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# **An Exploratory Study of Mechanisms to Transfer and Embed a Value-Based Culture**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This exploratory study seeks to build on the work of theorists who have proposed concepts to enhance organisational culture through a better alignment of values. The study seeks to gain additional support for the exploration of mechanisms to embed value-based cultures. This is achieved by better understanding the origins of goal-orientated values and the types of culture that manifest in small to medium enterprises. As a result of this study a model was developed, which could be implemented in future longitudinal research on the influence of embedding a value-based culture through the use of applied mechanisms. What distinguishes this study from others is the development of a comprehensive model to define, embed, and measure a value-based culture.

To gain a deeper understanding of the concepts a multi-method qualitatively driven methodology was implemented to identify core mechanisms to embed value-based cultures. Additional quantitative data was used to enable a deeper, more robust, understanding of the influence the identified mechanisms have on goal-orientated values and the types of culture, which manifest in a small to medium enterprise. The study suggests that founders of small to medium enterprises can define a value-based culture and through the use of six mechanisms, embed a value-based culture that aligns with the organisation's objectives. Gaining a better understanding of the concepts and mechanisms to embed a value-based culture enabled the development of a pragmatic process and model, which encompasses each of the key mechanisms identified in the literature. The study adds support to the work of theorists who have argued for value-based cultures and the concept of conflicting core values occurring in organisational cultures. The study builds on the work of others by proposing an applied model that draws the key concepts together into a single comprehensive model.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CVF	Competing Values Framework
ESS	European Social Survey
OCAI	Organisational Cultural Assessment Instrument
OVS	Organisational Values Survey
PVQ	Portrait Values Questionnaire
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
SVS	Schwartz Values Survey
VBCA	Values Based Cultural Assessment

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