mistake (p. 36).

The Peruvian Army has an organizational culture that is mainly defined by the value of discipline. However, as it refers to the collective behavior of its members, it naturally also encompasses other dimensions which will provide important information if evaluated; after their analysis, there may be a diagnosis that will help strategic leaders to take decisions that will result in evident improvements or modifications.

Bahamonde (2014) states that the cultural factor is crucially important, and that the main task to undertake is possibly related to this aspect. Regarding the risks and opportunities in the present and future of military institutions, an organizational culture that generates adequate strategies to achieve the organizational vision must be created, maintained, and strengthened, as well as an optimal future for their personnel and for Peruvian society in general (p. 65).

Considering this context, this research addresses a structural operational problem, and involves solving a recurring question regarding the way to design and implement improvements or modifications in the organizational culture. Thus, the research question is the following: How does leaders’ commitment in performance orientation lead to an optimal management of organizational culture in the Peruvian Army?

In such regard, Antonakis and Day (2004) stated that the concept of leadership is very broad, and is based on a diversity of positions, definitions, and theories, thus constituting a fundamental aspect of the guidance and direction of various groups in various scenarios (p. 18).

For this reason, the author of this paper considered—as the main objective of this study—to propose a course of action in performance orientation to improve the organizational culture in the Peruvian Army, as established by the ninth objective of the Plan de Transformación Institucional (Institutional Transformation Plan, PTI) of the Peruvian Army in its second version (Ejército del Perú, 2023). In such regard, this research is important because it contributes to the achievement of this objective, and it constitutes a foundation for future proposals and research. The theoretical framework of this research used all the publications cited in this academic paper, including the legal and constitutional frameworks, and the roles of the Peruvian Armed Forces.

Finally, the study approach consisted of four stages linked to the development of its
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contents. The first part described and analyzed the concept of organizational commitment, while the second part analyzed strategic leaders, and the third looked at organizational culture. The fourth part analyzed the concept of performance orientation, which led to the researcher to prepare this article. It is hoped that it will make a contribution toward the objective of improving organizational culture in the Peruvian Army.

METHODS

Antonakis and Day (2004) explained that:

Una revisión no se configura como un artículo original. En algunas ocasiones, tendrá como parte de su contenido, datos nuevos (del laboratorio propio del investigador) no publicada aún alguna revista primaria. Pero, el propósito de estos es el de explorar las referencias bibliográficas anteriormente publicadas y el de ubicarla con una perspectiva adecuada [A review is not an original article. On some occasions, its content will include new data (from the researcher’s own laboratory), not yet published in any primary journal. However, its purpose is to explore the previously published literature and to place it in a suitable perspective]. (p. 62)

The author sequentially referenced certain existing bibliography related to the review subject, with the purpose of examining it and obtaining his own results, placing it in a perspective that allows proposing courses of action that contribute to the improvement of the current situation of the unit of analysis of this research, which is organizational culture.

The works reviewed were selected following the pattern imposed by the unit of analysis, the Peruvian Army, since the subject is addressed by the institution in its Institutional Transformation Plan (PTI) for the year 2034 (Ejército del Perú, 2023), one of its objectives being to improve the organizational culture. The main selection criterion considered was performance orientation, which, as part of the dimensions of the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) research program established by Robert House, constitutes a fundamental pillar in the theory used to analyze the organizational culture of the unit of analysis.

Finally, following the above-mentioned methodology, articles published in indexed scientific journals were reviewed, ensuring the quality of their contents. These reviews were referenced following the logical order that leads to a sequential understanding of the article’s key concepts, which are part of the organizational culture construct.

RESULTS

Organizational commitment

Allen and Meyer (1996) define organizational commitment as an “estado psicológico..., el mismo que evidencia la relación existente entre una organización y una persona” [psychological state... which evidences the relationship between an organization and an individual] (p. 62). This psychological state needs to be reinforced and oriented toward the improvement of organizational culture in the Peruvian Army because, as previously stated, strategic leaders—since they hold the strategic level positions in the institution—can manage the organizational culture, but this requires substantial changes which involve breaking with the existing paradigms and mental models, even within themselves. This demands great institutional commitment on their part.

The position and the sequence of actions considered during the preparation of the first version of the Institutional Transformation Plan, related to engaging leaders, do not refer solely and exclusively to leaders at the strategic level; it must also be understood as part of the nature of the Army that most of its members are leaders at different levels (strategic, organizational, and tactical). Considering that both organizational and tactical leaders are on their way to becoming strategic leaders, the nature of their preparation must also be conceived in the long term; otherwise, the top echelon will continue to be singled out as the only one responsible for generating important changes in the mental models of the organization, when this could also be driven from the organizational and tactical levels as a strong current, thus generating the synergy that is so necessary to
materialize improvements or changes in the organizational culture.

Organizational commitment becomes a second-order construct, which is measured through the following dimensions: moral, affective commitment, and the identification of values and objectives (Fonseca Herrera et al., 2019).

In the Army, the organizational culture must be modified by the strategic leaders, because their decisions and actions evidence solid military training, committed to the transformation process which has begun (Aguilar Sánchez, 2022). For this reason, setting an example should become the main tool to be used by Army leaders at all levels and in every one of their actions. Their individual efforts will add to their collective effort, resulting in a solid institutional commitment and, eventually, becoming consolidated and sustainable over time.

**Strategic leaders**

Organizational culture in itself does not have a significant impact on organizational commitment, but mediation moderated by employer brand experts contributes positively to this relationship. Then, to strengthen organizational commitment and culture, the employer brand’s management needs to be included in advance, as it is a determining factor to make the relationship under study more dynamic (Hurtado Palomino et al., 2021).

Given the accelerated dynamics of change and considering societal demands for prepared military personnel with a deep vocation of service, leaders at strategic levels are called upon to implement institutional improvements, assume command and facilitate progress, taking the initiative without neglecting discipline (Aguilar Sanchez, 2022, p. 104).

As every organization, the Peruvian Army requires Peruvian Army with a suitable competency profile that allows them to plan and implement improvements that materialize in the long term, as is the case with everything that is truly important. It is necessary for current and future strategic leaders to be aware of this issue; thus, it is important to raise awareness of it among staff, to contribute to strengthening their organizational commitment, which should be part of their professional profile.

Considering these fundamental aspects to exercise leadership in the military field, it is inferred that the mentioned elements have a close relationship with certain points noted in transformational type leadership, taking into account that these leaders are perceived as the ones who guide their actions based on ideals, values, ethics, and a particular human sense, leaving aside traits such as envy, selfishness, among others, which would ultimately harm the achievement of goals (Parada, 2015, p. 7).

Taking into account the work of Fernández-Lores et al. (2016), the experience accumulated by the employer brand is the stimulating process that drives the employee’s physical, emotional, and sentimental perceptions, their actions in the workplace, as well as the enjoyment they derive from the work and the values promoted by the organization; in other words, the benefits provided by the institution to the human capital for being part of it.

The current environment of universities requires them to implement differentiated human talent management strategies to obtain and maintain competitive advantages; therefore, attracting human talent is currently a key variable for sustaining quality education. Therefore, the culture of an organization and what it has experience both significantly influence commitment to the organization (Vaijayanthi et al., 2011; Fernández-Lores et al., 2016; Khanh Giao et al., 2020).

Implementing, making effective, and meeting the goals of a strategy involves a sequence of steps that are configured in the change of the structure: knowledge of the resources available, and the identification of market requirements and the stakeholders of its irregular environment, in order to allocate pertinently and thus successfully adapt the available resources to the respective proposals (Drucker, 1954; Chandler, 1962; Galbraith and Nathanson, 1978; Koontz and Weihrich, 1991; Lambin, 1994; Johnson and Scholes, 1997; Burgelman, 2002).
In the Peruvian Army, organizational culture can be improved or modified as part of the decision-making process by its strategic leaders. This process must be preceded by solid institutional commitment, which must be instilled on officers from the beginning of their military training and reinforced throughout their careers. Institutional policies must be established to allow these decisions to be sustainable over time.

**Organizational culture**

Organizational culture is an implicit and intangible system of shared meanings that form a behavior pattern and uniformize the ways of thinking and living together in a given organization; thus, it is defined by values, ideologies, myths, norms, stories, rites, beliefs, habits, symbols, language, traditions, among others, which have been evolving over time and have become the foundations of the organization (Taylor, 1891; Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952; Pettigrew, 1979; Rossi and O’Higgins, 1981; Hofstede, 1980).

A potentially more fruitful approach is to consider culture as the source of a family of concepts. The offsprings of some organizations are symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual, and myth (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 574).

Organizational culture has been widely studied from various fields (Warrick, 2017) and is characterized as a shared set of beliefs, assumptions, and values in an organization (Khanh Giao et al., 2020).

Military culture differs from other community organizations in that it is the product of very particular roles, traditions, values, and principles that date back to the beginnings of what is now the State, which have evolved and adapted to enable the effective accomplishment of the Army’s mission. The peculiar military culture is one of its main strengths, which contributes to the integration and identification of people with this organization (Aguilar Sánchez, 2022, p. 351). This is why culture must be understood as the integration of a series of concepts that compose it—hereinafter ‘dimensions’—so that this identification allows the analysis and, as a result, valuable information is obtained that leads to a diagnosis of the state in which all or some of these dimensions may be, in accordance with what was done in 2019 during the development of the Institutional Transformation Plan in its first version (PTI v1) (Ejército del Perú, 2020).

During the preparation of the Peruvian Army’s Strategic Plan for Institutional Development (PEDI by its Spanish initials), planners determined that the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) study would be the most effective methodology for identifying the organization’s underlying assumptions. However, adaptations were made to this tool in order to establish the dimensions best suited to the analysis of the Army's organizational culture; in such regard, six dimensions were identified for the analysis of the existing organizational culture (Arévalo Kalinowski et al., 2021, p. 79).

The dimensions established by the GLOBE research program are: performance orientation, assertiveness, future orientation, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. The Peruvian Army, upon analyzing its organizational culture, only used equal opportunities, practicality and humane orientation, power distance, performance orientation, in-group collectivism, in addition to the value of discipline as being of significant importance to the nature of the military institution.

From the analysis conducted, highly important and valuable information was obtained in the search for the improvement of the organizational culture since, in order to do so, it is necessary to identify problems whose solution will lead to the implementation of actions that will bring about changes that will make any improvements or modifications to the collective behavior of the members of the Peruvian Army tangible.

Thus, at the end of the process, the planners identified ten strategic actions to achieve Strategic Objective No. 8 (Change the organizational culture) of the Plan de Transformación Institucional (PTI) of the Peruvian Army, v1 (Ejército del Perú, 2020). Likewise, a series of mechanisms were established to complement the effect of the strategic actions formulated to
improve aspects of the institution’s organizational culture (Arévalo Kalinowski et al., 2021, p. 84).

However, the second version of the Plan de Transformación Institucional replaced the word “change” for “improve”, and it will be Strategic Objective No. 9 hereinafter. In addition, these ten strategic actions were reduced to only one, which is subdivided into three activities: strengthening institutional leadership, strengthening discipline and service vocation, and strengthening the organizational climate.

This modification (Ejército del Perú, 2023), unlike what was established in the previous PTI version, does not present convincing support to understand the change, since in 2019 the data obtained from the organizational culture analysis of the Peruvian Army was used. For the author of this research, this situation is a setback in the search for success in the attainment of the now strategic objective No. 9; in addition, in March of the current fiscal year 2023, a presentation of the PTI v2 was made, which did not disclose the reasons why the data obtained using the GLOBE methodology were left aside, even though it showed specific problems which, had they been addressed through any measure, would have already experienced tangible changes in the perception of all the members of the organization, due to the particularity that the implementation of improvements to the organizational culture does not require financial resources to be achieved.

In 2019, a desired culture was determined, which was enunciated as an end state desired by the military. In its final lines, it summarizes the Army as an institution with a set of ideas that characterize it and that, mainly, allows the change of mentality and attitude of its new members Kalinowski et al., 2021, p. 82).

After announcing the desired organizational culture, a series of actions were implemented, aimed at changing the current culture. These were naturally accompanied by the solid institutional commitment of its leaders, which was a determining factor to improve or modify organizational culture. This is because strategic leaders are those who have the first option to accept recommendations, to present and implement actions to be executed, and to make immediate decisions. This is the only way to generate an impact on the culture of the organization as a whole.

**Performance orientation**

According to House et al. (2001), in Project GLOBE, performance orientation refers to the degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence. This dimension includes the future-oriented component of the dimension called dynamism (Hostede, 1980, p. 495).

While it is true that the Peruvian Army encourages and rewards the members of the institution, from the point of view of the author of this research, this process should be analyzed in depth, using the problems identified during the development of the diagnosis carried out in the PTI.v1 (Ejército del Perú, 2020).

In general, there were 15 problems identified within the organizational culture of the Army in 2019; specifically in terms of performance orientation, three were presented, as shown in Table 1.

The author believes that the solutions to the problems identified are of a complex nature, but they are particular in that their implementation and execution do not require any financial resources to become a reality. However, this apparent advantage requires strong organizational commitment, which must be a priority for strategic leaders. Additionally, in the case of Army officers who do not yet hold leadership positions, it is necessary to articulate their education process with the achievement of strategic objective Nº. 9 of the PTI.v2 (Ejército del Perú, 2023), which is to improve the organizational culture. The author believes that the preparation of this academic article is a great opportunity to present a proposal as a contribution in gratitude for the years of permanence in the institution and all that was received from it.

**DISCUSSION**

**Contribution - proposal**

In order to prepare an adequate and feasible proposal, the author considered the first of the
problems identified, that is, the perception of favoritism to obtain benefits and recognitions, and contrasted it with the process of officer education, since in most cases this step up the career ladder gives access to benefits and recognitions, where a significant number of interviewees believe that favoritism exists.

Thus, following the methodology currently in use by the Dirección de Planeamiento del Ejército (DIPLANE) to articulate PTI.v2 (Ejército del Perú, 2023) and the Institutional Operating Plan (POI). The author, using the six dimensions analyzed in the PTI.v1, made the following proposal in relation to current Objective 9, as detailed below:

- **Step 1.** Using the logical framework matrix from the first level of planning as a basis (see Table 2), the logical sequence of strategic objective (OE) No. 9 breakdown was identified: its respective strategic action, indicator, activities, and planning task PTI, as well as stating who is responsible for managing it.

Having prepared the logical framework matrix of the first level of planning, comprising the Dirección de Personal del Ejército (DIPERE) and the Dirección de Educación y Doctrina del Ejército (DIEDOCE), the value chain was created (see Table 3), identifying the sequence between the objective, action, activity, task, and strategic goal, developed in the second level of planning and considering the Comando de Educación y Doctrina del Ejército (COEDE) and the Jefatura de Educación del Ejército (JEDUCE), finally reaching the third level which is the Escuela Superior de Guerra del Ejército - Escuela de Posgrado (ESGE-EPG). Thus, of the four strategic tasks aimed at the Army’s human resources, that is, personnel with the rank of officers, technicians and sub-officers, voluntary military service troops, and civilian employees, only the strategic task “actions to improve the performance orientation of Officers personnel” was taken, as will be described below.

- **Step 2.** As a second step, the process route was developed, in which tactical activities were defined to improve the selection, education and awarding processes at the ESGE-EPG. Four intermediate products were determined, and implementing the modifications to the selection process in the ESGE-EPG was chosen.

- **Step 3.** As a third step, the relevant indicators were defined to measure the achievement of goals and objectives over time.

- **Step 4.** As a fourth step, the general formula of the third level of planning was proposed, as shown in Table 4.

- **Step 5.** As a fifth and last step, the modifications to the ESGE-EPG selection process for 2034 were scheduled and implemented, as can be seen in Table 4.

As can be noted, the author makes this proposal through the development of the DIPLANE methodology, considering that—if it were to be implemented and executed—it would have a significant impact on the problem being studied (perception of favoritism for receiving benefits and recognitions) due to the following reasons:

- The number of higher officers without the training provided in the Master’s Degree in Military Science would decrease significantly. This is because by
Table 2

**Logical framework of the first level of planning**

- **Objective No. 09:** To improve organizational culture in the Army
- **OIE indicator:** Level of implementation of activities contributing to the improvement of organizational culture in the Army
- **Entity in charge:** Army Personnel Directorate (DIPERE) Army Personnel Command (COPERE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic action (SA)</th>
<th>Indicator SA</th>
<th>Entity in charge of SA</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Task (PTI)</th>
<th>Process map V.2 - 2022</th>
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<tr>
<td>9.1 Organizational culture sustained in military ethics</td>
<td>9.1.1. Implementation level of activities contributing to organizational culture sustained in military ethics</td>
<td>DIPERE-COPERE</td>
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<td>1. Actions to improve power distance.</td>
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<td>9.1.1.e. Discipline</td>
<td>5. Actions to improve discipline.</td>
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*Note: Adapted from Ejército del Perú, 2023.*

Table 3

**Value chain**

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<tr>
<th>First level-strategic</th>
<th>Second level-operational</th>
<th>Third level-tactical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIPERE-DIEDOCE</td>
<td>COEDE-JEDUCE</td>
<td>ESGE</td>
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</table>

**Strategic objective 01**

To improve organizational culture in the Army.

**Strategic action**

- Organizational culture sustained in military ethics

**Operational objective**

To improve the process of officer training and development

**Tactical objective**

To implement the directive to improve the process of officer development

**Strategic activity**

9.1.1.B. Performance orientation

**Operational action**

Directive to improve the process of officer development

**Tactical action**

Directive to improve the development process at ESGE-EPG

**Strategic task:** Actions to improve the performance orientation of:

- Officers
- Army technicians and sub-officers
- Voluntary military service troop
- Civilian personnel

**Operational activity**

Implementation of the directive to improve the process of officer development

**Tactical activity**

Improving ESGE selection process

**Strategic goal**

Improved performance orientation

**Operational task**

Selection process

**Tactical task**

Modifying ESGE selection

**Operational goal**

Improving education

**Tactical activity**

Improving ESGE education process

**Operational goal**

Improving awarding

**Tactical task**

Modifying ESGE awarding

**Tactical goal**

Implementing modifications to the ESGE selection process

*Note: Adapted from DIPLANE, 2023.*
Figure 1

General formula matrix for the indicator of the third level

| Indicador de la directiva: | \( \% \text{ de nivell alcanzado en las mejoras de la calidad del proceso de selección en la ESGE + del proceso de educación en la ESGE + del proceso de premiación en la ESGE} \) | Nivel óptimo de calidad en los procesos de selección, educación y premiación en la ESGE-EPG en beneficio de la institución.
|
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| % de nivel alcanzado en las mejoras de la calidad del proceso de selección en la ESGE | + | del proceso de educación en la ESGE | + | del proceso de premiación en la ESGE |

Note. Adapted from DIPLANE, 2023.

Table 4

Control board with tasks and goals of the third level of planning

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Note. Adapted from DIPLANE, 2023.
2034, 120 majors from the class would have been invited during their third year in said rank.

- The problem arising in units where officers with the rank of major are applying for the ESGE-EPG would disappear. That situation, for obvious reasons, would have placed them in a conflict of priorities.

- The disappointment experienced by officers who fail to reach a place in several consecutive years would drop significantly. This feeling may result in serious frustration which, on many occasions, they take home with them.

CONCLUSIONS

- Organizational commitment must become a generic competency in the graduate profiles of programs taught by the ESGE-EPG, which must show consistency with the position profiles, thus providing strategic leaders with tools that help them manage improvements to organizational culture.

- The strategic leaders of the Peruvian Army must promote effort through their actions, leading by example at all times, which will cause a replication effect in the behavior of the organizational and tactical leaders who follow them on this long road of shared responsibility.

- The organizational culture of the Peruvian Army must be subjected to an improvement process as established in Objective N°. 9 of the second version of the Plan de Transformación Institucional (Ejército del Perú, 2023). For this to take place, the commitment of all its members is required; that is to say, all of the levels that make up the most valuable resource of an organization: its people.

- Performance orientation is a dimension of the organizational culture of the Peruvian Army that, if managed efficiently, would lead to tangible improvements in the perception of its personnel; it is important to point out that there are ways to set tasks and goals that do not entail any type of expense for the institution.

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Conflict of interest
The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Author contributions
Eduardo Gonzalo León Jesús (lead author): conceptualization, formal analysis, resources, writing (original draft, review, and editing).