

## Effect of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance: A Mediating Role of Employee Engagement in Malaysia Educational Sector

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### Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate the effect of organizational culture (OC) on employee engagement (EE) and employee performance (EP) among academic staff of Malaysian Private Universities (MPU). However, studies of such have been given less attention within the context of MPU. Therefore, this paper highlights the issue through a systematic review of previous literature on the subject matter. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents while Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the study hypotheses. The results revealed that OC has a significant effect on EP while EE partially mediates the relationship between OC and EP. This study encourages university management to initiate sound OC and at the same time invest on OC in order to actualize EE and achieve a sustainable EP. This research has made a significant contribution to the operationalization of OC, EE, and EP literature which help to develop model, theory, research and practice in the fields of job performance.

**Keywords:** Malaysian private universities; Social exchange theory; Task performance; Contextual performance; Adaptive performance.

### 1. Introduction

Employees are seen as part of an organization that are involved in the organization day-to-day actions to ensure that the organization continue to survive or exist (Abdullahi et al., 2020; Wambugu, 2014). Wambugu (2014) claimed that employees are vital component of an organization, and organization success depends on employee performance (EP). It cannot be overstated that workers are the main thrust of every organization since they manage any other factors that keeps it running. Employees has to be proactive, responsive, hard-working and diligent to ensure that they remain completely ahead of their rivals (Ramly, 2018). In a similar vein, an organization overall performance is highly dependent on EP levels via employee engagement (EE) (Ganyang, 2019). Therefore, EP can be seen as an operation in which an employee can effectively accomplish the task delegated to him/her subject to the fair use of the resources available (Mkamburi and Kamaara, 2017). Sarwar et al. (2015) also argued that work performance is an efficacy which is a measure of the amount of efficacy resulting from a certain degree of efficiency-related costs. The concept and view of EP need not to be overlooked as it is necessary for an organization to accomplish its stated goals and objectives. In line with that, each organization is in business to make profit, so the organization ability to earn more profit and maintain a competitive edge is decided by a concerted engagement effort of employees of an organization (Dobre, 2013). Moreover, May et al. (2004) conceived EE as the mixture of emotional and cognitive job as well as work-related interactions that make an employee behave while doing a job. In addition, Schaufeli et al. (2002) provided the most predominant facets of EE and described EE as an optimistic, satisfying, working-related state of mind characterized by dedication, absorption and vigor.

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Olawuyi (2017) stated that for an employee to perform either high or low is behind an impetus or motivation. The concept impelling an employee within an organization is often called Organizational Culture (OC) (Muliati et al., 2017). OC can also be interpreted as common values, convictions and norms affecting the way workers feel, think, and act within the work environment. Widodo (2017) argued that the OC suggested the way responsibilities or tasks can be carried out by employees. It may be the core or guiding principles by which an organization workers are supposed to adhere without unreasonable opposition. The main components of OC are behavioural patterns, beliefs and ideologies. These components establish the institutions or organizations main tactic and its likelihood of staying in the market or ultimately going out of the market (Olawuyi, 2017). OC includes the unwritten norms, behaviours and beliefs which ascertain the “game rules” for making decisions, structure and control, and it focused on the organization common cultures and heritage, combined with existing principles of leadership. In addition, culture determines the manner in which organizations conduct business and the strategies of organizational survival that promote integration and personal achievements (Shah et al., 2011). Employees perform better with an effective OC even though they believe it is the right thing to accomplish and believe they will be compensated for their behaviour and action. But if the management team lacks credibility or skews diversity, strong cultures will turn into clique, cult and caste (Santoso and Moeins, 2019). In the workplace, culture is indeed a very significant motivator that is intentionally and actively developed and passed on to new workers to know the rules and practices of the organization in order to effectively perform or participate in specific responsibilities (Stephen and Stephen, 2016).

For academic institutions, OC is ubiquitous and powerful; it is either a catalyst for progress, or a definite obstacle to it. It is either the adhesive for the workers that ties individuals to an institutions, or what pushes them away. Today, academic institutions are constantly forced to shift the culture of their institution in a manner that will favour ways or method of accomplishing task (Stephen and Stephen, 2016). OC plays an important part within an academic institution. It is a recognized measure that helps to understand the espoused stability of the institution and also the contentment, incentive and encouragement of the employees with their work. Nonetheless, institutions seem to be well conscious that the workers should indeed be provided with a solid, efficient, welcoming, supportive and career-oriented work atmosphere so that productive and skilled workforce can be created, handled and preserved. All this can be achieved if there is a strong OC in the workplace environment that promotes such activities (Ramly, 2018). OC, EP and EE are interrelated, and for academic institutions, particularly Malaysian Private Universities (MPU) to accomplish their goals effectively, they ought to pay serious attention to OC in order to achieve EP through job engagement levels (Ganyang, 2019).

OC therefore has the power to affect EP through EE, as it empowers/dissuades workers to act genuinely at workplace (Saks, 2006). Regarding such field of thought, social exchange theory (SET), established by Homans (1958) described and explained the phenomenon between both the employee's outcomes, OC and EE (Sak, 2006). SET has economic as well as social impact (Lambe et al., 2001). Employees will be encouraged to do more work in the organization when employees receive desirable OC (Tansky and Cohen, 2001). Furthermore, fair exchange creates linkage between employee and employer which bring psychological attachment of employees with the work (Burns, 1973). It brings connection between employees and organization on the basis of trust rather than legal obligations (Tansky and Cohen, 2001), flexibility rather than rigidity, and mutual cooperation (Stafford, 2008). In this connection, Thibaut and Kelley (1959) suggested that organizations should implement effective and sound OC which the employees can appreciate, with that different exchange relationships can be achieved by both party. When employees believe that the organization fulfils their requirements by providing sound OC that guide their work then they would feel important and be obliged to repay the organization with positive work behaviour like performance, loyalty and commitment among others (Mossholder et al., 2005). Therefore, EP is exchanged with how they feel of being respected, valued and supported by the organization (Mossholder et al., 2005).

The nature of the whole relationship is interesting and significant given the relationship examined by SET (Homans, 1958). Ganyang (2019) narrated that despite the number of OC studies over the past few decades, it is empirically proved that numerous studies on the effect of OC on EP through EE has yielded mixed outcome which are inconclusive, uncertain and inconsistent. It is also noted that scholars agree that there is no established agreement on the specific nature of the relationship between OC and EP through EE. Therefore, the question of whether OC influence EP through EE is still worthy for further research. Despite that, there is limited research that has examined the relationships between the three variables of this study which includes OC, EE and EP among academic staff in Malaysia educational sector, particularly MPU. However, most researches conducted by Blegur and Amalia, (2019), Ramly (2018), Maisoni (2019), Santoso and Moeins (2019), Widodo (2017), Fithriana and Adi, (2017), Stephen and Stephen (2016) and Haque et al. (2019) that used the same variables with the present study are not conducted in Malaysia, the ones conducted in Malaysia by Najeemdeen et al. (2018) and Nusari et al. (2018) are not conducted in MPU rather they are conducted in other sector

of the economy. Therefore, to the best of our knowledge this research is the first research conducted in MPU. Thus, a new phase unfolds in which EE and EP become vital to the institution and the economy. We therefore agree that the need to concentrate on the control of OC over EP through EE is essential. After critical review or examination of literature. This paper aims to address the gap in the field of knowledge by examining the effect of OC on EP through EE in Malaysia educational sector, particularly MPU.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 2.1 Organizational culture and employee performance

The relationship between OC and performance has gained significant recognition among OC researchers (Malam et al., 2019; Priyadharsan and Nithiya, 2020). Maryati et al. (2019) revealed that the association between culture and performance was influenced by the manner in which organizations search for vital fact or information and then use the fact or information. OC creates competitive edge by defining the organization's limits or boundaries in terms of human interaction or experiences and capabilities to process information (Soomro and Shah, 2019). Similarly, researchers further emphasized that a good culture within an organization enhances the willingness of workers to achieve the organizational objectives in a specific direction (Santoso and Soehari, 2020; Shahzad, et al., 2013). Employees are on a common path in a sound culture toward meeting organizational objectives, which also offers an opportunity or impetus for employees to expand and grow within the organization (Puspita et al., 2020). Consequently, it was suggested that it would be effective to improve EP by adopting a solid and sound OC (Shahzad et al., 2013). In addition, Fidyah and Setiawati, (2020) discovered that solid culture within the organization is quite useful to improve EP and enhances the organization's overall performance. Syauta et al. (2012) clarified that the organization that fail to have a long life expectancy, is as a result of poor culture of the organization. Eventually there will be a rally, protest, or the like that would bankrupt or unhealthy the organization. So it is clear that the organization goals will not be reached without solid approach through sound OC (Fithriana and Adi, 2017).

According to Stewart (2010) OC principles and values have a significant effect on workers that are explicitly or implicitly affiliated with the organization. Researchers have concluded that norms or expectations are intangible but have a significant effect on EP and productivity (Shahzad, et al., 2013). In addition, the study conducted by Lau et al. (2020) highlighted that OC drives and shapes attitudes and behaviours of all workers, and stressed that OC has an influence on EP. In view of this, Syauta et al. (2012) indicated that workers under cultural control are more competitive and productive than those who are not, and further claimed that cultural experience and exposure will decide the cultural and work values of workers. A study performed by Zahra et al. (2020) revealed that each employee has a range of personal needs and therefore any given OC may or may not satisfy or match some specific need, and also Zahra et al. (2020) further emphasize that individuals are more satisfied in organizations where their right and needs are met than those organizations where their right and needs are not met. For such reason, the researcher agreed that OC and EP had a relationship (Zahra et al., 2020). Understanding the correlation between OC and EP is therefore a significant research subject, since results from various research have shown that performance of an employee is crucial to an organization's success (Shahzad, et al., 2013).

Empirical studies conducted by Shahzad, Iqbal and Gulzar (2013), Abu-Jarad, Yusof and Nikbin (2010), Sangadji and Sopiha (2013), Wambugu (2014), Imam et al. (2013), Mohamed and Abukar, (2013), Shahzad (2014), Weerarathna and Geeganage (2014) on different field of study revealed that OC significant influence on EP. In a more recent studies examined by Hendrato and Subyantoro (2021), Lau et al., (2020), Natalia et al. (2020), Purnomo et al. (2020), Kawiana et al. (2018), Santoso and Moeins (2019), Widodo (2017), Muliaty et al. (2017), Saprudin et al. (2019) revealed that OC has significant effect on EP. Thus, organizations need to strengthen their managerial aspect, such as developing an effective OC and improve efficiency by flattening the organizational structure, in order to achieve and sustain performance (Wei, Herndon & Liu, 2011). SET is used to support the relationship between OC and EP, whereby if employee of an organization is offered with a fair culture, the employee will be satisfied and reciprocate by putting more effort in his/her work in order to achieve positive result that will boost the organization performance as well (Blau, 1964). Consequently, on the basis of the stated theoretical and empirical support, the foregoing hypothesis arise:

H1: *OC has significant effect on EP.*

## 2.2 The mediation role of employee engagement

Based on the assumption of Baron and Kenny (1986), 3 pre-conditions have to be achieved for a mediation test to be carried out. Claim 1: The exogenous variable (OC) should be directly linked with the endogenous variable (EP). Claim 2, the exogenous variable (OC) should be paired with the mediating variable (EE). Claim 3, the mediating variable (EE) should be linked to the endogenous variable (EP). However, scholars like Zhao et al. (2010), Rucker et al. (2011) argued that in testing mediation, the direct relationship must not be a necessary condition, as mediation can be statistically substantial in the absence of a direct relationship. Furthermore, Rucker et al. (2011) recommended that a non-substantial direct effect should not be considered as a stopping condition in the process of testing mediation. Therefore, this present study upholds the recommendations given by (Zhao et al., 2010; Rucker et al., 2011).

In this study, EE serves as a mediator. As indicated by Mensah (2015) EE appears to be a clear motivating factor for success. Effective OC has a positive influence on EP (Wambugu 2014; Mohamed and Abukar, 2013; Shahzad, 2014; Weeraratna and Geeganage, 2014). Similarly, OC has a positive influence on EE (Suharti and Suliyanto, 2012; Ganyang, 2019). Furthermore, EE has a positive influence on EP (Azeem and Yasmine, 2015; Mohd et al., 2018; Tampubolon, 2017; Anitha, 2014). Thus, it is expected that EE improves the association between OC and EP. The mediating effect of EE is built on SET (Blau, 1964). From the SET viewpoint, an organization that acts towards employees in a beneficial or positive way generates reciprocity such that employees react in a beneficial manner too that can favour the organization (Blau, 1964). SET offers a valuable lens for understanding the processes involved in how talented workers perceive and react to the OC. Effective OC is therefore seen as a bet on talented workers. Talented workers consider the organization's effective OC as valuable support, and willing to reciprocate positively to the organization. In addition, workers will be more interested in their jobs when their employer introduces sound and effective OC and it will result in improved and sustainable performance and optimistic attitudes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). Therefore, the following hypothesis is established on the basis of empirical evidence and theoretical support:

H2: *EE mediates the relationship between OC and EP.*

## 2.3 Research model and theoretical foundation

Following a thorough review of literature on EE, EP and OC, the aforementioned theoretical framework was developed in Figure 1.

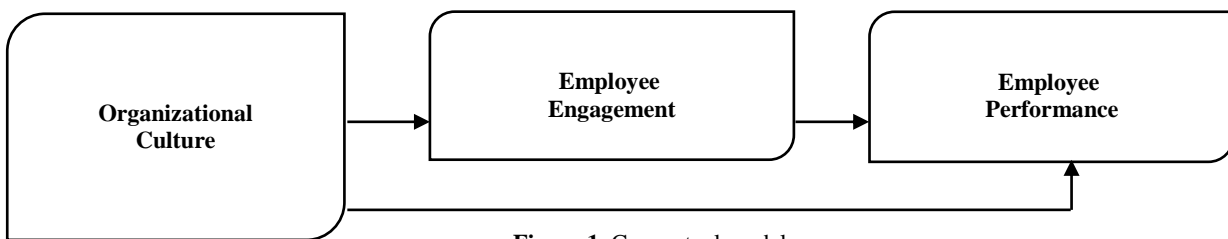


Figure 1. Conceptual model

Figure 1 shows an operating model which links OC with EE and EP. It is adapted from the model of Mensah (2015). From the model, OC stands as the additional contribution to the existing model after its modification. From the framework perspective, it is presumed that SET is one mechanism which illustrates how OC can transform into EP through EE (Blau, 1964). SET clarified and illustrates the relation between the variables through the mechanism of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Furthermore, engagement can be enhanced if workers believe that an OC obviously influences them, which in turn explains why they prefer to behave positively/negatively towards the organization. But even though cultural characteristics are not specifically geared towards workers, they can be associated/dissociated to the ideals, morals and beliefs of workers. Thus workers can actively reciprocate to the cultural traits of an institution through engagement. Hence, OC might affect EP through EE directly and/or indirectly (Albrecht, 2012). Therefore, the observed theory provides a sound direction to the study.

### **3. Methodology**

Survey research design was used in the present research, and other empirical studies conducted by Nuhu et al. (2018), Abdullahi et al. (2015), Mohammed and Munirah (2018), Abubakar et al. (2015), Abdullahi (2018), Abdullahi et al. (2018), Abdullahi et al. (2019) Yazid et al. (2017) and Abdullahi et al. (2018) used same research design. The unit of research in the present study was MPU academic staff, and the study population consists of 10, 473 participants which are captured from MPU with un-expired license as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 as issued by Ministry of Higher Education (2019). This study used simple random and stratified sampling technique which allow the participants in the survey to have an equal chance to be selected as a subject in a sample and it allows the researcher to allocate or assign the study sample to each stratum of the study population without any bias or prejudice. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table was used to determine the study sample size. Subsequently, the sample size was increased by 50% amounting to 557 to address the non-response dilemma and reduce the sample size error as recommended by Hair et al. (2010), Salkind (1997), Babbie (1973), Barlett, Kotrlik, and Higgins (2001). In this survey, a sum of 557 questionnaires was distributed online to the study respondents amounted to 100%, out of the 557 distributed questionnaires only 314 participants responded to the questionnaire amounted to 56.4% response rate, and the responded questionnaires were successfully filled and returned. In line with that, Sekaran (2003) opined that 30% response rate is good enough for a survey study. Furthermore, Lindner and Wingenbach (2002) suggested that 50% of responses should be realized in order to achieve sound analysis or result. Based on the recommendations of Hair et al. (2010), Salkind (1997), Babbie (1973), Barlett, Kotrlik, and Higgins (2001), the response rate of this study is satisfactory. Therefore, after data cleaning and screening, there were no missing data or outliers; based on that, the study proceeded with 314 valid questionnaires which amounted to 56.37% response rate for the final estimation of the study hypotheses. In addition, the present study utilized Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 for the study preliminary analysis.

#### **3.1 Measures**

This study consists 3 variables with 29 measurement items, in view of that EP were assessed 9 adapted items from Pradhan and Jena (2017). EE were assessed with 8 adapted items from Schaufeli et al. (2002), while OC were assessed with 12 adapted items from Denison et al. (2006). All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Pilot study was carried out whereby validity and reliability were exercised on the research instrument, in terms of validity 4 academic experts, and professionals from the industry were selected in order to confirm the instrument validity, which include physical attributes, item relevance, communication, language clarity and themes, with this content validity of the items was built (Straub, 1989). Reliability (internal consistency) among the items were also assessed with 40 randomly selected academic staff with similar characteristics that were not part of the target population through Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) reliability (Johanson and Brooks, 2010). The result showed that Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for EP was 0.871, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for EE was 0.841, while Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for OC was 0.897. This demonstrated that the instruments are accurate since the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  are all above 0.70 as recommended by Hair et al. (2010). In consequence, a valid and reliable questionnaire were launched to collect data from a large sample.

#### **3.2 Common Methods and Non-Response Bias**

This paper used the Harman one-factor test to determine whether a possible threat was cause as a result of common method bias (CMB) (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The first element contributed for 32.63% which is below the suggested value of 50% (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). So the CMB in this study is not a threat. In addition, t-test was utilized to measure the presence of the non-response bias in the data, in line with that statistical disparity between the early and delay replies was examined. The findings revealed that there were no significant values, all value were above 0.05, which proof that the variances were considered to be equal approximately. Therefore, there is no significant variations in all the variables under review between the two classes (early and delay participants) ( $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, the problem of nonresponse bias was lacking, and the samples collected matched the study overall population (Pallant, 2010).

#### 4. Data Analysis

This study used Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software version 3.0 to analyze the study hypotheses. Therefore, the measurement model and the structural model are assessed below.

##### 4.1 Evaluation of Measurement Model

Analysis were conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the measures. Table 1 explained the convergent validity of the measurement model. Hair, et al. (2006) narrated that items that have factor loading below 0.60 should be deleted. In addition, it is suggested that any item with an outer loading that is  $< 0.40$  should be removed (Hair et al., 2012). Therefore, this research relies on the recommendation of Hair et al. (2012) which stated that any factor loading  $< 0.40$  should be deleted. Thus, as shown in Figure 2 and Table 1, 5 items were deleted which involves EP6, EE7, EE8, OC1 and OC2 as a result of low factor loadings. The factor loadings of the remaining items as indicated in Figure 2 and Table 1 range from 0.502 to 0.805 exceeded the threshold of 0.40 as suggested by Hair et al. (2012). As for AVE, each variable AVE should be greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2012). As shown in Table 1 all the variables AVE range from 0.503 to 0.551 which are all above the acceptable value of 0.50 as suggested by Hair et al. (2012). In convergent validity, to test the reliability, it is necessary to measure using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  and composite reliability (CR). The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value and composite reliability are considered at 0.7 and above as recommended by Hair et al. (2016). The result showed a strong internal consistency ranging from 0.832 to 0.890, as shown in Table 1, and CR outcome as shown in Table 1 also have a satisfactory value ranging from 0.910 to 0.898 which are all higher than the acceptable value of 0.70 as suggested by Hair et al. (2016). The instrument's discriminant validity (DV) was tested by analyzing the AVE's square root as suggested by Hair et al. (2011). To assess the DV, Fornell and Laker (1981) approach was utilized, and it is fulfilled if the exogenous variance is greater than the common value with other variables as is apparent from Table 2 (Hair et al., 2011). The diagonal values shown in the bold text in Table 2 below reflect the square root of the AVE whereas the off-diagonals reflect the correlations. The Fornell-Larcker criterion results revealed that the square root of the AVE's of the constructs are above the correlations of all other constructs. Therefore, all conditions were met which fulfill the measurement model DV. Hence, Table 1 and Table 2 have established the convergent and DV of this study.

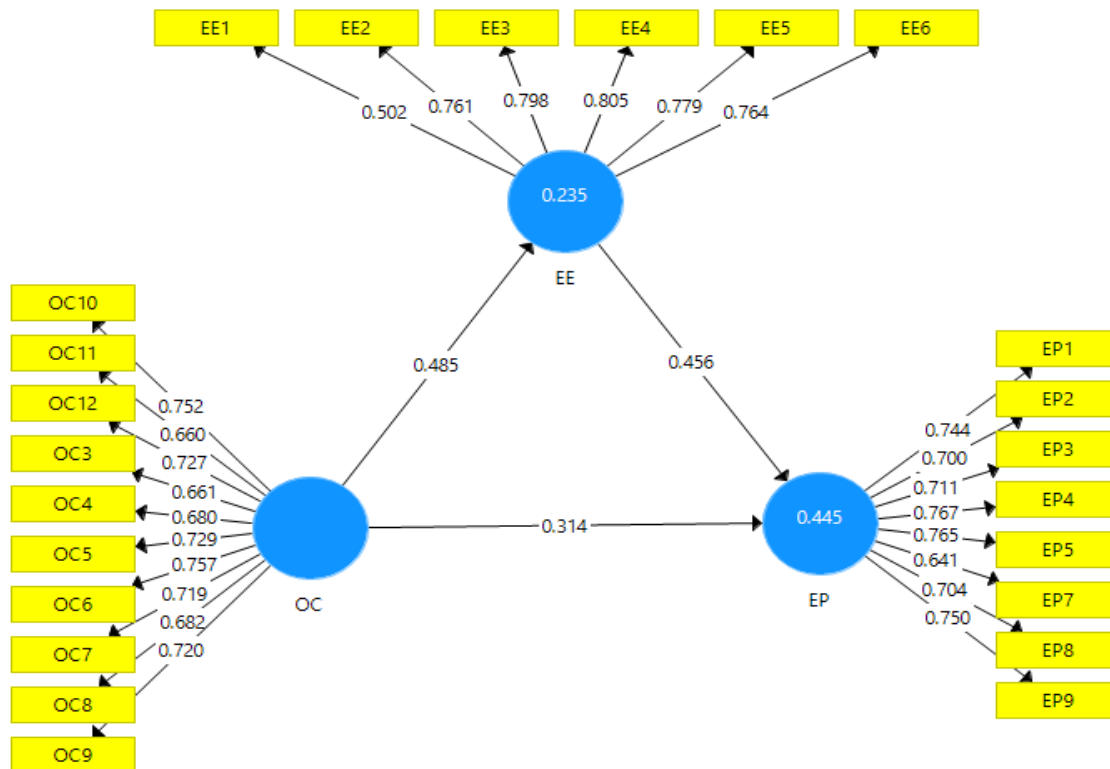


Figure 2. Measurement Model

**Table 1.** Items Loadings, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Constructs and Items	loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
<b>EP</b>		0.869	0.898	0.524
EP1	0.744			
EP2	0.700			
EP3	0.711			
EP4	0.767			
EP5	0.765			
EP6	Deleted			
EP7	0.641			
EP8	0.704			
EP9	0.750			
<b>EE</b>		0.831	0.878	0.551
EE1	0.502			
EE2	0.761			
EE3	0.798			
EE4	0.805			
EE5	0.779			
EE6	0.764			
EE7	Deleted			
EE8	Deleted			
<b>OC</b>		0.890	0.910	0.503
OC1	Deleted			
OC2	Deleted			
OC3	0.661			
OC4	0.680			
OC5	0.729			
OC6	0.757			
OC7	0.719			
OC8	0.682			
OC9	0.720			
OC10	0.752			
OC11	0.660			
OC12	0.727			

**Note:** EP =Employee performance; EE = Employee engagement; OC =Organization culture.

**Table 2.** Results of Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Method) & VIF

	EE	EP	OC	VIF
EE	<b>0.742</b>			1.307
EP	0.608	<b>0.724</b>		
OC	0.485	0.535	<b>0.71</b>	1.307

**Note:** EP =Employee performance; EE = Employee engagement; OC =Organization culture. Diagonals depict the AVE square-root while the off-diagonals depict the correlations.

#### 4.2 Evaluation of Structural Model

The EE and EP  $R^2$  values were concurrently 0.420 and 0.605 from the PLS-algorithm results which provide moderate explanatory strength (Chin, 1998). First, the analysis conducted collinearity evaluation among the predictor variables, and the result in Table 2 showed that collinearity is not a problem since all VIF values are significantly far below 5 as suggested by Hair et al. (2013). To determine the coefficient of determination of the structural models we measured the  $R^2$ . The  $R^2$  revealed how much variation demonstrate the independent variable (Hair et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2013). In Figure 3, the outcome revealed that EE and EP  $R^2$  values were concurrently 0.235 and 0.445 from the PLS-algorithm results which provide moderate explanatory strength (Chin, 1998). After the blindfolding protocol has been performed (Hair et al., 2013), the  $Q^2$  value for EE (0.123) and EP (0.228) are higher than 0, which demonstrate that the structural model has adequate predictive significance. After determining the study VIF,  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$ , the hypotheses are tested next. For the hypothesized relationships the path estimates and t-statistics were determined using a bootstrapping approach with a re-sampling of 5000. Figure 3 and Table 3 demonstrated the analysis of the structural model. From the evaluation in Figure 3 and Table 3, it was found that OC ( $\beta = 0.314$ , t-value = 5.621,  $p < 0.01$ ) have substantial effect on EP. Next,

we evaluated the EE mediating effect on OC and EP ties. The bootstrapping approach was also used to evaluate the indirect effect as indicated in the literature, and the findings in Table 3 indicated that the indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.221$ ,  $t\text{-value} = 6.965$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) were substantial, indicating that there were mediating effect. As proposed by Hair et al. (2013), variance accounted for (VAF) has been evaluated. The VAF determines indirect impact magnitude compared to total or overall effect. VAF: indirect effect/total effect. The VAF was assessed in this study, and the result was 0.41 which was rated as partial mediation (Hair et al., 2013). Therefore, OC partially mediates the relationship between EE and EP in MPU.

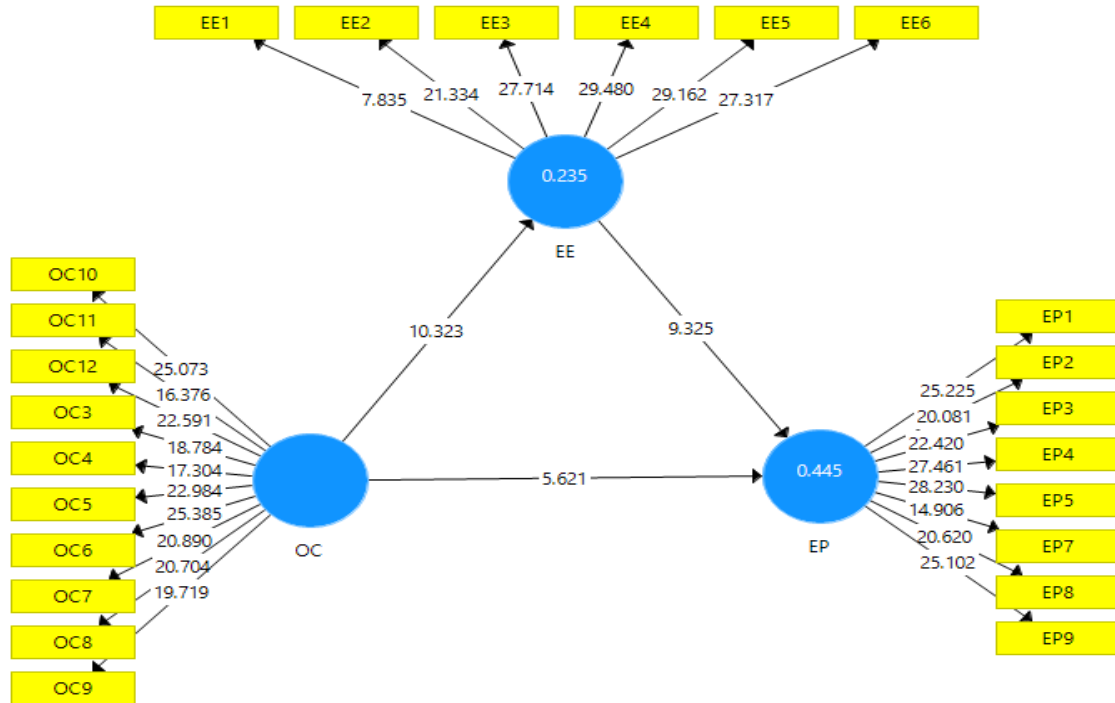


Figure 3. PLS-SEM bootstrapping direct, indirect and mediation relationship

Table 3. Results of Structural Path Model of Direct, Indirect and Mediation Effects

Hypothesized Paths	Path Coefficient	Std. Error	T-value	P-value	Decision
EE -> EP	0.456	0.049	9.325**	0.000	Supported
OC -> EE	0.485	0.047	10.323**	0.000	Supported
OC -> EP	0.314	0.056	5.621**	0.000	Supported
OC -> EE -> EP	0.221	0.032	6.965**	0.000	Supported

Notes: \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05. EP =Employee performance; EE = Employee engagement; OC =Organization culture.

### 4.3 Discussion

The hypothesized hypothesis 1 narrated that OC has significant effect on EP. The study outcome in Figure 3 and Table 3 indicated that OC has significant effect on EP. The finding implies that OC is one of the factor that determined performance among academic staff of MPU. As a result, MPU needs to form and establish corporate environments that are more responsive to their workers and organizational environment, and the core values that are compatible with the institutional atmosphere must also be established. OC thus plays a catalytic role in improving EP. To promote unity among the staff of the universities, OC must be mandatory for all academics of the universities. It will also improve group effectiveness, motivation and overall EP (Linnenluecke and Griffiths, 2010). Moreover, the finding suggests that MPU seeks to find grounds for rewarding pre-approved norms, or conduct that results in better adaptation and compliance and to a peer thinking and behaviour. This helps entrants to integrate more quickly and give management the benefit of a homogeneous workforce or team that enables greater job outputs. In addition, the leadership style that fosters a culture of productivity and achievement finds itself guiding a much more efficient team that has a certain passion for demanding work, and that inevitably ends up having a higher level of performance. In a nutshell, MPU should provide effective and



understandable OC that will benefit both the universities and their committed employees. The result is compatible with studies of Santoso and Moeins (2019), Widodo (2017), Muliaty et al. (2017), Saprudin et al. (2019), Wambu (2014), Shahzad (2014), Weerarathna and Geeganage (2014), which revealed that OC has substantial effect on EP while the result is not in line with the outcomes of Syauta et al. (2012), Stephen and Stephen (2016) and Nusari et al. (2018) which revealed that there is no substantial effect of OC on EP. The outcome of this study is guided by SET (Blau, 1964). The theory demonstrates the connection between OC and EP, whereby if staff of MPU are provided with a fair culture, the staff will be satisfied and reciprocate by putting more effort in their work in order to achieve positive result that will boost the universities performance (Blau, 1964).

The hypothesized hypothesis 2 narrated that EE mediates the relationship between OC and EP. The study outcome in Table 3 indicated that EE partially mediates the relationship between OC and EP in MPU. In this research, OC is a good predictor for EP, and at the same time EE exercise an effective role in increasing the EP to some extent. In line with the study results, it was agreed that OC is a key factor in understanding EE, because EE has been demonstrated in many positive job outcomes, the findings of this study revealed that it is prudent for MPU to cultivate and promote a positive and strong culture, and to ensure that staff remain engaged in their work, in order to achieve sound performance which will enable MPU to achieve its stated mission and vision effectively. The result of this study is guided by the studies of Blegur and Amalia (2019) and Tannady et al. (2019). Thus, it can be concluded that in the perspective of MPU, practitioners can consider EE in their respective universities along with effective OC in order to gain sound EP. The finding was also guided by SET. Thus, the mediation of EE between OC and EP relationship is logical and justified. Therefore, EE partially has mediating role on OC and EP relationship in the context of MPU.

## **5. Conclusion and Implications**

The present study investigates the effect of OC on EP through EE as a mediator in Malaysia educational sector, particularly in MPU. The findings of the study revealed that OC has substantial effect on EP. The findings also revealed that EE partially mediates OC and EP relationship. This research is the outcome of a rigorous scientific method, and the results covers academic as well as functional worlds. In line with the result strong and effective culture within the universities will enhance EE toward gaining EP and the aims of the universities within a common path. With that it was realized that personal beliefs are different from the institutional values when an employee join the university. Therefore, when a sound and effective culture is in place, employees are on the common path toward achieving institutional goals which also provides an opportunity to the employees to grow in the universities (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). The findings categorically showed that OC and EE are the most essential and key factors to actualized EP. In addition, from such outcomes, we infer that OC does not only improve EP behaviours but also decreases negative behaviours through the partial mediating role of attitudes of employees in workplace. Consequently, the current research contributes by improving the body of knowledge in the focused domain and also expand established literature based on the relationships between OC, EE and EP. Despite there are limited studies that explore the effect of OC on EP through EE among academic staff in Malaysia educational institutions, particularly MPU. This study is among the first few that bridge the gap, that conduct research of such nature in MPU. In addition, this study also identified opportunities for new areas for further examination in relation or in accordance to EP.

The outcome of this research have some major consequences for the universities management. Therefore, the universities management can incorporate OC in the institution through unified values, beliefs and norms to improves both staff effectiveness, efficiency and mutual understanding, and to reduce negative behaviours which also help to mainstream those staff of the universities who are either accidental or from different cultural backgrounds into a workable middle-point at which work-flow. The universities management can also initiate, build and enhance effective OC which can creates a sense of belonging, a feeling of similarity and unity among staff, in extent to the core belief of institutional ownership. Through incorporating sound OC, the universities management can benefit or flourish from the EE optimistic work attitudes. As OC prove to have an impact on staff behaviour. Therefore, the universities management or policymaker need to shape and develop corporate cultures that are more conducive to the staff and the universities setting toward achieving the universities mission, values and long-term strategic goals. Lastly, the universities management should note that EE partially mediates the relationship between OC and EP. In line with that, the universities management should invest on OC that can enhance EE in order to attain full positive performance from the staff.

This study has quite a number of theoretical and managerial contributions as other studies, this study also has certain limitations and at the same time offers guidance for future studies. The drawback of this study is that it only focuses on OC as the predictor. In this perspective future studies may include other predictors such as leadership behaviour,

management support, and change management to serve as additional predictor to EE and EP, and at the same time introduce moderating variable like organizational environment in order to strengthen or explain the variance of EP substantially, and also extend the current framework that may enhance the percentage of explained variances as well. The current research only considers academic staff as the unit of analysis and also the research was conducted under the context of Malaysia educational sector, particularly MPU. Hence, future research should expand the scope by considering non-academic staff and at the same time consider public universities, foreign private universities and other sectors or industries within Malaysia and beyond in order to have a generalizable and comparing result.

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