

The mediating role of Employee's job Satisfaction on the relationship between Organizational Culture and Employee Engagement among Academic Staff (Nigerian Universities)

Name: OGUN BABATUNDE SAMSIDEEN, Dr. VALLIAPPAN RAJU,
IMRAN IBRAHIM, A.

Student number: 110055821

POST GRADUATE CENTER LIKOKWING UNIVERISTY, JALAN
TECHONOKRAT, CYBERJAYA, MALAYSIA. YEAR 2021

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating role of employee's job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement. The constructs utilized in this study are conceptualized from three different theories namely: Cameron and Quinn CVF model (1999), Job demands-resources theory and Social exchange theory. The target population for this study is the academic staff of Nigerian universities. The study utilizes positivism paradigm and collects primary data using survey questionnaire. Purposive sampling technique is adopted in the study. Eight direct and two indirect hypotheses will be tested in the study as shown on the conceptual framework. Data analysis is conducted using the PLS-SEM statistical tool. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the research on organizational culture and employee engagement. The study has practical implications for the Nigerian universities in terms of job satisfaction and engagement of their academic staff. The study contributes theoretically by building a conceptual framework that incorporates three theories.

Key words: Clan culture, Adhocracy culture, Market culture, Hierarchy culture, employee engagement and job satisfaction.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Organizational culture plays an important role in the overall behavior of people including those charged with governance and staff members of an organization. Researchers and theorists have put forward several theories and models of organizational culture and recent empirical studies have shown that a particular culture imbibed by a company could positively or negatively impact on employee's job satisfaction and motivation albeit from different contexts (e.g. Lin and Huang, 2020; Park and Doo, 2020; Soomro and Shah, 2019; Tran, 2020; Siddique et al., 2020, etc.) Extant empirical studies have also shown that organizational culture could impact positively or negatively on employee engagement (e.g. Mohanty and Arunprasad, 2020; Ababneh, 2020; Sharafizad et al., 2019; Bhardwaj and Kalia, 2021; Shaik et al., 2019, etc.)

Organisational culture includes “the range of values, norms and conventions that influence the way subordinates think, behave and act in an organisation” (Schein, 2009). The term organisational culture has also been defined as “an anthropological hallmark in a sense that it is a general pattern of all the dynamic interactions between an organization's psychological and social elements” (Ababneh, 2020). Several theorists had published several dimensions of organisational culture (e.g. Schein's determinants of organizational culture, Handy's four cultural stereotypes, Hofstede's international perspective on culture, etc.). Culture can also be investigated through the model put forward by Cameron and Quinn (2011), called the competing values framework (CVF). This framework includes two axes, stability versus flexibility and internal versus external factors. These two axes identify four types of organisational culture, including the clan, market, adhocracy and hierarchy cultures (Cameron and Quinn, 2011).

Employee engagement has been acknowledged to be directly related to organizational success (Shaik et al., 2020). The realization that a motivated, competent and resourceful workforce can drive the business across any business instability and challenges thrown by

market conditions has not been lost on thought leaders of the organizations (Mohanty and Arunprasad, 2020). These leaders realize that, when employees are engaged at work it results in higher innovation, and efficiency with lower expenditure for recruiting and retaining in today's competitive markets (Parent and Lovelace, 2018). A previous study by Ababneh et al. (2015) operationalized employee engagement to include the following five interrelated dimensions: task performance, active and positive emotions, absorption, dedication and goal identification.

1.2 Research background

Evidence has shown that employee organizational engagement has benefits for both employees and their organizations and has encouraged its promotion with appropriate strategies (Siddique et al., 2020). Tarba et al. (2019) opined that “the well-being of an employee is strongly linked to the organisation's culture when it is strongly amalgamated and dependent on enriched values and faith.” It can be said that the employee is satisfied, as their perception is in line with the organisational culture of their organisation (Tran, 2020). Empirical evidence has shown that employee engagement significantly impact job performance positively (Tensay and Singh, 2020). A high level of engagement among employees leads to a positive evaluation of task and contextual performance of employees. Zainol et al. (2016), in their study found significant positive relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment, motivation, morale, and performance. Prasongthan and Suveatwatanakul (2017) in their study opined that there exists a significant powerful relationship between perceived organizational support and optimism and job performance through higher employee engagement.

Researchers have found that many institutions of higher learning face high employee turnover due to poor organizational culture (e.g. Lin and Huang, 2020; Park and Doo, 2020; Soomro and Shah, 2019), lack of employee engagement and employee dissatisfaction (e.g. Sharafizad et al., 2019; Bhardwaj and Kalia, 2021; Shaik et al., 2019). These studies have cited poor human resource management (HRM) practices such as inequitable compensation structure, lack of proper supervision and evaluation absence of proper training and development, lack of job autonomy, etc. as well as psychological factors such as job dissatisfaction and lack of organizational commitment (Sabiou et al., 2016) as the reasons behind employee turnover. For instance, if academic staff member experiences lack of

adequate job satisfaction, then his or commitment to work and the university becomes weak and fragile and finally, he or she tends to quit the job to have better opportunities in another higher institution of learning (Chan and Ao, 2018; Sabiu et al., 2016).

1.3 Problem statement

At a time of change and transformation within the institutions of higher learning due to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic, employee well-being is especially important for individuals in the institutions of higher learning as well as for the university as a whole due to its numerous potential benefits (Samad et al., 2021). Efficient and competent employees are the most critical “assets” in any organization and engagement and empowerment have emerged as an effective mechanism to overcome weaknesses associated with traditional management styles and stereotypical organizational structures and cultures and to widen employees’ responsibilities in modern organizations (Aldaihani, 2019).

Nigerian higher institutions of learning have faced numerous problems in the last decade including underfunding, lack of latest technology advancement in education, cultism among students, face-off between government and academic staff unions, high academic staff turnover, brain drain, incessant strikes to mention but few. Since 1999, successive Nigerian governments have struggled to meet the demands of university union workers to strengthen the country’s fragile education system. Evidence showed that Nigerian lecturers had gone on strike 15 times since 1999. The entire period they embarked on such strike spanned about 50 months. This represents about one-fifth, or 20% of the number of years since 1999 when democracy was enshrined in Nigeria. This means that for every five years since 1999, Nigerian universities spent one on strike (Salako, 2021).

During the Olusegun Obasanjo administration, academic workers went on strike for a cumulative period of about 18 months, approximately 19% of his eight-year reign. His successor, the late Umaru Yar’Adua administration’s saw about four months and a week of strike over three-year span. During Goodluck Jonathan’s administration, the length of the strike in the universities reached 13 months, which is 22% of his years in office. So far, under Muhammadu Buhari, Nigerian universities have been shut for a total of 12 months and counting (or 18% of his five-and-a-half-year tenure). The incessant face-off between the federal government and the striking academic union workers have been situated around the

context of poor funding of the education sector and lackadaisical attitude of the government to implement negotiated agreements with the academic staff union (Yusuf, 2020).

The problems above have led to poor ranking of Nigerian universities among the global citadel of learning. According to the National University Commission (NUC), which oversees the administration of Nigerian University education operating in Nigeria, there are 165 universities in Nigeria. This is made up of 43 federal universities, 47 state universities and 75 private universities. In addition to universities, there are a large number of polytechnics and colleges under the purview of the National Board of Technical Education (NBTE), and currently there are 28 federal polytechnics, 43 state polytechnics, 51 private polytechnics, 27 accredited specialized institutions, 34 colleges of agriculture, 38 colleges of health science and technology. In the recently released 2021 best Global Universities in Africa, only university of Ibadan made it to top 10 having being ranked 8th. University of Cape Town in South Africa topped the ranking at number 1.

1.4 Research significance

This study is significant from both theoretical and practical contributions. The study combined three theories namely Cameron and Quinn CVF model, Job-demands resource theory and social exchange theory. The Findings of the study will contribute to the development of cultural and employee engagement values among the universities in Nigeria which should in turn improve employee job satisfaction. There have been research on organizational culture and employee job satisfaction from Nigerian context; however, there is dearth of research on employee engagement from Nigerian context especially among the higher institutions of learning. In other words, employee engagement research, is relatively embryonic in Nigerian context. This study intends to fill the obvious gap in literature in this regard.

1.5 Research questions

RQ1: To what extent does organizational culture in Nigerian universities impact of academic staff's job satisfaction?

RQ2: To what extent does organizational culture in Nigerian universities impact of academic staff's engagement?

RQ3: To what extent does employee engagement impact of job satisfaction among Nigerian universities?

RQ4: What is the mediating role of employee job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement among Nigerian universities?

1.6 Research objectives

The main aim of this study is to investigate the mediating role of employee job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement among Nigerian universities. The objectives are in fourfold.

1. To investigate the relationship between organizational culture in Nigerian universities and academic staff's job satisfaction.
2. To investigate the relationship between organizational culture in Nigerian universities and employee engagement.
3. To investigate the relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction among Nigerian universities.
4. To investigate the mediating role of employee job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement among Nigerian universities.

1.7 Thesis structure

There are five chapters in this study. The first is the introduction, the second is the literature review, the third is the research methodology, the fourth is the research analysis and the fifth and the last is the conclusions and recommendations. These chapters have different sub-sections.

Chapter Two

2.1 Definitions of key terms

2.1.1 Organizational culture

Organizational culture has been defined in so many ways that many scholars believe that there is no universally acceptable definition of culture. According to Dobni (2008) and Miron et al. (2004) organizational culture can be defined as “a framework of shared values and beliefs for employees at all levels of the organization that are reflected in its characteristics.” In their definition, Tellis (2012) and Tellis et al. (2009) opined that organizational culture as “a basic set of approaches and practices shared by members of the organization and claim that a culture that fosters innovation will assist the business to stay ahead in the long term.”

2.1.2 Employee engagement

Employee engagement is defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) as “a positive and fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption.” Macey and Schneider (2008) in their definition described employee engagement as “a desirable condition with organisational purpose comprising involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, focussed effort and energy.” Macey and Schneider (2008)’s definition implied that employee engagement covers attitudinal and behavioural components. Recent definition by Eldor and Harpaz (2016) suggested that employee engagement is “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person’s preferred self in task behaviours that promote connections to work of personal presence – physically, cognitively and emotionally.”

2.1.3 Employee’s job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as “the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs” (Spector, 1997, pp. 97). A conceptual definition of job satisfaction was first provided by Robert Hoppock in 1935 as to be “a combination of a person’s psychological, physical and environmental events from the job to obtain satisfaction” (Hambuda, 2017). Another definition by Edgar and Geare (2005) defined job

satisfaction as “the combination of the worker’s emotional and cognitive reactions it gets from the difference between what they already receive and what they want.”

2.2 Theoretical background

There are three underpinning theories in this study namely: Cameron and Quinn CVF culture model, JDR theory and social exchange theory.

2.2.1 Cameron and Quinn CVF cultural model

Cameron and Quinn’s (1999) theory of culture typologies is used to conceptualized organizational culture in this study. Yu and Wu (2009) argued that the CVF model was extensively used and had a wide range of implications in various contexts. This study analyzes CVF model typologies that enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction among academic staff of Nigerian universities. Cameron and Quinn (1999) introduced the model of CVF as shown on Figure 2.1 below. Cameron and Quinn presented four types of organizational culture in the CVF model, which are adhocracy, hierarchy, clan and market culture, and two dimensions such as “external focus versus internal focus” and “flexibility and discretion versus stability and control.”

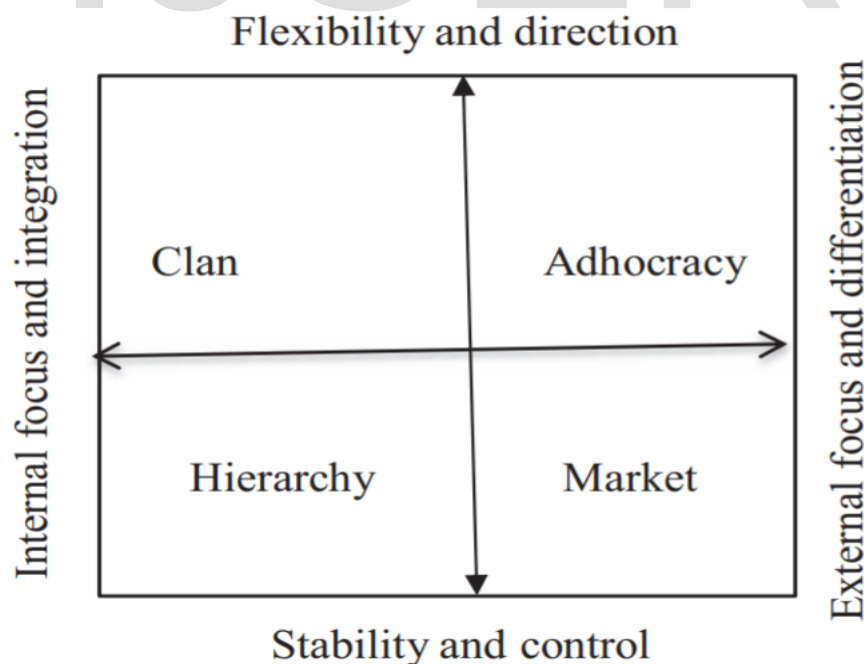


Figure 2.1: Cameron and Quinn CVF cultural model: Source: Cameron and Quinn (1999)

2.2.2 JD-R theory

In the JD-R framework, JD refers to the psychological, physical, social, and organizational aspects of the job that require employees' skills and effort (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The JD-R framework postulates that employees are likely to utilize JR to reduce the intensification of JD (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Having job autonomy also allows employees to manage the pace, flow, and approaches in performing their tasks. Therefore, inadequate level of JR may lead to employee disengagement, whereas an increase in JD may result in burnout (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Teo et al., 2021). The variables of this theory are conceptualized to measure the job satisfaction of academic staff among Nigerian universities.

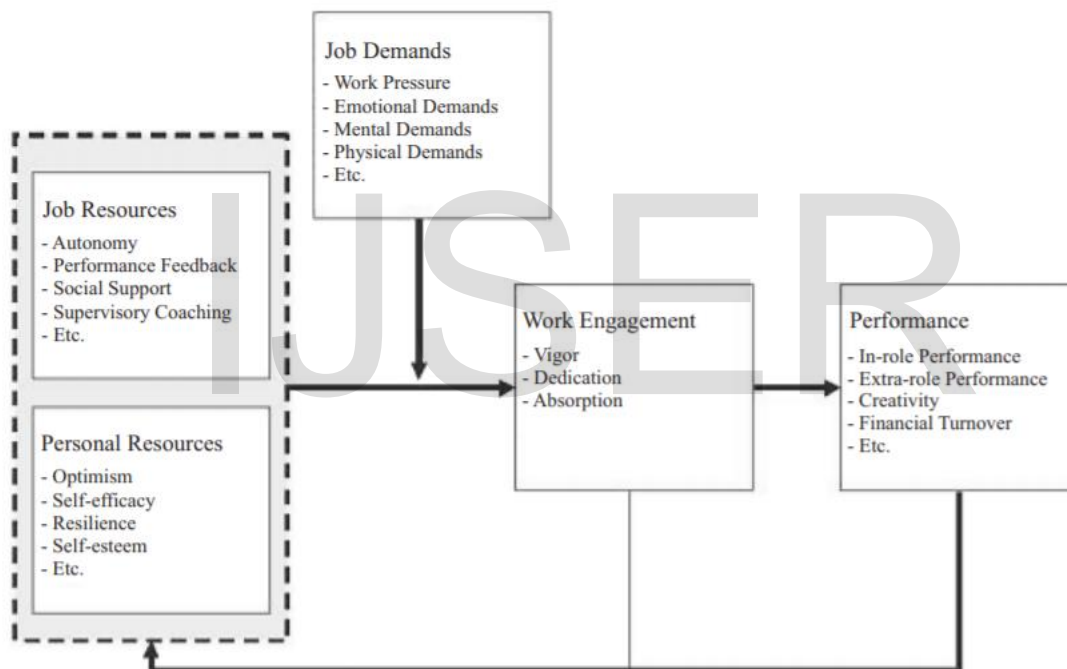


Figure 2.2: Employee work engagement theoretical model by Bakker and Demmeroti (2008).

2.2.3 Social exchange theory

The social exchange theory is one of the most prominent theories in the organizational behavior literature, making it one of the most researched, validated and influential theories in the field (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Zoller and Muldoon, 2019). According to Blau (1964, p. 91), social exchange “[...] refers to voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from

others.” The principle of exchange assumes the actions of one party prompt reciprocal actions by the other party involved in the exchange. In such interdependent relationships, the exchange behaviors between two parties follow a norm of reciprocity (Wang and Koerber, 2020). Intrinsically, the social norm of reciprocity is the expectation that people will respond to kindness from other actors with similar benevolence of their own. SET argues that social actors in exchange relationships can be individuals and organizations (Wang and Koerber, 2020). Researchers such as Ababneh et al. (2015) have applied this theory to operationalize employee engagement to include the following five interrelated dimensions: task performance, active and positive emotions, absorption, dedication and goal identification.

2.3 Relationship between OC and EE

Few researchers have investigated the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement albeit from different contexts such as hospitality industry (e.g. Ababneh, 2020; Bhardwaj and Kalia, 2021), public organizational setting or multinational companies (e.g. Gabel-Shemueli et al., 2019; Uhunoma et al., 2020; Afsar et al., 2020), healthcare (e.g. Gupta et al., 2018), however, studies investigating the CVF model classification of culture i.e. clan culture, adhocracy culture, and market culture and hierarchy culture and employee engagement are still in their infancy. Ababneh (2020) applied the CVF model classification of culture (only adhocracy culture and hierarchy culture) as shown on Figure 2.3 below. The findings show that both cultural types significantly impacted employee engagement.

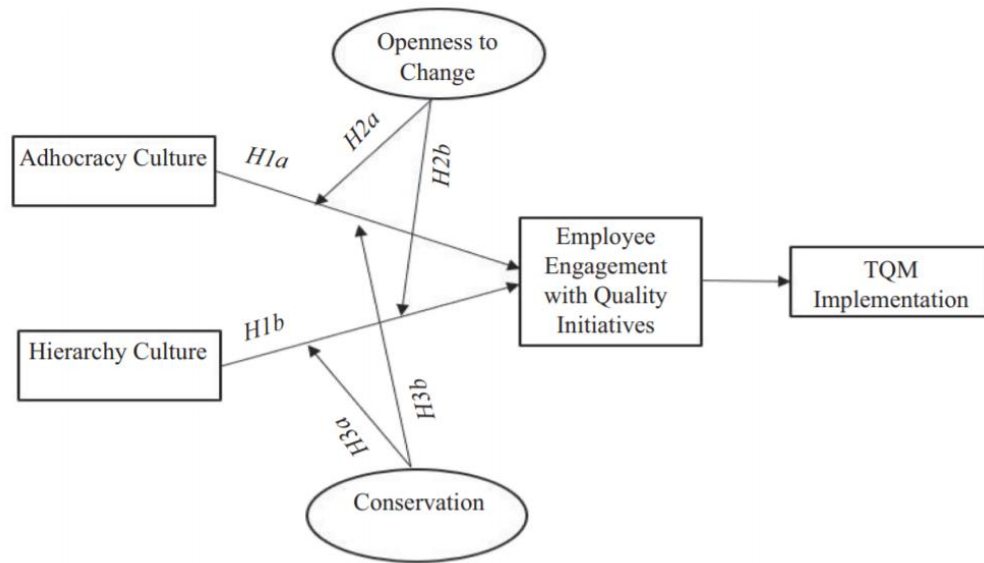


Figure 2.3: Conceptual model: Source: Ababneh (2020)

2.4 Relationship between OC and EJS

Researchers have investigated the relationship between clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture and hierarchy culture and employee's job satisfaction albeit from different contexts such as organizational sectors (e.g. Tran, 2020), cross-sectional data (e.g. Soomro and Shah, 2019), telecommunications industry (e.g. Lin and Huang, 2020), Korean Women Manager Panel (e.g. Park and Doo, 2020) and United Arab Emirates (Siddique et al., 2020). The conceptual model of the study by Bianchi et al. (2021) is shown on Figure 2.4 below. The findings of the studies proved that organizational culture significantly related to the employee's job satisfaction. The perception of employees about the dimensions of clan and adhocracy of organisational culture influences employee's job satisfaction and propensity to innovate but the impact of perceived market culture and hierarchical culture on EJS did not show significance.

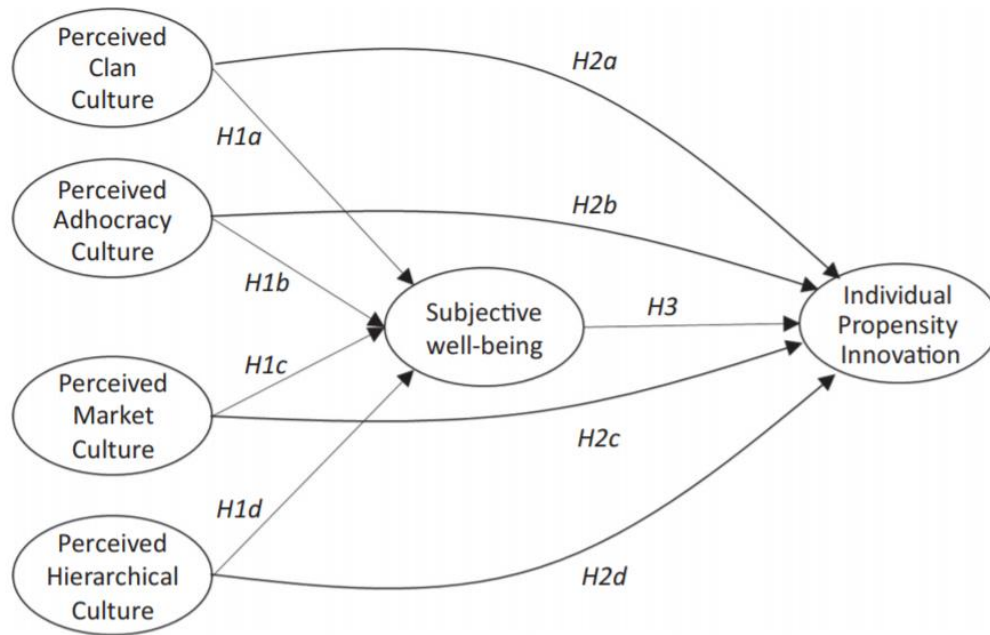


Figure 2.4: Conceptual model: Source: Bianchi et al. (2021)

2.5 Relationship between EE and EJS

Researchers have investigated the relationship between employee engagement and employee's job satisfaction albeit from different contexts such as business process outsourcing (e.g. Kaur et al., 2020), retail industry (e.g. Suhartanto and Brien, 2018), IT industry (e.g. Sihag, 2020). The conceptual model of the study by Kaur et al. (2020) is shown on Figure 2.5 below. The studies suggested that employee engagement has a significant positive relationship with employee's job satisfaction. In other words, an engaged employee will be more satisfied and this in turn will lead to better performance for the organisation.

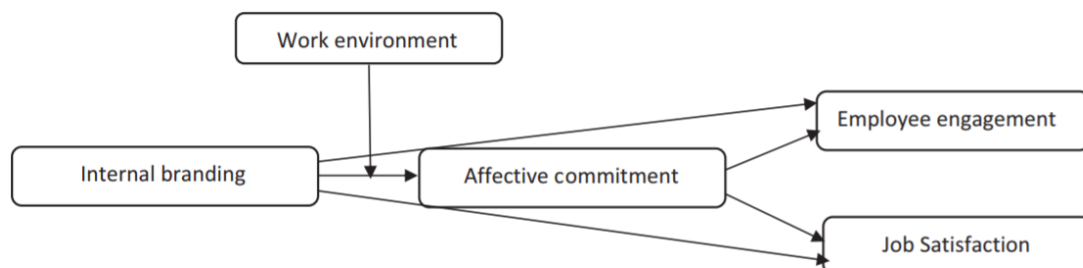


Figure 2.5: Conceptual model: Source: Kaur et al. (2020)

2.6 Mediating role of EJS on the relationship between OC and EE

Few researchers have investigated the mediating role of employee's job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement. Empirical studies by Al-Romeedy (2019), Ahmat et al. (2019) and Wirawan et al. (2020) found significant mediating role of employee's job satisfaction on several organization's behavior patterns including motivation, organizational commitment, job involvement, job burnout, work engagement, effect of authentic leadership on work engagementt and employee's performance, employee work motivation and employee turnover intention. The conceptual model of the study by Wirawan et al. (2020) is shown on Figure 2.6 below.



Figure 2.6: Conceptual model: Source: Wirawan et al. (2020)

2.7 Research gap and contribution

To be best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has combined the three variables used in this study in the same context. The study combined three theories namely Cameron and Quinn CVF model, Job-demands resource theory and social exchange theory. There have been research on organizational culture and employee job satisfaction from Nigerian context; however, there is dearth of research on employee engagement from Nigerian context especially among the higher institutions of learning. In other words, employee engagement

research is relatively embryonic in Nigerian context. Again, research investigating the mediating role of employee's job satisfaction on the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement is very scarce. This study intends to fill the obvious gap in literature in this regard.

2.8 Conceptual framework

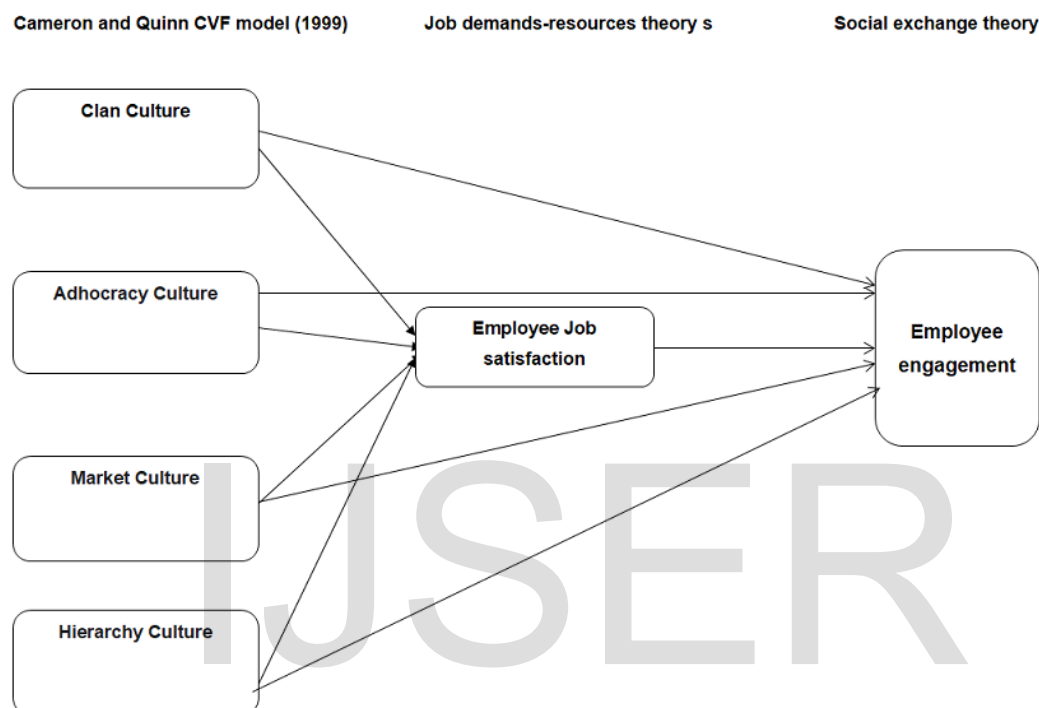


Figure 2.7: Conceptual model

2.9 Hypotheses development

S/N	Hypotheses statements
H1	There is a significant relationship between CC and EE
H2	There is a significant relationship between AC and EE
H3	There is a significant relationship between MC and EE
H4	There is a significant relationship between HC and EE
H5	There is a significant relationship between CC and EJS
H6	There is a significant relationship between AC and EJS
H7	There is a significant relationship between MC and EJS

H8	There is a significant relationship between HC and EJS
H9	There is a significant relationship between EJS and EE
H10	There is a mediating role of EJS on the relationship between OC and EE

Table 2.1: Hypotheses statements

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Chapter Three

3.1 Research paradigm

This study utilizes positivism research paradigm because of its suitability for quantitative research and hypothesis testing. Positivism research paradigm relies on the

hypothetical-deductive method to verify a priori hypotheses that are often stated quantitatively, where functional relationships can be derived between causal and explanatory factors (independent variables) and outcomes (dependent variables) (Chua 2019). A primary goal of positivist inquiry is to generate explanatory associations or causal relationships that ultimately lead to prediction and control of the phenomena in question (O'Connell et al., 2020).

3.2 Research design

This study utilizes explanatory research design because it aims to identify the causes and effects of organizational culture and employee engagement. Researchers often aim to explain why particular phenomena work in the way that they do. Research that answers “why” questions is referred to as explanatory research design (Murray and Cunningham, 2011). In this case, the researcher is trying to identify the causes and effects of whatever phenomenon they are studying (Hair et al., 2017). In this study, the researcher is seeking to understand why certain culture promotes employee engagement better than the others and why are the likely effects of well engaged or disengaged employees?

3.3 Data collection

Primary data will be used in this study. Data will be collected via survey questionnaire directly by the researcher. With the current on-going Covid-19 pandemic and the movement restrictions it has caused, the questionnaire will be distributed via emails. A primary data source is an original data source, that is, one in which the data are collected first-hand by the researcher for a specific research purpose or project. Primary data can be collected in a number of ways. However, the most common techniques are self-administered surveys, interviews, field observation, and experiments.

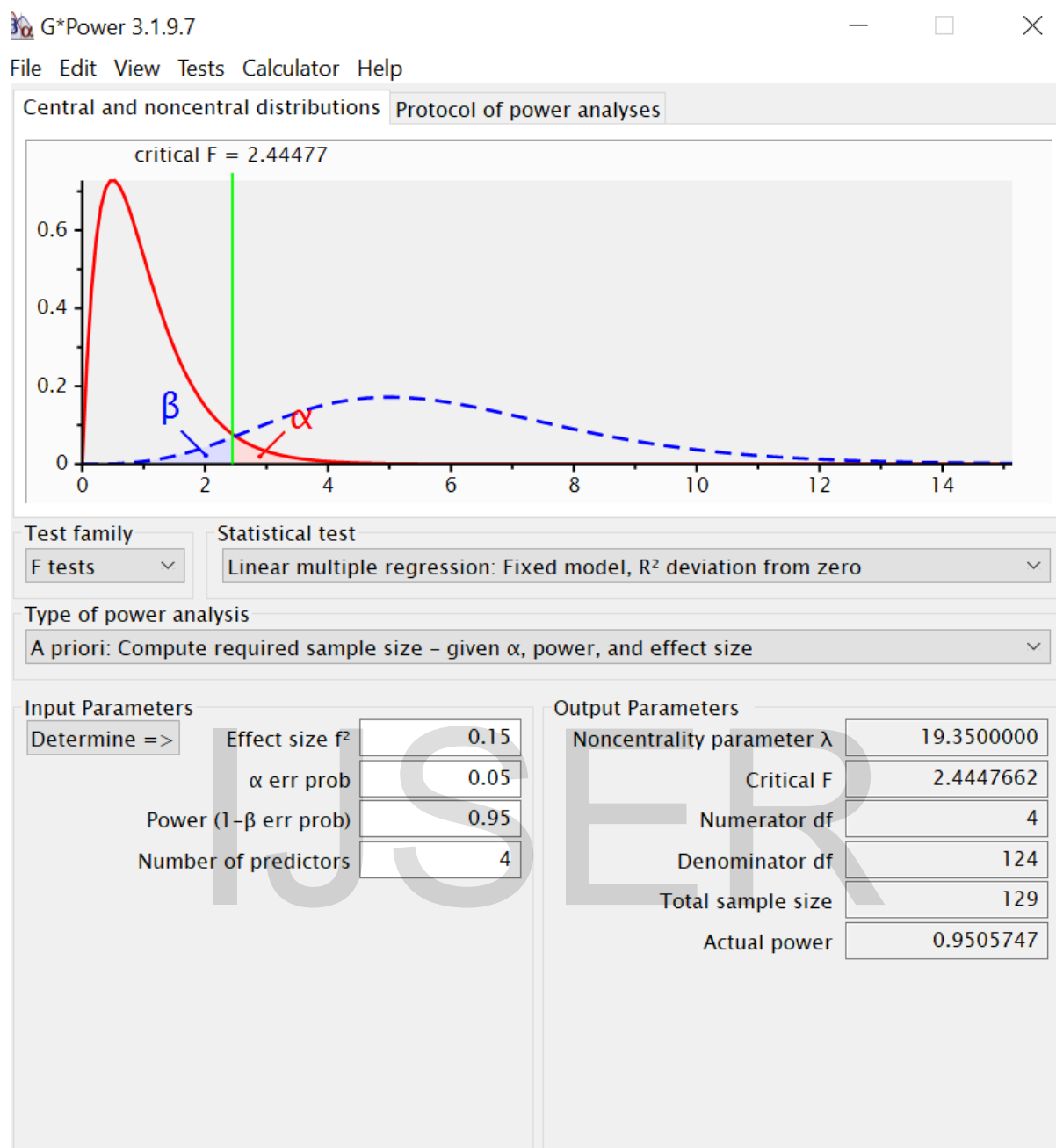
3.4 Population and sampling technique

The population for this study is the Nigerian academic staff. Non-probability sampling technique will be utilized. Purposive sampling technique is adopted. According to the National University Commission (NUC), which oversees the administration of Nigerian University education operating in Nigeria, there are 165 universities in Nigeria. This is made up of 43 federal universities, 47 state universities and 75 private universities. In addition to

universities, there are a large number of polytechnics and colleges under the purview of the National Board of Technical Education (NBTE), and currently there are 28 federal polytechnics, 43 state polytechnics, 51 private polytechnics, 27 accredited specialized institutions, 34 colleges of agriculture, 38 colleges of health science and technology.

Academic staff must have spent at least 3 years in the university to be eligible for this study. A purposive sampling technique is referred to as a judgmental or expert sample and it is a type of nonprobability sample. The main objective of a purposive sample is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. This is often accomplished by applying expert knowledge of the population to select in a non-random manner a sample of elements that represents a cross-section of the population. Using the power analyses ($1-\beta = 95\%$), the minimum sample size required with four independent variables (maximum number of arrows pointing at a construct) is 129 at 0.05. However, the total respondents are 194 representing over 50% more than the minimum expected sample size (Hair et al., 2017).

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3.5 Research instrument

The survey questionnaire has four sections namely the demographic section, independent variables section, mediating variable section and dependent variable section.

Variable	Questions	Sources
Clan culture	1. My university encourages cohesiveness and participation among the workforce.	Kumar et al., 2018

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. My university is very personal place just like an extended family where people share a lot of themselves. 	
Adhocracy culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My university is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place with risks taking being encouraged. 2. My university encourages creativity and adaptability among staff members. 	Kumar et al., 2018
Hierarchy culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My university is very formalised and structured place where established procedures generally govern what people do. 2. Uniformity is encouraged in my university and a strict reporting system is implemented. 	Kumar et al., 2018
Market culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My university is very production oriented and valued competitiveness where measurable goals are important. 2. The university is majorly concern with goal achievement without much personal involvement. 	Kumar et al., 2018
Employee job satisfaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am satisfied with my current job and university. 2. I am satisfied with my work environment including my relationship with my colleagues in my university. 	Kumar et al., 2018
Employee engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My university regularly provides training and 	Ismail et al., 2019

	development programmes to engage the employees	
	2. My university regularly sponsors external training and development programmes for employees	
	3. I regularly receive compensation adequate for my job output	
	4. My university usually organises events to recognise employees that are excelling in their roles	

3.6 Data analysis plan

Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling will be adopted in this study. PLS-SEM statistical tool will be used to analyse the numerical data. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a tool that is used to confirm or reject the measurement theory (Hair et al., 2017). Structural equation modelling (SEM) is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyse structural relationships (Hair et al., 2017). SEM combines factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, and it is used to analyse the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs (Hair et al., 2017).

3.7 Recommendations

This study has both practical and future research scope recommendations. University education in Nigeria has weathered several storms and it is pertinent that those charged with governance in these institutions as well as other key stakeholders should devise a means to solve the many challenges facing the sector. This study identifies the most suitable culture that could create job satisfaction and encourage adequate and effective engagement of academic staff in Nigerian universities. Future research may look into other theories of organizational culture or could look into cross-cultural study by comparing Nigerian

universities with other neighbouring country such as Ghana. Geert Hofstede national cultural model could play a role in this regard. Other studies may consider a comparative analysis between public and private universities within Nigeria.

3.8 Conclusions

This is a quantitative research based on Nigerian universities. The unit of analysis is the individual academic staff in these institutions. There is a dearth of research on employee engagement in the context of Nigeria; therefore, this study plays a significant role in bridging the research gaps from both practical and theoretical perspectives. There has been a brain drain among the academics in Nigeria as a result of what many tagged as rigid culture and lack of employee engagement in these institutions especially among the public universities. Data for this study will be collected via self-administered questionnaire to be mailed to the academic staff. The data will be analysed using the PLS-SEM statistical software.

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