



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERFORMANCE CULTURE,  
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL  
INNOVATIVENESS AMONG ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS***

**NOR INTAN ADHA BINTI HAFIT**

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EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

**By**

**NOR INTAN ADHA BINTI HAFIT**

**Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2017**

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## DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to*

*My lovely Husband, Kids and Strongest women in my life Emak Hajah Siti Naimah  
Yusof:*

*With love, respect and a bunch of memories  
Indeed, we belong to Allah and indeed to Him we will return.*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment  
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**NOR INTAN ADHA BINTI HAFIT**

**December 2017**

**Chairman : Associate Professor Azizan bin Asmuni, PhD**  
**Faculty : Educational Studies**

The empirical evidence indicates that in order to survive and achieve long-term viability, a higher education institution must show an impressive performance. In facing the challenges from the global education market, strategic planning must be in place for the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to capitalise on transformations for excellence. In line with the aspiration of Malaysia to be a competitive educational centre of excellence and international education centre in Southeast Asia, HEI in Malaysia are expected to achieve academic excellence through innovation. Therefore, it is important to review the innovations of HEI organisations. Meanwhile, organisational learning is the key to enhancing organisational reforms.

Hence, this study reviews the correlations between the performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning, and organisational innovativeness through the lens of a dynamic capability theory, knowledge-based view, and a structural contingency theory.

This study used a descriptive and correlation study design with a comprehensive sample. A total of 273 administrators from six HEIs, namely Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), representing a number of areas in Malaysia were randomly selected. Seven hypotheses were examined to identify whether or not each variable is associated with an organisational innovativeness. A descriptive analysis and Amos structural equation

modelling version 23.0 were adopted to examine the adequacy of the hypothesis model as well as the correlation between the variables.

By using the path analysis, this study gained support for seven hypotheses. In the Malaysian HEI environment, the performance culture is correlated with organisational learning (H1), organisational structure is correlated with organisational learning (H2), organisational learning is correlated with organisational innovativeness (H3), performance culture is correlated with organisational innovativeness (H4), organisational structure is correlated with organisational innovativeness (H5), performance culture is correlated with organisational innovativeness which are mediated by organisational learning (H6), and finally, organisational structure is correlated with organisational innovativeness which are mediated by organisational learning (H7).

This study also exposes that all hypotheses provide positive support. This indicates that organisational learning is important in ensuring that organisational innovativeness can be enhanced to be more innovative and productive, facilitated by the performance culture and organisational structure.

This study contributes uniquely towards the research by forming future frameworks, empirically combining the basic findings with theoretical descriptions from the information. The study also highlights a number of implications and recommendations for policies and practices towards organisational reformation enhancements in HEI. In the HEI context, this field of research is fairly new and as such it is important to reduce the gap between the limited empirical works for this topic, especially in Malaysia. From the perspective of theorists, this study opens up a new vision pertaining to organisational learning as a predictor of organisational innovativeness.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**HUBUNG KAIT ANTARA BUDAYA PRESTASI, STRUKTUR ORGANISASI  
DAN PEMBAHARUAN ORGANISASI DI KALANGAN PENTADBIR DI  
DALAM INSTITUSI PENGAJIAN TINGGI**

Oleh

**NOR INTAN ADHA BINTI HAFIT**

**Disember 2017**

**Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Azizan bin Asmuni, PhD**  
**Fakulti : Pengajian Pendidikan**

Bukti empirik menunjukkan bahawa untuk bertahan dan mencapai daya kebolehjayaan jangka panjang, sesebuah institusi pengajian tinggi hendaklah menunjukkan prestasi yang memberangsangkan. Perancangan yang strategik untuk Institusi Pengajian Tinggi dalam mengguna pakai perubahan untuk mencapai kecemerlangan dalam menghadapi persaingan yang ditimbulkan oleh pasaran pendidikan global. Selaras dengan aspirasi Malaysia untuk menjadi pusat kecemerlangan pendidikan dan pusat pendidikan antarabangsa yang kompetitif di Asia Tenggara, Institusi Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia dijangka mencapai kecemerlangan akademik melalui inovasi. Oleh itu, adalah penting untuk mengkaji inovasi organisasi IPT. Dalam masa yang sama, Pembelajaran organisasi merupakan tunjang utama dalam mempertingkatkan pembaharuan organisasi.

Maka, kajian ini meneliti hubung kait antara budaya prestasi, struktur organisasi, pembelajaran organisasi dan pembaharuan organisasi menerusi pemerhatian teori keupayaan dinamik, pandangan berasaskan pengetahuan dan teori luar jangkaan berstruktur.

Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kajian deskriptif dan korelasi dengan sampel yang komprehensif. Sejumlah 273 pentadbir daripada 6 institusi pengajian tinggi iaitu Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) dan Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) mewakili beberapa kawasan di Malaysia telah dipilih secara rawak. Tujuh hipotesis telah diuji untuk mengenal pasti sama ada setiap pemboleh ubah berkaitan dengan

pembaharuan organisasi. Analisis deskriptif dan pemodelan persamaan berstruktur (SEM) Amos versi 23.0 telah diguna pakai untuk menguji kecukupan model hipotesis dan menguji hubung kait antara pembolehubah.

Dengan menggunakan analisis laluan, kajian ini menemui sokongan terhadap tujuh hipotesis. Dalam persekitaran institusi pengajian tinggi Malaysia, budaya prestasi mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembelajaran organisasi (H1), struktur organisasi mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembelajaran organisasi (H2), pembelajaran organisasi mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembaharuan organisasi (H3), budaya prestasi mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembaharuan organisasi (H4), struktur organisasi mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembaharuan organisasi (H5), budaya prestasi dan mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembaharuan organisasi yang memudahkan dengan pembelajaran organisasi (H6) dan akhir sekali, struktur organisasi dan mempunyai hubung kait dengan pembaharuan organisasi yang memudahkan dengan pembelajaran organisasi (H7).

Kajian ini juga mendedahkan bahawa kesemua hipotesis memberi sokongan yang positif. Ini menunjukkan bahawa, pembelajaran organisasi adalah penting dalam memastikan pembaharuan organisasi dapat ditingkatkan serta lebih inovatif dan produktif yang dibantu oleh budaya prestasi dan stuktur organisasi.

Kajian ini memberi sumbangan yang unik terhadap penyelidikan dengan membentuk rangka kerja kajian akan datang dengan menggabungkan secara empirik dapatan asas bersama dengan penerangan teori daripada maklumat tersebut. Kajian ini juga mengetengahkan beberapa implikasi dan saranan untuk dasar dan amalan ke arah penambahbaikan pembaharuan organisasi di institusi pengajian tinggi. Bidang penyelidikan ini baru dalam konteks HEI, oleh itu adalah penting untuk mengurangkan jurang kerja empirikal yang terhad pada topik ini terutamanya di Malaysia. Dari perspektif teoritis, kajian ini menyediakan wawasan baru mengenai pembelajaran organisasi sebagai peramal untuk inovasi organisasi.



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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

**Azizan Asmuni, PhD**

Associate Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Chairman)

**Khairuddin Idris, PhD**

Associate Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

**Nor Wahiza Abdul Wahat, PhD**

Senior Lecturer  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

---

**ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD**

Professor and Dean  
School of Graduate Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Name and Matric No: Nor Intan Adha Binti Hafit, GS33826

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of  
Chairman of  
Supervisory  
Committee: Associate Professor Dr. Azizan Asmuni

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of  
Member of  
Supervisory  
Committee: Associate Professor Dr. Khairuddin Idris

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of  
Member of  
Supervisory  
Committee: Dr. Nor Wahiza Abdul Wahat

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	i
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	iii
<b>APPROVAL</b>	v
<b>DECLARATION</b>	vi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	viii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xiv
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Innovation and Higher Education Institution	3
1.4 Statement of the Problem	5
1.5 Research Objectives	8
1.6 Research Questions	8
1.7 Significance of the Study	8
1.8 Scope and Limitation Of Research	9
1.9 Definition of Terms	10
1.9.1 Organisational Innovativeness	10
1.9.2 Performance culture	10
1.9.3 Organisational Structure	10
1.9.4 Organisational Learning	11
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Higher Education Background	12
2.1.1 The National Higher Education Strategic Plan	13
2.2 Organisational Innovativeness Perspective	14
2.2.1 Innovation	14
2.2.2 Organisational Innovativeness	16
2.3 Underpinning Theory:	17
2.3.1 Dynamic Capability Theory	17
2.3.2 Knowledge Based View Theory	21
2.3.3 Structural Contingency Theory	22
2.4 Factor Affecting Organisational Learning	23
2.4.1 Performance Culture	23
2.4.2 Organisational Structure	25
2.5 Factor Affecting Organisational Innovativeness	27
2.5.1 Organisational Learning	27
2.5.2 Performance Culture	29
2.5.3 Organisational Structure	31
2.6 Organisational Learning as Mediator	34
2.6.1 Relationship between Performance Culture and Organisational Innovativeness	34

2.6.2	Relationship between Organisational Structure and Organisational Innovativeness	35
2.7	Theoretical Framework	36
2.7.1	Model Development and Hypotheses	36
2.8	Hypothesis	46
2.9	Conclusion	46
<b>3</b>	<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>47</b>
3.1	Introduction	47
3.2	Research Paradigm	47
3.2.1	Positivist Method	48
3.3	Research Design	48
3.4	Population	49
3.5	Sampling Size	49
3.5.1	The Sampling Procedure	51
3.6	Data Collection Procedures	52
3.7	Surveys Development Process	54
3.7.1	Expert review	54
3.7.2	Pilot Study	54
3.8	Measure	55
3.8.1	Organisational Learning	55
3.8.2	Organisational Culture	57
3.8.3	Organisational Structure	58
3.8.4	Organisational Innovativeness	59
3.9	Data and Statistical Analysis	60
3.9.1	Determination of the Demographic Profiles	60
3.9.2	Determination of the Level Organisational Innovativeness	61
3.9.3	Predicting factors of performance culture, organisational structure and organisational learning on organisational innovativeness.	61
3.10	Data Preparation and Factor Analysis	67
3.10.1	Data Screen	67
3.10.2	Missing Data	67
3.10.3	Analysis of assumptions	68
3.11	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	70
3.11.1	Assessing Measurement Model Validity	74
3.11.2	Unidimensionality	74
3.11.3	Validity	74
3.11.4	Reliability	77
3.12	Summary	77

<b>4</b>	<b>FINDING AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>78</b>
4.1	Introduction	78
4.2	Demographic Profile	78
4.2.1	Response rate	78
4.2.2	Characteristics	78
4.2.3	Level of Organisational Innovativeness	80
4.2.4	Structural Model (Testing of the Hypotheses)	81
4.3	Analyzing the Mediating Effects	83
4.3.1	H6: Organisational learning is a mediator between performance culture and organisational innovativeness	83
4.3.2	H7: Organisational learning is a mediator between organisational structure and organisational innovativeness	85
4.4	Finding and Discussion	87
4.4.1	The Level of Organisational Innovativeness	87
4.4.2	The Relationship between Performance Culture and Organisational Learning	87
4.4.3	The Relationship between Organisational Structure and Organisational Learning	88
4.4.4	The Relationship between Organisational Learning and Organisational Innovativeness	89
4.4.5	The Relationship between Performance Culture and Organisational Innovativeness	90
4.4.6	The Relationship between the Organisational Structure and the Organisational Innovativeness	92
4.4.7	The Mediating Effects of Organisational Learning between the Performance Culture with the Organisational Innovativeness.	92
4.4.8	The Mediating Effects of the Organisational Learning between the Organisational Structures with the Organisational Innovativeness.	93
4.5	Summary	96
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>97</b>
5.1	Summary	97
5.2	Conclusion	98
5.2.1	Conclusion on the Research Objective	98
5.3	Implication and Recommendation	100
5.3.1	Research implications for theory	100
5.3.2	Implications for HRD practitioner.	102
5.3.3	Implications for policy decision making	103
5.4	Opportunities for Future Research	104
5.5	Conclusion	105

<b>REFERENCES</b>	106
<b>APPENDICES</b>	145
<b>BIODATA OF STUDENT</b>	154
<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	155





## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Random sample size table for the determined number of population	50
3.2 The Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling in the Higher Education Institutions	52
3.3 Reliability of Measurements in the Pilot Study	55
3.4 Organisational Learning Items	56
3.5 Organisational Culture Items	57
3.6 Organisational Structure Items	59
3.7 Organisational Innovativeness Items	60
3.8 Determination of Level of Organisational Learning	61
3.9 The Three Categories of Model Fit and The Level of Acceptance	66
3.10 Assessment of normality	68
3.11 The Composite Reliability (CR) and AVE for all constructs	75
3.12 Fitness Indexes Indicate the Fitness of the Construct	76
3.13 Discriminant Validity Index Summary	76
4.1 Frequency table of respondent profile	79
4.2 Level of Organisational Innovativeness	81
4.3 The Regression Path Coefficients and its significance based on p-value < 0.05	82
4.4 The Path Regression Coefficient and its significance	83
4.5 The Path Regression Coefficient and Its Significance	84
4.6 The direct effect of structure on innovative is significant	85
4.7 The Path Regression Coefficient and its significance	86
4.8 The Summary of result Hypothesis	95

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
2.1 Proposed PC-OL relationship	38
2.2 Proposed OS-OL relationship	39
2.3 Proposed OL-OI relationship	41
2.4 Proposed PC-OI relationship	42
2.5 Proposed OS-OI relationship	43
2.6 Proposed PC-OL-OI	44
2.7 Proposed OS-OL-OI	45
2.8 Theoretical framework	45
3.1 Six –Stage process for Structural Equation Modeling	62
3.2 Scatterplot of the standardised residuals	70
3.3 The Pooled-CFA for All Constructs in the Study	72
3.4 The Pooled-CFA Output Showing Factor Loading and $R^2$ for every Item and the Correlation between Construct	73
4.1 The result of path diagram for proposed model	82
4.2 The result of direct effect on innovative (The beta coefficient is 0.344)	83
4.3 The Amos Output Shows Regression Weight between Construct culture, learning and innovation	84
4.4 The result of direct effect on innovative (beta coefficient 0.342)	85
4.5 The Amos output showing regression weights between constructs structure, learning and innovative.	86
4.6 The Final Structure Model	95

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview

This chapter is the first section of the thesis. It sets the background of the study to show how the problem statement exists thus, the need to conduct this study. In this chapter, the research objectives are explained and the research questions and hypotheses are also provided. This is then followed by the significance of the study and the scope in this study. The operational definitions of the research variables applied are discussed before it ends with a brief summary.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

This subchapter explains Higher Education Institution and need for innovativeness. Organisational innovativeness is defined, and explained as an important variable. The brief concept of innovation and innovativeness are also explained in the thesis to understand both concepts so that they can be adopted and used.

The higher education sector today is facing global challenges from the rapid technological change and increased demands of today's world (Mathew, 2010). Academic institutions need to develop their abilities and respond to these demands like business organisations (Kim and Ju, 2008) (Hussein, N., Mohamad, A., Noordin, F., & Ishak, N. A. (2014). Obendhain and Johnson (2004) pointed out that higher education institutions (HEIs) are important as they are producers of innovation, as a result of creating products and services. It is argued that the academic experience of the staff members represent the key knowledge of HEIs and it can be said that this is the main competitive resource of such institutions (Maponya, 2005). Colleges, technical institutions and universities function as suppliers of training, expertise, and personnel to industries (Fullwood et al., 2013). It is said that academic institutions play an important role in promoting and sustaining economic booms through their research, knowledge sharing, and creation of a skilled graduate workforce (Maponya, 2005). It is believed that HEIs contribute entrepreneurial graduates who will drive economic growth forward through their projects in the knowledge economy (Kim and Ju, 2008).

Galang (2010) argued that HEIs have the ability to change the world through training, researching answers to challenges and informing public policy. Higher education of a good quality is a source of great potential for the cultural development of a country (Kumar et al., 2013). Tian et al. (2009) argued that universities and research centres constitute social academic communities that play a vital role in creating and

transmitting scientific knowledge, which is the main source and driver of societal progress and development. HEIs can maximise their impact on the community and the wider society (Kim and Ju, 2008). They can play a critical role in knowledge transfer through working with other organisations to support innovation and solve their problems (Fullwood et al., 2013).

Innovation is closely related to innovativeness research, in fact, these concepts seem to be sometimes used as synonyms. Innovation becomes critical to the survival of organisations and a key factor in achieving competitive advantage, organisational learning. The organisational learning of an individual's knowledge increases when it is shared. Sundbo (2002) admitted that organisational learning can be a way to ensure improvement in an organisation's innovative behaviour when learning is seen as collecting the experiences from innovation activities, so that the rest of the organisation can learn from it. It is thought to be the foundation of learning and research at universities and a vital pillar of learning that is critical to academic innovation (Daud and Abdul Hamid, 2006). It is found that the use of learning techniques can lead to improved academic and administrative services and reduced product development cycle time (Kumar et al., 2013).

Organisation structure characterized by low formalization, decentralization, and high complexity helps with the generation of innovation proposals. On the other hand, an organisational structure featuring high formalization, centralization, and low complexity facilitates the process of innovation adoption and implementation. Rogers (2010) also reviewed previous studies on organisational innovativeness and listed a number of structural variables considered influential to an organization's innovative capability. According to Rogers, complexity, interconnectedness, size, and organisational slack are positively associated with the level of organisational innovativeness, while centralization and formalization have a negative influence on an organization's innovative capability. Organisational structure in this regard is considered to be the primary platform that enables interaction, communication, discussion, and information exchange to take place within the organization.

Organisation culture is an important in an organisational innovativeness (Ke and Wei, 2008) and widely agreed that the organisational cultures is a critical in influencing change initiative. Past researches, like Naranjo et al (2010), Büschgens et. al, (2013) observed the strong link between innovativeness and organisational culture. Cooperation and teamwork establish a cross functional boundary that enables knowledge acquisition. (Subramaniam and Youndt, 2005). When knowledge of different fields are merged together, innovation can be increased and new knowledge can be progressively created (Grant, 1996). Furthermore, Dobin (2008) mentioned that organizations that support knowledge creation would involve its individuals in ensuring teamwork and independence, increasing attention to value, risk taking, using the solution-oriented approach and embarking participative and communicative decision making. Moreover, studies like Jassawalla and Sashittal (2003) and Raj and Srivastava (2013) claimed that knowledge oriented organizations often discourage

practices and behaviors that could hinder innovation, such as control, rigidity, predictability and stability.

Since organizations generate and adopt innovations to achieve better performance, organisational innovativeness, namely an organization's capability to innovative, becomes one critical determinant of organisational competitiveness (Wang & Ahmed, 2004). Advocates of organisational innovativeness have argued that only when organizations possess a strong innovative capability can they be more efficient in responding to a fast-changing environment and market (Clark & Tracey, 2004). This innovative capability also enhances the ability of members of the HEI to manage difficult situations and non-routine problems, thus strengthening the probabilities of organisational survival and success. Therefore, organisational innovativeness, when well developed and utilized, is considered as a potential source of competitive advantage. Nevertheless, an organization's innovative capability is not formed within a short time period. The development of organisational innovativeness is an incremental process. Time, a high quality of human resources, systematic policies and practices, and support from the HEI as a whole are required in order to cultivate and strengthen it, and it is constructed on the existing foundation of the HEI (Freel, 2005).

### **1.3 Innovation and Higher Education Institution**

In higher education environments, innovation is important and it has been said that universities should rely on product and process innovation (Jaskyte, 2004). Rogers (1995- 2010) asserted that educational institutions were a way to adopt and apply innovation. Educational quality is reliant on both product and process being adaptive to the changing environment. Therefore, it is necessary to study these two types of innovation within the higher education environment (Obendhain and Johnson, 2004). Albury (2005) found that innovation has the ability to improve the learning outcomes and quality of the provision of education. It is argued that innovations in the educational system can help customise the educational process (Brodhag, 2013). There is a general consensus that education has a positive impact on the well-being of communities, families and individuals (OECD, 2009). Thus, innovation within the higher education sector is considered the main engine of economic and social development. Chen and Chen (2008) noted that innovation in HEIs could be achieved through the academic results.

HEIs in Malaysia strive to promote innovation. This is because innovation is deemed as central in driving education and economic development. According to Global Innovation Index (2017), Malaysia is currently developing innovation agendas quite rapidly. Malaysia has the second highest scores in patents by origin, scientific and technical articles, and ICT services exports. Besides, Malaysia is in ranking 11<sup>th</sup> in middle income economies remains large, especially in Institutions, Human capital and research, Infrastructure, and Creative outputs. In order to support innovation in Malaysian education, education funding agencies and higher education institutions have recognised the management of own research and development (R&D) and



innovation as a specialised area. The last decades have seen the emergence and evolution of new research and innovation modes of across different field in the tertiary education (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2008). In this regard, research management activities comprise of applying for funding, funding management, cooperation with funding agencies as well as the planning, implementation, supervision and the evaluation of tasks. These activities were conducted along with conventional research activities including publishing papers, conducting research and to some extents, commercialisation.

In the past, the level of higher education in Iraq was advanced, making it the best in the Middle East and the countries of the Arab Gulf. Iraq won the UNESCO prize for the best illiteracy-free country, especially due to the endorsement of a law on free education (UNESCO, 2011). Higher education in Iraq enjoyed government funding as well as funding by private individuals. This funding went towards the development of teaching, the inception of research and projects, the development of educational services, curricula, laboratories, scholarships and training, all aimed at spreading knowledge in society.

American Ivy League universities as the exemplary institutions of knowledge that have been long established and that Malaysian institutions of higher education can continue to learn and adapt in order to continue achieving academic excellence, particularly in research practices (Kamaruzzaman and Siti Akhmar, 2009). Through an Ivy League experience can empower a dynamic research culture which will enhance the norms of academic scholarship, creating talent pool, team collaboration, discipline knowledge and participation in colloquia, journals and other peer review mechanisms. These are initiatives that will subsequently create ripples of research and innovation excellence. For example, Google and Sun as exemplars of the pivotal role that universities play in new venture creation and industry or sectoral development (Vise, 2005; Vise & Malseed, 2006; Hamel, 2007). Likewise are American giant companies such as Apple Incorporation, Roche, Satmetrix Systems, Procter & Gamble, Bristol-Meyers Squibb, where university research was “catalytic” and that followed the process below for new venture creation. Hence to quote Yale’s 'Apple University', Apple Inc. has hired the Dean of the Business School, Yale University to head an educational initiative to be called Apple University. In another example, Procter & Gamble, supports Yale University Collaboration for public health training throughout China.

Indeed, the literature has reported that different types of innovation appear within private and public HEIs. For instance, Hsiao et al. (2009) and Chen et al. (2010) suggested that innovation appears in seven different areas within public universities and technical institutions in Taiwan: leadership, administrative operations, student affairs, curricula and instruction, teachers’ professional development, resource applications and the campus. They argued that leadership innovation includes vision, campus administration development, and participation in decision-making. Administrative operations innovation encompasses the organisational culture,

administrative measures such as the adoption of new policies that could improve organisational performance, and service quality. Student affairs refer to competitive events, innovative club activities, and life counselling. Curriculum and instruction innovation consists of innovation regarding course content, teaching materials, and teaching itself. Teachers' professional development innovation includes professional studies, action research, and teachers engaging in technical R&D tasks and publishing. Resource application innovation encompasses technical qualifications and development, industry-academia collaboration, and external resources. Finally, campus innovation includes innovative campus design, educational facilities such as providing the equipment and space teachers' need to engage in innovative teaching, and the innovative provision of library resources.

Similarly, Chen and Chen (2008) distinguished between technical and managerial innovation within different universities in Taiwan. They indicated that technical innovation consists of academic innovation such as research patents, academic communication, and publishing in journals, and administrative innovation refers to outsourcing, and affair rotation. Managerial innovation, on the other hand, encompasses member innovation (i.e. refresher classes), marketing innovations such as number of conferences, and organisational structure innovation such as whether the institute is a learning organisation.

Several empirical studies have been carried out to stimulate innovation within public and private HEIs. For instance, Rahimi et al. (2011) found that the creativity of faculty members within public universities in Iran could be enhanced through knowledge creation, namely socialisation, externalisation, combination, and internalisation. Su et al. (2009) noted that technical can provide an important source of basic scientific knowledge that is critical for product and process innovation. A survey of 612 employees within private universities in Jordan, conducted by Al-Saudi (2012), found that creative behaviours, namely problem solving, the ability to change, a risk-taking attitude, communication capacity, and the encouragement of innovation were positively related to the organisational climate. Additionally, Youssef et al. (2013) studied the accumulation of e-skills and innovative capacities among teachers within public vocational high schools in Tunisia. The study found that computer and internet skills, the effective use of ICT, and facilities all play an important role in the innovative pedagogical use of ICT. Bjornali and Støren (2012) found individual competences, namely communication and championing, professional and creative qualities, and productivity and efficiency, increase the probability that higher education graduates introduce innovation at work to develop their educational performance such as participation in research projects and problem-based learning.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Organisational innovativeness have been studied for decades (Wang & Ahmed, 2004). The earliest attempts focused on technological breakthroughs at the industrial level. Organizations were considered innovative when they effectively adopted and diffused

new innovations in order to catch up with their competitors. Nowadays, organisational innovativeness is gaining increasing attention since it strengthens an organization's ability to generate and accept new ideas and creative solutions. Higher Education, as an institution that deals with its learning, must also adapt to this kind of innovation to cater for their academic needs and for the purpose of institutional administration.

Strategic planning for Higher Education Institute in adopting change to achieve excellence in facing the competition posed by the global education market (Norashikin et.al, 2014) In line with Malaysia's aspiration in becoming a center of education excellence and competitive international education hub of South East Asia, Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia are expected to achieve academic excellence through innovation. Hence, it is important to study organisational innovativeness of HEI.

Based on literature review on organisational innovativeness in higher education institution have shown that organisational innovativeness practices of Administrative Departments of Higher Education are largely unexplored. There is a limited number of research in the area of organisational innovativeness implementation in Higher Education (HE) in the South East Asia region (Sharimllah, Chong, & Ismail, 2009; Sohail & Daud, 2009; Hussein, et.al., 2014)

Numerous studies have been conducted on specific topics of performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning, and organisational innovativeness, however, few have attempted to evaluate the relationship between these four concepts. For example, in regards to organisational structure, past studies focused on the relationship between organisational structure and organisational learning and found that organisational structure is primarily needed for organisational learning to take place. Patterns embedded in the organisational structure and values that are shared among members of an organisation can affect how employees share and use knowledge for the benefit of the organisation. The structure of the organisation will influence the procurement, distribution, and exploitation (Lejeune & Vas, 2009)

This study is evident through the limited knowledge available regarding the relationship or interconnectivity among each of these constructs in a causal framework (Liao, Chang, Hu, & Yueh, 2012; Bryman, 2003; Lam, 2011). The need to explore the relationship between these theoretical constructs became clear when the available research on each individual constructs or dual constructs was examined.

These include performance culture (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba, 2014, Kaliprasad, 2006; Schein, 1990; Schein, 1996; Beyer & Trice, 1993; Uzokurt, Kumar, Semih Kimzan, & Eminoglu, 2013), organisational structure (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Zaltman, 1973; Lam, 2011) organisational learning (March & Olsen, 1975; Simon, 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Senge, 1990; Huber, 1991, Louis, Louis, Murphy, & Murphy, 2017), performance culture and organisational innovativeness (Heskett



& Kotter 1992; Bass, 1990; Muffatto, 1998; Chang & Lee, 2007; Uzokurt et al., 2013; Norashikin, Safiah, Noordin, & Ishak, 2016); Yesil & Kaya, 2012), organisational learning and organisational innovativeness (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Lin, 2003; Marsick & Watkins, 2003; Husain, Dayan, & Benedetto, 2016); Tohidi, Seyedaliakbar, & Mandegari, 2012; Tabasi, Vaezi & Alvani, 2014), performance culture and organisational learning (Watkins & Marsick, 1993; Pool, 2000; Hall, 2001) and organisational structure and organisational innovativeness (Aiken & Hage, 1971; Thompson, 1965; Burns & Stalker, 1961; Tushman, Smith, Wood, Westerman & O'Reilly, 2010).

Furthermore, the relationship between organisational learning and organisational innovativeness has been well-researched; some studies have supported the existence of positive relationships between organisational learning and organisational innovativeness (Argyris & Schon 1978; Calantone, Cavusgil & Zhao, 2002; Husain, Dayan & Benedetto, 2016, Dulger, Alpay, Yilmaz, & Bodur, 2016, N Hussein, S Omar, F Noordin, NA Ishak, 2016). The current lack of substantive and scholarly information hinders the determination of the true relationship between the four variables of performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning, and organisational innovativeness..

Although the relations and connections were established among organisational culture, organisational learning and organisational innovativeness, there are however still lack of empirically assessment within the HEI context especially in Malaysia (Norashikin, Safiah, Fauziah & Normala, 2016). Norashikin et.al (2016) highlighted need further research on organisational innovativeness in HEI, especially in Malaysia, and this study close the gap, where include mediating variable between performance culture and organisational innovativeness, which where suggested by Norashikin et al (2016), this mediating variable can give better understanding on the relationship between these variable.

If performance culture and organisational structure impact organisational learning, and organisational learning impacts innovativeness, then what is the relationship between culture and innovativeness as mediated by organisational learning? And what is the relationship between structure and innovativeness as mediated by organisational learning? Can the assumption be tested that a causal link is present among the four variables of performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning and innovativeness? If this relationship is real, then how does an individual beneficially manage this relationship as a leader or a follower? These are essential questions were explored in the current study. Therefore, this study has identified a lack of empirical studies on the relationships between organisational learning, structure, culture and innovativeness. No such studies have examined these relationships within the field of higher education within Malaysia context. In order to fill this gap in the literature, this study aims to answer the following main objectives.

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

Main objective: To determine the factors that contributes to organisational innovativeness.

Sub objective:

1. To determine the level of organisational innovativeness among Higher Education Institution in Malaysia.
2. To identify the relationship between performance culture, organisational structure and organisational learning.
3. To determine the relationship between performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning and organisational innovativeness.
4. To determine organisational learning as a mediator in relationship between performance culture, organisational structure and organisational innovativeness.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

1. What is the level of organisational learning among Higher Education Institution in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between performance culture, organisational structure and organisational learning?
3. What is the relationship between performance culture, organisational structure, organisational learning and organisational innovativeness?
4. Is the organisational learning as a mediator in relationship between performance culture, organisational structure and organisational innovativeness?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is twofold. First, this study provides empirical evidence to bridge the knowledge gap with regard to the relationships between organisational learning, structure, culture and innovativeness. Even though organisational learning is considered critical concepts and practices for modern organizations, most of the existing literature focuses on the conceptual level and considers knowledge creation and acquisition as the primary outcome variables of organisational learning. Few studies have attempted to examine the influences of organisational learning on individual-level outcomes, such as innovative behavior, creativity, or problem solving ability. This study regards the enhancement of organisational innovativeness as a product of organisation learning. More specifically, in addition to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills at the individual level, organisational learning can affect an

individual's behaviour and attitudes, thus enhancing their organisational innovative capability.

Second, organisational innovativeness is treated as an organization-wide atmosphere, namely a propensity felt by organisational members to be open to considering and encouraging new ideas, organisational innovativeness as a climate becomes the major emphasis for the definition. Consequently, organisational innovativeness is no longer simply the result of a set of determinants that leads to some sort of financial performance. Rather, organisational innovativeness becomes an overarching organisational atmosphere which influences every single organisational member from every possible angle. Examining organisational innovativeness as a climate construct makes it possible to further help organizations understand its important influences on individual members' behaviour.

As a result, organisational members are expected to have an open mind and an innovative thinking style when confronting problems and difficulties, as well as searching for innovative solutions in their daily life. Meanwhile, to expand the definition of innovativeness to the abstract level enhances the generalizability of such findings to all types of organizations. In particular, through this study organizations that do not have professional in-house R&D or are not financially able to adopt innovations on a regular base can appreciate the importance of becoming an innovative organization.

Additionally, seeing innovativeness as an intra-organisational capability, an internal perspective must be adopted in order to determine how critical organisational antecedents affect such capability. It also suggests that the focus of organisational practices and systems that encourage innovation should be expanded beyond the department of research and development or technology to include every member within the organization.

## **1.8 Scope and Limitation Of Research**

First, the study was limited to the Malaysian Higher Education Institutions, hence, this study's result might be influenced by the unique perception of the culture. Furthermore, as there was a few months gap between the collection of data and the report consolidation, the employees' may change over time. Consequently, the findings might not express their current attitudes and perceptions. Lastly, the data from the survey are solely based on the employees' views and these might be biased. On the other hand, the data seem to show a reasonable balance of opinions and is deemed to reflect the real situations in the HEIs.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

### **1.9.1 Organisational Innovativeness**

Organisational innovativeness is defined as the propensity of a firm to actively support new ideas, novelty, experimentation, and creative solutions (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Innovativeness in this study refers to an overall capability with which an organisation embraces an atmosphere of willingness and openness to newness. In this study, organisational innovativeness is defined as the overall innovative capacity of an organisation to introduce new products to the market, or opening up new markets by integrating innovative behaviour and process with strategic orientation (Wang & Ahmed, 2004). Organisational innovativeness was measured by Hurley & Hult (1998) and Wang and Ahmed (2004) with a focus on the general perception of the behavioural and process aspects of organisational innovativeness.

### **1.9.2 Performance culture**

Performance culture is defined by O'Reilly and Chatman's (1996) as a "system of shared values (that define what is important) and norms that define appropriate attitudes and behaviours for organisational members (how to feel and behave)". Schein (1992) defined organisational culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions" that organisational members learn through the process of socialization. Schein considered organisational culture as being well-accepted and considered by organisational members to be a valid guide to behavior. In this study, performance culture is defined as a set of basic assumption and values created by an organisation. These assumptions and values are developed in an organisation to allow it to adapt to environmental changes and improve its performance. In this study, Organisational Culture is measured by the Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), designed by Cameron and Quinn (1999).

### **1.9.3 Organisational Structure**

A public organization's capability in promoting entrepreneurial tendency is notably influenced by its organisational structure (Slevin and Covin, 1990; Cornwell and Perlman, 1999, and Younhee, 2007). Hansen and Wemerfelt (1989), organisational structure can be treated as a set of determinants that influence employee behavior and firm performance from the organisational perspective. Thus, structural factor is defined as institutionalising a specific power configuration to promote the institution's identity. This research identifies hierarchy, formalisation, flexibility, and organisational size as the main features of the structural factor. For this research, organisational structure is defined as how activities such as task allocation, coordination and supervision, could be steered to achieve organisational aims. The dimensions of organisational structure (formalization, complexity, and centralization),

the study takes as its reference the contributions of Wang and Ahmed (2003), Lee and Choi (2003).

#### **1.9.4 Organisational Learning**

Huber (1991)'s definition of organisational information processing states that organisations process information by acquiring knowledge and using that knowledge to generate new interpretations of the state of the world. Specifically, "Knowledge acquisition is the process by which knowledge is obtained. Information distribution is the process by which information from different sources is shared and thereby leads to new information or understanding. Information interpretation is the process by which distributed information is given one or more commonly understood interpretations." (Huber 1991). This study defines organisational learning as an organisation's capacity to acquire, disseminate and use knowledge so that they can change their external and internal environment. This study use an existing instrument, Dimensions of Learning Organisation Questionnaire (DLOQ) developed by Watkins & Marsick (1993, 1996) in order to measure the learning organization.



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