

Human Resource Management Strategy, Work Environment, Organizational Culture, and Employee Work Motivation: Evidence from PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, Lampung Province

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of human resource management (HRM) strategy and the work environment on employee work motivation, with organizational culture positioned as an intervening variable, in PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, Lampung Province. Design/methodology/approach: An explanatory quantitative survey design was employed. Data were collected from 82 employees using a structured questionnaire with five-point Likert-type responses. The conceptual model was tested using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. Findings: The work environment had a positive and significant effect on organizational culture ($\beta = 0.507$, $t = 3.534$, $p < 0.001$) and employee work motivation ($\beta = 0.545$, $t = 3.695$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, HRM strategy did not significantly affect organizational culture ($\beta = 0.124$, $t = 0.795$, $p = 0.427$) or work motivation ($\beta = 0.026$, $t = 0.201$, $p = 0.841$). Organizational culture also did not significantly affect work motivation ($\beta = 0.131$, $t = 0.850$, $p = 0.396$). The model explained 36.4% of the variance in organizational culture and 42.4% of the variance in work motivation. Originality/value: The findings indicate that the immediate work environment is a more salient driver of employee motivation than formal HRM strategy in the studied organizational context. The study contributes to HRM and organizational behavior literature by showing that organizational culture does not automatically translate HRM strategy or workplace conditions into motivation unless employees experience the culture as behaviorally meaningful in daily work.

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Keywords: human resource management strategy; work environment; organizational culture; employee work motivation; PLS-SEM; plantation organization

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a strategic organizational resource because employees convert plans, physical assets, technology, and managerial systems into operational performance. Strategic HRM theory argues that human resource policies create value when they are aligned with organizational goals and when they develop employee ability, motivation, and opportunity to contribute (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Jiang et al., 2012). From the resource-based view, people-based capabilities can become a source of sustainable advantage when they are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and effectively organized (Barney, 1991).

In labor-intensive and geographically dispersed organizations such as plantation enterprises, employee motivation is not shaped only by formal HRM policies. It is also

influenced by everyday working conditions, including facilities, safety, interpersonal relations, communication, leadership support, and physical comfort. Work design and job demands-resources perspectives emphasize that job resources in the work environment support engagement and motivation by reducing unnecessary strain and enabling employees to perform their roles effectively (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001; Parker et al., 2017).

Organizational culture is another important mechanism because shared values, norms, and assumptions guide how employees interpret policies and workplace practices. Schein and Schein (2017) define culture as learned assumptions that help members solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration. In this sense, culture can connect formal HRM strategy and workplace conditions with employee behavior. However, culture may not automatically increase motivation if employees do not experience its values as concrete support, fairness, recognition, and role clarity in daily work (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Schneider et al., 2013).

This study focuses on PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, Lampung Province, and examines how HRM strategy and work environment influence employee work motivation through organizational culture. The empirical results are theoretically important because they indicate a strong role of the work environment but non-significant effects of HRM strategy and organizational culture. These findings suggest that employees may respond more strongly to proximal job conditions than to strategic HRM policies that are not fully perceived, internalized, or translated into daily work practices.

The objectives of this study are to: (1) examine the influence of HRM strategy on organizational culture and employee work motivation; (2) examine the influence of the work environment on organizational culture and employee work motivation; (3) test the influence of organizational culture on employee work motivation; and (4) assess whether organizational culture functions as an intervening variable in the relationships between HRM strategy, work environment, and employee work motivation.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

1. Human Resource Management Strategy

HRM strategy refers to an integrated set of policies and practices that guide how an organization acquires, develops, evaluates, rewards, and retains employees in order to achieve strategic objectives. In the present study, HRM strategy is represented by human resource planning, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation practices. These practices are consistent with the ability-motivation-opportunity logic of strategic HRM, in which employees are expected to perform better and show stronger motivation when they possess relevant capabilities, receive appropriate incentives, and are given opportunities to contribute (Combs et al., 2006; Jiang et al., 2012).

In theory, HRM strategy may shape organizational culture because formal HR policies communicate what the organization values. Recruitment and selection indicate desired employee characteristics; training conveys expected competencies and behaviors; performance appraisal defines valued outcomes; and compensation signals what the organization rewards. When these practices are internally consistent, employees

may develop shared expectations and behavioral norms that strengthen organizational culture (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Schein & Schein, 2017).

2. Work Environment

The work environment includes the physical and psychosocial conditions surrounding employees while they perform their tasks. Physical conditions include workspace layout, lighting, air circulation, facilities, cleanliness, safety, and equipment availability. Psychosocial conditions include leader-employee relationships, coworker relationships, communication patterns, psychological safety, and support. Previous Indonesian studies also highlight the relevance of work environment for work motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, and performance (Baribin & Saputri, 2020; Hasibuan & Bahri, 2018; Tiomantara & Adiputra, 2021).

From the job demands-resources model, a supportive work environment functions as a job resource because it reduces obstacles and supports goal achievement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Work design research similarly shows that autonomy, feedback, task conditions, and social support are central to employee attitudes and performance (Parker et al., 2017). Therefore, a favorable work environment should increase employee motivation directly and may also contribute to the development of a constructive organizational culture.

3. Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to shared values, assumptions, norms, and work habits that influence how members perceive, think, and act in an organization. Schein and Schein (2017) emphasize that culture is learned through collective experience and is transmitted to members as a correct way to understand and respond to organizational problems. Cameron and Quinn (2011) argue that culture is related to organizational identity, values, leadership style, and assumptions about effectiveness.

Culture can influence motivation when employees perceive that organizational values support fairness, professionalism, teamwork, integrity, recognition, and performance orientation. A strong and positive culture may create meaning, belonging, commitment, and direction. Conversely, if culture is experienced only as formal rhetoric or if everyday practices contradict official values, its influence on motivation may become weak. This distinction is important because organizational culture and organizational climate are related but not identical; climate is closer to employees' shared perceptions of policies and practices, while culture concerns deeper assumptions and values (Schneider et al., 2013).

4. Work Motivation

Work motivation is the internal and external force that directs, energizes, and sustains employee behavior toward work goals. Self-determination theory explains that employees are more likely to be motivated when work conditions support autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci et al., 2017). In organizational settings, motivation is also affected by recognition, fair compensation, leadership support, career development, and work environment quality. Indonesian empirical studies similarly show that work motivation is associated with leadership, compensation, discipline, job satisfaction, and performance (Harahap & Khair, 2019; Suryawan & Salsabilla, 2022).

METHOD

This study used an explanatory quantitative design with an associative approach. The design is appropriate because the purpose of the study was to test theoretically specified relationships among latent variables rather than to describe a single variable in isolation. The research was conducted at PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, Lampung Province, Indonesia.

The population comprised employees of PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7. The final sample consisted of 82 employees. The study used probability sampling through a simple random sampling technique, allowing each eligible employee an equal opportunity to participate. The analysis focused on the structural relationships among the research variables; demographic characteristics were not modeled as control variables.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from low agreement to high agreement. HRM strategy was measured through indicators of HR planning, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation system. Work environment was measured through physical and non-physical working conditions that support employee comfort and task completion. Organizational culture was measured through values, norms, and work habits within the organization. Work motivation was measured through internal and external motivational aspects related to employees' willingness, responsibility, and enthusiasm in performing their tasks.

The data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. PLS-SEM is suitable for prediction-oriented models, models with latent constructs, and studies that do not require strict multivariate normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022). The analysis followed a two-stage procedure: assessment of the reflective measurement model and assessment of the structural model. Measurement model evaluation included outer loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Structural model evaluation included coefficients of determination (R^2), standardized path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. Discriminant validity was conceptually assessed with reference to HTMT as recommended in variance-based SEM literature (Henseler et al., 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Measurement Model Assessment

The reflective measurement model was assessed using standardized outer loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 1, CR values ranged from 0.835 to 0.862 and AVE values ranged from 0.581 to 0.676, indicating acceptable internal consistency and convergent validity. Most indicator loadings exceeded the preferred threshold of 0.708. One organizational culture indicator (BO4) had a lower loading of 0.504; therefore, the item should be theoretically justified or re-evaluated in a final model refinement. The construct-level AVE and CR nevertheless remained above the commonly recommended minimum values of 0.50 and 0.70, respectively (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

Table 1. Reflective measurement model summary

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading	Composite reliability	AVE
Human Resource Management Strategy	SMSDM1	0.753	0.835	0.628
Human Resource Management Strategy	SMSDM2	0.851		
Human Resource Management Strategy	SMSDM3	0.770		
Work Environment	LK1	0.787	0.846	0.647
Work Environment	LK2	0.843		
Work Environment	LK4	0.781		
Organizational Culture	BO1	0.855	0.842	0.581
Organizational Culture	BO2	0.784		
Organizational Culture	BO3	0.851		
Organizational Culture	BO4	0.504		
Work Motivation	MK1	0.791	0.862	0.676
Work Motivation	MK2	0.843		
Work Motivation	MK3	0.832		

Note. Composite reliability and AVE were calculated from the standardized loadings shown in the SmartPLS output. BO4 is below the preferred loading threshold and should be theoretically justified or re-estimated in a final model refinement.

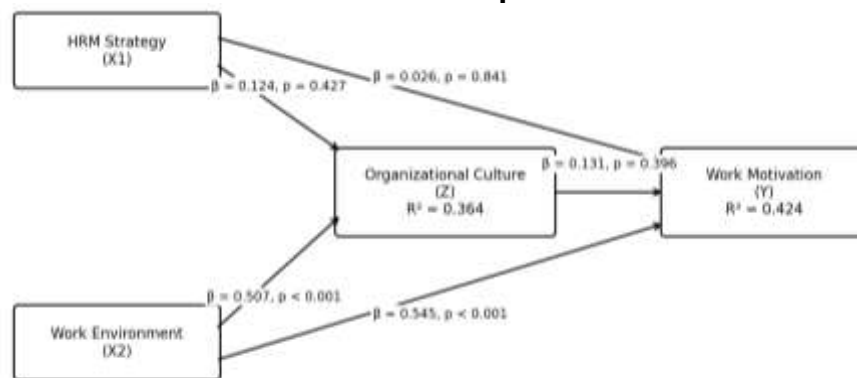
2. Structural Model Assessment

The coefficients of determination indicate that the model explains 36.4% of the variance in organizational culture and 42.4% of the variance in work motivation. The adjusted R^2 values were 0.348 for organizational culture and 0.402 for work motivation, indicating moderate explanatory capacity for employee motivation in this organizational setting.

Table 2. Coefficient of determination

Endogenous construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Organizational Culture	0.364	0.348
Work Motivation	0.424	0.402

Figure 1. Structural model and standardized path coefficients



Note. Path coefficients are standardized estimates from the SmartPLS structural-model output.

Note. The figure visualizes the structural model based on the path coefficients and p-values reported in the SmartPLS output. Significant relationships were found only for

Work Environment → Organizational Culture and Work Environment → Work Motivation.

3. Hypothesis Testing

Table 3 presents the path coefficient results. The work environment had a positive and significant effect on organizational culture ($\beta = 0.507$, $t = 3.534$, $p < 0.001$) and work motivation ($\beta = 0.545$, $t = 3.695$, $p < 0.001$). HRM strategy did not significantly affect organizational culture ($\beta = 0.124$, $t = 0.795$, $p = 0.427$) or work motivation ($\beta = 0.026$, $t = 0.201$, $p = 0.841$). Organizational culture also did not significantly influence work motivation ($\beta = 0.131$, $t = 0.850$, $p = 0.396$).

Table 3. Path coefficients and hypothesis decisions

Hypothesis	Structural path	β	Mean	SD	t	p	Decision
H1	HRM Strategy → Organizational Culture	0.124	0.129	0.156	0.795	0.427	Not supported
H2	HRM Strategy → Work Motivation	0.026	0.045	0.201	0.201	0.841	Not supported
H3	Work Environment → Organizational Culture	0.507	0.513	0.143	3.534	<0.001	Supported
H4	Work Environment → Work Motivation	0.545	0.544	0.148	3.695	<0.001	Supported
H5	Organizational Culture → Work Motivation	0.131	0.133	0.154	0.850	0.396	Not supported

Note. β = original standardized path coefficient; SD = standard deviation from bootstrapping; p = probability value from the bootstrapping procedure.

4. Mediation Assessment

The hypothesized mediating role of organizational culture was not supported by the structural results. Organizational culture did not significantly affect work motivation ($\beta = 0.131$, $p = 0.396$), which weakens the theoretical pathway through which HRM strategy or work environment would influence motivation indirectly. The estimated product terms from the reported coefficients were small for HRM Strategy → Organizational Culture → Work Motivation ($0.124 \times 0.131 = 0.016$) and Work Environment → Organizational Culture → Work Motivation ($0.507 \times 0.131 = 0.066$). Therefore, the results indicate that organizational culture does not function as a meaningful intervening variable in the tested model.

Discussion

1. Work Environment as the Dominant Predictor of Culture and Motivation

The strongest finding is the positive effect of the work environment on both organizational culture and employee work motivation. This indicates that employees are more motivated when they experience the workplace as physically adequate, socially supportive, and conducive to task completion. The finding is consistent with the job demands-resources model, which argues that job resources support motivation by helping employees achieve work goals, reducing unnecessary work strain, and stimulating personal growth (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). It also aligns with work design research showing that conditions surrounding the task can shape employee attitudes and performance (Parker et al., 2017).

In the context of PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, the work environment may function as a direct and visible signal of organizational support. Facilities, safety, lighting, workspace arrangement, leader-subordinate relationships, and coworker relations are experienced daily. Therefore, improving these conditions can immediately influence employees' enthusiasm, comfort, and willingness to contribute. The significant effect on organizational culture suggests that workplace conditions also shape the behavioral norms and shared meanings employees develop inside the organization.

2. Non-significant Effects of HRM Strategy

Contrary to the expectation of strategic HRM theory, HRM strategy did not significantly affect organizational culture or work motivation in this sample. This does not necessarily mean that HRM strategy is unimportant. A more plausible interpretation is that formal HRM policies may not yet be perceived by employees as concrete, consistent, or behaviorally meaningful. Strategic HRM influences outcomes when employees experience HR practices as coherent, fair, and relevant to their work (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Jiang et al., 2012). If HR planning, training, appraisal, and compensation exist as formal administrative systems but are not strongly connected to employees' daily experiences, their motivational impact may be limited.

The non-significant result also suggests that HRM strategy may require implementation quality, communication clarity, and managerial consistency before it can shape organizational culture. In practical terms, HRM strategy should not stop at policy formulation. It must be translated into transparent career pathways, relevant training, fair appraisal, meaningful feedback, and reward systems that employees clearly recognize as supporting their performance and development.

3. Organizational Culture and Work Motivation

Organizational culture did not significantly influence employee work motivation. This finding is important because it challenges the assumption that a strong culture automatically motivates employees. Culture may influence motivation only when values are enacted through visible leadership behavior, consistent rules, peer norms, recognition, and daily managerial practices. If culture is perceived as abstract, inconsistent, or disconnected from practical employee needs, its motivational role may be weak.

This result is consistent with the distinction between deep culture and more immediate organizational climate. Employees may respond more strongly to the climate they experience every day—such as fairness, comfort, interpersonal support, and facility adequacy—than to general cultural values that are not fully operationalized. Accordingly, organizations should convert cultural values into observable managerial routines, such as punctuality norms, supervisor feedback, teamwork practices, safety behavior, and recognition mechanisms (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Schneider et al., 2013; Schein & Schein, 2017).

4. Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to HRM and organizational behavior literature in three ways. First, it shows that work environment may be a more proximal and influential predictor of employee motivation than formal HRM strategy in the studied plantation context. Second, it provides empirical evidence that organizational culture does not necessarily mediate

the relationship between HRM strategy, work environment, and work motivation. Third, it highlights the importance of distinguishing formal HRM systems, perceived work environment, and enacted culture when explaining employee motivation.

5. Practical Implications

For management, the findings suggest that motivation improvement should prioritize concrete work-environment interventions. These include improving workplace facilities, lighting, workspace arrangement, safety, cleanliness, communication channels, and leader-employee relationships. Because the work environment significantly affects both culture and motivation, environmental improvement can be positioned as a strategic lever for organizational development.

Management should also strengthen HRM strategy implementation. HR planning, training, performance appraisal, and compensation should be made more transparent, consistent, and directly connected to employee growth and performance. The organization should ensure that employees understand how HRM policies benefit them, what behaviors are rewarded, and how development opportunities are distributed. Finally, cultural strengthening should focus on behavioral translation: values such as professionalism, teamwork, integrity, and performance orientation should be operationalized into routines that employees can observe and practice.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the sample was limited to 82 employees from one regional organizational unit, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should include multiple regional units or compare plantation organizations across provinces. Second, the study used cross-sectional survey data, so causal claims should be interpreted cautiously. Longitudinal designs would better capture how HRM strategy, work environment, culture, and motivation change over time. Third, all variables were measured through self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce common method bias. Future research should combine survey data with interviews, observation, administrative HR data, or supervisor assessments. Fourth, future studies should report a fuller PLS-SEM assessment, including HTMT discriminant validity, collinearity statistics, f^2 effect sizes, Q^2 predictive relevance, and bootstrapped indirect-effect confidence intervals.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of HRM strategy and work environment on employee work motivation through organizational culture at PT Perkebunan Nusantara 1 Regional 7, Lampung Province. The findings show that the work environment is the most important predictor in the model. It significantly improves organizational culture and employee work motivation. In contrast, HRM strategy does not significantly influence organizational culture or work motivation, and organizational culture does not significantly influence work motivation. The evidence therefore does not support organizational culture as an intervening variable in this model. The practical implication is clear: employee motivation is more likely to increase when management improves the immediate working environment and translates HRM strategy and cultural values into concrete, consistent, and visible practices.

Declarations

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