

Article

# Impact of organizational culture on employee commitment: Mediating role of employee engagement and perceived organizational support

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**Abstract: Purpose:** This study examines the impact of organizational culture on employee commitment in the context of Iran's challenging job market, characterised by high unemployment rates and job uncertainties. It specifically examines the mediating roles of perceived organizational support and employee engagement in this relationship. **Design/methodology/approach:** A quantitative research approach was adopted, collecting data from 260 full-time employees of Homa Hotel Group (HHG) in Iran. A mediation analysis using the PROCESS Macro Model was utilized to test the proposed hypothetical model. **Findings:** The findings reveal a positive relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment. Additionally, the mediation analysis confirms that this relationship is partially mediated by perceived organizational support. **Research limitations/implications:** While the study offers insights into the Iranian job market, its focus on a single organization limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research could expand this study to other sectors and cultural contexts to enhance understanding of these dynamics. **Originality/value:** This research contributes to the literature on organizational culture and employee commitment by elucidating the mediating role of perceived organizational support and employee engagement in the Iranian context. Its findings hold both theoretical and practical implications, offering valuable insights for organizations aiming to foster employee commitment amidst challenging economic conditions.

**Keywords:** employee engagement; organizational culture; unemployment; job uncertainties; employee commitment; hospitality and tourism industries

## 1. Introduction

There has been a steady increase in the demand for travel accommodations and luxury hotels around the world because of the rapid growth of the hospitality and tourism industries. To create a memorable experience for their guests, luxury hotels provide the best services (Peterhans, 2010). The United States has the most luxurious hotels in the world, followed by the United Kingdom, Canada, Hong Kong, and France. Furthermore, international tourism has increased throughout the Asia-Pacific region over the last decade (Habibikermani, 2022) but the tourist industry in Iran has faced several challenges and issues such as economic sanctions, which have harmed its economy. These sanctions have made it challenging for luxury hotels in Iran to access international financial systems, source quality goods, and attract foreign investment. In addition, Iran has experienced significant currency devaluation, which has affected the cost of imported goods and services. This can make it more expensive for luxury hotels to maintain their standards and offer quality services.

Iran is an attractive destination for international tourists, especially those with a keen interest in history and archaeology. The nation is widely recognized for its pilgrimage sites, religious landmarks, and cultural tourism destinations. Additionally, Iran's rich historical, religious, and cultural heritage draws tourists from diverse corners of the globe, including neighbouring Islamic nations that share similar belief systems with Iran (Butler and Suntikul, 2017). In reality, tourism has not consistently been a primary economic focus in Iran, although it has experienced occasional growth. Many government institutions and administrations have a dedicated mission to promote inbound tourism and recognize its significance as both an economic and cultural endeavour (Mozaffari et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the organizations responsible for tourist development, planning, and marketing have faced a range of challenges (Habibikermani, 2022). One of the main challenges is political stability. Iran's political situation and relations with other countries can have a direct impact on the hospitality industry. Political instability can deter international travellers and investors.

The aforementioned issues can influence employee commitment, as they may prompt employees to look for improved compensation packages due to the increasing cost of living (Ramayah et al., 2022). According to Lee et al. (1992), an individual's commitment to an organization endures until situational pressures necessitate the employee to evaluate a cost-benefit analysis for leaving the organization (Baliao, 2023). Bailey Jr (2023) asserted that employee commitment represents one of the most intrinsic and vital facets of an organization, formed through an individual's affiliation with the company. Employees with high organizational commitment significantly contribute to the advancement of the organization's goals and objectives. Thus, when there is individual commitment, employees are more likely to engage in their work, especially when the organization enforces their needs to feel safe and supported (Baliao, 2023).

Research indicates that when employees exhibit a commitment to the organization, it results in elevated morale and reduced absenteeism and turnover rates (Akkaya, 2020; Ballout, 2009; Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Falahat et al., 2019). As per Brewer (2021), employees who exhibit a commitment to the organization are less inclined to resign and seek alternative employment opportunities, and they also tend to have lower rates of tardiness and absenteeism. When employees are committed to an organization, greater functionality and productivity are achieved (Afif, 2018). High productivity can provide an organization with a competitive edge in the global marketplace (Bosh, 2020). Employees working in organizations whose values and goals align with their own are more inclined to exhibit positive behaviors in order to remain consistent with the organization's mission, values, and objectives. This alignment fosters strong commitment to the organization and a high degree of job involvement (Cesário and Chambel, 2017).

Commitment is likely to diminish when employees perceive a lack of support from their leader or the organization (Naotunna and Arachchige, 2016). Eisenberger et al. (1986) conceptualized perceived organizational support (POS) as a sequence of social interactions involving employees and the organization. In this dynamic, employees contribute commitment, effort, and loyalty, and in return, the organization reciprocates with tangible rewards like compensation, benefits, and promotional

opportunities. Perceived organizational support (POS) is seen as a form of assurance provided by the organization, ensuring that necessary support will be available when employees require it to perform their jobs effectively and navigate stressful situations (Qi et al., 2019). Employees who perceive high levels of organizational support tend to report greater job satisfaction and a healthier work-life balance (Balusek, 2023). As a result, George-Amiekumo (2022) concurred that when employers tend to the socioemotional needs of their employees and appreciate their contributions without exerting pressure, these employees perceive this support from their employers and respond positively in kind.

Hotel employees engaging in direct communication with customers desire the assurance of organizational support, knowing that they can rely on their organization in case of any issues. Such employees, when provided with organizational support, are better equipped to manage stress and tend to work with greater job satisfaction (Akgunduz et al., 2022). Existing literature also affirms that individuals' perceived organizational support (POS) plays a significant role in strengthening their commitment to the organization, fostering a favourable reciprocation of support (Maan et al., 2020). Furthermore, previous research has demonstrated that an individual's perceived organizational support (POS) contributes to improved performance, encompassing not only meeting role-related goals but also engaging in extra-role behaviors such as offering assistance and support to colleagues (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Chong et al., 2020). As per the findings of Salehzadeh et al. (2014), perceived organizational support pertains to employees' perceptions regarding the significance that organizations place on their collaboration and their well-being within the organization. Employees that experience a high level of organizational support feel that the company values their collaboration and cares about them (Salehzadeh et al., 2014). As a result, these employees are more likely to exhibit a strong commitment and dedication to their organization compared to those employees who perceive lower levels of organizational support (Suazo and Turnley, 2010).

Organizations often regard an elevated work engagement level and robust organizational commitment as essential drivers of enhanced performance and overall success (Cesário and Chambel, 2017). High levels of participation and happiness are experienced by employees who feel engaged (El Badawy and Bassiouny, 2014). Critical components of work engagement have also been identified as a strong work focus, abundant energy, and deep absorption in one's job. Choon et al. (2018) highlight justice, fairness, opportunity, engagement, and workplace freedom as paramount societal values across Eastern and Western societies. Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013) further elaborate that employee engagement hinges on their psychological readiness, which encompasses their confidence in meeting job demands, feeling secure in their roles, and finding purpose in their responsibilities. Cesário and Chambel (2017) have also defined work engagement as a multifaceted motivational term that signifies the simultaneous investment of an individual's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy into active and complete work performance.

Despite extensive research in the field, significant gaps persist, particularly in understanding the nuances of employee engagement and career commitment, such as how individual and organizational factors intertwine to influence these areas (Alsaad, 2016).

Employee engagement can be defined as the levels of commitment and the readiness to go above and beyond expectations to leverage their utmost capabilities in service of their organization and its values (Choon et al., 2018). Employees exhibiting high work engagement are actively involved both physically and are emotionally and cognitively connected when executing their duties (Cesário and Chambel, 2017). It is evident that employee engagement has a notable and positive influence on the organization's overall benefits and long-term growth. In the increasingly competitive market landscape, enterprises striving for sustainable competitive advantages must make prompt and concerted efforts to enhance their employee engagement levels (Dai and Qin, 2016). Hence, any company aiming to succeed in fierce competition must endeavour to foster dedication among its employees.

Existing research found a positive and significant relationship exists between engagement and commitment (Nazir and Islam, 2017). According to Walden et al. (2017), work engagement is most accurately comprehended as a positive and satisfying mental state characterized by dedication, vitality, and full absorption in one's work. To gain insights into the factors that could influence organizational commitment, it is essential to explore job or employee engagement (Schaufeli, 2013). However, there is a limited number of studies that consider employee engagement as a mediator in the context of addressing employee commitment (Kundu and Lata, 2017).

Organizational culture plays a pivotal role in determining the success of an organization, impacting not only employee satisfaction and retention but also the company's profitability and productivity (Canning et al., 2020). Cameron and ve Quinn (2006) theorized that understanding organizational culture (OC) serves as a means to establish stability through the reinforcement of values and consistency, as well as adaptability by offering coping strategies in the face of change. Research demonstrates that organizations flourish when they retain employees who exhibit both physical and emotional commitment, as well as those who derive a sense of purpose from their work within a company characterized by a positive culture and led by supportive and inspirational leaders (Burch-Parker, 2021). Styles (2022) emphasized that organizational culture has become an increasingly prominent subject in the fields of organizational behaviour and management studies. It is worth noting that the examination of organizational culture enables researchers to gain deeper insights into how business organizations can enhance their capacities and effectively address these challenges.

A workgroup's or organization's culture is defined by researchers as the norms that define its workgroup, and research indicates that productive and economically successful organizations often have cultures that are characterized by (a) collaboration, (b) innovation, and (c) integrity (Canning et al., 2020). These norms play a key role in defining successful organizational cultures, contributing significantly to the development of commitment among employees (Hartnell et al., 2011). While these cultural norms, along with the commitment they generate, have been demonstrated as predictors of an organization's success or failure (Chatman et al., 2014), there is limited understanding of the fundamental beliefs that form the basis for these positive cultural norms within organizations (Canning et al., 2020).

The correlation between organizational culture and employee commitment emerges from examining the literature (Bailey Jr, 2023). However, the specific

question asked in this research, assessing whether the alignment of perceived organizational support and employee engagement mediate the relationship between organizational culture and commitment in the hotel industry specifically in developing countries. This study is intended to minimize a knowledge gap and provide researchers, business leaders, human resource teams, and middle managers with empirical data for developing new models, strategies, and training programs to solve critical problems through effective change.

## **2. Literature review and formulation of hypotheses**

### **2.1. Organizational culture and employee commitment**

In the contemporary competitive business landscape, organizations are encountering fresh challenges in cultivating a workforce that demonstrates unwavering commitment to their mission. A diminished level of employee career commitment stands as a prominent contributor to turnover, impacting organizational performance and incurring substantial financial costs amounting to billions of dollars annually for organizations (Cohen, 2003). An issue of concern is that leaders may occasionally overlook the fact that the rapport they maintain with their subordinates can significantly influence employees' choices to dedicate themselves to organizations. Therefore, a leader's incapacity to cultivate commitment among employees can potentially impact a company's performance, resulting in a reduction of its operating income by up to 32.7% (Bonds, 2017).

Organizational commitment is delineated as a bond with the organization, marked by the intent to stay committed to it, a deep alignment with the organization's values and objectives, and a readiness to go above and beyond for its betterment (Baliao, 2023). Organizational commitment, as defined by Azan (2022), encompasses the level of desire and longing felt by an employee towards the goals, interests, and enduring presence of the organization. As noted by Porter et al. (1974), these concepts hold significant importance in comprehending an individual's organizational commitment. As per Harrell-Cook et al. (2017), when employees exhibit commitment, it tends to trigger their voluntary extra effort, leading to heightened productivity, innovation, and quality. This, in turn, results in reduced costs and ultimately contributes to an improved firm performance.

Another factor motivating researchers to explore employee commitment in organizations is the influence of organizational culture. Organizational culture encompasses a shared set of beliefs, values, practices, and customs that influence the behaviors of an organization's members (Ekmekcioglu and Öner, 2023). This culture plays a pivotal role in shaping their interactions with one another and their responses to the external environment (Kalia and Verma, 2017). Organizational culture can be defined as a collection of widely accepted foundational assumptions that a group develops while tackling external adaptation and internal integration challenges. These assumptions have demonstrated their effectiveness and validity, leading to their transmission to new members as the approved way to approach, perceive, think, and feel about these challenges. The measurement of organizational culture encompasses physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions (El Dajani, 2009). Organizational culture serves as a fundamental gauge of an organization's capacity to

accomplish tasks, make decisions, and formulate administrative policies; (Nurcholis and Budi, 2020) Emerson (2013) stated that organizational culture can serve as a lever for improving organizational performance by influencing employee behavior, fostering loyalty, and defining the boundaries of acceptable conduct.

Organizational culture and organizational commitment have been extensively explored in the field of organizational behavior and have gained increasing importance as subjects of academic research (Govender and Naidoo, 2022; Suslik, 2021). Organizational culture can foster organizational commitment, subsequently leading to enhanced productivity and the implementation of collective organizational improvements (Song et al., 2009). According to Burch-Parker (2021), organizational culture is the development of understandings among members of an organization that act as the social glue holding that organization together. Organizational culture (OC) places a strong emphasis on teamwork and the growth of employees, cultivating a compassionate work environment. This type of OC nurtures commitment and loyalty among individuals (Styles, 2022). Nikpour (2017) concluded that a significantly higher level of commitment can be achieved through the development of an improved organizational culture. Govender and Naidoo (2022) discovered that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in fostering employee commitment, which, in turn, has a substantial impact on organizational performance, profitability, and overall success or failure. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis (H1) to be tested:

H1: There is a positive relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment.

## **2.2. Organizational culture, perceived organizational support, and employee commitment**

Organizational culture is one of the key values of an organization. These values are nurtured and evolved by individuals within the organization, who influence the formulation of organizational policies related to employee management (Soomro and Shah, 2019). When an employee's personal values and objectives align with those of the organization, it reinforces the employee's sense of self-identity. This convergence of values is likely to enhance the individual's perceived organizational support (Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, 2011). Therefore, an individual's perceived organizational support (POS) should be linked to the organization's culture, as reflected in its system of values. When companies foster a positive and supportive culture, employees are more likely to perceive higher levels of organizational support. A supportive culture is expected to be especially effective in bolstering perceived organizational support (POS) by consistently reinforcing the positive appreciation of employees (Emerson, 2013). Nonetheless, there is limited substantiating evidence in the existing literature to validate such a connection, even though one researcher did identify a positive correlation between a specific archetype and perceived organizational support (Mauseth, 2008). Thus, we are proposing below hypotheses:

H2: There is a positive relationship between organizational culture and perceived organizational support.

H4: There is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and employee commitment.

### **2.3. Organizational culture, employee engagement and employee commitment**

The advancement of an industry hinges on the active involvement of its workforce, with organizational culture standing out as one of the key drivers of employee engagement (Kalia and Verma, 2017). An organization's culture facilitates an environment where employees are engaged in their work, and the work culture is reflected in the organization's goals, mission, and vision (Page et al., 2019). The culture of an organization is paramount to promoting and maintaining employee engagement levels (Milan, 2023). Considering that employees are the heart of the organization, leaders must establish a culture that draws in, nurtures, and retains exceptional talent (Madueke and Emerole, 2017). A positive work culture fosters employee engagement with the organization, resulting in mutual benefits for all involved (Milan, 2023). Research conducted by Jais and Suat (2022) delved into the connection between employee engagement and work-life culture, encompassing aspects such as adverse career outcomes, the perception of managerial support, and time demands. The analysis found no significant relationship between employee engagement and organizational time demands. Conversely, the findings indicated a highly significant impact between employee engagement and managerial support, as well as a less significant impact between employee engagement and negative career consequences. Although existing research offers compelling evidence regarding the impact of organizational culture on organizational outcomes, certain scholars have advocated for further empirical investigations to elucidate the mechanisms by which organizational culture exerts its influence on these outcomes (Emerson, 2013). Following prior discussions, this study posits the following hypotheses:

H3: There is a positive relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement.

H5: There is a positive relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment.

### **2.4. Mediating role of perceived organizational support**

Eisenberger et al. (1986) introduced the concept of perceived organizational support (POS) to elucidate the origins of perceived organizational support and to forecast its constructive impacts on employees' psychological well-being. This concept describes how employees perceive their organization's commitment to their welfare (Bullard, 2022; Salehzadeh et al., 2014). The foundational concept of perceived organizational support (POS) emerged from social exchange theory and evolved to elucidate the preservation of interpersonal relationships within the context of the work environment (Mohammadi et al., 2016). Social support theory promotes how "organizational support" increases workers' emotional connections to the organization and fosters commitment among them (Kundu and Lata, 2017). The social exchange theory posits that an employee's perceptions regarding how effectively an organization addresses their needs can reduce turnover intentions and foster positive feelings and attitudes toward their employers (Parker, 2022). Research indicates that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) initiates a social exchange process in which individuals perceive an obligation to contribute to the organization's objectives,

ultimately resulting in greater rewards. When an employee forms a positive connection with their job and the organization, it fortifies the bond between them, aligning with the principles of social exchange theory (Maan et al., 2020). Therefore, in accordance with this theory, employees engage in a reciprocal social exchange relationship with organizations, contingent upon their perception of the organization's support and commitment towards them (Bullard, 2022).

Balusek (2023) provided a definition of perceived organizational support as the perceptions held by employees regarding the degree to which their employer values their contributions and prioritizes their well-being. There is compelling evidence that establishes a robust connection between perceived organizational support (POS) and positive work outcomes, as seen through the lens of social exchange theory (SET) (Teo et al., 2020). Fundamentally, employee commitment is a psychological state rooted in the principle of perceived organizational support (POS). This principle serves as a bridge between employees and their organizations, yielding mutual benefits for both employees and employers (Hasnat, 2021). According to Udhöfer (2021), how workers feel about organizational support has a significant impact on how committed they are to organizational procedures. Prior research has underscored the significance of employees' perception regarding organizational support (Bullard, 2022; Hines, 2023). When employees can assess the support they receive from the organization, they respond in kind, adhering to a norm of reciprocity. Thus, when employees perceive that the organization acknowledges and values their contributions, as well as shows concern for their well-being, they develop a sense of obligation towards the organization. This, in turn, leads to higher commitment and increased effort in their work (Hossin et al., 2021; Mohammadi et al., 2016).

Recent areas of research have underscored the significance of organizational support as a crucial factor influencing employees' motivation to contribute to the organization (Qi et al., 2019). While significant research has explored the correlation between organizational culture and employee commitment (Aranki et al., 2019; Soomro and Shah, 2019), investigating the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) enhances our comprehension of how organizational culture can positively impact employee commitment (Ekmekcioglu and Öner, 2023). Through the examination of the mediating role of POS, this study offers unique insights into the mechanisms by which organizational culture (OC) influences employee commitment. Researchers have explored the mediating role of perceived organizational support concerning various organizational outcomes (Lu, Falahat, et al., 2023). For example, considering the mediating role of perceived organizational support, (Qi et al., 2019) investigated the correlation between inclusive leadership and employee innovative behaviour. Kerdpitak and Jermstiparsert (2020) explored the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between organizational culture, employee commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior concerning HRM practices. The results revealed that POS positively mediates the relationship between organizational culture, employee commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and HRM (Lu, Cheah et al., 2022). Similarly, Ekmekcioglu and Öner (2023) investigated the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between servant leadership (SL), innovative organizational culture (IOC), and employees' innovative work behavior (IWB). Their findings demonstrated that



SL and IOC positively influence employees' IWB by enhancing POS. Nonetheless, despite the extensive research on perceived organizational support (POS) and its connection with organizational outcomes, there has been limited focus on understanding how organizational culture can impact employees' perceptions of employer support (Emerson, 2013). Thus, the hypothesis (H6) put forth for examination is as follows:

H6: The relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment is mediated by perceived organizational support (POS).

## **2.5. Mediating role employee engagement**

Employee engagement serves as a crucial strategy for retaining personnel within organizations (Kundu and Lata, 2017). Employee engagement encompasses the complete involvement of employees in their work, influencing the level of dedication they invest in their tasks. Engaged employees demonstrate their commitment through enthusiasm, creativity, and a focused approach to enhancing their performance in alignment with organizational objectives (Bhatt and Sharma, 2019). Engaged individuals contribute value to the organization through their expertise, skills, concern for stakeholders, and longer-term commitment to the organization (Concepcion, 2020). Engaged employees provide organizations with a competitive advantage, necessitating continuous efforts by organizations to keep them engaged in order to attain strategic objectives and generate significant business outcomes (Kundu and Lata, 2017). According to Milan (2023), the relation between employee engagement and employer commitment that, when effectively harnessed, can be a catalyst for improved performance and ultimately contribute to an organization's success. Therefore, successful organizations often identify employee engagement as a key driver in facilitating improvement, innovation, and retention (Collie et al., 2018).

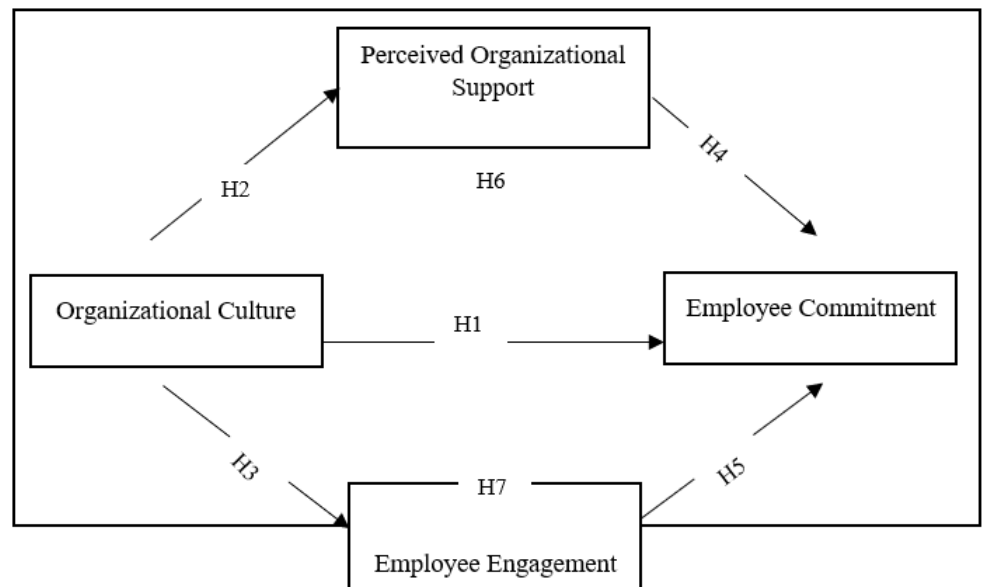
In the face of rising employee turnover, diminished job satisfaction, and escalating absenteeism worldwide, employee engagement is regarded as a strategic solution to enhance employee retention and bolster organizational effectiveness (Sahni, 2019). Employee engagement encompasses job-related attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, thereby predicting performance over attitudes (Mackay et al., 2017). According to DeSilva (2021), heightened employee engagement leads to increased productivity and organizational stability and success. Numerous studies have corroborated the positive and substantial correlation between employee engagement and employee commitment (Kundu and Lata, 2017; Sahni, 2019; Teo et al., 2020) investigated the correlation between employee engagement and employee commitment and observed a noteworthy and positive connection between employee engagement and organizational commitment in their study, which involved hospitality employees as the sample group. Another study conducted by Rameshkumar (2020) to determine the elements influencing employee engagement and its connection to the affective, continuance, and normative facets of organizational commitment among Indian ship officers. The study's findings revealed that there was no significant association between engagement and organizational commitment.

Although work engagement has been identified as a predictor of employee commitment (Hakanen et al., 2006), there is substantial evidence supporting its role

as a mediator in promoting positive work outcomes (Karatepe et al., 2018; Scrima et al., 2014). Employee engagement has been proven to be crucial for an organization’s growth and long-term sustainability (Concepcion, 2020). Teo et al. (2020) have revealed that engagement mediates the relationship between psychosocial work environment, perceived organizational support, and affective commitment. Yet, left unknown is the extent to which employee engagement mediates this relationship. In the context of the social exchange theory (SET), it seems that employee engagement plays a mediating role in fostering norms of reciprocity, resulting in a workforce that is better adjusted, more enthusiastic, and less alienated on an individual level (Biswas and Bhatnagar, 2013). Karatepe (2013) discovered that work engagement fully mediates the impact of HR practices on job performance and extra-role customer service in a study involving frontline hotel employees and their managers. Employee engagement serves as a mediator in the connection between a supportive work environment (encompassing factors like perceived climate, supervisory relationship, peer group interaction, and perceived organizational support) and employee retention (Kundu and Lata, 2017). Malinen et al. (2013) explored the mediating role of organizational engagement in the relationship between trust, procedural justice, withdrawal attitudes, and discovered that employees with higher levels of engagement are less inclined to leave the organization. Thus, proposed for testing, the hypothesis (H7) is stated as follows:

H7: The relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment is mediated by employee engagement.

Based on the above hypotheses development and supports, the subsequent conceptual model is formulated and presented at **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework.

### 3. Methodology

This paper employed an empirical research design, utilizing the questionnaire survey method to evaluate the research hypotheses.

### **3.1. Sample and data collection**

The primary focus of this study was on employees within the hotel industry. The research was conducted within the domain of Homa Hotel Group (HHG), with operations spanning across Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, and Bandar-Abbas. The study's participants encompassed 800 employees working across four branches of HHG hotels. These particular hotels were selected due to their frequent hosting of international guests representing diverse cultures. Out of the total 800 employees at HHG in Iran, a sample of 260 employees was selected for this study. To account for potential missing data and non-responses, the sample size was augmented by 30%, following the recommendation of Salkind (2006) for questionnaires. Consequently, the final sample size drawn from the population comprised 346 HHG employees after this 30% increase. Employing the convenience sampling method, a total of 283 questionnaires were gathered upon concluding the data collection phase. Therefore, twenty-nine questionnaires with missing data were omitted, resulting in a response rate of 82%.

### **3.2. Instruments**

Four different instruments were used to perform this study. The scale was translated into Farsi by a group of experts. Employee commitment was assessed using a 5-point Likert Scale consisting of eighteen items adapted from Hameli and Ordun (2022). A sample item is "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization". The Cronbach alpha value was 0.844. Employee engagement was evaluated using a 5-point Likert Scale comprising the 15-item Employee Engagement Scale (EES) developed by Shuck et al. (2017), which exhibited strong internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ). A sample item is "I am willing to put in extra effort without being asked". The perceived organizational support (POS) was operationalized with an eight-item scale adapted from George-Amiekumo (2022) and five items adopted from Hossin et al. (2021) using 7-point Likert Scale ranging from 1—Strongly disagree, 2—moderately disagree 3—Disagree; 4—Neither agree nor disagree; 5—Slightly agree; 6—Agree ; and 7—Strongly agree with high Cronbach alpha reliability (0.834). A sample item is "My organization considers my goals and values". Organizational culture was assessed using the questionnaire developed by Nidhan (2016). A sample item is "Offering moral support and help to employees and colleagues in crises". The instrument consists of forty items and is measured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1: Highly valued. 2: Fairly high valued. 3: Fairly low valued; 4: Very low valued. Finally, after distributing and collecting the questionnaires, data were analysed by the statistical software SPSS 26.

### **3.3. Analytic approach**

The conceptual framework of this study suggests that the relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment is mediated by perceived organizational support and employee engagement. To evaluate mediation, this study employed PROCESS (Model 4). This model is a statistical analysis technique developed by Hayes (2017). It is a software module that can be used in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to perform mediation analysis. For estimating direct and indirect effects in single and multiple mediator models, process

employs a route analytical approach that is based on either logistic regression or ordinary least squares (Abbu, 2017). The model employed in this study delineates two mediators situated causally between *X* and *Y*. As a result, a simple mediation model was employed to assess the sole mediation effect.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptive analysis

In this empirical study, a total of 283 questionnaires were gathered. Among the participants, 63% were male ( $n = 179$ ), while 37% were female ( $n = 104$ ). The majority of the participants (65%) fell within the 30–39 age group. Approximately 46% of respondents reported having 11–15 years of experience in the hotel industry, while 27% had over 15 years of experience in the hotel sector.

### 4.2. Correlation

The mean, standard deviation (SD), and correlation values are shown in **Table 1**. The correlation coefficients align with our expected directions and offer initial support for the hypotheses in our study.

**Table 1.** Mean, SD, and correlation.

Variables	Mean	SD	AVE	1	2	3	4
Employee Commitment	4.32	0.97	0.632	-			
Perceived Organizational Support	5.28	1.35	0.701	0.45**	-		
Employee Engagement	3.91	1.40	0.870	0.39*	0.27**	-	
Organizational Culture	4.39	0.79	0.790	0.56*	0.68*	0.33**	-

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

The results indicate that organizational culture has a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment ( $r = 0.56, p < 0.05$ ); organizational culture is positively significant with employee engagement ( $r = 0.33, p < 0.01$ ); perceived organizational support has a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment ( $r = 0.45, p < 0.01$ ); employee engagement is positively significant with employee commitment ( $r = 0.39, p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, there is positive and significant relationship between employee engagement perceived organizational support ( $r = 0.39, p < 0.05$ ).

### 4.3. Construct validity and reliability

The composite reliabilities (CR) for all the constructs in our study fall within the range of 0.72 to 0.85, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.632. Therefore, we have established convergent validity. Additionally, we have met the criteria for discriminant validity outlined by Fornell and Larcker (1981), as the AVE values for each construct in the study surpass their respective squared correlations.

### 4.4. Test for mediation

To conduct mediation tests, we assessed the hypothesized theoretical model,

which examines the impact of organizational culture on employee commitment, mediated through perceived organizational support and employee engagement. The mediation analysis was performed in a single step using the SPSS PROCESS Macro Model 4, employing a 95% confidence interval based on 5000 bootstrap samples. The results of the mediation analysis are detailed in **Table 2**.

The results indicate that when perceived organizational support is considered as the outcome variable, **Table 2** shows that organizational culture explains 44.91% of the variance in perceived organizational support. Additionally, there is a significant and positive interaction effect ( $\beta = 0.6624$ ) that underscores the significance of this relationship. With a  $p$ -value of  $p < 0.001$ , it is evident that organizational culture is an extremely significant predictor of perceived organizational support. This level of significance is reflected in the boundaries of the zone, which range from 0.5640 to 0.7608, reinforcing the substantial impact of organizational culture on perceived organizational support. Furthermore, according to **Table 2**, when employee engagement is taken as outcome variable,  $R^2$  value shows that 35.37% change in employee engagement can be attributed to organizational culture of which organizational culture is significant ( $\beta = 0.6624, p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 2.** Regression results for mediation.

<b>Outcome Variable POS</b>	R	R-sq	F	df1	df2	p
	0.6702	0.4491	176.0949	1.0000	216.000	0.0000
<b>Direct effect on POS OC</b>	$\beta$	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
	0.6624	0.0499	13.2701	0.0000	0.5640	0.7608
<b>Outcome Variable EE</b>	R	R-sq	F	df1	df2	p
	0.5947	0.3537	118.2133	1.0000	216.000	0.0000
<b>Direct effect on EE OC</b>	$\beta$	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
	0.5721	0.0526	10.8726	0.0000	0.4684	0.6758

The model further illustrates the direct effect of organizational culture, perceived organizational support and employee engagement on employee commitment.

The direct relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment, which is positive and significant (OC  $\rightarrow$  EC) ( $\beta = 0.372, t = 8.029, p < 0.001$ ) supported H1. Additionally, the results indicated that the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee commitment is significant (POS  $\rightarrow$  EC) ( $\beta = 0.385, t = 7.453, p < 0.05$ ), hence H4 is supported. However, H5 is also supported by the direct impact of employee engagement on employee commitment which is significant ( $\beta = 0.591, p < 0.001$ ). It is essential to investigate both the indirect and overall effects of organizational culture, perceived organizational support, and employee engagement on employee commitment because the coefficient serves as the primary predictor of mediation.

This study assessed the mediating role of perceived organizational support and employee engagement on the relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment. As indicated in **Table 3**, the results revealed a significant indirect impact of organizational culture on employee commitment through perceived organizational support ( $\beta = 0.351, t = 3.392$ ), supporting H6. The study also found a significant indirect effect of impact of organizational culture on employee commitment through employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.181, t = 2.715$ ), supporting H7.

Furthermore, the direct effect of organizational culture on employee commitment in the presence of the mediators was also found significant ( $\beta = 0.311, p < 0.001$ ). Hence, both perceived organizational support and employee engagement partially mediated the relationship between organizational culture on employee commitment.

**Table 3.** Direct, indirect and total effects between organizational culture, perceived organizational support and employee engagement on employee commitment.

Outcome variable EC	$\beta$	SE	t-value	P-value	LLCI	ULCI
OC	0.372	0.046	11.455	0.0000	0.594	0.687
POS	0.385	0.068	7.453	0.0000	0.295	0.401
EE	0.591	0.454	6.951	0.0000	0.370	0.389
Indirect effect on EC OC→ POS→EC	Effect 0.351	BootSE 0.080	Significance Sig		BootLLCI 0.228	BootULCI 0.478
Indirect effect on EC OC→ EE→EC	Effect 0.181	BootSE 0.044	Significance Sig		BootLLCI 0.412	BootULCI 0.522
Total effect of OC on EC Total effect	Effect 0.311	SE 0.153	t-value 2.034	P-value 0.000	LLCI 0.0097	ULCI 0.6132

Notes: EC: Employee Commitment, POS: Perceived Organizational Support, EE: Employee Engagement, OC: Organizational Culture. Level of significance: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ . Bootstrapped standard errors and 95% confidence are based on 5000 replicates.

### 5. Findings and discussion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the impact of organizational culture on employee commitment and gain a deeper understanding of the intricate mediation processes involved. In line with Hypothesis 1, the findings revealed a positive correlation between organizational culture and employee commitment. Our result supported the findings of Nikpour (2017) and Carvalho et al. (2018). As indicated by Dwivedi et al. (2014), a more favourable organizational culture, which fulfils individuals’ higher-order needs, tends to result in a higher level of employee commitment. Another study supporting these conclusions is the research conducted by Raharjo and Achmad Rinaldo Fernandes (2018). This study suggests that to improve a company’s internal culture, it should actively manage external relationships and engage in a wider range of activities. This might mean bringing in expertise from different fields that the company currently lacks. Further, a healthy organizational culture is a vital prerequisite for the sustained and successful operation of an organization. Organizations must grasp the principles of cultivating and preserving a robust organizational culture (Gulua, 2018).

Recent studies by other researchers have explored various aspects of organizational culture types and their connection to employee engagement (Jais and Suat, 2022; Paro and Gerolamo, 2017). In a closely related study, Lee et al. (2017) illustrated how an empowering leadership culture can influence employee engagement over time. According to Kalia and Verma (2017), the hospitality industry must implement measures that foster a highly engaged organizational culture. This will not only benefit individual organizations but also have a positive impact on the industry as a whole. Despite the existing literature that underscores the significance of employee engagement and culture types for organizational success, there remained a gap in the literature concerning the specific relationships between different levels of

organizational culture and employee engagement (Plett, 2019). This study successfully addressed a well-defined requirement for further research into workplace cultures, examining how they either promote or hinder employee engagement.

The data revealed a significant relationship between organizational culture and perceived organizational support. Organizational culture can influence how employees perceive the level of support they can expect from the organization, and this perception can significantly impact their inclination to stay with or leave the organization (Emerson, 2013). This study contributes to the existing research by investigating how employees at luxury hotels in Iran perceive organizational culture and cultural changes within their organizations. POS partly depends on the employee's perception that the organization cares about their well-being, so it must satisfy the employee's emotional needs and the distinct, tangible needs it fills, such as benefits and pay. Employees' POS will increase if these basic needs are met, increasing their commitment to the company (Notari, 2023). Therefore, the researcher argues that when employees experience support and satisfaction, they are less likely to consider leaving the organization voluntarily. Supported employees believe they have the necessary resources for success, the approval of their supervisors, and are motivated by the expectation of fair compensation for their contributions. Employees who feel supported and satisfied tend to feel secure in their current roles and have minimal motivation to explore other employment opportunities.

H6 and H7 proposed that perceived organizational support and employee engagement mediate the relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment. To assess the mediating effect, regression analyses were conducted using the PROCESS macro. Through 5000 bootstrap samples, analyses revealed a significant partial mediation effect involving employee engagement and perceived organizational support. These findings are consistent with previous research (George-Amiekumo, 2022; Hashemiamin and Ramezani, 2022; Proby, 2022). Wiguna and Augustine (2022) proposed that the engagement between employees and the organization should be addressed from both physical and psychological perspectives. Therefore, employee engagement is critical to building a productive workforce committed to organizational excellence (Milan, 2023). Further, according to Côté et al. (2021), when employees feel a strong level of support from their organization, they feel that they are being supported and understood. Consequently, they have confidence that their managers and/or the overall work environment can be more accommodating and responsive in addressing perceived challenges. These findings align with existing literature and validate the commonly held belief that employees who feel supported tend to have higher job satisfaction.

## **6. Future research directions**

The exploration of cultural influences and the social environment of the working space has emerged as a pivotal theme in understanding the dynamics of organizational behavior, particularly within the context of developing countries (Gargantini et al., 2022). These nations, characterized by their rich cultural heritage and complex social fabric, offer a unique backdrop against which the interaction between work culture and social environment can be studied. Future research should endeavor to delve

deeper into how traditional values, cultural norms, and social expectations shape the working environment in these contexts. This exploration is not only crucial for developing a nuanced understanding of workplace dynamics but also for designing interventions that are culturally sensitive and effective in enhancing employee well-being and productivity.

Moreover, the impact of rapid globalization and technological advancements on the traditional workspaces of developing countries presents an additional layer of complexity. As these countries navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, the evolving work culture and its interplay with local traditions and social norms merit thorough investigation. Future studies could focus on longitudinal analyses to capture the transitions and transformations within the working spaces, assessing how these changes influence social interactions, employee satisfaction, and overall organizational culture. Such research endeavors will not only contribute to the academic discourse but also offer practical insights for policymakers, organizational leaders, and HR practitioners aiming to foster inclusive, respectful, and productive work environments that honor cultural identities and promote social cohesion.

## **7. Conclusions**

In conclusion previous studies examined the relationship between organizational culture and employee commitment, they did not include perceived organizational support and employee engagement as a mediator. This study addresses the issue of employers lacking a comprehensive understanding of the mediating role of POS (George-Amiekumo, 2022). To investigate this matter, a quantitative research approach was employed, involving a survey of full-time employees working in Iranian luxury hotels that provides a clear and comprehensive picture of the relationship between organizational culture, perceived organizational support, employee engagement and commitment. The practical findings offer empirical support for the principles of social exchange theory, which forms the basis for understanding the connections between these relationships.

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