

## The organizational culture in autism centers from the teachers' viewpoint

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### Abstract

The study Aims to identify the degree of availability of the prevailed organizational culture in autism centers from the teachers' viewpoint. The researcher adopted the descriptive survey approach and used the questionnaire as a tool to collect data. The study sample consisting of (116) teachers from Autism Centers in Jordan was selected in a simple random way. The results showed that the organizational culture in autism centers in Jordan was of a medium degree. The study recommended the necessity of developing a strong organizational culture in autism centers through effective collaboration between the center's administration and the teachers working in autism centers in Jordan to be consistent with the desires and expectations of all workers at Autism Centers. Keywords: Special Education ,organizational culture, center administrators, autism.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Autism Centers, Teachers' Viewpoint, Special education, educational administration

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## 1. Introduction

Today, the world is undergoing rapid and successive changes in all aspects of life, in particular technological and knowledge development, especially in the field of communication and information, and the resulting shift towards a knowledge-based society and the reconstruction of the organizational structure of institutions in various economic, educational and professional fields. Information and communication technology have freed organizations from relying on space and time to achieve their goals since the virtual world can reflect reality and promoting many of the realistic processes embodied in electronic management and e-learning.

In the educational field, it is evident that each educational institution has its own organizational culture that distinguishes it from other schools in terms of the values and beliefs that underlie the behavior of its employees. It is the responsibility of the administration of these institutions to contribute to the development of this culture, to determine the administrative pattern and to map the course for the workers to achieve a shared unified target at a specific time (Al-Amian, 2010).

The term organizational culture at the level of institutions generally emerged in the thirties of the last century. It developed with the development of management and organizations since several studies on human relations have addressed this topic and derived its dimensions from the behavior of individuals and their interaction with the surrounding environment (Al-Azzawi, 2009). Al-Nouri (2014 ) pointed out that, in the early days, the idea of an organizational culture centered around the ideals of the founders of administrative institutions and their role in shaping the behavior of individuals in the organization and their organizational practices, and then this concept extended to include workers at multiple administrative levels. This has contributed to the multiplicity of definitions of the term "organizational culture" specified by researchers and those interested in the subject of organizational culture, due to the bifurcation of the concept of culture and its relation to organizational behavior.

### Literature Review

Al-Nouri (2014) defined it as "The ideologies, beliefs, and values of all organizations, as well as the established habits of how individuals must work in those organizations.

Jallab and Rhio (2015) defined it as "a set of ruling values and beliefs shared by the members of the organization, which is transmitted to them through events of celebrations or from stories, symbols, and slogans. It is defined as "the set of shared beliefs, values and expectations that interact with the establishment of the institution and produce a code of conduct" (Al-Sakarneh, 2015). Al-Amian, 2010 AD, 311) defined it as "A set of advantages that distinguish the organization from other organizations. These advantages have the characteristic of relative continuity, and they exert a great influence on the behavior of individuals in an organization." Likewise, the organizational culture indicates the outcome of the recurrent social relations between workers, which constitute behavioral patterns of the organizational social system, contributing to the unity of the organization and its integration through the convergence of workers around its various elements represented in values, beliefs, norms, standards, and expectations" (Al-Sabab et al., 2015).

Dorczak (2011) pointed out that organizational culture means the influence on the environment of the organization resulting from the set of rules of conduct, values, philosophy, and informal activities within the organization.

Meanwhile, Al-Hariri (2011) defined the school organizational culture in particular as "a cognitive framework consisting of the attitudes, values, standards of behavior and expectations shared by workers, where this culture is rooted in a set of basic characteristics that they value."

From the aforementioned, we can notice that all the definitions of the concepts of organizational culture agreed to define the main dimensions represented in the values, beliefs, norms, and expectations that individuals share within the organization. Accordingly, a comprehensive definition of

organizational culture can be formulated, which is the set of values, beliefs, norms, and expectations found within the Autism Centers, which determine the behavioral practices practiced by individuals and groups, their relationships and interactions, and are considered as standards that affect the effectiveness of achieving goals. Organizational culture includes a set of key elements, most notably the following:

#### Organizational values:

Values are generally embodied in the set of customs that the majority of the members of the same social organization adopted and respect. Hence, they have become their special values that determine the desired and acceptable behaviors in society and create political, economic, social, and other values (Al-Ash'ari, 2013). Organizational values are the values existing within the organization that direct the behavior of its employees within the various organizational conditions. Among these values is equality among the employees, time management, concern for performance, and respect for others (Al-Amian, 2010).

#### Organizational Beliefs:

Beliefs include the ideas that individuals share within their organization regarding how to conduct social life in the work environment, and how to perform the work in an appropriate way to achieve organizational goals. Among these beliefs is the importance of participating in decision-making and contributing to teamwork (Al-Sabab et al., 2015.)

#### 3.Organizational norms:

They are the recurring values that over time and with consistent practice by the members of society have become its basic norms. Norms are what society is accustomed to saying or doing in their daily practices. They come in two types: either a valid custom, which is derived from the standards of the true religion, or a corrupt custom, which is every action or saying that contradicts the Islamic religion (Al-Ash'ari, 2013). Organizational norms mean that it is a set of standards that individuals in the organization abide by, as they are good and effective standards for the organization. An example of this is the organization's commitment not to appoint the father and son in the same institution, and it is assumed that these norms are not written and are obligatory on subordinates (Al-Sabab et al., 2015).

#### 4.Organizational expectations:

Organizational expectations mean the "unwritten psychological contract" which means a set of reciprocal expectations between employees, their leaders, and other colleagues represented in appreciation and mutual respect, and the provision of an organizational environment and an organizational climate that helps and supports the needs of the individual and the psychological and economic factors (Al-Amian, 2010).

Al-Azzawi (2009) believes that organizational culture consists of two basic aspects, one of which is virtual (physical) related to outward concepts such as symbols, slogans, inventions, and the internal organization of the organization, and the other level is implicit (intangible) represented in the values, ideas, and past experiences that individuals carry. From the abovementioned, it can be said that the positive organizational culture within Autism centers supports a strong society that builds its relationships based on cooperation, respect and friendliness, and participation in decision-making. It also has strong sense of goals, and clear values and assumptions about students and workers, and that is flexible and inclusive for all aspects of human behavior.

Al-Hariri (2011) added that one of the most significant functions of organizational culture is the role it plays in supporting senior administration in strengthening the organizational values it believes in. It also gives a deeper understanding of all matters related to the Autism Centers, including policies and procedures, and contributes to increasing workers' sense of affiliation and loyalty to the school and improving the relationship among the employees and senior administration.

Organizational culture often plays an important role in identifying employees' expectations and attitudes towards several principles relevant to the administrative and organizational sectors of the organization such as acceptance of change and their ability to achieve goals and ambition. All of the previous depends on the degree of openness of the organizational culture and its ability to adapt to every new benefit, unlike organizational cultures, and the fanaticism that imposes on workers dependency and stereotypes, which delays the growth of the institution and its inability to develop. (Al-Nouri, 2014).

### **Administration of Special Education**

The recent decades have witnessed quantitative and qualitative developments in the field of special education, and important educational innovations have taken place for those in need, which showed the different change that emerged in dealing with this category from the period of verbal and practical abuse towards them to the period of interest in establishing their own institutions and centers, and the creation of specialized and trained hands to deal with them.

Hence, the role of management and supervision in the institutions, centers and institutes of special education has emerged because of its great importance in the conduct of the educational process, and as is known, management in any institution is the key to the success of that institution and its misuse is the cause of failure.

In addition, supervision in special education has its own peculiarity, which comes from the nature of the groups that teachers deal with. Therefore, some attention must be given to this aspect, as this trend is relatively recent compared to educational supervision in the public education sector.

The studies of Nathaniel J. Williams, Hannah E. Frank, Lindsay Frederick, Rinad S. Beidas, David S. Mandell, Gregory A. Aarons, Philip Green & Jill Locke (2019) indicated organizational culture and climate profiles are a strong predictor. of EBP fidelity and work attitudes that support EBP sustainment, highlighting the importance of an organization's overarching social context when developing implementation theory and strategies. Strategies that foster a comprehensive profile may improve EBP implementation.

### **Study Problem and Questions**

Organizational culture is considered one of the main elements in the work environment. It is a broad system that includes the values, beliefs, norms, and expectations that members of the organization share to become directed to the behavior of the individual and the group, which made organizational culture a complex phenomenon that intertwines many aspects in its composition such as the ethical, value and behavioral aspect that the institution adopts in managing Her affairs (Ali, 2010).

The researcher found that autism centers in Jordan, through his fieldwork, required such a study. The study's subject matter may contribute to the improvement of the educational and administrative quality of educational institutions. It also has positive aspects in improving the work culture of administrators of autism centers in Jordan.

As a matter of fact, the more the institution has a strong culture, the greater the percentage of agreement among employees towards a specific cultural organizational direction. A strong culture is one that is characterized by trust and acceptance of the majority of workers, which makes them subscribe to a set of values, beliefs, norms, and expectations that govern their behaviors and attitudes in light of the mission and goals of the organization. The study problem was identified by answering the following main question: What is the degree of availability of the prevailing organizational culture (organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, organizational expectations) in Autism Centers?

## **Study Objectives**

The study aimed to identify the degree of availability of the prevailing organizational culture (organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, organizational expectations) among administrators in autism centers in Jordan.

The importance of Study

The importance of the study lies in two aspects that are:

First: The theoretical importance:

It addresses the issue of organizational culture as one of the latest trends in developing administrative work within the autism centers. There is a need for such studies that address organizational culture in the educational field. It is one of the studies that present ways for providing a suitable school environment and to enhance the organizational affiliation of its workers. It is hoped that this study will constitute a scientific addition to the local and Arab library that is in line with modern educational trends.

Second: the practical importance:

1- The Higher Council for People with Special Needs in Jordan may benefit in identifying the prevailing organizational culture within autism centers and improving the prevailing organizational culture within these centers.

3- It is hoped that the recommendations of this study will help motivate researchers to conduct more studies in the field of organizational culture to develop the level of administrative work performance in autism centers.

Study Terminology:

Organizational culture:

Al-Sabab, et.al (2015) defined organizational culture as the outcome of recurrent social relations between employees, which constitute the behavioral patterns of the organizational social system, thus contributing to the unity and integration of the organization through the meeting of workers around its different elements of values, beliefs, norms, and expectations.

Operationally, it is defined as the practice of autism centers administrators of the set of values, beliefs, norms, and expectations within the school system that determine their behavioral practices. It is also considered as the criteria that affect the effectiveness of achieving goals and is measured by the response of the study sample with the tool used.

The Study Limits:

The study included the following limits:

1- Objective limits: it was limited to identifying the prevailing organizational culture (organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, and organizational expectations) in autism centers.

2- Human Limits: The study was limited to teachers with autism in Jordan.

3- Spatial boundaries: The application of this study was limited to autism centers in Jordan.

4- Temporal limits: This study was applied in the second semester of 2020.

## **2- Methods**

This section presents the study methodology, the study population and its sample, building the study tool, and the steps to verify the validity and reliability of the tool, as well as the procedures for

applying the study, and the statistical methods used in processing the study data and answering its questions.

**Study Approach:**

The study adopted the descriptive survey method to achieve its objectives and answer its questions.

**Study Population and Sample:**

The population of this study comprised all the (8) autism centers in Jordan as shown in Table (1).

**Table 1: The distribution of the study population according to its variables.**

<b>N</b>	<b>Autism Centers</b>	<b>NO of Teachers</b>
1	The Jordanian Autism Specialized Center	15
2	Jordan Autism Center	12
3	Jordan Academy for Autism	15
4	Autism communication center	20
5	Autism Consulting Center	15
6	Charitable Support and Support for Autistic Individuals and Their Families	15
7	Autism Friends Association	13
8	Autism Scientific Center	15
9	Aliaa Center for Autism and People with Special Needs	14

**The Study Sample**

The study sample was chosen in a simple random way and it consisted of (116) teachers in autism centers in Jordan as indicated in Table (2).

**Table 2: Distribution of the study sample**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>percentage</b>
Experience	Less than 5 years	12	10%
	6-10 years	26	22%
	More than 11 years	78	67%
Total		116	100%

Academic qualification	M.A. Bachelor	20 96%	17% 83%
<b>Total</b>		<b>116</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Instrument

The study used a questionnaire as a tool to collect data. The researcher built the tool (a questionnaire) after reviewing previous studies and the theoretical framework of the current study. The research benefited from the study of Al-Salami (2015) in building the study tool. The questionnaire consisted of four dimensions as follows:

The first dimension: organizational values include (6) items.

The second dimension: Organizational beliefs: It included (6) items.

The third dimension: organizational norms: It included (6) items.

Fourth dimension: Organizational Expectations: It included (6) items.

The responses of the questionnaire were according to the five-year Likert scale to determine the degree of consistency. Therefore, the score (5) is given to "very high", the score (4) for "medium" degree, the score (2) to show "low" degree, and the score (1) indicate "very low". The mean and standard deviations of the responses of the study sample were extracted on the degree of agreement.

#### 1.2. Instrument validity:

##### Content validity

It indicates the extent to which the tool measures what it intended to measure and its validity in representing the content that was originally chosen to be included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was presented to experienced arbitrators to check the appropriateness of the items and their relevance. The researcher modified the suggestions as required and the final form was formed properly and scientifically (Al-Zoubi and Al-Talafha, 2012). After the questionnaire was developed in its initial form, the researcher distributed it to a group of faculty members specializing in the educational field to express their opinions regarding the study tool and to arbitrate it in terms of clarity of the phrase and its fitting to the field, and the validity of its items, as well as to judge the five-point scale criterion for measuring the items of each field. Based on the opinions of the arbitrators, the researcher made the modifications.

##### Internal consistency validity:

After confirming the face validity of the study tool, the researcher applied it to an exploratory sample consisting of (20) respondents from the study population, from outside the basic study sample. Based on the questionnaire's sample data, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient to find out the internal validity of the questionnaire, where it calculated the value of (r) between the degree of each item and the total score of the item, then the value of (r) was calculated between the degree of each dimension and the total degree of the questionnaire. The results showed that the tool has an acceptable degree of validity.

#### 1.3. Instrument reliability

Reliability means to get the same results continuously if the questionnaire is used more than once and under similar conditions. To verify the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher calculated the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The value of the general reliability factor was = 0.82, which is a high value and indicates that the tool has a high degree of reliability that can be relied upon in the application of the study.

### Study procedures:

This study was conducted according to the following steps:

- Determining the general framework for the study, getting acquainted with the educational literature, and preparing the theoretical framework.
- Presenting the previous studies that dealt with the issue of organizational culture.
- Determining the population of the study and its sample.
- Development and evaluation of the study tool in its preliminary form.
- Presenting the study tool to the arbitrators.

The researcher distributed (20) initial questionnaires to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. After obtaining the approval of the competent authorities to apply the tool to the study sample, the researcher distributed (144) questionnaires to all the sample of the study population. Data were entered into the computer and was statistically processed using (SPSS). Then, results were concluded, analysed, discussed, and compared with previous studies, and appropriate recommendations were made.

### Data Analysis

Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) through the following statistical methods:

- Checking the validity and reliability of the questionnaire statements by using the Product-moment correlation; Person coefficient, and the Cronbach Alpha
- Frequencies and percentages of the study sample were calculated.

### 3- Results & Discussions

What is the degree of availability of the prevailing organizational culture (organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, organizational expectations) in Autism Centers in Jordan? To answer this question, the means and standard deviations of the study sample responses were calculated for each of the dimensions (organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, organizational expectations), as shown in table (3).

**Table 3: Means and standard deviations of the responses on the dimensions forming the organizational culture prevalent in autism centers**

Rank	Items	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Organizational values	3.34	0.81	High
2	Organizational beliefs	3.31	0.83	High
3	Organizational norms	3.17	0.89	medium
4	Organizational expectations	3.15	0.79	medium
<b>Total average</b>		<b>3.24</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>medium</b>

Table (3) illustrates that the total mean of the dimensions =3.24, which indicates that the dimensions of the organizational culture are available with a medium degree in the autism centers. The researcher attributes this result to the presence of positive values, ideals, standards, and expectations agreed upon by the central administrative body and the employees, in addition to the efforts made by the administrators to create a healthy work environment where job satisfaction is achieved through confidence, transparency, and fairness in the distribution of tasks. On the other hand, there are also cooperation, team spirit, and participation in decision-making, which helped to

improve and develop a high organizational culture. This result is also attributed to the clear laws and circulars issued by the competent authorities, which contributes to improving the level of organizational culture in the center.

The findings of the current study are consistent with the results of Al-Enzi (2017), which concluded that both the degree practice and the importance of organizational culture in secondary schools in Hail were high. It is also consistent with the results of the study of Abdeen (2013), which stated that the level of organizational culture was high in the field of values, beliefs, and expectations, but they differed in the field of norms, where they came to a medium degree. Askar (2012) indicated that the areas of organizational culture that this study addressed were organizational values, organizational beliefs, organizational norms, organizational expectations and all of them came at high levels of the application from the viewpoint of teachers in the Gaza Governments that agrees with the findings of this study. Meanwhile, the study results differed from the result of Al-Ghaith's study (2015) which found that the level of organizational culture in schools was low and that three domains got medium grades (expectations, norms, and values), while the beliefs field got low ratings. Al-Otaibi (2014) study concluded that the level of organizational culture prevailing in schools was medium.

A detailed discussion of the responses of the study sample on the four dimensions of the organizational culture:

1- Organizational values, means, and standard deviations were calculated, as shown in Table (4).

**Table 4: The responses on the degree of availability of the organizational culture dimensions “organizational values”**

NO.	paragraphs	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Spreading positive work values inside the center	3.92	0.77	high
2	Reliance on objective criteria for performance evaluation to accurately judge the level of achievement	3.41	0.87	high
3	Distributing teachers' tasks objectively	3.39	0.81	medium
4	Preparing the necessary school statistics of various kinds according to accurate information, which contributes to increasing confidence among teachers	3.29	0.77	medium
5	Facilitating communication with local community institutions	3.91	0.86	medium
6	Equitable development of teachers' performance of the study sample	2.99	0.91	low
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.34</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>Medium</b>

Table (4) indicates that the overall mean of the degree of availability of organizational values for administrators of autism centers in Jordan from the teacher viewpoint =3.34, which confirms that the respondents believe that the availability of organizational values was of a medium degree. Moreover, the degree of items of organizational varied between (high and medium).

The researcher attributed this result to the personality of the educational leader who is distinguished by his ability in strengthening positive values of the organizational culture, and in developing teachers' performance equally. The medium degree is attributed to the fact that some administrators in autism centers lack awareness of the importance of providing a suitable work environment which allows teachers to explore their creative energies through teamwork. These

results are consistent with the findings of the study of Abdeen (2012), which indicated that the level of organizational culture in the field of values was high.

Organizational beliefs: Means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in Table (5).

**Table 5: Means and standard deviations of the items of the organizational beliefs dimension**

NO	paragraphs	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Teamwork by sharing the use of databases for teachers	3.76	1.10	High
2	Increasing motivation to work by obtaining the required information in a short time	3.64	1.18	High
3	Strengthening the delegation of some powers in administrative work to teachers	3.43	0.91	High
4	Effective communication between center administrators and parents of students with autism disorder	3.22	1.10	Medium
5	Participating in decision-making by facilitating the exchange of ideas between teachers	3.15	1.18	Medium
6	Giving attention to the public good by saving effort and time in managing the center's resources	3.12	1.18	Medium
Total		3.31	0.84	Medium

Table (5) shows that the overall mean of the availability of organizational beliefs among the administrators in autism centers in Jordan from respondents' point of view = 3.31, which confirms that the respondents believe that organizational beliefs are available to a medium degree. Table (5) also shows that the availability of organizational beliefs according to the respondents ranged between (medium-high) degrees equally. The items regarding (sharing data, increasing motivation, and delegation of powers) came with a high degree and the items concerning (effective communication, participating in decision -making and giving attention to the public good) came with a medium degree. The organizational beliefs that have come at a high and medium level were due to the fact that teachers in autism centers work collaboratively and share the same shared goals, which implies that the ethos of the community prevails and enhances the loyalty and affiliation to education. For the aspect concerning the public interest by saving effort and time in managing the autism centers resources, they were of a medium degree; this may be due to the multiple responsibilities of administrators in autism centers, which reduces their ability to attain the best and easiest means to perform their administrative duties. These finding were consistent with the results of the study of Al-Hajri (2013), which indicated that the level of organizational culture in the field of beliefs was high.

Organizational norms, the means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in Table (6).

**Table 6 : The responses concerning the degree of availability of organizational norms dimension**

<b>NO.</b>	<b>paragraphs</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Degree</b>
1	Self-development of the administrator of the center	3.52	1.20	high
2	Emphasizing the strong points of the center.	3.41	1.11	medium
3	Evaluating the weaknesses in the administration of the center	3.33	1.34	medium
4	Spreading the positive norms prevailing among teachers	2.93	1.04	low
5	Setting administrative hours faster and more accurately	2.81	0.95	low
6	Adaptation of the center's administration to the scientific developments in the educational field	2.80	0.92	low
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.17</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>medium</b>

Table (6) shows that the overall mean of the organizational norms according to the responses of the participants = 3.17, which demonstrates that the participants believe that the reinforcement of organizational norms takes place to a medium degree. The dimension (organizational norms), which consists of six items has recorded different degrees which ranged between (high) and (medium and low). The means ranged between (3.017) and (2.80). These results were consistent with the findings of Ahmed's study (2012), which indicated that the level of organizational culture in the dimension of norms was high.

4- Organizational expectations. Means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in Table (7)

Table 7: The responses on the degree of availability of the prevailing dimensions' Organizational expectations

<b>NO.</b>	<b>paragraphs</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Degree</b>
1	Enjoying work because of having job satisfaction	4.15	1.02	high
2	Fast feedback on teachers' administrative achievements	3.98	1.05	high
3	Maintaining confidentiality of data	3.70	0.94	high
4	Dealing with emergency conditions quickly	3.33	0.92	high
5	Excellence in performance	3.20	1.04	high
6	Reducing the contradiction in administrative directives	3.13	0.94	high
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>high</b>

Table (7) shows that the total mean of the positive organizational expectations prevalent among administrators of autism centers in Jordan = 3.15, which confirms that the respondents believe that positive organizational expectations are widely available in autism centers environment, and these results were consistent with the findings of Daoud (2011) which pointed out that the level of organizational culture in the area of expectations was high.

#### **4- Conclusion**

The results concluded that the degree of availability of organizational culture in autism centers in Jordan was of a medium degree.

#### **5- Recommendations:**

Considering the study findings, the study recommended the following:

- Employing information, communication technology, and cloud computing among administrators of autism centers in Jordan to improve the organizational culture.
- Building a strong organizational culture in the centers, through effective participation between the center's administrators and teachers in autism centers in Jordan to suit the desires and aspirations of all those involved in the educational process.
- Preparing a written guide on the organizational culture prevailing in autism centers in Jordan to guide workers in autism centers about the values, norms, and expectations that the center's management wants to adopt, taking into account the constant review of it and ensuring that it meets the needs of the work.
- Conducting studies like the current study using other research tools such as observation and interview and comparing their results with the results of this study.

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