

# “Organizational Culture and Institutional Values: A Paradox in Mission-Driven Universities”

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Received: 25/05/2026 | Revised: 26/05/2026 | Accepted: 30/05/2026 | Published: 02/06/2026

organizational learning. This article is designed as a literature review based on existing research. It prepares the conceptual ground for the case study that follows and informs the methodology of the broader doctoral investigation. It draws on academic publications retrieved through Google Scholar, on reference books in organizational theory and Jesuit education, and on reliable open-access institutional websites, notably those of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth and the Society of Jesus. This article therefore proposes a conceptual reframing: the paradox is not treated as a problem to be solved once and for all, but as a disciplined form of institutional self-examination.

**Keywords:** organizational culture; institutional values; mission-driven universities; Jesuit higher education; Ignatian values; human resource management.

## ملخص البحث

تحتل الجامعات ذات الرسالة، أي التي تركز هويتها المؤسسية على ميثاق أخلاقي أو روحي أو مرتبط بالعدالة الاجتماعية، موقعًا متناقضًا ومتزايدًا في مشهد التعليم العالي المعاصر. فهي مطالبة من جهة بتجسيد منظومة قيم كثيفة الدلالات وخاصةً ومتجدرة تاريخيًا، ومن جهة أخرى يُتوقع منها أن تتنافس في سوق أكاديمي عالمي يكافئ المؤشرات السطحية والعامّة والقابلة للقياس بسهولة. يعالج هذا المقال هذا التناقض اعتمادًا على

## Abstract:

Mission-driven universities, whose institutional identity rests on an explicit ethical, spiritual, or social-justice charter, occupy an increasingly difficult position in contemporary higher education. On the one hand, they are expected to embody a rich, historically grounded value system; on the other, they must compete in a global academic market that often rewards generic and easily measurable signs of performance. This article examines that paradox using the framework developed in a doctoral investigation of Jesuit higher education, with Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth (USJ) as its main empirical case. Drawing on Schein (2017)’s three-level model of culture, Cameron and Quinn (2011)’s Competing Values Framework, and the Ignatian tradition’s articulation of cura personalis, discernment, magis, faith that does justice and universality, the article argues that the tension between institutional values and organizational culture in mission-driven universities is not a temporary management problem but a deep-seated condition. It manifests at three levels: between espoused values and underlying assumptions, between collegial mission narratives and market-oriented incentive systems, and between internal identity and externally curated image. Yet the paradox is also productive: when leadership, human-resource practices and governance are deliberately reconnected with mission-based criteria, the very tensions that threaten coherence become engines of

الأرضية المفاهيمية لدراسة الحالة وللمنهجية المتبعة، وتستند المراجعة إلى المنشورات الأكاديمية المُسترجعة عبر Google Scholar، وإلى الكتب المرجعية في النظرية التنظيمية والتعليم اليسوعي، وإلى المواقع المؤسسية الموثوقة ذات المصادر المفتوحة، ولا سيما موقع جامعة القديس يوسف وموقع الزهينة اليسوعية. ويقترح المقال إعادة صياغة مفاهيمية يُحفظ فيها التناقض ولا يتم حلّه كمشكلة، بل يتم ضبطه كمولد للفحص الذاتي المؤسسي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الثقافة التنظيمية؛ القيم المؤسسية؛ الجامعات ذات الرسالة؛ التعليم العالي اليسوعي؛ القيم الإغناطية؛ إدارة الموارد البشرية.

الإطار النظري المطور في بحث دكتوراه حول التعليم العالي اليسوعي، متخذاً من جامعة القديس يوسف في بيروت مرتكزاً ميدانياً له. ويرتكز التحليل على نموذج شاين بمستوياته الثلاثة، وإطار القيم المتنافسة لكامبرون وكوين، ومنظومة القيم الإغناطية (الاهتمام بالشخص ككل، والتّمييز، والماجيس، والإيمان الذي يحقّق العدالة، والكونية). ويبرهن المقال أنّ التوتّر بين القيم المؤسسية والثقافة التنظيمية ليس مشكلة إدارية عابرة بل وضع بنيوي يتجلّى على ثلاثة مستويات: بين القيم المُعلّنة والافتراضات الكامنة، وبين الخطاب الجماعي للرسالة وأنظمة الحوافز السوقية، وبين الهوية الداخلية والصورة الخارجية. غير أنّ التناقض ينتج أيضاً: إذ تتحوّل التوتّرات إلى محرّكات للتعلّم المؤسسي عند ربط القيادة والموارد البشرية والحوكمة عمداً بمعايير الرسالة. وقد صمّم هذا المقال كمرجعة أدبية تُمهّد

#### How to Cite This Article

Abdo, G. E. (2026). Organizational culture and institutional values: A paradox in mission-driven universities. *Arab Journal for Scientific Publishing (AJSP)*, 9(92), (262–276).

(Individual DOI)

رابط الأرشيف الدولية المباشر والمخصص لبحثك: <https://doi.org/10.36571/ajsp.92.9>



## 1. Introduction

Few organizations claim a stronger normative identity than universities. Within higher education, this claim is even more visible in institutions founded on a religious, ethical, or social-justice charter. Mission-driven universities present themselves as more than producers of credentials and research outputs; they situate their activity within a moral horizon that pre-existed the modern logic of higher education and that, they argue, gives that logic its meaning. Catholic, Jesuit, Protestant, Muslim, secular-humanist and indigenous institutions all share, in different idioms, this rhetorical posture: education is not only formation of competence but formation of persons, communities and societies.

This claim is difficult to sustain in the institutional environment of the twenty-first century. Higher education has been progressively reshaped by massification, marketization, performance-based funding, employability discourse, and an ecosystem of global rankings that converts reputational capital into a small number of numerical indicators. In this context, the daily life of universities is increasingly governed by metrics of productivity, efficiency and visibility that are, by design, neutral in appearance and largely indifferent to content. The result is

a deep tension that mission-driven universities live more acutely than their secular counterparts: their espoused identity and their operating environment speak different languages.

This article approaches the tension as a paradox: not a contradiction that can simply be removed, but a defining feature of mission-driven universities that both threatens and strengthens their distinctiveness. The argument is developed from a doctoral inquiry into the impact of Ignatian values on the organizational culture and behavior of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth (USJ), the only Jesuit university in the Arab world, founded in 1875. Although the main case is a single Jesuit institution, the analysis has broader relevance: the paradox examined here is generic to mission-driven universities, and the conceptual apparatus used to read it draws on mainstream organizational-culture theory rather than on confessional premises.

This article is written as a literature review based on existing research that prepares the conceptual and contextual ground for a subsequent case study and for the methodology of the broader doctoral investigation. It proceeds through the sections required for a scientific publication: a statement of the study problem, its objectives, its importance, its limits, definitions of its key terms, the theoretical framework and previous studies, the study methodology, the substantive analysis and discussion, and a concluding section that draws together findings, recommendations and conclusion.

## 2. Study Problem

Mission-driven universities face a deep and increasingly visible problem. Their declared values, formation of the whole person, service rooted in justice, the patient cultivation of community, hit with environmental pressures that do not, by design, recognize or reward what these institutions claim to stand for. Global rankings, accreditation regimes, performance-based funding mechanisms and donor expectations translate the complex educational realities of universities into a small number of readable indicators. Very few of these indicators are designed to capture the real content of mission.

The result is a gradual and often invisible decoupling: mission language survives, sometimes flourishes, on websites, in convocation speeches and in patronal feasts, but it loses contact with the decisions that actually shape the institution, hiring criteria, promotion frameworks, resource allocation, performance evaluation and public reporting. In practice, the institution may say one thing while rewarding another. The longer this decoupling persists, the more fragile mission becomes, and the more the institution moves toward the generic profile that its environment most easily reads.

The research problem of this article can therefore be stated as follows: how can mission-driven universities sustain authentic alignment between their espoused values and their organizational culture in a higher-education environment that is largely indifferent, and sometimes hostile, to the real content of mission? This question is the core problem the article addresses, taking the Jesuit articulation of the mission-driven model and the specific case of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth as its analytical reference point.

## 3. Objectives of the Study

This article pursues six interrelated objectives:

- To analyse the structural paradox between organizational culture and institutional values in mission-driven universities, and to show that it is constitutive rather than temporary.

- To use the principal theories of organizational culture (Schein 2017, Cameron and Quinn 2011, Hofstede 2011, Mintzberg 1979, Tierney 1988) as a diagnostic framework for reading the dynamics between values and culture of mission-driven universities.
- To examine the Ignatian value system, cura personalis, discernment, magis, reflection, service rooted in justice, solidarity, as a particularly dense and operationally specific articulation of the mission-driven model.
- To illustrate the dynamics through the case of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth, a Jesuit institution operating in Lebanon under conditions of compounded crisis.
- To identify the practical levers, human resource management, leadership and governance, through which the paradox can be transformed from a vulnerability into a discipline of organizational learning.
- To establish the conceptual foundation on which a subsequent empirical case study, and the methodology that informs it, can be developed within the broader doctoral project.

#### 4. Importance of the Study

The study is important for several reasons. Theoretically, the article contributes to the literature on organizational culture in higher education by reading the principal models of organizational culture as theories of value-driven behavior rather than as taxonomies of organizational types, and by applying them to a class of institutions, mission-driven universities, whose distinctive cultural problem is structurally underexplored in mainstream organizational theory.

Practically, it speaks to leaders of mission-driven institutions who need analytical tools to protect their universities' distinctiveness in an environment that does not naturally value it. It identifies concrete practical levers, in HRM, leadership and governance, through which institutional values can be reconnected with organizational culture.

Contextually, the article makes a specific contribution to the study of higher education in the Arab world by analysing Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth, the only Jesuit university in the region, as an revealing case for the questions it raises. The Lebanese setting, confessionally plural, crisis-affected, regionally exposed, makes the case unusually instructive for any institution that wishes to remain credibly mission-driven under pressure.

Finally, it serves as the conceptual and contextual platform for the empirical investigation that will follow within the broader doctoral project on Ignatian values, organizational culture, and human-resource practices at USJ.

#### 5. Limits of the Study

The study has several clear limits. Geographically, it focuses on a single country (Lebanon) and a single institution (Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth) as its main empirical case; the analytical claims are intended to be transferable to other mission-driven universities, but the case-specific findings must be interpreted in light of the Lebanese context. Disciplinarily, the argument is developed from organizational theory and educational management; it engages the theological foundations of the Ignatian tradition only in so far as they inform the operational and pedagogical features of Jesuit higher education.

Methodologically, the article is a literature review designed to prepare the ground for a subsequent empirical case study; it does not itself report new primary data and its findings should be read as conceptual and contextual rather than as empirically conclusive. Temporally, the reviewed literature covers principally the period from the early 1980s to 2025, with priority given to the most recent international sources and to the post-2019 Lebanese context. Finally, the study does not attempt a comparative analysis across multiple mission-driven traditions (Protestant,

Muslim, indigenous, secular-humanist); such comparison is signalled as a productive direction for further research.

## 6. Terms and Definitions

The following key terms are used throughout the article in the senses defined below.

- Organizational culture: the pattern of shared meanings that guides how members of an organization perceive, think and act (Schein, 2017).
- Institutional values: the core collectively held preferences about what is good, important and proper in the organization, which form the foundation on which culture rests.
- Mission-driven university: a university whose institutional identity is anchored in an explicit ethical, spiritual or social-justice charter that pre-exists and aims to inform its educational and research activity.
- Ignatian values: the cluster of operational values articulated in the Jesuit tradition, notably *cura personalis*, discernment, *magis*, reflection, service rooted in justice and love, and solidarity / kinship, derived from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola and elaborated in successive Jesuit educational documents.
- *Cura personalis*: literally “care for the whole person”; the disciplined recognition of each individual as worthy of attention in intellectual, emotional, physical, social and spiritual dimensions.
- Discernment: the disciplined practice of consequential decision-making that reads context, examines motives, weighs alternatives against shared purpose, and chooses for the greater good in freedom rather than under pressure.
- *Magis*: literally “more” or “greater”; the restless commitment to excellence understood as going further in service rather than outdoing competitors.
- Decoupling: in organizational sociology, the persistent gap between an organization’s formal claims and its operational routines, by which mission language continues at the level of discourse while resource flows track external pressures.
- Identity–image gap: the asymmetry between what an institution understands itself to be at its core (identity) and how it is read by external audiences through the signals they happen to monitor (image).

## 7. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Organizational culture is most usefully defined, for the purposes of this article, as the pattern of shared meanings that guides how members of an organization perceive, think and act, and values as the core collectively held preferences about what is good, important and proper in that group (Schein, 2017; Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In this sense, values are not a decorative addition to culture; they form part of its foundation. Culture is, in effect, the routinized residue of past value choices: what an organization once decided was worth defending, rewarding, celebrating and prohibiting eventually becomes what its members take for granted. Four theoretical lenses are particularly relevant for reading the value–culture dynamic of mission-driven universities, and a body of previous studies has begun to apply them to higher-education contexts.

### 7.1. Schein’s Three Levels: Visible Artifacts, Espoused Values, Underlying Assumptions

Schein’s model distinguishes three layers within every organization: visible artifacts (architecture, ceremonies, dress, language, symbols), espoused values (the ideals members publicly claim, such as “excellence”, “innovation” or “care for the whole person”), and underlying assumptions (the taken-for-granted convictions about human nature, knowledge, authority and truth that members no longer notice they hold). Behavioral

alignment requires coherence across the three levels; misalignment, especially between espoused values and underlying assumptions, is the principal source of cultural drift (Schein, 2017).

For mission-driven universities, Schein's model is especially useful as a diagnostic tool. Strategic plans, charters, and presidential addresses are dense with espoused values: care for the person, justice, dialogue, service. The visible artifacts are equally rich: chapels, founders' portraits, patronal feasts, mission statements engraved in stone. The decisive question is whether the underlying assumptions, about what counts as serious scholarship, what merits promotion, what defines a "good" dean, actually align with the espoused level. Where they do not, Schein's framework predicts that espoused values will gradually become ceremonial: invoked at convocations, ignored in committee rooms.

## 7.2. Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework

Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework (CVF) maps organizational culture onto two orthogonal axes, flexibility versus control, and internal versus external focus, yielding four ideal types: clan (internal-flexible, valuing mentoring, loyalty and consensus), adhocracy (external-flexible, valuing experimentation and entrepreneurship), market (external-controlled, valuing competition and goal attainment), and hierarchy (internal-controlled, valuing rules, stability and efficiency) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

The value of the CVF for mission-driven universities lies in its reminder that these four cultures are not simply different; they also compete with one another. A university cannot maximize all four at once. Mission-driven institutions typically present a strong clan profile in their identity discourse, community, mentoring, accompaniment, shared discernment, while their external environment pushes them, often forcefully, toward market culture (rankings, internationalization metrics, donor-facing productivity) and hierarchy (accreditation compliance, audit regimes, regulatory reporting). The result is a structural pull-on culture that does not respect the institution's declared value preferences.

## 7.3. Hofstede and the National Context

Hofstede's dimensions, power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence-restraint, add a macro lens to the analysis (Hofstede, 2001). They remind us that the same mission language lands on different cultural soil. A high-power-distance context will read "companionship" and "shared discernment" paternalistically; a low-power-distance one will read them as horizontal solidarity. A high-uncertainty-avoidance environment may resist precisely the experimental, adhocratic dispositions that some mission preferences (innovation in pedagogy, community-engaged research) demand. For internationally networked mission-driven universities, the implication is that what looks like resistance to mission may be a cultural translation problem rather than a normative failure.

## 7.4. Mintzberg's Structural Configurations

Mintzberg's configurations, simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisional form, adhocracy, underline that universities are, in their core academic work, professional bureaucracies (Mintzberg, 1979). Coordination depends on the standardization of skills through professional training and on peer accountability, not on supervisory command. This point has important implications for mission-driven institutions: identity claims that cannot enlist professional norms (peer review, disciplinary standards, faculty self-governance) cannot become culture. Leaders may proclaim mission from the top; behavior will follow only if mission is rendered intelligible and rewardable within the professional logic of academic work.

## 7.5. Previous Studies on Organizational Culture in Higher Education

body of previous studies has applied these frameworks to higher-education contexts. Tierney (1988) developed an influential reading of academic culture as carried by institutional sagas, narratives and symbolic forms that bind faculty, students and administrators across generations. Deal and Kennedy (1982) earlier articulated culture as the rituals and rites of corporate life, a framework subsequently extended to universities. Several studies using the Competing Values Framework in higher education have shown that universities often display mixed cultural profiles, combining collegial, hierarchical and performance-oriented features. Coman and Bonciu (2016) and Lacatus (2016) examined the hybridization of collegial and managerial logics in contemporary universities. Pavlova (2023) explored organizational culture and resilience in higher education during the COVID-19 crisis. Stack (2021) analyzed the political economy of global university rankings and the cultural distortions they produce.

Within the Catholic and Jesuit literature, Gallin (2001) traced the negotiation of Catholic identity in higher education since 1960; Peck and Stick (2008) examined faculty perceptions of Catholic and Jesuit identity; Rose and König (2016) reviewed the characteristics of Jesuit higher education; Kolvenbach (2000) and Sosa (2018) provided key statements from successive Jesuit Superiors General on the service of faith, the promotion of justice and the reconciled life. Mencuccini (2021) examined “hiring for mission” and Ignatian formation in Jesuit higher education. Together, these previous studies provide the immediate scholarly context in which this article is situated.

## 7.6. Integrative Reading

Taken together, these frameworks and previous studies point toward one central proposition: organizational culture in universities is reliably produced not by what is declared but by what is rewarded, assumed, structurally enforced and peer validated. Mission-driven universities are particularly vulnerable between the declared and the structurally rewarded because their declared values, typically clan-and-mission heavy, oriented toward formation, justice and care, sit in tension with environmental pressures that pull toward market and hierarchy. The frameworks together provide the diagnostic framework for the analysis that follows. They locate the paradox not in the rhetoric of any particular institution but in the structural fit (or misfit) between identity claims and the cultural mechanisms through which behavior is actually produced.

## 8. Study Methodology

The methodology of this article is that of a structured literature review designed to settle the conceptual and contextual ground for a subsequent empirical case study, and to inform the methodology of the broader doctoral investigation on the impact of Ignatian values on the organizational culture and behavior of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth. The review is therefore not an end in itself but a preparatory step: it builds the analytical framework, surveys the relevant previous studies, and establishes the contextual map against which the empirical work will be conducted.

### 8.1. Sources

The review draws on three complementary streams of sources, each chosen for a specific purpose:

- Peer-reviewed academic publications retrieved through Google Scholar, using a combination of keyword searches (organizational culture, institutional values, mission-driven universities, Catholic higher education, Jesuit higher education, Ignatian pedagogy, cura personalis, decoupling, identity–image gap,

human-resource management in universities). Results were filtered for relevance, recency and academic credibility, with priority given to peer-reviewed journals and to publications cited across multiple authors.

- Reference books in organizational theory and Jesuit education, including the foundational works of Schein (2017), Cameron and Quinn (2011), Hofstede (2001), Mintzberg (1979), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Tierney (1988); and, on the Jesuit side, the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola (1548/1991), Gallin (2001), Stack (2021) on the politics of rankings, and the programmatic addresses of Kolvenbach (2000) and Sosa (2018).
- Reliable open-access institutional websites and documents from primary sources, including: the official website of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth (USJ, 2024) for the institution's charter, vision, mission and values, governance documents and 150th-anniversary materials; the websites of the Society of Jesus and its provinces (Society of Jesus, 1995, 2019, 2025; Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province, 2022), including the General Congregations' decrees and the Universal Apostolic Preferences; and the websites of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and the International Association of Jesuit Universities (IAJU) for the Mission Examen resources and the Living Tradition document. These open-access sources, scientific reference databases and reliable institutional sites, provide primary documentation that complements the academic literature and grounds the analysis in the institution's own self-articulation.

## 8.2. Selection Criteria

Sources were retained according to the following criteria: peer-review or institutional authority for academic and institutional sources respectively; thematic relevance to the value–culture dynamic of mission-driven universities; temporal balance between foundational works (Schein, Cameron and Quinn, Mintzberg, Hofstede, Tierney, Ignatius of Loyola) and recent publications (Lacatus, Mencuccini, Pavlova, Stack, Sosa, Society of Jesus 2019–2025); plurality of theoretical perspectives, so that the analysis is not dependent on a single school; and primary-source preference for institutional and tradition-specific documents (USJ charters, Society of Jesus decrees, AJCU and IAJU materials).

## 8.3. Thematic Organization and Analytical Procedure

The reviewed material was thematically organized around four axes that structure the article: (a) the theory of organizational culture and its application to universities; (b) the value architecture of Jesuit higher education and its Ignatian foundations; (c) the case context of Lebanon and Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth; and (d) the practical levers, human resource management, leadership and governance, through which institutional values become organizational practice. Each axis was read through the diagnostic lenses of Schein, Cameron and Quinn, Hofstede and Mintzberg, with the aim of producing not a survey of the literature but an integrated analytical platform.

The review process was progressive. An initial review of foundational works produced theoretical framework. The framework was then used to interrogate the literature on mission-driven and Jesuit higher education, which in turn produced the categories used to analyse the USJ case. Institutional documents and open-source materials from USJ, the Society of Jesus and Jesuit higher-education networks were read against those categories to ground the analysis in concrete institutional life. The literature review therefore prepares, on the one hand, the conceptual framework, and on the other, the empirical sensitivity required for the case study that follows.

## 8.4. Limits of the Methodology

As a literature review, the methodology relies on secondary sources and on institutional self-presentations; it does not yet test the analytical claims against new primary data collected from members of USJ. That test belongs to

the subsequent empirical phase of the doctoral project, for which this article supplies the conceptual map. The review also privileges English- and French-language sources accessible online; Arabic-language scholarship on USJ and on Lebanese higher education is included where available but does not exhaust the body of work in that language. These limits are acknowledged explicitly and are intended to be partially compensated for in the empirical phase.

## 9. Results and Discussion

The literature review produces four interrelated findings, which together constitute the conceptual platform on which the subsequent empirical investigation will be built.

### 9.1. The Paradox of Mission-Driven Universities

The paradox of mission-driven universities can be stated simply. The features that make these institutions distinctively a rich, historically grounded value system articulated in particular and often religious idioms, are precisely the features that the modern environment of higher education does not easily recognize, reward or sustain. In other words, mission is what gives these universities their identity, yet it is also what their environment is least prepared to value. The paradox is not a temporary embarrassment to be managed away by better communications; it is a deep-seated condition. It operates simultaneously at three levels, each of which reproduces the others.

The first asymmetry is internal to the institution and lives at the level Schein identified. Mission-driven universities are exceptionally articulate at the espoused-value layer: charters, mission statements, accreditation self-studies, and presidential discourse converge on a vocabulary of care, justice, dialogue, integrity and service. But the underlying assumptions, what counts as a serious scholar, what makes a “rigorous” promotion file, which conferences matter, which forms of teaching deserve protection in workload models, are not formed inside the institution. They are imported, largely unexamined, from the international disciplinary communities to which faculty belong and, on whose judgments, their professional standing depends. The consequence is a quiet but persistent gap. The university may therefore speak one language in its mission and another in its daily routines.

The second asymmetry is the one Cameron and Quinn’s framework makes most visible. Mission-driven universities are, in their identity claims, clan organizations, communities of formation, mentoring, accompaniment and shared discernment. Their preferred descriptors are familial, relational and developmental. But the environment in which they compete is increasingly a market environment, structured by global rankings, international student flows, donor expectations, and accreditation regimes that translate complex educational realities into a small number of readable indicators. Clan and market are not merely different cultures; they are competing logics. Lacatus (2016) describes the result as a “hybrid culture” in which the strategic-management apparatus, scorecards, rankings, entrepreneurial revenue, is layered onto a collegial foundation. This hybrid can work, but over time it may move cultural weight away from the collegial community and toward the market unless leadership deliberately counterbalances that movement.

The third asymmetry is the one that mission-driven universities feel most acutely in their public-facing communication. Identity is what the institution understands itself to be at its core. Image is what external audiences, prospective students, donors, accreditors, media, ranking compilers, read of that identity through whatever signals they happen to monitor. Where the signals external audiences monitor is aligned with the institution’s identity, the gap is small. Where they are not, image either narrows identity to what is publicly legible, or it begins to drift away from identity entirely. Stack (2021) shows how global comparison systems reward what

can be counted and narrated easily, which displaces mission priorities that are complex, long-horizon and relational. The risk that follows is what organizational sociologists call decoupling: the institution continues to speak about formation, justice and care while daily routines and resource flows track whatever is most readable to external authorities (Albrecht & Heaton, 1984).

These three asymmetries are not independent. The internal espoused/assumed gap weakens the institution's ability to resist the clan/market pull; the clan/market pull, in turn, sharpens the identity/image tension; and the identity/image tension feeds back into the espoused/assumed gap. The paradox is therefore a self-reinforcing system in which each asymmetry amplifies the others, which is also why purely managerial responses tend to fail.

## 9.2. Ignatian Values as a Counter-Cultural Architecture

Among mission-driven universities, Jesuit institutions offer a particularly rich and coherent articulation of values. The vocabulary is centuries old, anchored in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1548/1991), and has been continuously translated into pedagogical, governance and HR practices through documents such as the Characteristics of Jesuit Education, the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, and successive General Congregations of the Society of Jesus (Society of Jesus, 1995, 2019).

Six values structure the Ignatian system as it is applied in higher education. *Cura personalis* names the recognition of each individual as worthy of attention in intellectual, emotional, physical, social and spiritual dimensions; it forbids the reduction of a person to one role, one problem or one productivity score (Muldoon, 2015). *Discernment* is the disciplined practice of decision-making that reads context, examines motives, weighs alternatives against shared purpose, and chooses for the greater good in freedom rather than under pressure. *Magis* is the restless commitment to excellence understood not as outdoing competitors but as going further in service. *Reflection* treats experience as raw material that requires deliberate interpretation to become learning. *Service* rooted in justice and love places the institution's capacity at the disposal of those who lack equivalent capacity. *Solidarity* and *kinship*, finally, locates the individual within a community of co-responsibility and reciprocal accompaniment.

These six values are not simply a moral layer added to ordinary educational practice. They translate, in Jesuit pedagogy, into the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm's cycle of context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation; in governance, into discernment in common as a deliberative method; in human resource management, into "hiring for mission" and into formation programs that accompany staff over careers; and in strategic planning, into the Mission Examen, a structured instrument of institutional self-assessment (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, n.d.; Mencuccini, 2021).

Read through the four organizational-culture frameworks, the Ignatian system reveals a structural logic that is, at minimum, internally consistent. In Schein's terms, it has a developed artifact register, a precise espoused-value vocabulary, and, critically, an explicit theory of underlying assumptions: human beings are formed, not merely trained; knowledge serves justice; discernment, not optimization, is the proper mode of consequential decision-making. In CVP terms, it is predominantly clan, with significant adhocracy elements; market and hierarchy elements are present but disciplined by mission. In Hofstede terms, the values translate differently across national contexts but retain a recognizable core. In Mintzberg terms, the values are designed to be carried by professional norms rather than imposed by hierarchy. This is the design feature that lets the system function inside a professional bureaucracy.

However, the Ignatian system does not implement itself. It depends on formation, people learn to discern, accompany and reflect through structured practice over time, and on courageous closure: discernment must end



Human resource management is often the most underestimated lever in mission-driven universities, even though its alignment with mission can produce the strongest cultural effects. Recruitment, performance evaluation, promotion, professional development and well-being are the principal channel through which the institution's underlying assumptions are formed, transmitted and revised. As long as promotion and merit privilege only easily counted outputs (publications in indexed journals, external grant volume, citation counts), they teach a hidden curriculum that quietly contradicts the mission. Recoding incentives so that community-engaged scholarship, justice-integrated teaching, intercultural leadership and ecological stewardship receive real academic credit alongside traditional markers is the single most consequential intervention available to leadership. USJ's HR Service supports Ignatian retreats, mission days, exposure to the Spiritual Exercises in adapted formats, and participation in the Examen exercise; its commitment to employee well-being is framed not instrumentally but constitutively, as an expression of *cura personalis* applied to employees themselves.

Leadership in mission-driven universities is best understood less as command than as sense-giving (Tierney, 1988). Mission-driven leaders extend this work by making mission an explicit decision rule rather than a decorative narrative. The Jesuit tradition offers a specific method for this: discernment in common. The practice is to publish the mission-based criteria that will guide major choices, invite evidence aligned to those criteria, name the trade-offs openly, and document how the final decision advances the mission. When discernment is made auditable in this way, mission moves from rhetoric to method, and community trust rises because people see that reasons, not rhetoric, governed the choice.

Governance is the third lever. Mission-driven universities require governance forms that combine the necessary clarity of authority with the participatory texture that mission demands. The Jesuit articulation is co-responsibility: boards, presidents, senates, deans, departments and student bodies each exercise their role in ways that advance the whole and resist the role drift that tends to concentrate decisions at the top. Subsidiarity, the principle that decisions should be taken at the level closest to those affected, where competent, prevents the centralization that hollows out cultural authority. Two governance practices deserve particular emphasis: the integration of crisis-time discernment into governance manuals, and the alignment of public reporting with mission-based indicators rather than with externally borrowed metrics.

These three levers matter because they act precisely where the three asymmetries meet. HRM addresses the espoused/assumed gap by aligning rewards with mission. Leadership addresses the clan/market pull by making mission the decision rule. Governance addresses the identity/image asymmetry by tying public reporting to mission evidence. None of the three is sufficient on its own; together, they convert the paradox from a source of vulnerability into a discipline of self-examination that is the institution's actual competitive advantage.

### 9.5. Implications Beyond the Jesuit Case

Four broader implications follow from this analysis. First, the paradox is constitutive, not pathological: the expectation that, with enough strategic skill, the tension between mission and environment can be eliminated misreads the situation. Treating the paradox as constitutive shifts the strategic question from how do we make it go away? to how do we live it well? Second, mission without operationalization is drift: values that are not translated into HRM, leadership and governance practices do not survive environmental pressure. Third, the distinctive resource of mission-driven universities is discernment as method; other traditions have analogues to the Jesuit articulation (dialogical Protestant practice, Islamic consultative deliberation, Quaker and indigenous consensus-seeking). Fourth, the external recognition problem will not resolve itself: mission-driven universities must therefore invest deliberately in the slow work of building external audiences, accreditors, peer institutions, alumni networks, philanthropic partners, civic publics, who can read the institution in its own terms.

## 10. Recommendations and Conclusion

### 10.1. Recommendations

On the basis of the literature review and the analysis developed above, several recommendations can be formulated for mission-driven universities, and for Jesuit institutions in particular:

- Reconnect human-resource practices with mission: revise recruitment, promotion and reward criteria so that community-engaged scholarship, justice-integrated pedagogy and intercultural leadership receive real academic credit alongside traditional indicators.
- Institutionalize formation: replace episodic workshops with multi-session formation programs for chairs, deans, directors and professional staff that join Ignatian practice with organizational decision-making.
- Make discernment auditable: publish the mission-based criteria that guide major decisions, invite evidence aligned to them, document trade-offs, and review outcomes against those criteria after the fact.
- Embed crisis-time protocols in governance: specify in advance how rapid decisions will still be framed against published mission-based criteria, so that compressed time does not erode cultural coherence.
- Align public reporting with mission-based indicators: annual reports should narrate how curriculum review, recognition frameworks, and equity and ecological indicators advanced mission elements, educating donors, accreditors and the civic community about what excellence means in this institution.
- Treat plurality as constitutive: in confessionally plural societies such as Lebanon, configure religious identity as the ground of pluralism rather than as its rival, and document the institutional practices through which this is achieved.
- Build constituency externally: invest deliberately in the slow work of cultivating accreditors, peer institutions, alumni networks and philanthropic partners who can read the institution in its own terms, rather than relying exclusively on signals legible only to ranking compilers.
- Pursue empirical follow-up: subject the conceptual claims of this literature review to direct test through interviews, survey, observation and document analysis at Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth in the subsequent empirical phase of the doctoral project.

### 10.2. Conclusion

Organizational culture and institutional values stand in a paradoxical relationship in mission-driven universities. The values that give such institutions their identity are the values their environment is least equipped to reward; the culture that environment fosters is the culture those values would resist. The paradox is deep-seated, not temporary. It operates simultaneously at the level of espoused values and underlying assumptions, at the level of clan identity and market environment, and at the level of internal identity and external image. The three asymmetries reinforce each other, which is why purely managerial or rhetorical responses tend to fail.

At the same time, the paradox can also be productive. The same tension that threatens coherence supplies the occasion for a particular kind of institutional self-examination. The Ignatian tradition, with its developed vocabulary of *cura personalis*, discernment, *magis*, reflection, service in justice and solidarity, offers one model of how values can be made operational through human resource management, leadership and governance. Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth illustrates how that operationalization can be sustained even under compounded crisis, and what its limits are.

The wider implication, relevant to any institution that wishes to remain credibly mission-driven, is that mission does not survive through declarations alone. It survives through the patient reconnection of values with structures. The paradox cannot be solved. It can, however, be lived as a discipline. Institutions that learn to live it as a

discipline rather than evade it as an embarrassment retain something that the contemporary higher-education environment does not, by itself, supply: a reason for being that is comprehensible to themselves, recognizable to those they serve, and durable enough to outlast any single strategic cycle.

As a literature review preparing the conceptual and contextual ground for a subsequent case study, this article claims no more than to have set out that map. The empirical work that follows will test, refine and where necessary correct the framework proposed here, in the specific institutional setting of Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth.

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