



## Corporate culture at Vietnam Dairy Products Joint Stock Company, Vinamilk, Vietnam

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### Abstract

Vinamilk's robust corporate culture is further exemplified by its proactive approach to international integration and the strategic mobilization of resources, ensuring a confident and sustainable entry into the global market. This synchronized and highly effective cultural framework has been institutionalized through continuous technological innovation, rigorous R&D to meet increasingly diverse consumer demands, and the comprehensive development of infrastructure, operational capacity, and high-quality human capital. The commitment to 'International Quality - Vinamilk Quality' transcends a mere slogan; it functions as a fundamental core value, reflecting the organization's long-term vision and strategic intent to penetrate global markets and elevate the prestige of Vietnamese brands on the world stage.

**Keywords:** Corporate Culture, Vinamilk Vietnam

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### 1. Introduction

In the current era of profound globalization and international economic integration, enterprises are compelled not only to navigate intensifying domestic competition but also to validate their competitive prowess on a global scale. The success of an organization is no longer contingent solely upon business strategies, manufacturing processes, or financial capabilities; rather, it is intrinsically linked to corporate culture. Regarded as the 'soul' and a vital intangible asset, this culture shapes the identity, core values, and organizational resilience. Far from being a mere collection of behavioral codes or slogans displayed in boardrooms, corporate culture represents a sophisticated synthesis of values, beliefs, norms, behaviors, and attitudes shared by all members, from executive leadership to frontline personnel. As emphasized by Prof. Phan, (2017) <sup>[5]</sup> in his work '*A Lifetime of Management*', even a million processes cannot substitute for a positive and robust culture, underscoring that the longevity and adaptability of an enterprise depend largely on the inherent strength of its organizational culture.

More specifically, corporate culture is perceived as a strategic tool that enables organizations to foster differentiation and establish a sustainable competitive advantage. The cultivation of a positive cultural environment not only optimizes employee performance but also facilitates the formation of a shared value system, aligning individual contributions with overarching organizational objectives. Such a culture enhances employee loyalty, commitment, and motivation, while simultaneously building trust and credibility with customers, partners, shareholders, and regulatory bodies. From the perspective of economic and management researchers, corporate culture is the decisive factor in an organization's competitiveness; it serves not only as the foundation for sustainable development but also as the 'common thread' (or leitmotif) that integrates all functional areas. This internal cohesion empowers enterprises to navigate difficulties and overcome challenges within an increasingly volatile business environment.

Vinamilk stands as a preeminent paradigm of effective corporate culture construction within the Vietnamese business landscape. By harmonizing a philosophy that prioritizes employee welfare with a steadfast commitment to consumer protection, Vinamilk has successfully fostered a positive organizational environment characterized by mutual respect, encouragement, and the empowerment of individual potential.

Within this framework, corporate culture transcends a mere collection of values, beliefs, and behavioral norms; it serves as the strategic bedrock for formulating business initiatives, enhancing brand equity, and consolidating the company's position in both domestic and international markets. These cultural tenets have evolved into a distinct competitive advantage, enabling Vinamilk to attract top-tier talent, bolster employee loyalty, and cultivate seamless internal cohesion across all functional departments.

In conclusion, corporate culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the identity, values, and competitive prowess of an organization. Serving as the 'soul' of the enterprise, it acts as a catalyst for human connectivity, value creation, and long-term sustainability. Vinamilk exemplifies the successful integration of corporate culture, balancing the protection of employee welfare with a steadfast focus on customer interests and international market expansion. The study of Vinamilk's cultural model transcends theoretical inquiry; it offers profound empirical insights for other enterprises in constructing, developing, and sustaining their own cultural frameworks. Ultimately, this facilitates the creation of a sustainable competitive advantage and ensures flexible adaptation within the era of global economic integration.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Overview of Corporate Culture

Corporate Culture (CC) constitutes the collective spiritual, material, and intellectual values developed throughout an organization's existence, gradually forming its distinct concepts, customs, and traditions.

According to French expert Georges de Sainte-Marie, CC is defined as 'the synthesis of values, symbols, myths, rituals, taboos, and philosophical and ethical viewpoints that form the profound foundation of an enterprise' (Dao, 2018:18)<sup>[2]</sup>. This definition emphasizes the diversity of cultural elements, ranging from core values to specific rituals and codes of conduct within the firm. Similarly, the International Labour Organization (ILO) offers another perspective, suggesting that CC is a unique blend of values, standards, habits, traditions, behavioral attitudes, and ceremonies that are idiosyncratic to a specific organization (Phan, 2018)<sup>[4]</sup>. This definition clarifies that CC not only reflects the combination of spiritual elements but also fosters the unique identity of each organization. A widely recognized definition in the field of organizational research, proposed by Edgar Schein, describes CC as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that members of a company learn as they solve problems of internal integration and external adaptation (Schein, 2010)<sup>[6]</sup>. According to Schein, corporate culture is forged through practical experiences and the challenges an organization encounters throughout its operational history.

Furthermore, Nguyen (2012)<sup>[3]</sup> provides a more in-depth definition, stating that CC is a system of meanings, values, dominant beliefs, perceptions, and mindsets shared by all members of an organization, which extensively influences their actions. This view underscores the role of consensus and collective influence in shaping corporate culture.

In addition, Duong (2009)<sup>[1]</sup> defines CC as a system of values, norms, concepts, and behaviors that govern the activities of all members and establish a unique business identity. This definition illustrates the profound impact of CC on organizational operations and distinctiveness.

Within the scope of this essay, CC is understood as a system of values, beliefs, and dominant meanings, reflecting the

shared perceptions and mindsets of an organization's members. These elements have a far-reaching influence on individual behaviors and operational methods, thereby contributing to the firm's unique identity. As enterprises exist with the primary mission of producing material wealth and providing services, every production activity is linked to a specific technological chain. To ensure the efficiency of this chain, a rigorous organizational and management system must be maintained consistently. This requires every individual to adhere to specific values and standards while following certain 'cultural patterns' during their work.

Consequently, CC can be interpreted as the totality of cultural values formed and developed throughout an enterprise's existence. These values evolve into deep-seated concepts, customs, and traditions that govern the emotions, thoughts, and behaviors of members in pursuit of collective goals. CC is manifested through a system of core values and cultural norms, encompassing both tangible values (symbols, products, architecture, etc.) and intangible values (vision, beliefs, mission, philosophy, etc.), all of which are created and preserved by the enterprise throughout its formation and development.

### 2.2. The Role of Corporate Culture in Organizational Development

#### 2.2.1. CC functions as the core value system of an enterprise, establishing its unique hallmark and organizational identity.

Every enterprise possesses a distinct framework of core values, strategic visions, ethical standards, and business philosophies. These elements are typically conceptualized and cultivated by senior leadership or founding teams throughout the organization's evolutionary trajectory. An organization's core values, growth strategies, ethical benchmarks, and business philosophies are manifested through a diverse array of cultural constituents and instruments. These include the brand identity system (encompassing logos, slogans, and corporate architecture); formal regulations regarding professional conduct and customer engagement protocols; as well as organizational narratives, myths, rituals, and corporate events. Collectively, these factors synthesize to form a specialized and characteristic working environment.

Successful enterprises are consistently those that prioritize the cultivation of a distinctive cultural milieu that differentiates them from their competitors. This cultural identity serves not merely as a peripheral identifier but as a reflection of the collective operational and social modalities of the firm. It engenders a unique corporate lifestyle and business model, incorporating the internal climate, emotional resonance, interpersonal communication, professional relationships, and a heightened sense of accountability and collaborative spirit among the workforce.

#### 2.2.2. CC generates a centripetal force within an enterprise, fostering a cohesive and efficient work environment while significantly enhancing employee satisfaction.

A robust cultural foundation not only serves as a critical driver for talent acquisition but also fortifies employee loyalty and organizational commitment. CC exerts a direct influence on the synergy among individual members and the cross-functional collaboration between departments. By cultivating a climate characterized by transparent

communication, mutual respect, and the empowerment of individual potential, an organization can substantially elevate the level of job satisfaction among its workforce.

Furthermore, a work environment built upon the pillars of cooperation, trust, and progressive affiliation transforms the enterprise into a unified community, instilling deep-seated confidence in the organization's collective success. Consequently, corporate culture transcends the mere establishment of organizational norms; it functions as a strategic orientation toward sustainable development and institutional advancement.

### 2.2.3. CC functions as a catalyst for innovation and creativity within the enterprise.

A robust cultural framework fosters a high degree of authentic autonomy, wherein employees are encouraged to operate independently while continuously exploring and innovating. Such encouragement not only stimulates organizational dynamism but also unlocks the creative potential of members, establishing a rigorous foundation for the firm's Research and Development (R&D) activities.

However, a culture that promotes creativity does not necessitate a climate of absolute consensus. On the contrary, such an environment permits the free proposition of innovative ideas and facilitates constructive debate and critical inquiry. These intellectual exchanges are instrumental in ensuring the quality of creative outputs, refining ideas, and enhancing their feasibility for practical implementation. Furthermore, CC incentivizes innovation through formalized mechanisms, including performance-based rewards, recognition systems, and career advancement opportunities.

### 2.2.4. CC bolsters an enterprise's competitive strength through a framework of healthy competition and humanistic values.

An organization's competitiveness is typically reflected through key determinants, including product/service quality, technology, human capital, managerial proficiency, and financial assets. Within this context, CC plays a pivotal role in optimizing these factors by establishing standardized work environments, ensuring quality assurance, and incentivizing innovation - particularly in scientific and technological advancements. Furthermore, a robust CC empowers employees to maximize their individual potential and facilitates the seamless integration of modern management methodologies. Consequently, CC transcends its role as a mere supportive element to become a decisive factor in enhancing a firm's overall competitive standing.

An enterprise with a strong cultural foundation possesses the capacity to attract elite talent and fortify employee loyalty - essential components for building and sustaining competitive prowess. Moreover, CC serves as a critical mechanism for maintaining and consolidating this strength by enabling the organization to adapt fluidly to both internal and external environmental shifts.

In light of the aforementioned analysis, it is evident that corporate culture holds a paramount position in the sustainable development of an organization. Only by establishing a solid cultural foundation can an enterprise fully mobilize its inherent strengths, potentials, and creativity, thereby forging an unbreakable bond among all organizational members.

## 2.3. General Overview of Corporate Culture

### 2.3.1. Core values and Cultural norms

#### A. Core values

Core values constitute a fundamental system of principles that define an organization's identity and generate competitive differentiation. These values serve as a normative benchmark for all operations, fostering a unified cognitive framework across all hierarchical levels, from executive leadership to front-line employees. This system is operationalized through four pivotal components:

**Vision:** This component outlines the desired future state of the enterprise, functioning as a 'strategic compass' to mobilize resources and facilitate collaborative synergy among organizational members.

**Mission and Fundamental Values:** These elements articulate the organization's *raison d'être* (reason for existence), its core purpose, and its institutional responsibilities, thereby establishing the groundwork for long-term strategic orientation.

**Strategic Objectives:** These are formulated with inherent flexibility to capitalize on opportunities and mitigate risks arising from the complex dynamics of both internal and external business environments.

**Strategy-Culture Nexus:** Corporate culture dictates the mechanisms through which an organization perceives and processes environmental data. It functions not only as a catalyst for collective action but also as a 'perceptual filter' that shapes and executes strategic initiatives effectively.

The rigorous alignment of these components enables an enterprise to not only realize economic objectives but also ensure sustainable development within an increasingly integrated global market.

#### B. Cultural norms

Cultural norms constitute a system of recognized values consistently practiced throughout an enterprise's operational lifespan. To maintain this system, organizations must explicitly define cultural elements derived from their core values, categorized into two distinct groups: tangible and intangible artifacts.

Tangible cultural norms encompass identifiable material elements such as corporate architecture, organizational structure, brand symbols (logos and slogans), rituals, attire, and observable behavioral patterns of members. Rather than being mere external manifestations, these elements function as a critical 'bridge.' They facilitate the accessibility and identification of the culture for members - particularly new employees - enabling them to gradually internalize the profound intangible cultural values, such as underlying beliefs and business philosophies. The synchronization of these two cultural layers is essential for an enterprise to cultivate a consistent and sustainable organizational identity.

### 1. Organizational Structure and Corporate Departments

An organizational structure serves as a systematic framework of functional units with delineated authorities designed to achieve collective objectives, while simultaneously acting as a reflection of the prevailing managerial culture.

Disparities in structural design fundamentally shape distinct cultural characteristics: a hierarchical (tall) model, characterized by multiple managerial tiers, typically epitomizes a power-oriented culture, often resulting in operational rigidity and impeded information dissemination. Conversely, a flat or network-based structure fosters a collaborative culture, emphasizing organizational dynamism and innovation through the optimization of information sharing and knowledge exchange.

Aligning the organizational model with core values is a prerequisite for effective strategic implementation. This structure not only establishes the foundation for authority relationships and inter-departmental coordination but also dictates the design of the physical and operational landscape. In conclusion, a congruent organizational structure cultivates a robust cultural ecosystem, enabling the enterprise to sustain its internal capabilities and maintain flexible adaptability amidst the fluctuations of a volatile business environment.

## 2. Annual Organizational Rites and Festivals

Rituals and ceremonies serve as vital symbolic manifestations of corporate culture, systematically organized to strengthen internal cohesion and celebrate core values. Within this framework, commemorative anniversaries act as significant milestones that honor organizational traditions, evoke collective pride, and reinforce the institution's mission among its members. Beyond formal ceremonies, socio-cultural and athletic initiatives - such as musical performances, sporting competitions, and corporate retreats - are essential components that enrich the psychological well-being of the workforce. These activities not only promote physical health but also facilitate an environment of open dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and solidarity. Consequently, management can strategically utilize these events as powerful instruments to transmit corporate values, thereby sustaining and advancing a robust and enduring organizational identity.

## 3. Symbols, Logos, Slogans, and Websites

Cultural symbols serve as tangible instruments that encapsulate an enterprise's profound values and core messages. These encompass architecture, rituals, narratives, and, most notably, the brand identity system, enabling stakeholders to perceive the organizational identity through diverse sensory channels. According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is defined as a combination of a name, symbol, and design intended to identify products and differentiate them from competitors. However, from a cultural perspective, a brand transcends mere identification; it serves as a reflection of the organization's prestige, reputation, and business philosophy within the consumer's psyche.

The logo is regarded as a creative masterpiece that conveys the organizational image through visual language. Despite its simplistic form, a logo possesses immense symbolic power, directing public attention toward the dominant values the enterprise intends to instill in the collective consciousness. The logos of global corporations such as Coca-Cola, Toyota, and Microsoft exemplify designs that must simultaneously reflect specific cultural identities and maintain high adaptability across diverse languages and cultural landscapes.

Furthermore, the slogan represents the most condensed expression of a business philosophy. Utilizing concise and

memorable language, the slogan acts as an emotional bridge connecting employees, customers, and the community. To fully comprehend the profound implications of a slogan, it must be analyzed in close alignment with the organization's mission statement. Messages such as Viettel's '*Say it your way*' or Trung Nguyen Coffee's '*The source of creativity*' are not merely promotional taglines but affirmations of the firm's vision and social commitment. The synchronization of these elements not only enhances brand recognition but also fosters a consistent cultural ecosystem, enabling the enterprise to solidify its market position and competitive prowess.

## 4. Attire and Corporate Uniforms

Attire and corporate uniforms constitute tangible cultural artifacts - visible and empirical elements that contribute to the distinctive identity of an enterprise. Beyond establishing a brand image, these elements promote organizational equity and foster social cohesion and integration among members. Furthermore, they function as symbolic representations of professional pride and collective solidarity, reflecting the employees' commitment to the organization of which they are a constituent part.

## 5. Product Aesthetics and Design Packaging

Product design and aesthetics serve as tangible artifacts that directly reflect an enterprise's cultural philosophy. Disparities in design - such as the minimalist and utilitarian approach characteristic of Japanese cosmetics versus the opulent and intricate aesthetic of Korean counterparts - demonstrate the divergent core values pursued by specific nations and organizations. Beyond physical products, intangible elements such as behavioral conduct, corporate narratives, and internal publications play a pivotal role in transmitting organizational identity to stakeholders.

In conclusion, visual symbols transcend mere external appearance; they encapsulate latent values regarding a firm's commitment to its customers and employees. By strategically investing in these symbolic instruments, management can effectively communicate strategic messages, fostering profound trust and mutual understanding within both the community and the internal organization.

## C. Intangible norms

The potency of corporate culture is manifested through the collective alignment of organizational members regarding intangible norms. These unseen yet pervasive elements - encompassing beliefs, shared expectations, philosophies, and mental models - are internalized by members over time, eventually crystallizing into self-sustaining behavioral standards. In practice, these intangible norms govern the relational dynamics within the firm and its interaction with the external environment through five core dimensions of underlying assumptions.

Primarily, the dimension of man's relationship to nature reflects how individuals and the enterprise perceive their agency, ranging from an 'active' stance of mastering one's destiny to a 'harmonizing' or 'submissive' approach toward environmental forces. Closely linked to this perception is the nature of human relationships, which defines the social architecture of the firm by emphasizing either individual achievement and competition or, conversely, collaborative synergy and collective solidarity. Furthermore, the nature of human activity reveals how organizations hold divergent views on motivation; while some operate under the

assumption that individuals are inherently passive and require strict control, others believe in innate autonomy and creativity, thus fostering empower-based management styles. In addition to these structural beliefs, the nature of human behavior recognizes that attitude, perception, and continuous learning are critical determinants that shape individual conduct and work methodologies within the organizational construct. Equally significant is the nature of truth and reality, which determines the criteria for 'right' and 'wrong.' In this context, truth may be established through objective, empirical analysis and scientific laws, or alternatively, it may be socially constructed based on the charismatic authority and vision of the leadership. In essence, these intangible norms constitute the 'submerged portion of the cultural iceberg,' subconsciously guiding every decision and action within the enterprise to ensure long-term stability.

### 3. The Current State of Corporate Culture at Vinamilk Joint Stock Company

#### 3.1. Overview of the Formation and Development Process

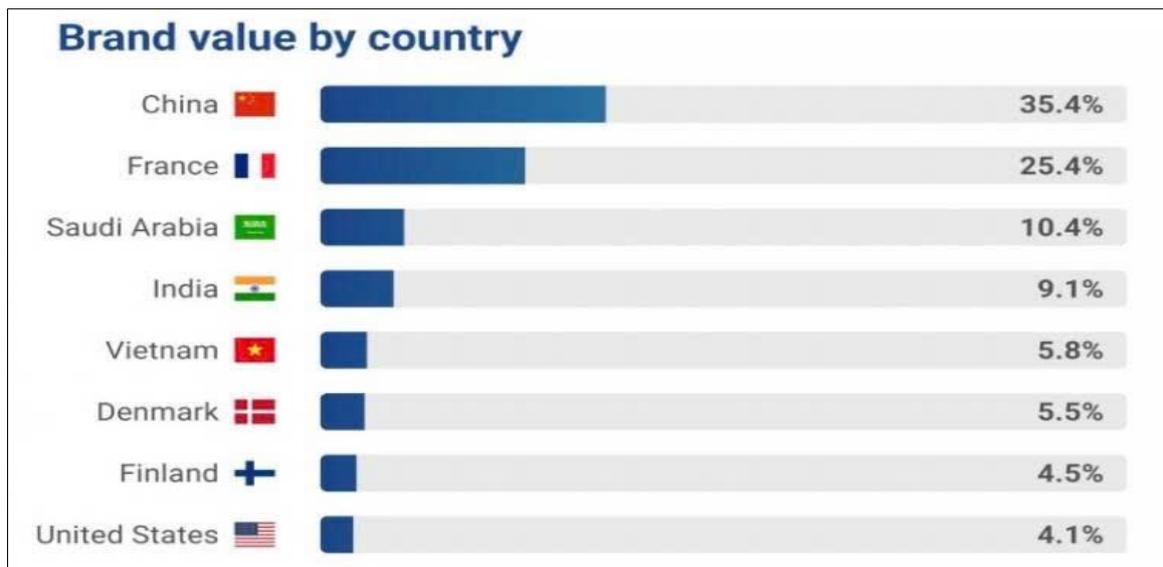
##### 3.1.1. Company Introduction

Established in 1976, Vietnam Dairy Products Joint Stock Company (Vinamilk) has solidified its position as the premier dairy enterprise in Vietnam and the broader region. By 2023, with a brand valuation reaching \$3 billion, Vinamilk ascended to the 6th position among the Top 10 most valuable dairy brands globally, according to the Brand Finance report. The corporation is headquartered in District 7, Ho Chi Minh

City, and maintains its primary digital presence at <https://www.vinamilk.com.vn/>. In terms of market dominance, Vinamilk maintains an overwhelming domestic share across multiple segments: 54.5% of the total dairy market, with particularly high concentrations in condensed milk (79.7%) and spoonable yogurt (84.5%). Its expansive distribution network, comprising 220,000 retail points, ensures maximum consumer accessibility. Internationally, the company has successfully exported to 43 countries, surpassing a cumulative export turnover of \$2.2 billion and penetrating highly demanding markets such as the United States, Japan, and France.

Over 45 years of evolution, Vinamilk's operational scale has expanded to include 46 entities, featuring 16 manufacturing plants and 14 modern dairy farms. Key strategic milestones include its equitization and subsequent listing on the Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange (HOSE) in 2003, and the inauguration of its first Cambodian facility in 2016. The company's diversified product portfolio - ranging from powdered and liquid milk to specialized nutrition for children and the elderly - is highly regarded for its superior quality and flavor profile.

Driven by advanced technological integration and astute strategic planning, Vinamilk has become more than just a food industry icon; it serves as a cornerstone of the national economy and a symbol of Vietnam's industrial pride (Tran, 2024)<sup>[9]</sup>.



Brand Finance (cited from Mekong ASEAN E-Magazine, 2025)<sup>[7]</sup>.

**Fig 1:** Vinamilk has successfully propelled Vietnam into the Top 5 nations making the most significant contributions to the global dairy industry's value.

##### 3.1.2. Business Performance Results

Over the past three years, Vietnam Dairy Products JSC (Vinamilk) has recorded stable and sustainable growth despite macroeconomic challenges. In the fourth quarter of 2024, consolidated revenue reached 15,477 billion VND. For the full fiscal year 2024, Vinamilk achieved a historical milestone with total revenue of 61,783 billion VND, representing a 2.3% increase compared to 2023. Profit after tax (PAT) reached 9,453 billion VND, up 5% year-on-year, while net profit grew by 6%, marking a three-year high. The domestic market remained the primary revenue driver,

contributing 50,799 billion VND (a marginal increase of 0.4%). Conversely, international markets exhibited robust expansion, with revenue reaching 10,983 billion VND, up 12.6% over the previous year. Regarding the financial position, total assets exceeded 55,000 billion VND by the end of 2024, with a significant concentration in cash and cash equivalents. Despite a slight uptick in financial expenses, the company maintained a stable debt structure and continued its policy of high dividend payouts, reaching 38.5% of par value for 2024.

### 3.2. Analysis of the Current State of Corporate Culture at Vinamilk

#### 3.2.1. Core Values and Cultural Norms of Vinamilk Core Values

The corporate culture of Vinamilk is anchored in a cohesive framework of core values, vision, mission, and a sustainable business philosophy, establishing a consistent set of normative standards for all institutional operations.

##### The Core Value System (The Five Pillars)

The potency of Vinamilk's corporate identity is primarily anchored in its Core Value System, often referred to as the Five Pillars. At the forefront of these values is *Integrity*, which emphasizes absolute honesty and transparency in every commercial transaction and behavioral conduct. Complementing this is the principle of *Respect*, a value that promotes not only self-regard but also a deep appreciation for colleagues, partners, and the inherent diversity within a harmonious professional environment. Furthermore, the corporation maintains a steadfast commitment to *Fairness*, ensuring equity and impartiality toward all stakeholders - ranging from employees and customers to suppliers - while actively protecting legal rights and eliminating discrimination. In addition to these interpersonal values, *Ethics* serves as a vital moral framework, guiding the organization toward social responsibility and the preservation of its institutional reputation. Ultimately, all these principles are solidified through *Compliance*, which ensures strict adherence to legal regulations, the Corporate Code of Conduct, and internal policies.

Building upon this ethical foundation, Vinamilk's strategic guidelines are articulated through a clear *Vision* and *Mission*. Regarding its long-term aspirations, the company seeks to become the premier symbol of trust in Vietnam for nutritional and health products, continuously innovating to remain the community's most reliable choice. This vision is driven by a profound Mission: to provide superior quality nutrition fueled by a sense of love and social responsibility toward human life. Evidently, this dual focus on innovation and compassion ensures that the organization remains deeply rooted in societal well-being.

Beyond its internal philosophy, Vinamilk's cultural identity is tangibly expressed through its symbolic *Logo* and *Slogan*. Notably, the current logo features a modern, minimalist design that reflects strength, sustainability, and a symbiotic connection with nature, effectively conveying a message of purity and reliability. This visual representation is further reinforced by the tagline 'For a Healthy Life,' which reaffirms the company's dedication to researching and developing optimal nutritional solutions. In summary, the seamless integration of ethical pillars, strategic foresight, and cultural symbolism creates a comprehensive framework that enhances the quality of life for consumers while securing Vinamilk's position as a market leader.

##### Business Philosophy and Quality Policy

Vinamilk's business philosophy identifies quality as the pivotal factor, integrated with innovation and the application of cutting-edge technology to meet market demands. The corporation transcends short-term economic gains to focus on sustainable development, environmental protection, and the cultivation of trust-based partnerships. To operationalize this philosophy, Vinamilk's Quality Policy pledges to satisfy all customer requirements through product diversification, food

safety assurance, and competitive pricing, while upholding business ethics and the rule of law.

In conclusion, the rigorous alignment between ethical values and business strategy has enabled Vinamilk to build a sustainable brand, contributing significantly to the national economy and social progress.

#### 3.2.2. The Foundational Values Constructing Vinamilk's Culture

##### 3.2.2.1. Vinamilk's Corporate Culture in Relation to Specific Stakeholders

Vinamilk's enduring success is fundamentally rooted in the strategic implementation of a transparent corporate culture model, which is operationalized through specialized engagement policies tailored to key stakeholder groups. Primarily, regarding leadership and shareholders, the corporation focuses on an orientation of optimizing profit value in tandem with the effective preservation and mobilization of internal resources. This governance model affirms a rigorous reciprocal relationship wherein sustainable shareholder returns are viewed as the prerequisite for long-term organizational stability and growth, thereby demanding absolute accountability and transparency in all managerial activities.

Building upon this orientation, Vinamilk places a significant emphasis on human capital development and the construction of an internal culture based on equity and inclusion. Beyond merely adhering to institutional respect, the leadership proactively creates optimal conditions for employees to enhance their individual competencies through a comprehensive welfare system; this includes extensive health insurance programs for dependents and substantial investment in physical infrastructure, such as gym facilities and swimming pools, to bolster both physical well-being and labor productivity. Consequently, the corporate culture has catalyzed a profound behavioral transformation, enabling employees to not only adhere to professional grooming standards but also to genuinely internalize a dedicated and enthusiastic work ethic.

Furthermore, a customer-centric philosophy and community engagement serve as the strategic 'compass' to fortify trust and brand equity. By committing to a diversified portfolio of international-standard products at competitive prices - grounded in the foundation of integrity - Vinamilk simultaneously reaffirms its corporate social responsibility through practical initiatives, such as organizing athletic competitions and supporting educational empowerment to improve the community's quality of life. Moreover, to ensure operational consistency across the entire system, Vinamilk has pioneered the adoption of a governance framework based on Six Core Principles and Seven Leadership Behaviors. It is this normative framework that directs all decision-making processes, ensuring equity and operational efficiency throughout the organization. In summary, by institutionalizing cultural values across diverse stakeholder segments, Vinamilk has not only fortified its internal synergy but also solidified its formidable market position, establishing a robust foundation for sustainable development in the context of globalization.

##### 3.2.2.2. The Six Core Cultural Principles of Vinamilk

The most pivotal milestone in Vinamilk's cultural development strategy is the introduction of the handbook titled 'The Vinamilk Journey'. Far from being a mere

operational manual, this document serves as a vivid cultural symbol that operationalizes core values into practical behavioral standards. In particular, the deployment of its digital version has established a unified connection network, enabling the entire workforce to access information rapidly and efficiently. At the heart of this handbook lies a set of six new cultural principles designed to shape a professional and high-integrity working environment. First and foremost, the principle of responsibility demands an 'inward-looking' mindset, where individuals take ownership of errors to foster improvement rather than shifting blame to external factors. In tandem with this, a result-oriented spirit is promoted through data-driven communication, which renders all managerial decisions more transparent and objective.

Furthermore, creativity and proactivity are upheld as strategic compasses, encouraging employees to constantly seek solutions in the face of challenges. To complement this, the principle of collaboration emphasizes voluntary coordination and mutual respect, thereby dismantling departmental silos without the need for rigorous supervision. Moreover, integrity is regarded as the moral foundation, requiring every member to be truthful and maintain ultimate accountability for both their words and actions. Finally, the aspiration toward excellence through continuous learning drives the workforce to elevate their professional expertise to international standards. Consequently, 'The Vinamilk Journey' is not merely a behavioral code but a vital strategic link that fortifies internal synergy, allowing the enterprise to maintain its leading position and achieve sustainable growth on a global scale.

### 3.2.2.3. The Seven Leadership Behaviors of Vinamilk

In addition to the core cultural principles, Vinamilk has established a framework of seven leadership behaviors that serve as managerial benchmarks to drive organizational effectiveness. Primarily, a systematic work ethic is operationalized through meticulous planning, the establishment of clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and the maintenance of transparent reporting mechanisms, ensuring that all activities are precisely oriented and measurable. Building upon this managerial dimension, the role of leaders is further emphasized through the timely understanding and motivation of personnel, thereby incentivizing employees to achieve their maximum potential. In particular, the systematic observation and cultivation of high-performing individuals are regarded as a vital strategy for nurturing a high-quality succession pipeline.

In tandem with these efforts, leaders bear the responsibility of fostering an open work environment that dismantles departmental silos to promote a culture of collaboration and sustainable engagement. Furthermore, in every professional interaction, those in leading positions are expected to embody the persona of a 'mature adult,' characterized by a composed and civilized demeanor. Ultimately, the leadership image at Vinamilk is depicted as a dual role: acting as a 'driver' who coordinates strategy while simultaneously serving as a 'servant' who supports the team. Consequently, these behaviors establish a robust foundation for the enterprise's long-term development and strategic resilience.

### 3.2.2.4. Characteristics of Vinamilk's Organizational Culture Model

Vinamilk's corporate culture model is strategically structured and implemented to optimize talent acquisition and retention.

To achieve this objective, the corporation has cultivated a model characterized by the following salient features:

#### Principled Characteristics

The Multi-Dimensional Stakeholder Model of Vinamilk's Corporate Culture

Vinamilk's cultural model is defined by a rigorous organizational structure and a comprehensive commitment to its diverse stakeholder network. Primarily, regarding internal governance, the corporation's organizational chart is designed with transparency, clearly delineating roles and responsibilities from executive leadership to front-line staff; this ensures that all operational processes strictly adhere to established regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, in relation to its consumer base, Vinamilk solidifies its market position by pledging to provide a diversified portfolio of safe, high-quality products at competitive price points, with the ultimate objective of enhancing public health standards. In tandem with consumer interests, the company places significant emphasis on safeguarding shareholder rights through astute business strategies, ensuring that capital is utilized securely and yields sustainable profitability.

Moreover, a profound respect for the rule of law is a salient feature of Vinamilk's identity, as the corporation consistently complies with the national policies of Vietnam and all other operating markets, thereby affirming its legal integrity and contribution to socio-economic development. Regarding human capital, the company fosters a safe and satisfying work environment with competitive compensation packages, allowing individuals to maximize their professional skill development. Simultaneously, relationships with partners are built upon the foundations of mutual benefit, transparency, and social responsibility, creating sustainable synergy throughout the value chain. Finally, communal responsibility is manifested through practical educational and healthcare initiatives. In conclusion, by harmonizing the interests of all stakeholders, Vinamilk not only fortifies its corporate reputation but also contributes to the creation of a prosperous society, reaffirming its model of sustainable corporate culture.

#### Innovative Characteristics

Vinamilk's corporate culture is recognized as an innovative and highly effective framework, playing a pivotal role in fostering employee engagement and driving sustainable growth. First and foremost, the core attribute of this model lies in the establishment of clear and consistent objectives, which creates a unified vision across the entire organization and ensures that all resources are strategically channeled toward optimal outcomes. Building upon this foundation, Vinamilk cultivates professional motivation through equitable and timely recognition policies; these systems not only validate employee achievements but also incentivize a proactive mindset toward emerging challenges. Simultaneously, the implementation of regular feedback mechanisms and the institutional respect for constructive contributions have fostered an open work environment where creativity and continuous improvement are highly valued.

Furthermore, the professional yet inclusive work environment at Vinamilk is designed to allow individuals to maximize their potential and generate distinctive value in their respective roles. Within this ecosystem, the role of leadership is emphasized not merely through executive decision-making but through 'spiritual leadership,' where

managers serve as mentors who guide and support their teams in achieving collective goals. In particular, teamwork is an indispensable element, nurtured through frequent extracurricular activities, cultural events, and sports; these initiatives effectively dismantle interpersonal barriers and enhance collaborative synergy. Finally, a profound sense of national brand pride is internalized within the work culture, bridging the gap between corporate commitment and the broader development of the community and the national economy. In summary, the harmonious integration of goal-oriented management, comprehensive compensation policies, and collective spirit solidifies Vinamilk's status as a benchmark working environment in Vietnam.

### 3.2.3. Distinctive Highlights of Vinamilk's Corporate Culture

In practice, many corporations often perceive the development of corporate culture as a vague or abstract concept. In reality, organizational culture is manifested even through the smallest actions. Vinamilk has effectively applied this philosophy to build and implement its corporate culture through the following specific initiatives:

#### 3.2.3.1. Human-Centric Strategy in Vinamilk's Corporate Culture

Vinamilk's cultural development strategy adopts a human-centric approach, grounded in the philosophy that employees are the decisive factor in creating sustainable value and constitute the organization's most precious asset. Primarily, the corporation materializes this commitment by investing heavily in state-of-the-art facilities across its manufacturing plants, while simultaneously standardizing professional conduct, ranging from office uniforms to an enthusiastic work ethic. Beyond optimizing performance through soft skills training and time management workshops, Vinamilk places a particular emphasis on strategic talent retention. Specifically, through periodic commendation and reward initiatives, the enterprise not only recognizes individual efforts but also cultivates an inspiring and cohesive working environment.

Furthermore, the humanitarian values inherent in Vinamilk's culture extend to the families of its workforce through practical policies, such as welfare visits and medical expense subsidies. Consequently, by providing comprehensive care that encompasses both the personal lives and the domestic support systems of its employees, Vinamilk has successfully established a workplace that resonates as a 'great family.' As a result, the workforce not only feels secure in their professional endeavors but also nurtures a deep sense of trust and loyalty, thereby voluntarily committing to the long-term collective growth of the organization.

#### 3.2.3.2. Community-Oriented Values in Vinamilk's Corporate Culture

One of the core pillars of Vinamilk's corporate culture is its steadfast commitment to community-oriented values, where commercial interests are consistently aligned with social responsibility. Primarily, the corporation proactively fosters positive societal change through humanitarian programs such as 'Bright Fireflies' and 'Hot Air Balloons with Vinamilk Reaching High,' which create developmental opportunities and instill hope in children and vulnerable populations. Furthermore, Vinamilk strategically integrates its brand identity into cultural and athletic activities, as well as artistic

projects that honor the nation's seas, islands, and patriotic spirit. Consequently, by engaging deeply in these initiatives, the enterprise not only inspires national pride but also reaffirms its position as a national brand dedicated to the sustainable development of the country. In summary, the robust synergy between the corporation and the community has evolved into a distinctive cultural identity, enabling Vinamilk to cultivate enduring public trust.

#### 3.2.3.3. Strategic investment in distribution channels:

In essence, Vinamilk perceives its agents not merely as intermediary channels but as an organic extension of the enterprise, serving as the primary representatives of the corporation's brand image and core values. Primarily, to ensure consistency in service quality across the entire system, Vinamilk mandates that all distributors internalize and rigorously execute corporate cultural standards, ranging from professional etiquette to a customer-centric attitude. Building upon this orientation, the corporation invests heavily in synchronized infrastructure and modern equipment at points of sale, aiming to create a convenient shopping environment that optimizes the overall customer brand experience.

Furthermore, the dissemination of corporate culture throughout the distribution network has enabled Vinamilk to establish robust strategic partnerships and attract high-quality human resources. Consequently, this professionalism and uniformity have served as a vital lever, not only solidifying its leading position in the domestic market but also facilitating brand expansion into stringent international markets such as the United States, France, the Netherlands, and Canada. In summary, a consistent distribution culture is the cornerstone that allows Vinamilk to maintain sustainable growth and elevate its brand value on the global stage.

### 3.3. Evaluation of Vinamilk's Corporate Culture

At present, Vinamilk's corporate culture model is highly regarded for its numerous strategic advantages. This framework has effectively enabled the corporation to maintain a stable human resource structure while continuously attracting highly qualified professionals, thereby catalyzing rapid organizational growth.

The cultural model of Vinamilk exerts a profound influence not only on internal operations but also on external stakeholders and organizations, as detailed below:

#### 3.3.1. Internal Environment

Vinamilk's corporate culture possesses distinct advantages that serve as a strategic lever for sustainable development. Notably, the ability to foster collective cohesion is a standout feature of this model. By establishing a work environment that harmoniously integrates professional excellence with dynamic social interaction, the corporation not only facilitates mutual support but also enhances the sense of accountability and loyalty among its workforce. In addition to this internal cohesion, periodic commendation and reward programs play a vital role in talent retention while incentivizing employees to continuously refine their professional expertise. This creates a workforce with synchronized competencies, ready to meet the most stringent market standards.

Regarding business performance, a solid cultural foundation has enabled Vinamilk to solidify its absolute leadership in the Vietnamese dairy market - particularly within the packaged milk segment - thereby creating a sustainable competitive

advantage. Furthermore, these cultural values serve as the bedrock for the enterprise to maintain internal stability and confidently penetrate international markets, while simultaneously building a prestigious brand image in the eyes of global customers and partners. Consequently, Vinamilk's cultural model not only optimizes internal operational efficiency but also acts as the primary driver for comprehensive brand development on a global scale.

### 3.3.2. External Environment

To date, Vinamilk has successfully established a distinctive corporate culture model wherein internal growth is seamlessly integrated with the cultivation of harmonious and sustainable relationships with external stakeholders. Primarily, a profound respect for the rule of law serves as the core foundation; Vinamilk pledges strict compliance with both Vietnamese and international regulations, thereby affirming its transparency and corporate prestige within the global business community. Beyond internal governance, the company prioritizes consumer well-being by fulfilling its mission to provide safe, high-quality nutrition grounded in advanced scientific research.

Furthermore, Vinamilk's approach to its clientele is inherently strategic, as it regards customers as collaborative partners, which optimizes brand loyalty and facilitates long-term cooperation. Regarding suppliers, shareholders, and investment partners, the enterprise consistently maintains a principle of mutual respect, ensuring fairness and a commitment to sustainable growth. In summary, this comprehensive cultural framework not only fortifies internal trust but also serves as the 'key' to elevating Vinamilk's brand value and competitive positioning on the global economic stage.

## 4. Conclusion

### 4.1. General practices in corporate culture development

Corporate culture is far more than mere formal slogans; it is aptly described as the 'soul' of an organization or the 'operating system' that directs all strategic activities. While leaders often prioritize business plans and strategies during the startup phase, empirical evidence suggests that long-term sustainability depends directly on a robust cultural foundation. Culture is not a separate entity but evolves in tandem with the organization's development, encompassing the totality of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors shared by all members.

The role of leadership is the pivotal factor in steering and shaping this culture. An effective working environment must be built upon mutual trust and respect, where employees feel empowered and encouraged to develop their individual identities. When workers operate in an environment characterized by psychological safety and trust, productivity and performance outcomes are significantly enhanced. Conversely, rigid or toxic management styles, if not rectified early, pose a severe threat to the organization's survival.

Regarding implementation, the core of corporate culture lies in the entrepreneurial spirit and the system of core values the organization pursues. A common pitfall for leaders is imposing culture mechanically without fostering a comprehensive understanding among employees, which reduces cultural initiatives to mere superficial movements. Depending on specific organizational characteristics, leaders must identify suitable values to create a distinct identity. This construction process should be initiated as early as possible,

as culture serves not only present interests but also becomes a legacy inherited by future generations.

### 4.2. Corporate Culture Construction Specifically for Vinamilk

Vinamilk stands as a quintessential exemplar of possessing a robust corporate culture, which serves as a pivotal driver in fostering sustainable development and elevating the brand's stature on the international stage. This cultural foundation is not merely confined to optimizing internal operational efficiency but also provides substantial support for the corporation's global integration strategy. By consistently adhering to the philosophy of 'International Quality - Vinamilk Quality,' the group has adeptly integrated modern technological innovation, intensive research and development (R&D), and a consistent cultural identity to forge a sustainable competitive advantage. Furthermore, the meticulous preparation of human resources and infrastructure in accordance with international standards has enabled the enterprise to assertively establish the Vietnamese brand footprint within stringent global markets.

Evidently, the hallmark of Vinamilk's cultural model lies in the harmonious equilibrium between promoting employee welfare and safeguarding the maximum interests of consumers. From these practical successes, other organizations can derive profound managerial lessons regarding organizational culture. In light of this experience, the establishment of a strategic set of cultural principles is regarded as a fundamental step toward creating a unified operational framework, facilitating the realization of management objectives and reinforcing trust among stakeholders. Building upon this, the earnest and synchronized participation of the entire workforce is a prerequisite for cultural values to truly permeate the life of the enterprise, requiring leadership to play a proactive role in guiding and supporting employee integration.

In addition, fostering multi-dimensional interaction between management levels and subordinates plays a crucial role in maintaining and executing culture effectively. By cultivating an environment of open dialogue, the enterprise not only enhances internal credibility but also ensures that all members deeply comprehend the organization's strategic direction. In summary, Vinamilk's corporate culture model represents a comprehensive synthesis of preserving internal values and building external prestige, creating a solid foundation for the enterprise to maintain its leading position and continuously expand its influence on a global scale.

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