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RESEARCH ON APPROACHES TO ENHANCE CORPORATE CORE COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH CORPORATE CULTURE

ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ПІДХОДІВ ДО ПІДВИЩЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ КОРПОРАТИВНОГО ЯДРА ЗА ДОПОМОГОЮ КОРПОРАТИВНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ

Summary. This research explores the importance of employees as key resources in building core competitiveness for enterprises, analyzing the role of corporate culture in this process through various theoretical frameworks such as Resource-Based View (RBV), Knowledge-Based View (KBV), and Capability-Based View (CBV). RBV and KBV underscore the significance of employees in knowledge creation and competitive advantage, while CBV identifies core, absorptive, and dynamic capabilities that highlight the strategic role of employees in adapting to environmental changes. Corporate culture, a heterogeneous resource unique to each enterprise, serves as a driving force in fostering innovation, learning, and performance. The study divides corporate culture into four levels: spiritual, institutional, behavioral, and material. Each of these layers contributes to shaping the overall competitiveness of the firm. The spiritual layer, including vision, mission, and values, is identified as the core of corporate culture, which also influences institutional rules, behavioral norms, and the company's material image. To enhance competitiveness, companies must integrate employee values with the corporate culture, improve learning and promotion mechanisms, and foster leadership in managers. These strategies help align employee goals with the company's vision, ensuring stronger organizational commitment and

enhanced market performance. The research concludes that a well-structured corporate culture, led by strong management, plays a crucial role in long-term sustainability and success, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Keywords: core competitiveness, diversification theory system, corporate culture, human resources, behavioral culture, innovation and knowledge creation, small and medium-sized enterprises, competitive advantage, sustainability, employees.

Problem statement. With the continuous advancement of economic globalization, the competition among enterprises is intensifying. All sectors are seeking ways to enhance their core competitiveness. The formation and development of enterprise core competitiveness is a highly intricate process. Currently, numerous single-factor models and multi-factor collaborative models with complex theories have been developed [1–4]. From an enterprise perspective, it holds great practical significance to operate businesses by empowering managers and employees in order to enhance core competitiveness. However, precise models and scientific management alone may not guarantee optimal growth for enterprises. In face of market-driven developmental challenges and opportunities,

fostering a soft corporate culture has emerged as a crucial approach for various industries to bolster their competitive edge [5–7]. This study focuses on how to strengthen enterprise core competitiveness through the construction of corporate culture, which holds significant value in terms of realization.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The positioning of an enterprise's core competitiveness refers to the analysis of its products or services and the development of its own unique competitive advantage that sets it apart from industry competitors. According to Prahalad C.K. et al., core competitiveness is the ability of enterprises to integrate and allocate their resources effectively, as well as coordinate various production skills [1]. Building upon this concept, scholars have discussed the connotation of core competitiveness from different perspectives including R&D and technological innovation, environmental adaptability, corporate culture, internal resources and capabilities, external networks, and information technology. Xie C. et al. categorized these theories into resource-based view (RBV), knowledge-based view (KBV), capability-based view (CBV), and institutional-based view (IBV) [2]. The sustainable competitive advantage for enterprises stems from continuous innovation based on institutional norms and resource heterogeneity. Shen et al., on the other hand, believe that core competitiveness lies in an enterprise's ability to formulate and implement strategies such as differentiation and cost leadership in response to complex external environments [3]. Overall, core competitiveness encompasses a collection of capabilities formed through the organic integration of technological advantages, innovation, and institutional strengths in order to navigate internal changes and external circumstances effectively. It serves as a crucial guarantee for enterprises to excel amidst increasingly fierce market competition.

The core competitiveness of enterprises represents the theoretical framework that integrates economics and management. Coombas argues that it encompasses the specific combination of enterprise capabilities and the accumulation of experience derived from interactions between enterprises, markets, and technology [8]. Javidan M. highlights a four-tiered progression in understanding core competitiveness: resources, capabilities, competitiveness, and ultimately core competitiveness. He asserts that core competitiveness involves coordinating and integrating various institutional competencies [9]. Zhongliang Ma et al., on the other hand, contend that enterprise competition hinges upon technical

talent, emphasizing the importance for companies to attract and retain key talents [10]. Rastogi P.N. believes that it is impossible for senior managers of enterprises to have all ideal solutions to the increasingly complex and rapidly changing internal and external situations faced by enterprises [11]. Under such a background, employees in enterprises constitute the core resources of their sustainable competitiveness. It is the core carrier of knowledge, skills, creativity and technological innovation needed by employees for enterprise development, that is, the ability of employees to continuously provide customer value results.

The purpose of the article. The purpose of this paper is to promote the construction and improvement of the enterprise's internal capacity and strengthen the positive interaction between the enterprise and the external environment from the perspective of the construction of enterprise culture in the complex and diverse theories and models of improving the enterprise's core competitiveness, so as to enhance the enterprise's core competitiveness in multiple dimensions.

Presentation of the main material. Employees are important resources and carriers of the core competitiveness of enterprises

In RBV theory, Penrose E.T. insisted that an enterprise is a collection of productive re-resources, that enterprises also need to obtain human resources and other resources when providing products or services to the market, and that employees are considered as important resources for the core competitiveness of enterprises [12]. In KBV theory, specialization in the production process can enable employees at different levels to have rich professional knowledge and skills, thus promoting the professional production of enterprises. KBV theory regards enterprises as heterogeneous knowledge bodies, and the competitive advantage of enterprises comes from the creation, acquisition and application of knowledge, and the core carrier of knowledge is employees at different levels [13].

In CBV theory, the unique capabilities of enterprises are mainly divided into core capabilities, absorption capabilities and dynamic capabilities. Among them, core competence can form heterogeneous resources, reflecting instability, extensibility, value and difficulty in imitation. Absorptive capacity refers to the ability of enterprises to sensitively obtain industry information, identify, transform and utilize external knowledge. Dynamic capability is to always perceive the changes of external environment and internal resources, obtain favorable competitive position, constantly refresh the capability model of employees and enterprises

to establish core competitiveness, and highlight the strategic flexibility of enterprises, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises [14–15]. IBV theory holds that managers are more likely to obtain the heterogeneity of enterprises when deciding at the institutional level under which opportunities to make the best resource choice [16].

Among the above theoretical models, RBV, CBV and KBV theories all emphasize employees as the core resources or carriers. Although IBV theory emphasizes the heterogeneity of managers acumen and institutional norms, the final implementation of its strategy still needs employees to implement it. Under the differences of external environment, internal resources and self-ability of different enterprises, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, the driving and realizing paths of core competitiveness of different enterprises are different. The formation of the core competitiveness of enterprises is a complex process of multi-factor synergy and linkage. Although the existing research theories and models have found that the core competitiveness of enterprises is the result of multiple factors, it is generally assumed that the variables are independent of each other and can't interact with each other. This assumption leads to the existing research being unable to test the configuration effect of the interaction of multidimensional factors on the formation of the core competitiveness of enterprises, nor can it explain the diversified paths of the core competitiveness of different enterprises in reality.

1. The mechanism of corporate culture and core competitiveness

Corporate culture refers to the joint force formed by the promotion of internal management mechanism and external identity under a specific economic background or cultural background. Enterprise culture is obviously different from the products launched by enterprises, and it is difficult to replicate. It belongs to the unique heterogeneous resources of enterprises, that is, competitiveness, which will also have an impact on other resources. It is worth noting that in the above-mentioned theories and models of enterprise core competitiveness, corporate culture is regarded as a seriously narrowed quantitative factor or index to judge its influence on core competitiveness, such as replacing corporate culture with one or several rules and regulations, leaders values and even group activities. Song's research shows that the origin of core competitiveness is the interaction between the internal pursuit (corporate culture) and the external stimulus (external environment) of enterprises [4]. Yangs C.C. research shows that “good corporate

culture” is the most important basic element of an enterprise, which supports the successful implementation of the core competitiveness and core competence of an enterprise, but in this research, corporate culture is characterized as the values and attitudes of the management [17].

In its own research dimension, corporate culture has four levels, including spiritual culture, institutional culture, behavioral culture and material culture. The above four levels can influence and promote each other, and ultimately determine the promotion of enterprise competitiveness. The spiritual culture of the enterprise is the core of the enterprise culture, including the vision, mission and values of the enterprise, and can play an important role in the fierce competition. The values of corporate culture are not the values of corporate managers. Excellent corporate values should be the organic unity of the values of all members of the enterprise, and give more feedback to the values of employees. Besides the direct role of spiritual culture, it can also influence the other three aspects of culture, and influence the competitiveness of enterprises through indirect influence.

The institutional layer of enterprise culture includes rules and systems, organizational structure, welfare, training and learning, etc. The IBV theory of enterprise core competitiveness is mainly realized by the institutional layer. Managers formulate enterprise rules and regulations, and then implement various decisions through perfect enterprise organizations at all levels, promote production progress, and supplement various enterprise welfare, training and learning to promote original innovation, enhance employees ability and satisfaction, and stimulate employees work efficiency. However, the institutional layer of excellent enterprises is not static, and the rules and regulations should be dynamically revised and improved in combination with the actual situation of external environment and internal resources. Therefore, the institutional layer is the foundation of enterprise value creation and plays a supporting role in improving the core competitiveness of enterprises.

The behavior layer of corporate culture includes corporate image and corporate cohesion, and the behaviors of corporate directors, senior management and employees directly reflect the matching degree of corporate values. As the largest group in an enterprise, employees are an important resource of the enterprise, and they are also the core carrier of enterprise knowledge and ability. Under the influence of enterprise values, they actively innovate and learn from the existing enterprise resources, and

cooperate tacitly with team members. Therefore, the development of corporate culture behavior layer needs to be guided by the spiritual layer, with the institutional layer as the framework of restricting behavior and the strategic support of ability and knowledge improvement, clear behavior norms, improve employees abilities from the spiritual layer and strategy, and enhance the matching degree of employee-corporate culture, so as to promote the competitiveness of enterprises.

The material layer of enterprise culture is the surface enterprise culture with material form as the main research object, and it is the external embodiment of spiritual layer. In the information age, customers comparison of products is more convenient and transparent, and the competition of products in the industry has gradually changed from the competition of price and quality to the competition of brand and service. The competition between brand and service is essentially the competition of enterprise culture with enterprise value, enterprise technological innovation, enterprise positioning and image as the core. The change of material demand has pushed the overall optimization of spiritual, institutional and behavioral layers, and the reputation and image of enterprises will also be improved. A flexible corporate culture will bring about a significant improvement in corporate value, achieve stronger sustainability of operations, and ultimately promote the improvement of competitiveness. This is easier to achieve for small and medium-sized enterprises.

2. Ways for corporate culture to enhance corporate competitiveness

As shown in Figure 1, the four levels of corporate culture can directly enhance the core

competitiveness. With employees, managers, products and customers as carriers, they can be transformed into learning ability, ability, product quality, management level, brand effect, service level, etc., thus indirectly enhancing the core competitiveness of enterprises. Taking the factors in Figure 1 as the breakthrough point, corporate culture should be built from the following perspectives to enhance the core competitiveness of enterprises.

(1) Building multi-dimensional corporate culture

Enterprises have formed a unique spiritual core and value orientation in long-term operations. On the basis of the spiritual layer, the institutional layer, behavioral layer and material layer are gradually extended and enriched, forming unique heterogeneous resources. This is the key factor to promote the high-quality development of enterprises. The core factors of development and sustainable development can play an important guiding role in the development process of enterprises. Corporate culture is a relatively abstract concept, and it is easily ignored or narrowed by managers. Therefore, it is necessary to make a macro layout of corporate culture, continuously promote the construction of multi-dimensional corporate culture, and strengthen spiritual resources. After the formation of basic corporate culture construction, the development of corporate culture will drive the improvement of enterprise learning ability, enhance its created value, and finally realize the improvement of competitiveness.

(2) Improve the matching degree between employees and corporate culture

Employees are the most important human resources of enterprises, and they are also important heterogeneous resources for enterprise

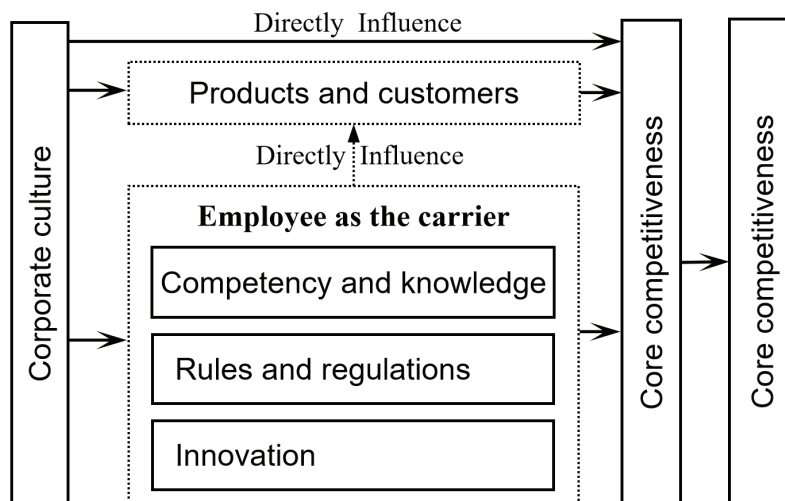


Figure 1. Improving the core competitiveness of corporate culture from the perspective of employees

Source: compiled by the authors

development. Many studies have shown that employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction are positively correlated numerically, and corporate culture takes employees as the carrier to directly or indirectly enhance the core competitiveness. In the process of corporate culture construction, especially the construction of the core spiritual layer, we should not take the values of enterprise managers as the leading factor, but fully refer to the values demands of employees, and reshape the institutional layer, behavioral layer and material layer of corporate culture with the spiritual layer, so that employees can fully identify with corporate culture, enhance their organizational commitment, cohesion and satisfaction, promote the creation of value entities, and then enhance the core competitiveness of enterprises.

(3) Optimize learning, training and promotion mechanisms to enhance employees ability and enthusiasm

With the continuous development of the times, employees also need continuous learning and innovation to improve their own value output, improve product quality, optimize customer service, and enhance brand effect. This requires clarifying training mechanisms, learning mechanisms, promotion mechanisms, etc. at the institutional and behavioral levels of corporate culture to improve their learning ability. Enterprises such as Intel and Siemens have established perfect learning organizations to provide technical support for technological innovation and technological innovation through continuous learning of learning organizations; Google provides a relaxed cultural atmosphere, fully stimulates employees "hero" consciousness with more open soft cultural management, and the creativity of employees has been greatly developed. Therefore, if enterprises want to survive in the increasingly fierce market competition, they need to establish a perfect learning mechanism and promotion mechanism, fully enrich employees knowledge reserves, stimulate job competence and innovation ability, and ensure that employees knowledge can be effectively transformed into technological innovation and market competitiveness, so as to realize the "trinity" development of Industry-University-Research.

(4) Improve managers leadership

According to IBV theory, the unique vision and excellent scheduling ability of enterprise managers can cope with the increasingly complex external environment, and it is also very important for the allocation and scheduling of internal resources. Enterprise managers are the advocates, leaders

and executive models of enterprise culture, and the leadership of enterprise managers is crucial to the development of enterprises. The management concept is integrated with corporate culture, the values of the enterprise are promoted, and the corporate culture is used as a link to enhance the matching degree of values between employees and the enterprise and shape the sense of ownership. Use corporate culture to soften management, guide employees behavior, enhance employees independent awareness, so that employees can truly become the carrier of corporate culture implementation, and use this as a link to improve the corporate image and further enhance the market competitiveness of enterprises.

Conclusions and suggestions. The core competitiveness of enterprises is the key indicator for assessing the survival and development of modern businesses, encompassing not only their competitive position in the current market but also indicating their future growth potential and capacity for sustainable development. However, different theoretical frameworks emphasize various constituent elements, formation mechanisms, evaluation methods, and promotion strategies of core competitiveness, leading to diversified and complex understandings of this concept. This theoretical inconsistency not only increases the challenge for enterprises to accurately identify their core competitiveness but also poses significant obstacles when formulating strategic planning. Employees play an indispensable role as a resource element within an enterprise's core competitiveness; their importance lies not only in quantity but also in quality, potential, and deep integration with corporate culture. By influencing employees, managers, products, and customers alike, multidimensional corporate culture promotes internal capability construction and enhancement while strengthening positive interactions between enterprises and the external environment. Consequently, it enhances the overall core competitiveness of enterprises across multiple dimensions.

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Анотація. У дослідженні розглянуто важливість працівників як ключових ресурсів у побудові основної конкурентоспроможності підприємств, аналізуючи роль корпоративної культури у цьому процесі через різні теоретичні рамки, такі як ресурсно-орієнтована теорія (RBV), знання-орієнтована теорія (KBV) і теорія здібностей (CBV). Теорії RBV і KBV підкреслюють значущість працівників у створенні знань і конкурентних переваг, тоді як CBV визначає основні, абсорбційні та динамічні здібності, що підкреслюють стратегічну роль працівників у адаптації до змін середовища. Корпоративна культура, яка є гетерогенним ресурсом, притаманним кожному підприємству, виступає рушійною силою для стимулювання інновацій, навчання та ефективності. Дослідження поділяє корпоративну культуру на чотири рівні: духовний, інституційний, поведінковий і матеріальний. Кожен із цих рівнів сприяє формуванню загальної конкурентоспроможності підприємства. Співробітники відіграють незамінну роль як елемент ресурсу в основній конкурентоспроможності підприємства; їх важливість полягає не лише в кількості, але й у якості, потенціалі та глибокій інтеграції з корпоративною культурою. Впливаючи на співробітників, менеджерів, продукти та клієнтів, багатомірна корпоративна культура сприяє створенню та вдосконаленню внутрішніх можливостей, зміцнюючи позитивну взаємодію між підприємствами та зовнішнім середовищем. Отже, це підвищує загальну основну конкурентоспроможність підприємств у багатьох вимірах. Духовний рівень, включаючи бачення, місію та цінності, визначається як ядро корпоративної культури, що також впливає на інституційні правила, норми поведінки та матеріальний імідж компанії. Для підвищення конкурентоспроможності компанії мають інтегрувати цінності працівників з корпоративною культурою, вдосконалювати механізми навчання та просування, а також розвивати лідерство серед керівників. Ці стратегії допомагають узгодити цілі працівників з баченням компанії, забезпечуючи міцнішу організаційну відданість і покращення ринкової діяльності.

Ключові слова: основна конкурентоспроможність, система теорії диверсифікації, корпоративна культура, людські ресурси, культура поведінки, інновації та створення знань, малі та середні підприємства, конкурентна перевага, стійкий розвиток, співробітники.