

The Role of Organizational Culture and Organizational Justice in Enchancing Employee Performance: A Moderated-Mediated SmartPLS Model in Pamekasan SMEs

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Abstract. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in developing regions frequently confront structural and operational bottlenecks that constrain overall productivity. This study investigates the direct and indirect mechanisms through which organizational culture and organizational justice drive employee performance among SMEs in Pamekasan Regency, East Java, Indonesia, evaluating the mediating roles of work attitudes and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Utilizing a quantitative research design grounded in Social Exchange Theory and the Competing Values Framework, structural equation modeling via Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) was executed using SmartPLS 4. Data were collected via stratified random sampling from 210 employees across the culinary, batik, and handicraft SME sectors in Pamekasan Regency. SME owner-managers in Pamekasan must move beyond purely financial or transactional incentives by cultivating procedural fairness, interactional respect, and culturally aligned organizational values to achieve long-term workforce retention and operational productivity. This research provides valuable empirical insights into regional SME dynamics in Indonesia by integrating sociocultural contexts (Madurese cultural values) with quantitative structural equation modeling. The study applies a quantitative research design grounded in Social Exchange Theory and the Competing Values Framework. Structural equation modeling using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) and SmartPLS 4 is used as the analytical framework. The source manuscript reports data collected through stratified random sampling from 210 employees across culinary, batik, and handicraft SME sectors in Pamekasan Regency. The reported simulated results indicate significant positive relationships among organizational culture, organizational justice, work attitudes, OCB, and employee performance. The manuscript also proposes organizational commitment as a mediator and digital management capability as a moderator. These findings suggest that SME owner-managers should move beyond purely financial or transactional incentives by cultivating procedural fairness, interactional respect, culturally aligned organizational values, and organized digital management practices. The study contributes to the discussion of regional SME dynamics by connecting organizational behavior concepts with the sociocultural context of Madurese business communities.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Organizational Justice, Work Attitudes, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Employee Performance, SmartPLS, SMEs, Pamekasan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) constitute the foundation of economic growth, employment generation, and socio-economic resilience across emerging economies. In Indonesia, the SME sector accounts for over 60% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and absorbs approximately 97% of the national labor force (Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Within regional economies such as Pamekasan Regency, located on Madura Island, East Java, SMEs serve as vital engines for poverty alleviation, rural industrialization, and traditional heritage preservation—most notably through the vibrant Madurese batik, food processing, and handicraft sectors. However, despite their systemic economic importance, regional SMEs outside major urban centers consistently operate under severe operational vulnerabilities. While previous scholars have frequently attributed SME performance bottlenecks to limited capital access, obsolete technology, or inadequate market

reach, contemporary organizational research indicates that internal human resource dynamics constitute the primary determinant of sustained operational productivity and enterprise survival (Eisenberger et al., 2020; Sugiyanto & Rahayu, 2022).

Respect “Abantal Ombak Sapu' Angin”, and religious-moral norms. When SME owners align workplace expectations with supportive, innovative, and clan-like cultural frameworks, employees experience a cohesive working environment that minimizes role ambiguity and fosters collective identity. Conversely, fragmented or authoritarian workplace cultures lead to cognitive friction, high turnover intentions, and operational inefficiency (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

According to Social Exchange Theory, organizational relationships are governed by psychological contracts of reciprocity. When employees perceive an organizational culture characterized by trust and fairness across distributive, procedural, and interactional dimensions, they experience positive psychological states reflected in favorable work attitudes. Employees who display high job satisfaction and affective commitment feel a strong moral obligation to repay their organization. However, in SME environments where formal job definitions are flexible, this reciprocity manifests first as voluntary, extra-role behaviors such as assisting overburdened colleagues, taking initiative to solve operational challenges, and conserving business resources. Ultimately, these discretionary behaviors aggregate into measurable improvements in overall individual employee performance.

By systematically addressing these objectives, this study contributes to organizational behavior literature in three key ways. First, it extends Social Exchange Theory into the context of regional Asian micro-entrepreneurship, showing how psychological contracts function without formal corporate structures. Second, it provides SME owner-managers in Pamekasan with actionable empirical evidence for improving productivity through strategic cultural alignment and procedural fairness rather than relying exclusively on wage increases. Third, it offers a robust methodological framework utilizing PLS-SEM to capture complex mediated behavioral models in emerging economic landscapes.

The proposed model consists of organizational culture and organizational justice as exogenous variables, organizational commitment as a mediator, digital management capability as a moderator, and employee performance as the endogenous variable. For illustration, the simulated SmartPLS results indicate that organizational culture and organizational justice positively influence organizational commitment and employee performance. Organizational commitment also positively mediates the relationship between the two independent variables

and employee performance. Digital management capability strengthens the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance. These findings suggest that Pamekasan SMEs should move from informal and careless management practices toward more organized, fair, digital, and employee-oriented management practices.

Financial management can be improved by separating personal and business finances, recording income and expenditure systematically, monitoring profits and losses, and utilizing digital applications. Marketing management can be strengthened through social media, online marketplaces, and Google Maps business listings so that Pamekasan products can reach consumers outside the local area. Operational management should emphasize consistent product quality, cleanliness and food safety, efficient use of raw materials, and reduction of production waste.

Human resource management is equally important. Employees need clear responsibilities, adequate training, fair treatment, and a work environment that encourages commitment. Organizational culture provides employees with shared values, norms, and behavioral expectations, whereas organizational justice determines how employees perceive the fairness of organizational decisions, procedures, rewards, and interpersonal treatment.

Despite their importance, regional SMEs may operate under severe operational vulnerabilities. Conventional explanations often emphasize limited capital, obsolete technology, restricted market access, and weak infrastructure. However, the source manuscript emphasizes that internal human resource dynamics are also central to sustained productivity and enterprise survival. Employees interpret management behavior, workplace norms, fairness, responsibilities, rewards, and communication through everyday organizational experience. Consequently, the quality of the internal organizational environment can determine whether available resources are converted into consistent employee performance.

Organizational justice represents another central dimension. Employees evaluate whether outcomes, procedures, decisions, and interpersonal treatment are fair. Distributive justice concerns the perceived fairness of outcomes and rewards; procedural justice concerns the fairness of processes used to make decisions; and interactional justice concerns the quality and respectfulness of interpersonal treatment. In SMEs, where organizational relationships are often close and informal, fairness becomes especially visible. Informality can create flexibility and closeness, but without transparent rules it can also generate perceptions of favoritism.

Social Exchange Theory provides an explanation for the behavioral mechanisms connecting these organizational conditions with employee outcomes. The basic logic is

reciprocity: when employees perceive that the organization provides fairness, respect, support, and positive norms, they may respond with positive attitudes and discretionary contributions. Such contributions can appear as willingness to assist colleagues, initiative in solving operational problems, conservation of organizational resources, and other forms of organizational citizenship behavior.

The source manuscript also incorporates the Competing Values Framework, which identifies clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy orientations as useful dimensions for understanding organizational culture. This framework is particularly relevant to SMEs because a business may simultaneously need interpersonal cohesion, adaptability, market responsiveness, and sufficient structure. The challenge is not simply to select one cultural type but to develop a configuration that supports the enterprise's circumstances and employees' responsibilities.

The proposed research model examines organizational culture and organizational justice as important organizational antecedents, work attitudes and organizational citizenship behavior as behavioral mechanisms, employee performance as the central outcome, organizational commitment as a proposed mediator, and digital management capability as a proposed moderator. The manuscript contains two closely related formulations of the model. The first emphasizes work attitudes and OCB as sequential mediators, while the later SmartPLS-oriented section specifies organizational commitment as the mediator and digital management capability as the moderator. This expanded manuscript retains both formulations rather than silently replacing one with the other.

The study has practical relevance for Pamekasan SME owners. Better financial management can involve separating personal and business finances, recording income and expenditure systematically, monitoring profit and loss, and using digital applications. Marketing management can employ social media, online marketplaces, and Google Maps business listings to expand the visibility of Pamekasan products. Operational management can focus on product consistency, cleanliness, food safety, efficient raw-material use, and reduction of production waste. Human resource management should establish clear responsibilities, provide training, apply fair treatment, and create an environment that supports commitment.

The research therefore addresses a practical and theoretical problem: how can relatively small and informally managed enterprises convert organizational values and fair treatment into measurable employee performance? The answer proposed by the source manuscript is that culture and justice influence employees not only directly but also through psychological and

behavioral mechanisms. Understanding these mechanisms can help SME owners improve management without assuming that sophisticated corporate systems are always necessary.

The study contributes in three principal ways. First, it extends Social Exchange Theory into a regional Asian micro-entrepreneurship context in which formal corporate structures may be limited. Second, it provides actionable implications for Pamekasan SME owner-managers by emphasizing cultural alignment and procedural fairness alongside financial incentives. Third, it demonstrates how PLS-SEM can be used to examine complex relationships among organizational variables in emerging economic settings. The effect of Organizational culture on employee performance mediated by job satisfaction and work motivation: Evident from SMEs in Indonesia. *Management Science Letters* (Wahjoedi, T. 2021).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Utilizing a quantitative research design grounded in Social Exchange Theory and the Competing Values Framework, structural equation modeling via Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) was executed using SmartPLS 4. Data were collected via stratified random sampling from 210 employees across the culinary, batik, and handicraft SME sectors in Pamekasan Regency.

Research Design

The study employs a quantitative research design grounded in Social Exchange Theory and the Competing Values Framework. Structural equation modeling through Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) is selected to examine relationships among multiple latent constructs and to evaluate direct, mediated, and moderated relationships.

Research Setting and Participants

The research is situated in Pamekasan Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The source manuscript identifies culinary, batik, and handicraft SMEs as the main sectors represented in the study. Data are described as being collected from 210 employees through stratified random sampling. Stratification is appropriate for ensuring that relevant SME sectors are represented rather than allowing one sector to dominate the sample.

Data Analysis

SmartPLS 4 is identified as the software environment for the PLS-SEM analysis. The analytical logic consists of evaluating the measurement model and then examining the structural model. Internal consistency and convergent validity are considered in the source manuscript, which reports that the simulated values indicate satisfactory results.

The structural model is used to evaluate relationships among organizational culture, organizational justice, work attitudes, OCB, organizational commitment, digital management capability, and employee performance. Mediation is evaluated through direct, indirect, and total effects. Moderation is evaluated through an interaction term, with the interaction coefficient indicating whether digital management capability strengthens or weakens the focal relationship.

Measurement and Interpretation

The manuscript does not provide a complete item-level measurement instrument or full SmartPLS output tables. Therefore, this expanded manuscript does not invent indicator loadings, reliability coefficients, discriminant-validity statistics, or bootstrapping confidence intervals that are not contained in the source. The reported statistical values are retained as simulated results, and interpretations are presented conditionally where the manuscript itself uses simulated data.

Ethical and Contextual Considerations

Because the research examines employee perceptions and workplace behavior, respondents' confidentiality and voluntary participation should be protected in an actual field study. The local context should also be respected. Cultural values should be incorporated as contextual resources rather than stereotypes. The reference to Madurese values in the source manuscript is therefore treated as part of the organizational context that may shape norms, communication, and expectations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical evaluations reveal that both organizational culture ($\beta = 0.342, p < 0.001$) and organizational justice ($\beta = 0.418, p < 0.001$) exert statistically significant positive direct effects on employee work attitudes. Work attitudes strongly influence organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = 0.512, p < 0.001$), which subsequently drives employee performance ($\beta = 0.465, p < 0.001$). Mediation testing confirms that work attitudes and OCB serve as sequential structural bridges linking supportive institutional environments and fair supervisory treatment to high-level task performance ($R^2 = 0.618$).

The simulated values indicate satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity. The simulated results suggest that organizational culture and organizational justice both positively affect organizational commitment. Both variables also have positive direct effects

on employee performance. Organizational commitment has a positive effect on employee performance.

The simulated results indicate that organizational commitment significantly mediates the effects of organizational culture and organizational justice on employee performance.

Because the direct effects remain significant while the indirect effects are also significant, the pattern may be interpreted as **partial mediation**, assuming the actual SmartPLS output confirms the same direction and significance.

SmartPLS describes mediation as a mechanism through which an exogenous construct influences an endogenous construct through a mediator and provides direct, indirect, and total effects for evaluation.

This means digital management capability strengthens the positive relationship between organizational culture and employee performance.

For example, an SME with a strong culture but poor digital management may still have difficulty translating organizational values into market performance. In contrast, a strong culture combined with digital financial recording, digital marketing, online marketplaces, and digital customer communication can help employees work more efficiently and respond more quickly to customers. Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R: A Workbook*. Springer (Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(3), 386–400, Colquitt 2021).

SmartPLS recommends testing moderation through an interaction term and notes that the interaction coefficient indicates whether the moderator strengthens or weakens the focal relationship. Explain that structural equation modelling is a multivariate statistical approach that enables researchers to examine relationships among multiple variables simultaneously (Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. 2022).

The first simulated finding indicates that organizational culture positively influences organizational commitment. SMEs with clear values, teamwork, employee participation, adaptability, and clear goals are more likely to develop employees who feel attached to their organization.

In Pamekasan SMEs, organizational culture can be strengthened through simple but consistent managerial practices. Business owners do not necessarily need complicated corporate systems. Clear work responsibilities, regular communication, fair rules, employee involvement, and consistent service standards can already create a stronger culture.

This finding is conceptually consistent with the Denison approach, which emphasizes involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission as important cultural characteristics associated with effectiveness.

Organizational justice is also expected to increase organizational commitment. When employees believe that workloads, rewards, decisions, and interpersonal treatment are fair, they are more likely to develop a positive relationship with the organization.

This is especially relevant to SMEs because organizational relationships are often close and informal. Informality can be beneficial, but it can also create perceptions of favoritism if management decisions are not transparent.

Therefore, SME owners should establish clear rules for wages, bonuses, schedules, responsibilities, leave, performance evaluation, and employee discipline.

A positive organizational culture can directly improve employee performance. Employees who understand organizational goals and receive clear behavioral expectations are more likely to perform consistently.

For Pamekasan SMEs, this can be implemented through standard operating procedures, service standards, product-quality standards, and regular employee evaluation.

Fair treatment can increase employee performance because employees are more likely to invest effort when they believe that their contribution is recognized fairly.

Organizational justice research emphasizes that fairness perceptions are related to employee cognitions, emotions, and behaviors.

Therefore, SMEs should avoid arbitrary treatment, unclear reward systems, and inconsistent application of workplace rules.

Organizational commitment provides an important explanation for how culture and justice can influence performance. Emphasize that OCB is an important area of organizational behavior because citizenship behaviors can have consequences for employees, team, and organizations (Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. 2018).

A supportive culture may not automatically produce high performance if employees lack psychological attachment to the business. Similarly, fair treatment may create positive perceptions, but commitment is important for converting those perceptions into sustained effort.

The mediation model therefore suggests that SME owners should not only focus on immediate employee output. They should also build employees' sense of belonging, responsibility, and willingness to contribute.

Digital management capability can strengthen the effect of organizational culture on performance.

For example, a culture emphasizing accountability becomes more effective when employees use digital financial records and operational monitoring systems. A culture emphasizing customer orientation becomes more effective when SMEs use social media, online marketplaces, and digital communication.

This is particularly important for Pamekasan products that have the potential to reach markets outside the local area.

The findings and proposed model support the usefulness of Social Exchange Theory for understanding employee behavior in SME environments. Reciprocity does not depend on formal corporate structures. Employees can respond to fairness and support through attitudes, commitment, OCB, and performance even when the organization is small.

The Competing Values Framework also provides a useful lens because SMEs need to balance collaboration, flexibility, market responsiveness, and control. The model therefore connects cultural characteristics with behavioral mechanisms and performance outcomes.

The practical implication is that Pamekasan SME owners should not rely exclusively on wage increases or financial incentives. Financial rewards remain relevant, but long-term workforce retention and productivity can also depend on fairness, respect, clear expectations, supportive culture, commitment, and effective management systems. Argue that organizational culture can be understood through four key traits (Journal Organization Science, 6*(2), 204–223. Denison and Mishra 1995).

A practical management sequence can begin with clarifying organizational values, defining responsibilities, establishing fair rules, implementing basic performance standards, improving employee communication, and adopting appropriate digital tools. This sequence can be implemented gradually according to the resources and sector of each SME.

The source manuscript provides a strong conceptual structure but does not include complete respondent demographics, questionnaire items, indicator loadings, reliability coefficients, discriminant-validity results, bootstrapping tables, confidence intervals, or the full SmartPLS output. It also uses the term simulated results in several places. Consequently, the statistical findings should not be represented as verified field estimates unless actual empirical output is available. PLS-SEM is particularly useful for analyzing complex structural models involving multiple constructs and relationships (Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. 2021).

Another limitation is that the manuscript contains two related model formulations: one with work attitudes and OCB as sequential mediators and another with organizational commitment as mediator and digital management capability as moderator. Rather than resolving this inconsistency without evidence, the expanded manuscript presents both as part of the source's conceptual development. Future empirical work should specify one final structural model before hypothesis testing. Employees who perceive greater organizational support are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the organization and demonstrate behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness (Eisenberger, R., Rockstuhl, F., & Aselage, J. 2020).

Future research should also consider broader samples, additional SME sectors, longitudinal data, and validated measurement instruments. Such work could determine whether the relationships observed in Pamekasan remain stable across different regions and types of SMEs. Organizational culture is closely associated with organizational effectiveness. A strong culture can provide shared values and behavioral patterns that guide employees in achieving organizational objectives (Denison, D. R. 1990).

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recent literature highlights that structural inputs alone do not drive performance; human dynamics—specifically Organizational Culture (OC) and Organizational Justice (OJ)—shape the internal environment. Furthermore, the mechanism through which OC and OJ translate into higher EP is often mediated by Work Attitudes (WA) (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This study investigates how OC and OJ influence EP directly and indirectly through WA and OCB among SME employees in Pamekasan Regency, utilizing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review Underlying Theories Social Exchange Theory (SET). Explains that power emerges from differences in dependence between individual (Blau, P.M 1964).

Posits that when employees perceive fairness (OJ) and positive norms (OC) from their employer, they feel obligated to reciprocate with positive attitudes (WA) and discretionary behaviors (OCB). Competing Values Framework (CVF) Frame for analyzing how organizational cultural dimensions (Clan, Adhocracy, Market, Hierarchy) drive employee behavior and performance. Explain that Organizational culture can be understood through the

competing values framework, which identifies four dominant culture types clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy (Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. 2011).

The Pamekasan SME context demonstrates why these relationships matter. SMEs operate in an environment where owner-managers often interact directly with employees, organizational roles may be flexible, and business systems may be less formal than those of large corporations. In such conditions, fairness and culture become visible through daily management practices. Forever focused on fairness: 75 years of organizational justice in **Personnel Psychology**. **Personnel Psychology*, 76*(2), 413–435. Emphasize that employees attitudes and behaviors are important factors that contribute to individual performance and organizational effectiveness (Colquitt, J. A. 2023).

The simulated findings indicate positive relationships between organizational culture, organizational justice, work attitudes, OCB, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Organizational commitment is presented as a mediator, while digital management capability is proposed as a moderator that strengthens the culture-performance relationship. The reported work-attitude-to-OCB and OCB-to-performance relationships further illustrate the possible behavioral pathway from organizational conditions to performance. Emphasizes that employees perceptions of fairness in organizational practices can influence their attitudes, behaviors, and subsequent work outcomes (Colquitt, J. A. 2001).

The managerial message is clear. Pamekasan SME owners should move beyond careless or purely transactional management. Financial management should separate personal and business finances and use systematic records. Marketing should employ digital channels to expand market reach. Operations should protect quality, cleanliness, efficiency, and waste reduction. Human resource management should provide clear responsibilities, training, fairness, and supportive communication. Most importantly, organizational culture and organizational justice should be treated as practical management resources. Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. **Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86*(3), 425–445 (Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O. L. H., & Ng, K. Y. 2001).

A culture based on clear values, teamwork, adaptability, participation, and mission can create a stronger working environment. Justice can be strengthened through transparent decisions, consistent procedures, fair rewards, and respectful interpersonal treatment. Together, these practices can strengthen commitment and encourage discretionary behaviors that support performance. For future empirical application, the conceptual model should be tested using

actual SmartPLS output and clearly defined measurement instruments. The simulated values in the present source should not be treated as substitutes for empirical evidence. Nevertheless, the model provides a useful framework for examining how organizational and behavioral factors interact in regional Indonesian SMEs. Justice, fairness, and employee reactions. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 2*, 75–99 (Colquitt, J. A., & Zipay, K. P. 2015).

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