

# A Critical Revisit to Performance Measurement rooted in Critical Postmodernism

Chai-Ching Tan<sup>1)</sup>, Sirinthip Arsirapongpisit<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> Director, Business Consultation and Research, and Division of Wear-Resistant Engineering, Suriyati Duramat International Co., Ltd. (adhiptan@yahoo.com)

<sup>2)</sup> Director, Chiangrai (1993) Sahataweekij Co., Ltd. (sirinthipAT@yahoo.com)

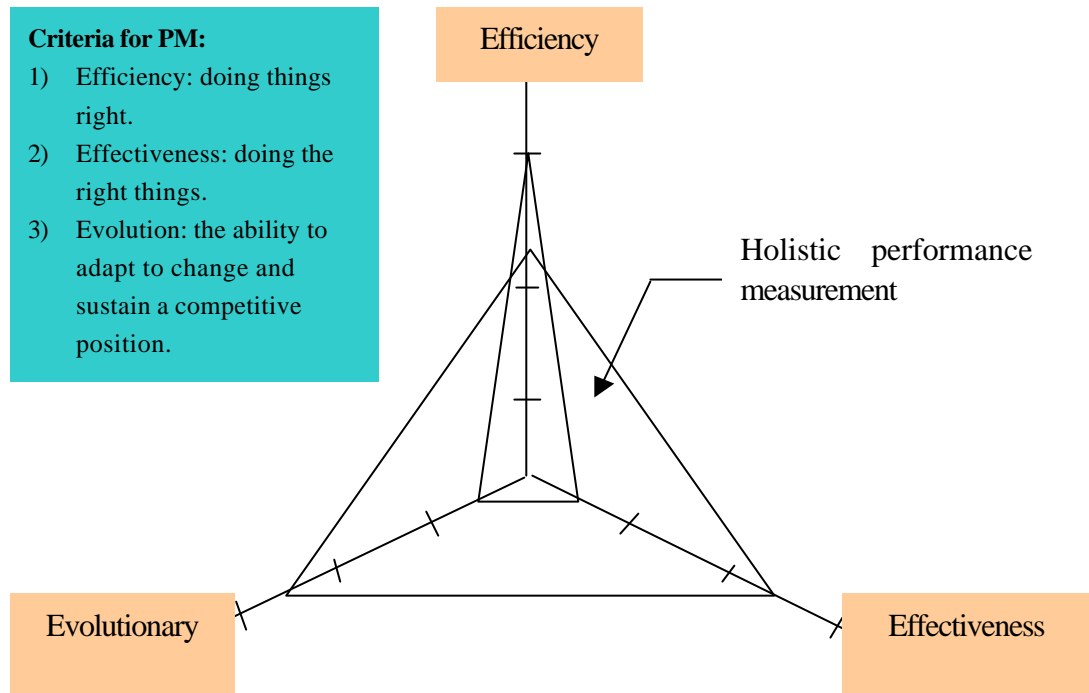
## Abstract

In this article key essentiality of postmodernism are articulated for applications in constructing an effective performance measurement system capable to act as competitive basis and core competencies key for sustainable competitive advantage. In an era of a trend towards enriching intellectual capitalization, an organization must also seek performance measurement as a platform to transcend measurement into knowledge and wisdom. Thus performance measurement is also about knowledge management. This article also outlines four other key postmodern traits of performance measurement that are often neglected by practitioners or researchers, that is: performance measurement is also about sensational high-energy interaction, embodiment of an implicate order, the part as the whole and the whole as characterized in the part, and finally performance measurement is an outcome of proactive behavioral acts of staffs accountable for within the organization. Finally, a spirituality-based postmodernism model in achieving corporate cohesion and company-wide performance is presented, together with its 8-S implementation framework modified from McKinsey 7-S model of corporate strategy structure.

## 1. Introduction

This paper demonstrates how postmodernistic traits in performance measurement can be treated as the basis in gaining or creating sustainable competitive advantage in many of the organizations who strike to excel in the present era of rapid change and uncertainty – an era characterized by strategic importance of intellectual capitalization [1]. Performance measurement is more of a means to an end – a platform of self-adaptable management system capable to learn and adapt to changes and demands of the marketplace [2]. Its functionalities are multifaceted, for instance, PM can be used to track availability and level of utilization of corporate resources (such as labor, raw material, competency, brand name, intellectual capital, investment fund, value chain network, e-infrastructure) as compared to best practices within or outside the industries (i.e., practices of internal and external benchmarking). For one, world class manufacturers (WCMs) have been actively involved with the use of performance measurement in tracking continuous improvement activities and key-success-factor projects within their organizations. WCMs know very well that manufacturing strategy must proactively be capable to dictate the direction of a corporate strategy instead of staying at a reactive catching-up version of best practices. In other words WCMs recreate the norm of standards of best practices within industries. To do that most WCMs have installed a highly effective performance measurement system tightly linked to corporate objective and with committed responsibility spreaded across each member within an organization. Feurer [3] presented an excellent organization-wide framework model in the implementation of a performance measurement system which is capable to lift up to the expectation of world-class organizational standard [Fig. 1]. In this sense, as argued in [3], corporate strategy is no longer centrally formulated but rather it is an outcome that reflects the culmination of aligned business level strategies that have been formulated throughout the organization. In [4] it outlines the deficiency of a traditionally cost-based approach to performance measurement in terms of time delay and asserts that financial monitoring – a laggard performance metric – often presents shadows projected by real images. Further argument on weakness of performance measurement with emphasis on lagging metrics such as cost is found in [5]. A balance approach would be that lagging measurement is complemented by performance tracking and actions on lead metrics such as quality and cycle time. Time-based performance metrics such as lead time, cycle time, turnover time, rate of

new product introduction to the marketplace, first to make crucial strike-or-lose decision, quoted lead time, uptime yield and cycle time are examples of lead metrics without time delay and they form the bases for chain of positive reactions to profitability and market share. In sum, it is only by attaining to the enablers or drivers of performance achievement that an organization can then be of competitive advantage [6,7]. This article will highlight what we can learn from some critical postmodernistic traits of performance measurement, and how they can be applied to help organization nurture and build strength and foundation for competitive edge in a marketplace.



**Fig. 1. Holistic Performance Measurement Framework (Source: [3])**

## 2. Postmodernistic Traits of Performance Measurement

Undoubtedly and inevitably performance measurement is key to the success of a corporate strategy. In [6], six key-success-factors of a manufacturing strategy required of organizational focus in leading towards world-class performance are presented which include specifically performance measurement. In reality all six factors are interrelated and intra-connected. They reinforce each other. The six factors are short symbolized as 6Ps – planning, proactiveness, pattern of actions, portfolios of manufacturing capabilities, programmes of improvement and performance measurement. One worth re-asserting is the pattern of action. Basically it says that a manufacturing strategy can easily be depicted out a series of previous key decision patterns. This is like our outlook or action patterns that are the embodiment of our thoughts and innermost conversation – a part of Buddhism philosophy where postmodern physics have high similarity and connection [8]. Here we will only present critical postmodernistic traits of a measurement rooted in postmodern physics paradigm [8] that are often neglected by practitioners and researchers, and relationally link them to performance measurement which are highly applicable to any contemporary organizations – both private and public – seeking to sustain or recreate competitive advantages.

### 2.1 PM as a result of proactive behavioral act (accountability, empowerment, commitment and responsibility)

First, an act of measurement is treated in postmodern physics as a behavioral act that can proactively influence the direction and outcome of the measurement. In [8] it is asserted that an act of measurement (e.g., process of preparation and actual measurement itself) dictates the outcome. In other words both what and how we intend to measure an entity, and the measurement itself are highly interrelated and cross-reinforced. In [9] performance is defined as a behavior that it should be differentiated away from the outcome in order to obtain true understanding of what is a performance. The argument is that outcome is always contaminated and tainted with uncontrollable system factors outside the hands of performers [10]. In

postmodern physics context, behavior is enacted in both consciousness and measurement realm. As such, behavior cannot be purposefully separated from the outcome itself. Practically what it means to a performance measurement is that each targeted metric – whether be it lagging or lead indicator – has to be properly accounted for. The expectation of what the metrics will bring will dictate the direction of a pursuit on a process towards achieving value of the metrics. For instance if an organization has designated a corporate aligned goal in reducing operating cost then the activities underlying the performance measurement in reducing operational cost will follow in strict directional sense. There may be variances but the direction of a goal is fixated with a behavioral expectation. More practical examples within an organization in this aspect can be found in [11,12]. Both demonstrate how a compelling vision or motivating behavior of intention can help us to proceed towards achieving what we intend to achieve in the future. Thus, the influence of proactive behavioral act in a performance measurement system is inevitable and in addition, the compelling vision and energy for change must finally present to the corporation as an ability to adapt to change and sustain competitive advantage. In other words, performance measurement must not only attend to the traditional focuses in either efficiency (doing things right) or effectiveness (doing the right things), but also to target evolutionary factors key to sustainability of a corporate competitive position (**Fig. 1**) [3].

## **2.2 PM as platform of sensational interaction that creates high positive energy for corporate focus**

Secondly, measurement is interaction that creates sensations in our consciousness and each interaction is really an exchange and flux of energy [8]. Mind and matters are always intertwined, for instance, when we think we act, and when we see (a flower) our thinking machine starts clicking in a macro sequence as such: acknowledge the color (of flower), feel (the beauty), think (about the beauty and romantic dating in the past occasion), act (to re-arrange another date), and absorb into our consciousness and inner mind (e.g., to re-store into our mind memory) about the sensations as experienced. In postmodern knowledge era we come to realize that consciousness is beyond mere content-focus. Traditionally we often restrict spatially to our consciousness or awareness as they are always bounded in our physical or symbolic interaction or encounter in close proximity compound [13]. In other words potentiality for quantum leap is vastly delimited by consciousness driven by locality awareness and spatial restriction. Performance measurement, when viewed along this postmodernism ideology, is suddenly a web of active interaction filled with positive energy and capability to create corporate up-lifting sensation for challenges and high performance. Intuitively it may imply that performance measurement is also about shared identities and values, but on reality it encompasses diversity and its purpose is only to maximize energy field of the group to yield better outcome and consequence.

## **2.3 PM as Part of a Whole and Whole of Parts**

Thirdly, a postmodern physics stresses that unless the distance between what is to be observed and who is observing is infinitely distant [8], it is impossible one gets away with locality focus that is inherently a characteristics of the whole. In other words it means that each part is a whole and the whole is characterized in the part. Each member or part is actively interconnected, intertwined, interrelated and inseparable from the active cosmic web of activity and interaction. In spiritual term it means we each embody our thoughts and consciousness, and the wholeness is implicated in each of us and that is how we present to the community. It further demonstrates that each part of the performance measurement must be linked relationally and each part is in reality a part of the wholeness (the corporate objective). Most organizations, who are into performance measurement of some sorts for whatever purposes (e.g., reengineering, TQM, QCC), fail simply because there is looseness in each part of the performance measurement – that each part is not strategically linked. Instead each part of the whole behaves as functional silos that are highly non-integrative and not interactive. For instance in [14] it is demonstrated through survey-based research over some UK Engineering companies, relative leanness itself (i.e., as a part of the holistic whole) should not be a complete indicator of how a manufacturing cell is performing under WCM, and in fact relative un-wholeness focus as such may be very misleading if it is to be used in comparing performance between cells. Instead it is asserted that each should characterize the intention of the whole for meaning [14]. In other words leanness must be viewed in terms of performance of the whole across a certain timeframe of meaningful corporate objective. Another instance is that both quality and cycle time are inseparable factors of influence in driving operational cost reduction in an organization.

## **2.4 PM as embodiment of an implicate order symbolizing a shared value type of corporate policy or value norms**

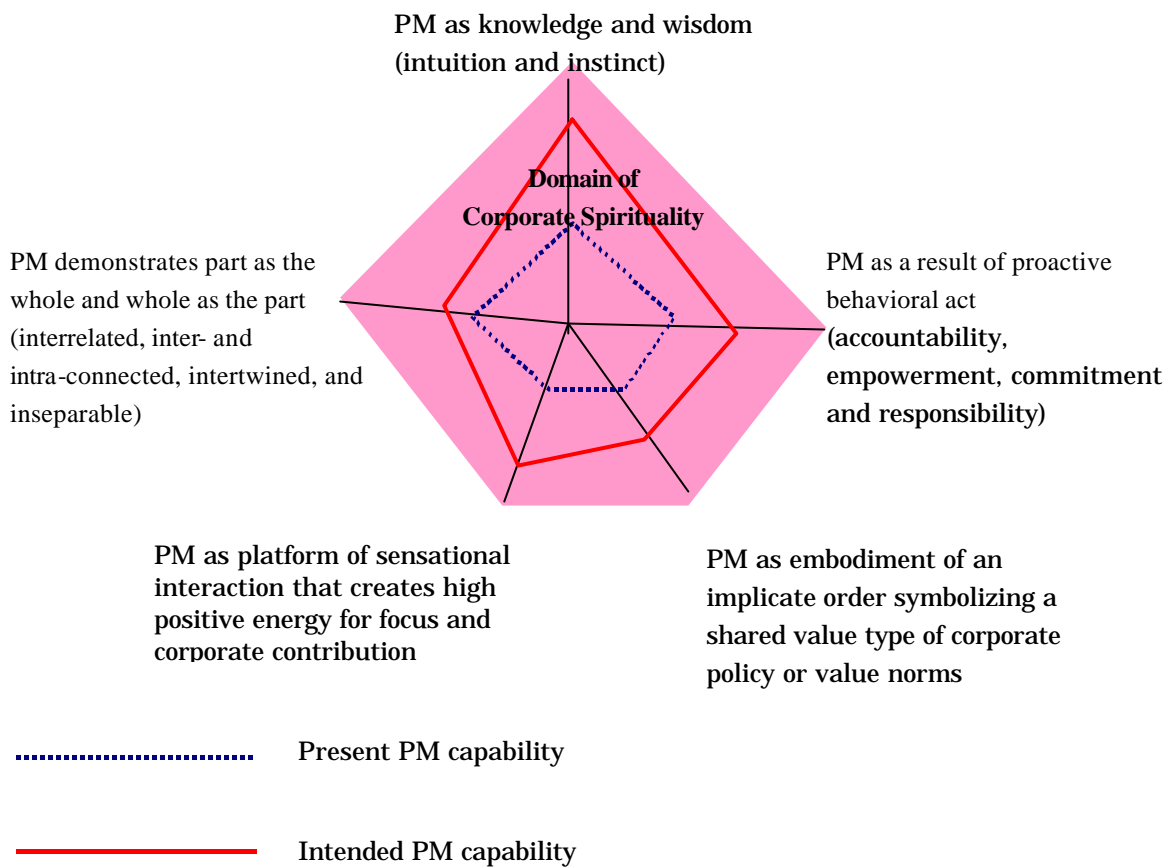
Fourth, a measure in postmodern physics [8] is treated as manifestation of an implicate order (e.g., order as in the perception of order, and order as exhibited out of the structure of movement of manifested objects) and a necessary consequence of self-consistency. Understanding this perception of order and its manifested reality is crucial to postmodern business strategists as every strategy undertaken and enacted upon is really nothing but an embodiment of our perception of that order, of our thought and corporate culture, belief systems and self-trusted paradigm; although such orderly perception or perception of ordered phenomenon is nothing but only existence as probability of interconnectedness, tendencies, potentialities and perhaps statistical causality [8]. Order can also be implicated in a corporate intention in reaching out to the community and searching out for ultimate truth within or outside an organization. In this sense the purpose of a performance measurement system which is rooted in postmodernism is about reaching out to the entire corporation and value-chain system with shared sense of sustainable purpose and values. There are two-way communicative purpose in reaching out to the stakeholders: one purely is the purpose of reaching out, but the second is the most crucial aspect, which is the feedback energy that is reverberated back into the source of communication so that the reaching-out energy level is always renewed to a higher and higher inspirational level. Thus, measure as implicate order of reaching out has capability to increase organizational motivation and inspirational level readily available to challenge change of uncertainty in the marketplace. Besides, the order implication in performance measurement presents an ability to gaze through the performance space and the process of an initiative towards achieving an aligned corporate goal or target. The essence of this neo-imperialistic gaze through space (in accounting spaces) is studied extensively in [15]. Having a spatial gazing ability also presents another dimension for food of thought – Yin and Yang. In Yin it reflects a mental space or discourse of philosophies capable for intro- and retrospection of the contents and contexts of a corporate strategy, whether in strategic, tactical or operational levels. In Yang perspective, measurement as space depicts a social space or space as gaze-ability readily reserved for actions. Both the mental space and social space make up the lived space of measurement we are familiar with such as in our accounting space [15]. It also delineates that mental, action and outcome are all interrelated and cross-fertilized each other for better action and results.

The above four factors of postmodern traits particularly of relevance to performance measurement form the most crucial perspectives in performance measurement and are often neglected by practitioners in an organization. This holistic aspect combines each part of the contents and contexts of performance measurement into a holistic whole and allows each part to demonstrate the characteristics of a whole. In this way it avoids many of the frequent encountered shortfalls of performance measurement such as a lack in service intangibility measures, short-terminism, lack of balance [16] and behavioral dysfunction when PM is inadequately designed [17].

## 2.5 PM as knowledge and wisdom (intuition and instinct)

Finally it is nevertheless less complete if we do not present performance measurement as a windowing gateway to knowledge management. Measurement is an extraction process of information key to strategic formulation or tactical implementation. When information is codified it becomes knowledge – whether in explicit or tacit form. Thus codification or interpretation of what is measured or measurement is essentially knowledge. Measurement has to move a little step forward from mere information and reach a level of knowledge. People who are accountable for measurement have to know what the measurement is for, and have to have the compelling desire to transcend them into knowledge as key resources for sustainable competitive advantage. Similarly to what Feurer [3] is proposing on new perspectives of performance measurement, knowledge management is also about doing the right things and doing the things right [18,19]. To know what is right to do and do it right is wisdom. Thus performance measurement is also about wisdom. For an organization to gain competitive edge, the performance measurement system must establish a basis for wisdom acquisition and application. Wisdom is about applying relevant knowledge to a relevant problem of usefulness and values to the marketplace, stakeholders and shareholders. While knowledge is an outcome of a synthesized, analyzed, or codified information, the opposite is equally true that the encoded packets of knowledge are also classified as information. Wisdom can be transcended for fast decision-making process. This is made possible when wisdom is deeply penetrated into subconscious mind as it will become an intuition and finally an instinct. It becomes more and more tacit and less explicit, but its value is quantum leaped. In [20], intuition best function when a high level of uncertainty exists, when little precedent exists, when variables are less scientifically predictable, when facts are limited, when several plausible alternative solutions exist, and when time is limited. Instinct is the highest ability to dance with change and instability without losing one's sense of purpose or direction [21].

The above five critical postmodernistic factors formed as the basis for optimal performance measurement system design and implementation can be concluded in a radar chart format of **Fig. 2** to help managers and practitioners understand the whereabouts of their effort and feasibility for alternative approaches.



**Fig. 2. Postmodern Performance Measurement Traits as Key Basis for Sustainable Competitive Advantage**

The above **Fig. 2** also demonstrates the present level of capability and future expectation of an organization on which a performance measurement system should behave like and be able to achieve. The socio-technico trend in the present era seems to move towards an intellectually enriched society and in this sense knowledge management will be a key driving source for competition in general. Performance measurement (PM) is about the ability to demonstrate wisdom and knowledge within each accountable person so that the whole is danced with a collective competency that outshines the competitors and best practices in the marketplace. In [18], knowledge management is defined as an achievement of organizational goals through the strategy-driven motivation and facilitation of knowledge workers to develop, share and apply knowledge. Thus, PM is also a platform to motivate and facilitate performers for highest energy of participation, commitment, responsibility and pro-activeness, and a platform of shared identities and interests to enable transformation of untapped tacit and explicit knowledge into useful knowledge within an organization or across organizational boundaries, again could be in both tacit and explicit formats [cf. 1]. Knowledge transformational tactics are grouped into four broad categorization, namely as socialization, combination, internalization and externalization [22]. Embracing wisdom as part of the deliverable in PM system will lead to the competitive reinforcement of knowledge strategy policy, culture and style of management, and organizational goals. This reinforcement is an act of agility and near-instinct response of collective employees but is only possible when integrative and interconnected synergy and alignment are the norms of the corporate culture, and that the overall organization is action-, process-, consciousness-, and goals-oriented. Each temporal and spatial connection within the PM system must be strongly supported by effective two-way communication we have presented earlier – that is, the communication must exert an energy reverberating effect back into the communication channels. As such the part is characteristics of the whole and similarly the whole can almost be interpreted by each part. In this way local sub-optimization

is prevented and thus there exists a possibility for global optimization in a postmodern performance measurement system [cf. 2]. **Fig. 2** also demonstrate that corporate spirituality is the ultimate domain of paradigm that supports and facilitates the design and implementation of the organizational PM system. Next section will elaborate on this spirituality perspective much deeper and insightfully.

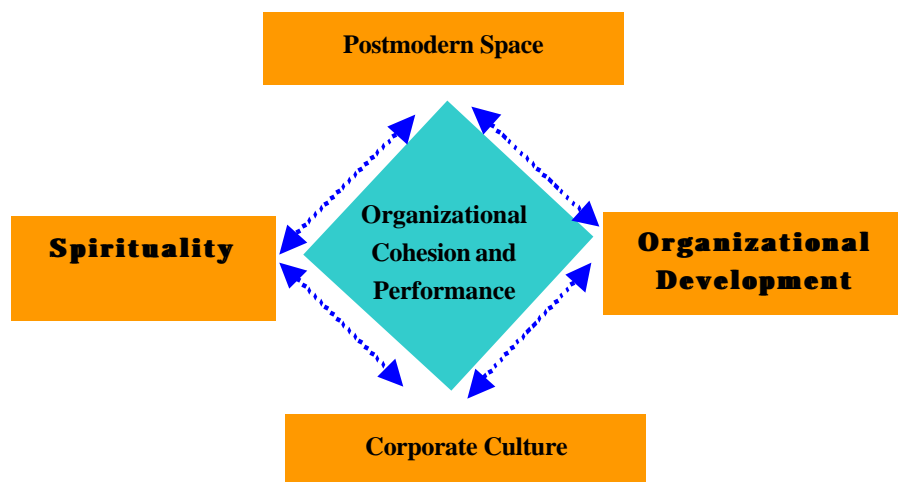
### 3. Linking Corporate Spirituality to Postmodernism

In this section we will demonstrate how corporate spirituality is linked to the postmodernistic standpoint which we undertake in the provision of critical performance-measurement dimensionality often neglected by practitioners and researchers in the field of performance measurement or management.

#### 3.1 Spirituality-based Postmodernism Model for Corporate Cohesion and Performance Achievement

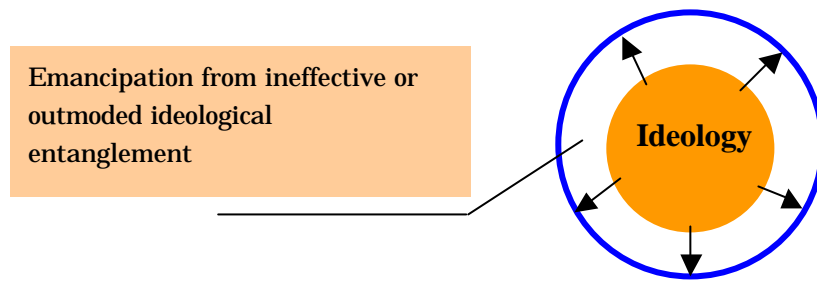
Many Asian companies have expanded beyond a point where family mode of control is ineffective. In other words space as defined within family controllable mode of control is no longer effective, not even Newtonian space or linear paradigm. The dawn of globalization or regionalization has transformed many family-controlled businesses to behemoths or giant conglomerates of diversification. Control or organizational leadership is still very much traditionally based on financial monitoring system albeit sometimes a rather authoritative one. This westernization way of approaching controllability within a diversified or homogeneous organization of different regional branches is a positive step forward in resolving to accounting as space of gaze-ability. In financial accounting domain, space has no limit. It transmits message across regional boundary to reach managers of far-distant subsidiaries. The weakness is that lived accounting space is mainly an outcome of monetarization. A better approach in postmodern society is by taking a more balanced perspective across broader key-success-factor areas such by including institutional learning and growing as one of measurement targets [23]. In the balanced scorecard approach, performance measurement can be perceived as a lived corporate space where measurement factors of concern are more aligned, integrated, synergistic and holistic. But again much can be learned from traditional accounting as space of homogenization and standardization [15]. In [15], lived accounting space is presented as consisted of both corporate mental and action space that acquire a superpower capability to be normalized with shared norms and standards of behavior. Intuitively space has been a determining factor of influence in nurturing and inculcating a corporate culture with shared identities and belief systems. This however does not mean rejection of diversity. It only means homogenization in terms of organizational intents and direction of strategic pursuits. Thus it is possible to treat corporate culture as containing many crucial features of postmodern space and time where message is extended, shared, communicated, and absorbed into meaning and knowledge. As such the lived space (whether it is where an organization is resided or where performance measurement system is created for and within) is able to influence its cultural contents across far-distance corners of a giant corporation. In this article one will realize that they are multiplicity of corporate spiritual traits of which they can play a key role in designing and implementing a globally optimal performance measurement system. Nonlinear or holistic paradigm thinking could be the normative facilitating ideology platform in postmodernistic human intellectual era. In [24] marketing paradigm is challenged beyond actions of analysis, and planning and control to now embrace a more holistic view – that is marketing as the institutionalization of the actions within a cultural and ideological milieu. This process of renewed paradigm being realized with practical actions and initiatives are to some extent a slow process if taking the diversity of humanistic interests and capabilities into perspective. In this sense corporate visioning will be a catalyst tool to help speed up the paradigm re-shifting process. Basically it involves with an epistemological understanding of what the corporation's intention or goal is and how the vision is evolved, and how it can be translated into an ontological belief structure of the stakeholders within the organization. Corporate visioning is very much a spiritual entity where it involves both yin's retro- or introspection of an organization and yang's initiatives as walk-of-the-talk process of goals realization. Spirituality informs us of the "hows and whats" we presented in terms of personality and facial outlook are a direct consequence of our innermost thought and nature of mind. The lived space of what McPhail [15] has preached is an embodiment of our own idea. The cultural force field with which stakeholders within or outside an organization have felt is an embodiment of an internal cultural source or belief paradigm. In layman terms if we want to be conceived as a knowledgeable person, we must have certain depth and breadth of knowledge in whatever field of specialization that we are competent at and that we can share and contribute proficiently. There is thus a macro-micro interactivity coexisting and co-evolving simultaneously in a universal realm, and corporate visioning is an epistemological understanding and a new ontological moulding process in a postmodernism environment.

So far we have drilled into space perspective of influence in corporate culture or visioning process demonstrated as vertical alignment between space and corporate culture in **Fig. 3**. Now we will proceed to delineate the horizontal alignment between spirituality and the basis of organizational development (**Fig. 3**). Verticality means that an influence – a rather innovative and breadth-taking one – is felt deeper into the organization spanning across each hierarchical position within the organization. Horizontality implies the breadth and time-based discourse of influence across the history of an organization and the journey the organization is to take into the future. It also means that the effect of spirituality is felt across both each horizontal division and role of the organization, its value chain and market network systems. Pictorially as demonstrated in **Fig. 3** both horizontal and vertical alignments also signify cross-fertilization and reinforcement (cross alignment) from key postmodern traits of spirituality and space to corporate culture inculcation and organizational development discourse. Linking spirituality-based postmodernism now to our earlier presentation in section 2, it is now clear that performance measurement has to span across the entire organization that has corporate culture and organizational development discourse as the two supporting and catalyst mechanisms for organizational cohesion and actualization of effectiveness and performance measurement/management system.



**Fig.3. Spirituality-based Postmodernism Model for Corporate Cohesion and Performance**

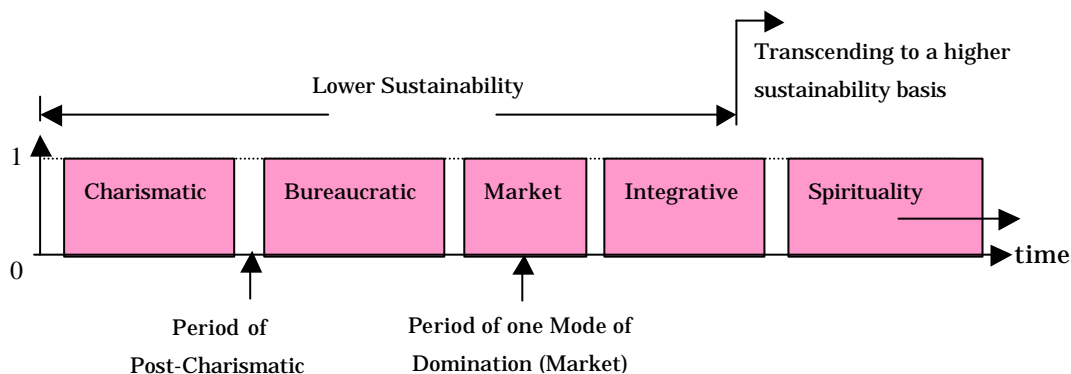
It seems on the superficial level that most business theories are at best epistemological ontology that its usefulness is only ephemeral or very much contingent upon time or some factors of influence (e.g., resources, industry structure, culture). Critical theorists have been able to approach this ephemerality of organizational development discourse from a critical lens and take note that each period of dominance of an organizational control mode is only ephemeral and often come with the engulfment by next control mode along with possibly a period of crisis. To look beyond and catch the right trend before it comes too late to do so is to explore into the basis for real emancipation and existential sustainability [25]. In other words, performers and visionary practitioners must transcend the present norms of practices by emancipating from an ideological delusion. Performance measurement system must thus ensure that the organization is insightful enough not to be deluded from a restricted paradigm or corporate belief system. Emancipation from an ideological construct into a next realm of awareness is depicted in **Fig. 4**, and the way around it is by attending to spirituality practices within an organization as demonstrated methodologically in **Fig. 2** and **Fig. 3**. In [25] ideology can be of any the three types: 1) ideologies that are self-centered and experientially acquired, 2) ideologies that are of ruling ideas or pertaining to power and authority, and 3) ideologies out of self-consciousness which are normative ideologies that energize self-reflection and include enlightenment and have ability to help opening up possibility for emancipation. The later is the preferred approach which one should take in the design of PM system or in the crafting of corporate strategic blueprint in gaining competitive strength and advantage over competitors or new potential entrants in the marketplace.



**Fig. 4. Spirituality as Catalyst and Guidance to help Emancipating from Ideological Entanglement**

### 3.2 Digital Construct of an Dialectic Socioanalysis on Organizational Development (OD)

The ephemerality of organizational development mode is depicted in **Fig. 5** as the dialectical struggles between dichotomy of powers between one mode of organizational control to another mode of dominance (cf. [25]). The construct of this mode-of-control struggle is similar to a digital construction as composed of zero and full signal of one. PM system will also change adaptively and flexibly when the organizational mode-of-control evolves into an alternative structure or form as shown in **Fig. 5**. It demonstrates exactly the patterns of our world nature as demonstrated in the following corporate Four-Noble Truths.



**Fig.5. Digital Construct of an Dialectic Socioanalysis**

#### The Corporate Four Noble Truths

##### 1. Dukka (Impossibly Permanent Sustainability of Nature)

All non-transcendental nature are not sustainable to eternity of dominance or perfection and thus all are subjective to change and impermanence. Every mental or physical phenomenon is in constant change. Our thought stream is really an unsteady state of phenomenon and each consecutive thought-content is different from the subsequent version.

##### 2. Samudaya (Causes of Dukka)

There are always causes and reasons behind each deteriorating mode of social or organizational discourse. For instance there is always reason behind the subsiding of charismatic mode of organizational development and the overtaking of next trend of mode as bureaucratic system in an organization. The reason is that as organization grows bigger from one-man show of business, more wider and deeper responsibility will have to be shared and distributed across hierarchical spans and thus the evolvement will eventually result in the formation of a bureaucratic structure within an organization which is positione with managers that are not originally entrepreneurs.

##### 3. Nirodha – Cessation of Dukka

Clearly there is a beginning of a control mode, the end of that mode and thus a new beginning of another mode of organizational development. In spirituality sense it implies that nothing is permanent or in reality every nature of the world is in constant change. Ability to take control of change and sustain the present state of dominance so that the next change is



probably in far distance or not feasible to occur is a transcendental skill or capability of an organization. Acquiring this core spiritual competency will lead the organization to stay away from macro pains and failure, and enjoy sustainable returns of investment.

#### 4. Magga – The Path Leading to the Cessation of Dukka

For any intended corporate objective to be attended to, there are always variegated ways forward. Thus, the key concern is about which are the ways we can take to effectively produce sustainability in competitive advantage and how do we go about achieving our goals. Or, are we able to anticipate change, take action to destroy competitive advantages of our competitors, and recreate new set of competitive advantage where there is enjoyment in lead time for market and product share. All these are key issues in studying factors for sustainable competitive advantage. For instance, in [26], competitive advantage is generated out of contingent profit-leveraging strategy undertaking (cost leadership, product differentiation, cost focus policy) which are synthesized and analyzed within the five proposed competitive force field (competitors, new entrants, substitute products, demand and suppliers). In [27] competitive advantage is rather a matter of internal resource capitalization in terms of distinctive core competencies development. Similarly in [28], market niche position is created out of creative exploitation of resources through resource-competency-product value exchange processes that merges the long-term inside-out proactive competency development with short-term external market dynamics characterized in outside-in short-term reactive market mix strategies. Indirectly this marketing-competency synergy is a continuous learning process. It thus transforms a reactive organization into an organic, innovative and learning institution capable to challenge and transform change in the marketplace into competitive advantage for better rate of investment return. The path leading to competitive advantage and away from corporate defeat is in this article very much rooted in spiritual postmodernism and is captured and exemplified in a postmodern PM system. The specific systematic approach to this path is what we call it as the corporate Eight-fold Path [cf. 29] (**Table 1**). The reasons for corporate Eight-fold Path are simple to grasp. Corporate success depends very much on three forms of existence and competencies: 1) corporate mind, 2) corporate body, and 3) corporate speech. Speech is a necessary competency that often strikes a difference between leadership or mediocre in areas of marketing, problem solving, public relationship and organization-wide CEO speech and presentation. Thus right speech is needed. In [30], mind-body is intertwined and reinforced. Mind of an organization serves as a collective ambition within an organization characterized by an underlying sense of purpose and motivation so unique and deep that collectively it generates a high level of positive energy and exude a can-do attitude within the entire organization. Thus right mind in terms of right view, right thinking, right mindfulness and right concentration are compulsory key factors of success in creating long-term success and competitive advantage of an organization. Others are right action, right effort and right corporate livelihood that incorporate together to form the right corporate body as one key category of the Eight-fold Path.

**Table 1. Corporate Eight-fold Path**

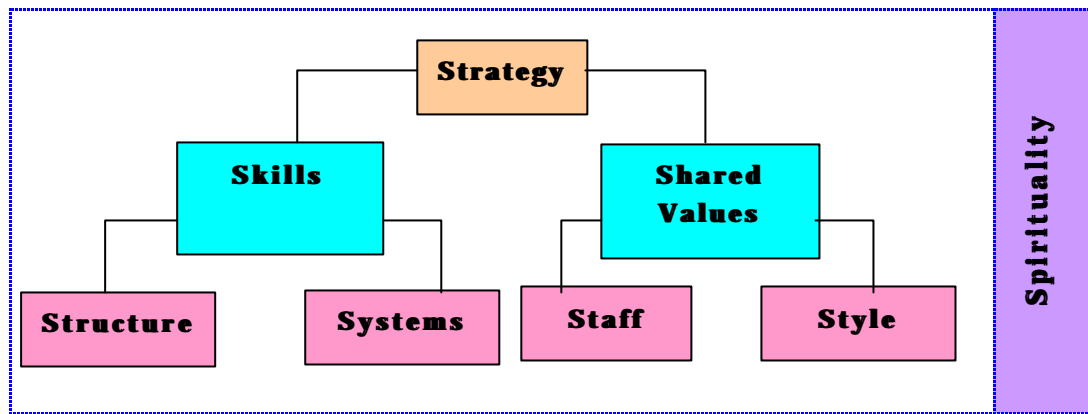
| <u>Corporate Eight-Fold Path:</u> |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.                                | Right View          |
| 2.                                | Right Thinking      |
| 3.                                | Right Speech        |
| 4.                                | Right Action        |
| 5.                                | Right Livelihood    |
| 6.                                | Right Effort        |
| 7.                                | Right Mindfulness   |
| 8.                                | Right Concentration |

### 3.3 Spirituality-based Performance Indicator (SPI) and an 8-S Spirituality-based Corporate Strategy

A key spiritual attribute is attainment of inner core of peace which is often a result of intrinsic motivation and simultaneous accomplishment of inter-outer harmony. When in peace, mental acute is the sharpest and the role of contribution to an organization is at constantly renewing peak. This draws into a next level of spirituality achievement which is meditative recreativity and respiritualization. This talks about meditative attention that renews and re-levels creativity and innovation norms of standard, and enables one to see factors of competitive advantage clearer and sharper than what one's competitors can do. Meditative transcendence is achieved through simultaneous working of the mind, heart and soul. In pragmatic sense it

requires a systematic approach in order to realize the impacts of meditative practices and their contribution to an organization. One specific meditation practice procedure is found abundantly in the literature (cf. [31-33]). As all ways lead to Rome, it is also felt that a strategic human resource management (SHRM) approach could also be taken as a practical methodology in facilitating the simultaneous working of the mind, heart and soul as the enablers in order to leverage what is to be defined as the spirituality-based performance indicators (SPI). In other words, SHRM coupling with meditative transcendence practice can help facilitating the implementation of a PM system. SPI is anything we are familiar with in terms of performance indicators or criteria typically employed in a performance measurement system (cf. [23]), except that the measurement index or indicator is now spiritually rooted, enhanced and re-leveled to a new height in accordance to **Fig. 1-5** and **Table 1**. Exactly to what extent and value of SPI we can achieve as compared to traditional performance indication is very much a topics of future evolving research. A more religious approach to spirituality means a more strategic focus is needed in incorporating corporate ethics, belief and faith system and shared sense of purpose into the corporate environment. Ethics and morality purify our cognitive mind into thinking the positive and right way in achieving high performance profiles of an organization. Ethics and morality include right view, right speech, thinking, actions and corporate livelihood. Ethics and morality enhance power of confidence, self image and esteem, and allow us to focus our mental and physical attentions into what we need to focus most urgently. Ethics should be treated as our differentiated competitive intangible asset (alongside with knowledge as intangible asset) and thus must be strengthened and exploited as competency difficult to imitate. In spirituality aspect, ethics is also a form of concentration of energy as by conforming strict to ethics, our focus of useful energy is sharpened and mental intellectuality is at the apex. Thus an organization must strike to inculcate and nurture an ethical climate conducive for corporate growth and continuous learning. Ethical climate has the necessary corporate energy – a rather intrinsic one – to help creating a learning organization key to sustainable competitive advantage. In [34] ethics is treated as both the right thing and profitable thing to do, and must be incorporated as part of the strategic process in before-profit decisions rather than after-profit decisions. Belief and faith are required when one is in the process of a path working towards achieving full maturity in corporate spirituality. Faith and belief guide our efforts, provide us with the necessary strength to sustain our effort, be persistent, be confident in our pursuits, and most importantly be committed in all directions. Belief and faith is an organizational culture, and strategic commitment is the driving force for change and competitive advantage [35].

Once horizontal, vertical and cross alignment among corporate spirituality, organizational development, postmodern space and corporate culture are in tune and well secured, corporate performance and strategic intents will be highly able to be achieved with greater satisfaction and feel of achievement. Corporate culture as the basis for corporate performance and competitive advantage are literally abundant. In [36] both qualitative and quantitative research concluded that strong idiosyncratic culture – involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission oriented – tend to bring higher corporate performance and investment returns to an organization as compared to others who are not culturally enriched. In [37] it is asserted that strong positive culture must be aligned with employee values and be consistent with the environment in which the organization operates. In this sense the organization has competitive edge over competitors as cultural attention boosts morality, increases team working, sharing of information and openness to new ideas and also attracts and retains top high-performance employees [37]. On the pragmatic side, corporate culture analysis is also an effective tool to help identifying gaps needed to improve human resource development, in which Brown and Dodd [38] presented the use of a CVF (Competing Values Framework). Through CVF interaction with corporate culture position, the organization can determine whether much human resource efforts are needed in terms of for instance teams cooperation, organizational process streamlining, learning and growing, and organizational goals clarification or strategy implementation [38]. An implementation framework of **Fig. 3** is established through a re-modification of McKinsey's 7S-framework to an 8S-framework to include spirituality. The downside of the McKinsey's 7S-framework is that it lacks of a strong basis for change and guidance. The upside is that the model clearly presents the linkage of effects when there is a need for change of corporate strategy – a change in strategy will require a change of tactics and contents in skills and shared values, which then require a subsequent modification or adaptation in structure, systems, staffs and style. An additional "S" of spirituality is required so that the McKinsey 7S can be modified to suit corporate environment for expected returns of investment in a sound and strong basis as we have narrated in this article. **Fig. 6** presents the 8S model in organizational development. It further signifies that corporate spirituality has to be assimilated, practiced, and culturally absorbed throughout the entire strategic management structure in order to gain sustainable competitive advantage.



**Fig. 6. The 8S Spirituality-based Corporate Strategy Framework**

#### **4. Conclusion**

First the article carefully presents contemporary trends in performance measurement particularly of concern to uplift an organization to a world-class status. In doing so the basis for sustainable competitive advantage is secured. Realizing the weaknesses of the present form of actions or frameworks in performance measurement in the literature, five key postmodernistic traits of performance measurement which are rooted in corporate spirituality domain are outlined and delineated in detail which are of practical purposes in today's era of rapid change and uncertainty. The five postmodern traits include 1) PM as knowledge management (ability to transcend what is measured), 2) PM as embodiment of an implicate order symbolizing a shared value type of corporate policy or value norms, 3) PM as an outcome of proactive behavioral act of staff (accountability, empowerment, commitment and responsibility), 4) PM as demonstrating each measurement (part) of PM as the holistic whole (organizational vision), and the whole as the part, and 5) PM as a platform of sensational interaction that creates high positive energy for effective corporate focus and performance achievement. Finally a spirituality-based postmodernism model in achieving corporate cohesion and company-wide performance is presented, together with its 8-S implementation framework which is modified from McKinsey 7-S model of corporate strategy structure. In sum, this article has inductively and critically presented key dimensions of performance measurement that are often neglected by researchers and practitioners, and the paradigmatic basis of this research is on spirituality-based postmodernism, albeit a rather critical one.

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