

# Research on the Characteristic Development of Universities from the Perspective of Organizational Capital Theory

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**Keywords:** University, Characteristic development, Organizational capital

**Abstract:** This paper carries on the analysis to characteristic development of universities from the perspective of organizational Capital theory, and the viewpoint is that strategic capital, structural capital and cultural capital are the three elements of the organization capital. Universities should reasonably develop the three elements of organizational capital to increase the stock, and realize their own characteristic development.

## 1. Introduction

The “China Education Modernization 2035” issued by the State Council in February 2019 proposed to “guide the scientific positioning and characteristic development of higher education institutions”, and characteristic development has once again become one of the contents of the construction of universities. However, due to the historical reasons of the development of higher education in China, especially after entering the stage of higher education popularization, universities are keen on the goal of large scale, high level, high quantity and completeness, blindly pursuing the goal of high and comprehensive, ignoring the advantages characteristics and cultural deposits of themselves, which has been leading to the problem of homogenization development of universities. In the context of the modernization of higher education, how to position the characteristic development of universities? What are the elements of the characteristic development of universities? How to guide the characteristic development of universities? The characteristic development of universities is related to the university’s strategy, faculty, organization, discipline, system, and culture. This article attempts to find the organizational capital factors related to the characteristic development of universities from the perspective of organizational capital theory, and through organizational capital factors Analyze the characteristic development of universities.[1]

## 2. Literature

### 2.1 Definition of University Characteristic Development

The characteristic is “the unique color and style of things”. In contrast, the characteristic is the unique difference of the same kind of things. Characteristics are the unique imprints of things that will last forever, and they are also where their vitality lies. The characteristics of universities are their own unique attributes and unique connotations formed by the integration of school environment, people and historical development. It can be the characteristics of tangible material form, such as unique architectural style, campus environment. It can also be intangible and non-material form, such as the unique cultural attributes and institutional attributes presented by the university itself, or it can be the heritage and humanistic atmosphere formed by blending with time and space, which can not be touched but can be felt.[2] Including uniqueness, another attribute of university characteristics is high quality, that is, the characteristics of universities are stable and lasting advantages that have been retained for a long time. The purpose of development is to maintain and produce these unique advantages. The characteristic development of a university is the content of the connotative development of a university, which reflects the high-quality and unique development characteristics of a university, and is the embodiment of the competitive advantage of

the university. The more distinctive the characteristics of a university are, the stronger the cooperation and complementarity with other universities will be, and the easier it will be to generate distinctive advantages and avoid homogenization, which in turn further enhance and enrich the characteristics of the university itself. Therefore, the characteristic development of universities can be defined as the process that universities maintain or generate unique styles and advantages through resource mining and development.

## **2.2 Organizational Capital**

Organizational capital is a combination of material capital, human capital and production objects formed in the process of resource mining and development. The organizational capital of a university includes the strategic capital embodied in the mission, vision, goal, direction, plan and action framework of the organization, the structural capital embodied in the governance structure, organizational structure, business process, internal and external relations and rules, and the cultural capital embodied in the values, cognition mode and code of conduct of the organization.

This article believes that organizational capital, different from human capital and material capital, is a special form of capital and an intangible asset of an organization. Strategic capital, structural capital and cultural capital are three key elements of organizational capital. The characteristic of universities is a kind of non-material capital formed in the long-term development process, which is essentially the organizational capital. Therefore, universities should reasonably increase the stock of strategic capital, structural capital, and cultural capital, so as to promote the increase in the stock of organizational capital with the characteristics of universities.[3]

## **3. The Elements of Organizational Capital for the Characteristic Development**

### **3.1 Strategic Capital**

The strategy of the university provides a programmatic and overall traction for the organizational capital of the university. The increase in the stock of organizational capital has increased the competitive advantage for the development of universities, and has also increased the heterogeneous characteristics of universities and highlighted their characteristics. However, the prerequisite for the improvement of the organizational capital of a university is that the organizational capital must be adapted to the strategic goal of the university. On the one hand, facing the objective needs of the development of society and the market and the inherent needs of the university's own development, recognizing the status quo of the university's organizational capital and the distance to the university's due requirements, the university strategy puts forward higher requirements for its education concept, brand value, knowledge stock, values and the development of the whole university. On the other hand, in order to achieve the school's strategic goals, universities must adopt strategic measures to strengthen discipline construction, improve teaching quality, develop school characteristics, highlight the advantages of the school, and continuously increase the stock of organizational capital of universities.

Judging from the historical process of universities development, universities have different characteristic strategic goals at different development stages. The continuous improvement of strategic objectives at different stages requires universities to take this unique school-running feature as the basis for their overall development and long-term planning. According to the "recent development zone theory", in order to achieve the overall goal, the university should formulate a feasible plan, position the goal strategy in stages, optimize the allocation of resources, and achieve the role of highlighting their own advantages.[4]

### **3.2 Structural Capital**

Structure is a pattern of the connection between various parts of an organization and the interrelations among various elements. It is the basic governance framework, management framework and business organization framework of an organization. It is a stable and structured arrangement of the responsibility and power relationship, resource allocation mode, organization

operation rules and organizational processes of an organization. A reasonable organizational structure can improve the operating efficiency of the organization, effectively realize the optimal allocation of resources, and lay the foundation for the sound development of the organization. First of all, the university should be scientifically positioned and design an organizational structure suitable for the university itself. Finding the right position and category can better serve the strategic goals of the university. Secondly, the university should innovate on the organizational structure based on actual conditions, highlighting the characteristics of the organizational structure. There are two directions for innovation. One is to make the entire structure more efficient. Second, structural innovation can better serve teachers and students. University structural innovation includes the reform of governance mechanism and organizational structure. Structural innovation means breaking the way of resource allocation and power balance, the change of organization members' mutual relations and organizational processes, and the revision of the organization's business and operation methods. The structural design conforms to the reality of the university itself, the stable and effective operation of the structure, and the structural innovation meets the requirements, which are the embodiment of the increase of the structural capital of the university.

### **3.3 Cultural Capital**

The material culture of the university is the material form of the culture on the university campus, including the architecture, cultural landscape, and greenery in the university. The distinctive material culture of the university embodies the unique spiritual outlook and humanistic atmosphere of the university. For example, the architectural style of a school, the school emblem and some commemorative medals representing the school can all reflect the uniqueness of a university and reflect the characteristics of the university. It can make teachers and students be subtly nurtured and infected. Institutional culture includes not only the school management system and standard system, but also the atmosphere generated during the operation of the system, such as the management atmosphere. Institutional culture plays a role of value guidance and restraint and encouragement. It is the external embodiment of the philosophy and spirit of running a university, and can guarantee and enrich the formation of the characteristics of the university. Behavioral culture, including the teaching style, study style and school spirit of colleges and universities, is a professional ethics and spiritual phenomenon formed in the process of education, teaching and study life.

The stock of cultural capital of universities is embodied in the stock of spiritual cultural capital, institutional cultural capital, material cultural capital and behavioral cultural capital. University's spiritual cultural capital, material cultural capital, institutional cultural capital, and behavioral cultural capital are all manifestations of university's organizational capital, which are organizational capital with unique attributes formed in the long-term practice of running a university. The organic combination of them forms a unique cultural capital of a university, and subtly influences the behavior and values of teachers and students, changes the behaviors of teachers and students, and makes them present a unique distinctive feature and Spiritual outlook. The process of value recognition and behavior change is the internalization process of cultural capital affecting students and teachers, and the process of increasing the stock of cultural capital. It is also a manifestation of the characteristics of a school different from another school. In essence, it promotes the development of the characteristics of the university.

### **3.4 Correlation Analysis**

Strategy is the long-term goal of colleges and universities, structure is the institutional guarantee in the process of strategy realization, and culture is the foundation of college development. First of all, the strategy leads the development of a university, and the structure needs to be improved accordingly to better serve the implementation of the strategy. At the same time, structural changes will also prompt corresponding adjustments in the strategy, so as to achieve optimal coordination between the two, which will promote the development of the school more efficiently. In the process of interaction between strategy and structure, culture plays a role of support and integration, impregnating strategy and structure, so that they have common characteristics and move towards a common goal. Meanwhile, the interaction of strategy and structure will bring new growth points to

culture and promote its development. In short, the three interact and influence each other, and jointly promote the development of universities.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Strategic capital, structural capital, and cultural capital are the three basic elements for the development of universities' characteristics. The increase of strategic capital stock indicates that colleges and universities are forging ahead with determination and constantly setting new goals. The increase of structural capital stock indicates that structural improvement or innovation is carried out in order to better serve the strategy. The increase of cultural capital stock indicates that the innovation of university strategy and structure brings new connotation to culture. The process of joint change or single change of strategic capital, structural capital, and cultural capital is also the process of the development of university characteristics. Therefore, in the process of characteristic development, it is necessary to pay attention to the role of these three kinds of organizational capital, increase the investment of strategic, structural and cultural capital, and explore its growth mechanism.

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