

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION, JOB SATISFACTION, AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON PERFORMANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Article history: received 10 June 2025; revised 22 June 2025; accepted 15 July 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33751/jhss.v9i2.80>

Abstract. This study aims to examine the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment on organizational performance at Universitas Pakuan. A quantitative approach with an explanatory research design was employed. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 150 permanent lecturers selected using purposive sampling. The research instrument was tested for validity and reliability, and data were analyzed using multiple linear regression and Sobel test for mediation through SPSS software. The results show that work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment have a positive and significant effect on organizational performance. These three variables also significantly influence organizational culture. Mediation analysis reveals that organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between motivation, satisfaction, and commitment with organizational performance. These findings indicate that strengthening organizational culture plays a critical role in optimizing the impact of psychological factors on performance outcomes. The practical implication of this study suggests that enhancing organizational culture should become a key strategy in human resource development in higher education institutions. The study also contributes theoretically to the performance management literature in the academic sector and opens avenues for further exploration using qualitative approaches.

Keywords: organizational culture; work motivation; job satisfaction; organizational commitment; organizational performance

I. INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly intense global competition, higher education institutions are required to continuously enhance the quality of their services, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. Optimal organizational performance is the key to the success of higher education institutions in achieving their vision and mission. One of the most critical factors influencing organizational performance is human resources, particularly in relation to work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee commitment to the institution. Work motivation reflects an individual's internal drive to achieve organizational goals, while job satisfaction describes the extent to which employees feel content with their work. Organizational commitment indicates the degree to which individuals are emotionally and professionally attached to their workplace. These three variables have been widely recognized in numerous studies as key factors influencing both individual and organizational performance. However, in the context of higher education institutions such as Pakuan University, organizational culture plays an equally vital role. Organizational culture is a set of values, norms, and practices that guide behavior and interactions within the workplace. A

strong and positive organizational culture is believed to foster a conducive work environment, strengthen emotional bonds among members of the organization, and enhance overall work morale. Previous research has shown that organizational culture can act as a mediating variable that either strengthens or weakens the relationship between motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment with organizational performance. In other words, even with high motivation and job satisfaction, performance improvements may not be optimally achieved without a strong organizational culture.

In the context of Pakuan University, it is essential to empirically examine how organizational culture can be reinforced to maximize the potential of human resources and how it mediates the influence of motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment on organizational performance. By understanding these relationships in depth, the university can formulate strategic policies aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness through a holistic and culture-based approach. Therefore, this study is conducted to explore the role of strengthening organizational culture as a mediating variable in the relationship between motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment toward organizational performance within the

environment of Pakuan University.

Organizational culture is a fundamental element in shaping individual and collective behavior within an institution. A strong organizational culture creates alignment of values and norms, which ultimately impacts overall organizational performance. According to Wua et al. (2022), organizational culture has a direct and significant influence on employee performance, both individually and collectively. A strongly instilled culture fosters work enthusiasm, a sense of belonging, and responsibility for the tasks and roles of each member of the organization.

In addition to its direct influence on performance, organizational culture also plays a crucial role as a mediating variable in the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction and organizational performance. Research by Bintang and Riani (2022) shows that organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and performance. This means that increased job satisfaction may not necessarily have an optimal impact if it is not supported by an organizational culture that supports productivity and collaboration.

Work motivation is a crucial factor that drives individuals to perform optimally. High motivation encourages individuals to set goals, innovate, and demonstrate superior performance. A study by Putra and Nasution (2023) shows that a strong organizational culture can strengthen the influence of work motivation on performance by increasing job satisfaction and commitment. This means that organizational culture can be a crucial link in the motivational pathway leading to high organizational performance.

Job satisfaction has long been recognized as a significant determinant of employee performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate greater loyalty, persistence, and responsibility. Research by Faturrahman and Yuniawan (2023) found that organizational culture and motivation influence job satisfaction, which in turn directly impacts performance. This suggests that psychological and cultural variables are closely interconnected in shaping organizational performance.

Organizational commitment is also a key focus of this literature review. Affective commitment—a sense of emotional attachment to an organization—plays a significant role in creating sustainable performance. Lestari and Palupi (2023) note that a strong organizational culture can increase employee commitment, which in turn leads to improved institutional performance. This is particularly relevant in the context of higher education, where the loyalty and engagement of faculty and educational staff are key pillars of institutional success.

In the context of higher education, organizational culture is a key determinant of an institution's success. Prianto et al. (2024), in a study at Gajayana University in Malang, demonstrated that organizational culture plays a key role in creating a conducive work environment for lecturers and staff. A strong academic culture strengthens performance orientation through a sense of responsibility for the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. At Pakuan University, this phenomenon is also relevant as the university faces challenges in improving the

quality of academic and administrative services.

Interestingly, a study by Maslan et al. (2023) at a private university in North Sumatra found that organizational culture, along with leadership and competence, contributed more than 80% to lecturer performance. This reinforces the notion that organizational culture is not merely complementary but, in fact, the foundation of an effective management system, particularly in the higher education sector.

Conversely, organizational commitment does not always have a direct impact on performance, as suggested by Widjajani et al. (2023) in a study of secondary schools. This research showed that job satisfaction and motivation were more dominant than commitment in influencing teacher performance. This suggests that the role of psychological variables can vary depending on the organizational context.

Several studies, including those by Faturrahman and Yuniawan (2023), found that work motivation does not always have a direct impact on performance, but rather through job satisfaction and organizational culture. This confirms that strengthening organizational culture plays a crucial role in the process of building effective and sustainable organizational performance. In other words, without strong cultural support, even high motivation can become disoriented.

Based on this literature, it can be concluded that integrating organizational culture, motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment is a comprehensive approach to understanding the dynamics of organizational performance, particularly in higher education settings like Pakuan University. This research is important because few studies have integrated all these variables into a single, coherent conceptual model. Therefore, a deeper exploration of the role of strengthening organizational culture as a mediator would be a significant and applicable scientific contribution to the development of educational institutions in Indonesia.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to examine the causal relationship between work motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational culture on organizational performance. This approach was chosen because it allows for the examination of both direct and indirect influences between variables through objective and measurable statistical tests (Hair et al., 2021). The population in this study was all permanent lecturers at Pakuan University. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique, selecting respondents based on certain criteria, such as a minimum of two years of service and active permanent employment status. Based on these criteria, the sample size for this study was 150 lecturers. Data collection was conducted using a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of statements based on indicators for each variable. Each item was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Work motivation variables were structured based on Herzberg's theory (Robbins & Judge, 2019), job satisfaction based on the Job Descriptive Index

(Smith et al., 1969), organizational commitment based on the Meyer and Allen (1997) model, organizational culture based on Denison's (2006) theory, and organizational performance referring to perceptions of individual effectiveness, efficiency, and contribution to institutional goals (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2018).

Before full distribution, a pilot test was conducted on 30 respondents to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Validity was tested using the Pearson Product Moment correlation technique, and reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum value of 0.70 as the acceptable limit of internal accuracy (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The pilot test results indicated that all questionnaire items were valid and reliable. The collected data were analyzed using the latest version of SPSS statistical software (e.g., SPSS 26). Data analysis techniques included descriptive analysis, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity), and multiple linear regression analysis to examine the direct effects between variables. To test the mediating role of organizational culture, a path analysis approach using stepwise regression was used, followed by the Sobel test to confirm the significance of the mediating role (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Zhao et al., 2010). The testing was conducted in several stages: first, testing the direct influence of motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment on performance; second, testing the influence of these three variables on organizational culture; and third, testing the influence of organizational culture on organizational performance. The mediating role of organizational culture was declared significant if the Sobel test showed a p -value < 0.05 . Using this method, the study is expected to clearly illustrate how organizational culture plays a role in strengthening or bridging the relationship between individual psychological aspects (motivation, satisfaction, and commitment) and organizational performance. The results of this study are expected to provide an empirical contribution to strengthening human resource management systems in higher education institutions, particularly at Pakuan University.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data analysis of 150 lecturers at Pakuan University, it was found that work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment each have a positive and significant influence on organizational performance. The regression coefficients for each variable indicate a positive relationship, with a significance value (p -value) < 0.05 , thus accepting H1, H2, and H3.

Furthermore, the regression test results also indicate that all three independent variables (motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment) have a significant influence on organizational culture. This indicates that the higher the motivation and job satisfaction and the stronger the commitment, the stronger the lecturers' perceptions of the organizational culture prevailing at Pakuan University.

The Sobel test results indicate that organizational culture acts as a significant mediating variable in the

relationship between motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment on performance. In other words, organizational culture indirectly strengthens the impact of these psychological variables on lecturer performance. The Sobel test for all three mediation pathways showed a p -value < 0.05 , indicating that the mediation hypothesis is statistically accepted.

The findings of this study confirm that work motivation is a crucial driving factor in improving organizational performance. Highly motivated lecturers tend to be more enthusiastic, responsible, and results-oriented. This aligns with the findings of research by Faturrahman and Yuniawan (2023), which found that intrinsic motivation plays a role in increasing work effectiveness by enhancing job satisfaction and enthusiasm.

Similarly, job satisfaction has been shown to positively contribute to performance. Lecturers who are satisfied with their jobs—whether in terms of facilities, work relationships, or rewards—are more committed to making maximum contributions. A study by Putra & Nasution (2023) supports these findings, stating that job satisfaction mediates the influence of organizational culture on workforce productivity.

Organizational commitment, both affective and normative, also significantly contributes to performance. Lecturers who feel emotionally attached to the institution demonstrate loyalty and active involvement in the Tri Dharma (three pillars) of higher education. This aligns with the findings of Lestari & Palupi (2023), which demonstrate that commitment is a determining factor in the success of educational institutions, especially in the long term.

The most interesting finding of this study is the mediating role of organizational culture in the overall relationship between variables. A strong organizational culture—with values such as collaboration, transparency, responsibility, and innovation—strengthens the relationship between motivation, satisfaction, and commitment and performance. This finding aligns with Denison's (2006) research, which states that organizational culture is a key driver of individual behavioral change within a collective performance framework.

Organizational culture also acts as a social amplifier in the context of higher education. When a positive culture is well internalized by lecturers, motivational drive and job satisfaction will find their outlet in the form of tangible contributions to institutional performance. Maslan et al. (2023) found that a strong academic culture effectively mediates the relationship between psychological variables and lecturer performance at a private university.

These results reinforce the literature stating that strengthening organizational culture is not only a supporter, but also a guiding and binding factor in the dynamic relationship between human resources and organizational goals (Prianto et al., 2024). Therefore, Pakuan University management needs to focus more on establishing and strengthening a work culture that is adaptive, participatory, and oriented toward academic quality.

In a practical context, the results of this study suggest

that policies to improve lecturer performance cannot simply rely on technical aspects (such as training and incentives) but must be combined with strengthening shared cultural values. Organizational interventions need to be directed at strengthening institutional identity and collective engagement in building a culture that supports the achievement of the university's vision.

Thus, the results of this study not only support the proposed hypothesis but also provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of human resource management in higher education. This research also opens up opportunities for further research, for example through qualitative approaches that can explore concrete forms of strengthening organizational culture in everyday practices on campus.

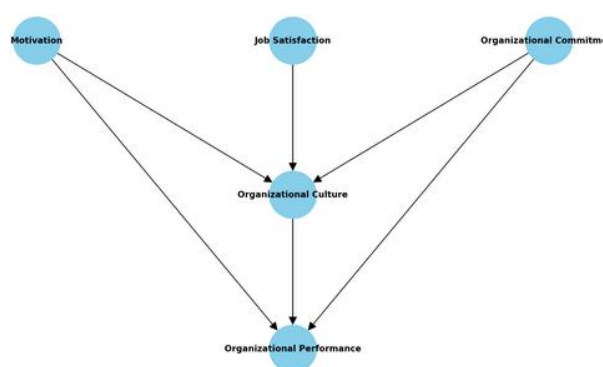


Figure 1. SEM path diagram- Organizational Culture as mediator

The visualized model illustrates the structural relationships found in the study, Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment each have a direct positive influence on Organizational Culture. Organizational Culture plays a mediating role by transmitting and strengthening the effect of these three variables on Organizational Performance. Additionally, Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment also have direct effects on Organizational Performance, independent of the mediation pathway. This indicates a partial mediation model, where both direct and indirect effects contribute to performance outcomes in the higher education context.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study shows that work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment have a direct, positive and significant impact on the organizational performance of lecturers at Pakuan University. These three variables also have a significant relationship with organizational culture, which in this study serves as a mediating variable. Another important finding is that organizational culture plays a significant mediating role in strengthening the influence of motivation, satisfaction, and commitment on performance. This means that when organizational culture is systematically strengthened, the positive effects of motivation,

job satisfaction, and commitment on lecturer performance are maximized. Thus, this study confirms that strengthening organizational culture is not merely a complementary aspect of organizational management, but rather a strategic element that determines individual work effectiveness and the achievement of higher education institutions' goals.

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