

The Effect of Organizational Culture on Organizational Innovation with the Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support: Empirical Evidence from the UAE

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Abstract

In today's dynamic business environment, organizational innovation is critical for sustaining competitiveness. This study examines the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between organizational culture, based on the Competing Values Framework (CVS), and organizational innovation. A quantitative approach was employed using data collected from 377 employees in the UAE energy sector. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that cuff culture significantly influences both organizational innovation and perceived organizational support. Furthermore, POS has a significant positive effect on innovation and partially mediates the relationship between organizational culture and innovation. This study

contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from the UAE context and highlights the importance of aligning organizational culture with supportive practices to enhance innovation outcomes.

Keywords: organizational culture, perceived organizational support, organizational innovation

1. Introduction

Innovation is widely recognized as a critical driver of organizational success, enabling firms to achieve sustainable growth and maintain competitiveness in increasingly dynamic environments (Bendak et al., 2020; Alateeg & Alhammadi, 2024). In the context of rapid technological advancement and globalization, organizations are under growing pressure to foster innovation as a core organizational capability. Consequently, both organizational culture and organizational support have been identified as key enablers of innovation by shaping employees' attitudes, behaviors, and willingness to engage in innovative activities (AlHashmi et al., 2019).

Despite this recognition, organizations in the UAE; particularly within the service and public sectors, continue to face challenges in effectively managing innovation, often yielding suboptimal outcomes (Alosani, 2020). Existing evidence suggests that these challenges are largely attributed to unsupportive organizational cultures and insufficient organizational support mechanisms, which constrain employees' propensity to innovate (Dulaimi, 2022; Khalifa, 2021). This is further exacerbated by the complex and multicultural nature of the UAE workforce, where fostering a cohesive innovation-oriented environment remains a significant challenge (Islam & Ayupp, 2022; Cherian et al., 2021).

In addition, inadequate organizational support such as limited development opportunities and insufficient resource allocation has been identified as a key barrier to innovation. Prior studies indicate that when employees perceive higher levels of organizational support, they are more likely to demonstrate commitment, proactive behaviors, and engagement in innovation-related activities (Aldabbas, 2021; Fan et al., 2022; Hadi et al., 2024). Conversely, the absence of such support can negatively affect innovation performance and contribute to undesirable outcomes such as increased turnover intentions (Peng et al., 2023).

Prior research has extensively examined the direct effects of organizational culture and perceived organizational support on innovation (Afsar & Badir, 2017; Le & Lei, 2019; Naveed et al., 2022; Akter et al., 2023), limited attention has been given to the underlying mechanisms through which these factors interact to influence organizational innovation, particularly in the UAE context. Specifically, the mediating role of perceived organizational support in linking organizational culture dimensions to innovation outcomes remains underexplored. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to examine how organizational culture influences organizational innovation through the mediating effect of perceived organizational support. By focusing on the UAE context, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how organizations can strategically leverage cultural and supportive mechanisms to enhance innovation performance.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 The Relationship Between Organizational Culture and Organizational Innovation

Organizational culture is widely regarded as a fundamental determinant of organizational innovation, as it shapes shared values, norms, and behaviors that influence how organizations generate and implement new ideas (Hazem Shayah, 2019; Garza & Lopez, 2020;

Mendoza-Silva, 2021). Prior research consistently indicates that cultures emphasizing flexibility, collaboration, and adaptability are more conducive to innovation outcomes (Bayhan & Korkmaz, 2021; Vargas-Halabi & Yagüe-Perales, 2024). Empirical studies further reinforce this relationship across diverse contexts. For instance, organizational culture has been found to significantly influence both the development of innovation-oriented environments and employees' innovative behaviors (Sharifirad & Ataei, 2012; Eskiler et al., 2016). More recent evidence confirms that cultural attributes play a decisive role in shaping organizational innovation performance by enabling firms to respond effectively to dynamic environmental conditions (McCausland, 2022; Vargas-Halabi & Yagüe-Perales, 2024).

Within the UAE context, the culture–innovation relationship remains robust despite the complexities associated with a highly diverse workforce. Empirical findings demonstrate that organizational culture continues to exert a positive and significant influence on innovation across organizations operating in multicultural environments (Ayupp, 2022; Alateeg & Alhammadi, 2024). This suggests that diversity, when strategically managed, can enhance rather than hinder innovation capabilities. In addition, structured approaches such as innovation-oriented cultural frameworks further highlight the potential for organizations to deliberately leverage cultural dimensions to improve innovation outcomes (Bendak et al., 2020). Although the overall relationship between organizational culture and innovation is well established, variations across specific cultural dimensions and contextual settings suggest that the strength and nature of this relationship may differ. This highlights the need for further investigation into how distinct culture types influence organizational innovation. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between the Competing Values Framework culture dimensions (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy) and organizational innovation.

2.2 The Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Innovation

Perceived organizational support (POS) is widely acknowledged as a critical organizational mechanism that shapes employees' attitudes and discretionary behaviors, thereby influencing innovation outcomes (Mustika et al., 2020; Aslan, 2019). POS reflects employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, which in turn fosters motivation and engagement in innovative activities (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). From a theoretical perspective, higher levels of perceived support enhance employees' performance expectations and strengthen socio-emotional attachment to the organization, leading to increased willingness to contribute beyond formal job requirements (Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024). Such supportive environments not only provide access to resources and favorable working conditions but also reinforce innovation-oriented behaviors by encouraging risk-taking and idea generation (Alateeg & Alhammadi, 2024). Moreover, organizational contexts characterized by strong and cohesive cultures are more likely to cultivate higher levels of perceived support among employees (Ekmekcioglu, 2023).

Empirical evidence largely supports the positive association between perceived

organizational support and innovation-related outcomes. For instance, perceived support has been shown to significantly enhance public service innovation and employees' innovative work behavior (Kasemsarn, 2022; Ekmekcioglu, 2023). Similarly, Satrio and Suryanto (2022) found that POS positively influences employees' engagement in innovative activities. However, contrasting findings have also been reported, with some studies identifying a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and innovative behavior (Park & Kim, 2022; Turki & Elkhailifa, 2023). These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational innovation may be context-dependent and influenced by additional organizational factors. Accordingly, further empirical investigation is warranted to clarify this relationship. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: There is a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational innovation.

2.3 Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support (POS) has increasingly been recognized as a key mechanism through which organizational factors translate into employees' innovative outcomes. By reinforcing employees' beliefs that the organization values their contributions and supports their well-being, POS enhances motivation, commitment, and willingness to engage in innovative activities (Wijaya, 2023). As such, POS provides a critical explanatory pathway linking organizational practices to innovation-related behaviors. A growing body of literature has validated the mediating role of POS across diverse organizational settings (Le & Lei, 2019; Lafta & Dahi, 2022; Fan et al., 2022; Peng et al., 2023). Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that organizational and leadership factors are more effective in fostering innovation when they operate through employees' perceptions of support. For example, Nazir et al. (2018) showed that POS significantly mediates the effects of leader-member exchange and relational ties on employees' innovative behavior. Similarly, Aslan (2019) found that POS partially mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and innovative work behavior, indicating that supportive perceptions strengthen the impact of leadership on innovation outcomes.

Further evidence reinforces the mediating role of POS in innovation-related processes. Ekmekcioglu (2023) demonstrated that POS acts as a significant mechanism through which both servant leadership and innovative organizational culture influence employees' innovative work behavior. These findings suggest that organizational culture and leadership practices do not directly translate into innovation; rather, their effects are channeled through employees' psychological perceptions of organizational support. Despite these contributions, research explicitly examining POS as a mediator between organizational culture and organizational innovation remains limited (Opoku et al., 2022; Utomo et al., 2023; Al-Taie & Khattak, 2024). This gap is particularly evident in the UAE context, where empirical studies addressing both direct and indirect relationships among organizational culture, perceived organizational support, and innovation are scarce. Specifically, insufficient attention has been given to how different cultural dimensions influence innovation outcomes through

employees' perceived support. Addressing this gap, the present study proposes that perceived organizational support functions as a mediating mechanism linking organizational culture dimensions to organizational innovation. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between Competing Values Framework culture dimensions (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy) and organizational innovation.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study proposes a conceptual framework examining the relationship between organizational culture and organizational innovation, with perceived organizational support (POS) as a mediating variable. The framework is grounded in organizational culture theory and social exchange theory, explaining how internal organizational dynamics influence innovation outcomes. Organizational culture is operationalized using the Denison Organizational Culture Model, which comprises four dimensions: mission, adaptability, involvement, and consistency (Denison, 2006). These dimensions capture key cultural attributes that shape organizational effectiveness and influence employee behaviors related to innovation (Chatman & Choi, 2022). Organizational innovation is treated as the dependent variable, while POS serves as the mediating mechanism linking culture to innovation. Specifically, supportive organizational environments enhance employees' motivation and engagement, thereby strengthening the translation of cultural values into innovative outcomes. Accordingly, the framework posits that organizational culture influences innovation both directly and indirectly through perceived organizational support, as illustrated in Figure 1.

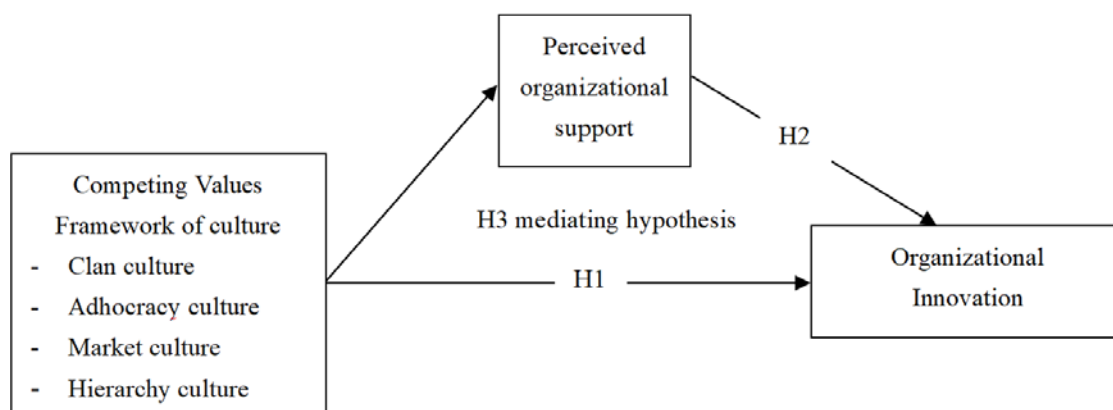


Figure 1. Research framework

4. Research Methodology

This study aims to examine the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between organizational culture dimensions and organizational innovation. A quantitative research design was adopted, given its strength in systematically testing

hypotheses and generating generalizable findings (Willig, 2019). The target population comprises employees working in selected energy sector organizations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). To ensure representativeness and methodological rigor, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. This approach is particularly suitable for studies involving heterogeneous populations, as it enables proportional representation of subgroups while enhancing statistical precision (Taherdoost, 2017). The population was drawn from three organizations of varying sizes; accordingly, a total sample of 377 respondents was proportionally allocated based on the size of each organization. This sample size aligns with recommendations in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) literature, which emphasize the necessity of adequate sample sizes to achieve sufficient statistical power, stable parameter estimates, and robust model fit (Hair et al., 2018).

Organizational culture was operationalized as the independent variable using the Competing Values Framework (CVF), which encompasses four culture types: hierarchy, market, clan, and adhocracy. Each dimension reflects a distinct set of organizational values and characteristics that shape the internal environment and influence organizational outcomes. Measurement items for organizational culture (27 items) were adapted from prior validated scales (Schlagwein & Prasarnphanich, 2011; Ghanem, 2022).

Perceived organizational support was measured using established scales adapted from Guan et al. (2014) and Pazetto et al. (2022). Organizational innovation, the dependent variable, was assessed using items adapted from Alosani and Al-ansi (2020), Alosani et al. (2020), and Yamin (2020). Therefore, the study employs validated measurement instruments and a robust sampling design to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, thereby contributing to the empirical literature on organizational behavior and innovation within the UAE energy sector.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Measurement Model Assessment

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) following established guidelines (Hair et al., 2016). The analysis was conducted in three stages: measurement model assessment, structural model evaluation, and predictive relevance (Tailab, 2020). Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model was assessed to ensure construct reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2017). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, with values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity was assessed through indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where loadings above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 indicate adequate convergence (Hair et al., 2021). Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). These assessments ensure that constructs are measured consistently and are empirically distinct. The results of reliability and convergent validity are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Constructs reliability and validity

Indicator	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Organizational Innovation	0.891	0.910	0.510
Adhocracy culture	0.904	0.925	0.641
Clan culture	0.867	0.895	0.518
Competing Values Framework of culture	0.938	0.945	0.505
Hierarchy culture	0.938	0.951	0.764
Market culture	0.880	0.909	0.626
Perceived Organizational Support	0.867	0.896	0.522

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that all constructs satisfy the recommended thresholds for reliability and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.867 to 0.938, while composite reliability values range from 0.895 to 0.951, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70 and demonstrating strong internal consistency across all constructs. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range between 0.505 and 0.764, all above the recommended cutoff value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2016). This confirms that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators, thereby establishing adequate convergent validity. Thus, these findings provide robust evidence of construct reliability and convergent validity, indicating that the measurement model is appropriate for subsequent structural model analysis. The factor loading results are presented in Figure 2.

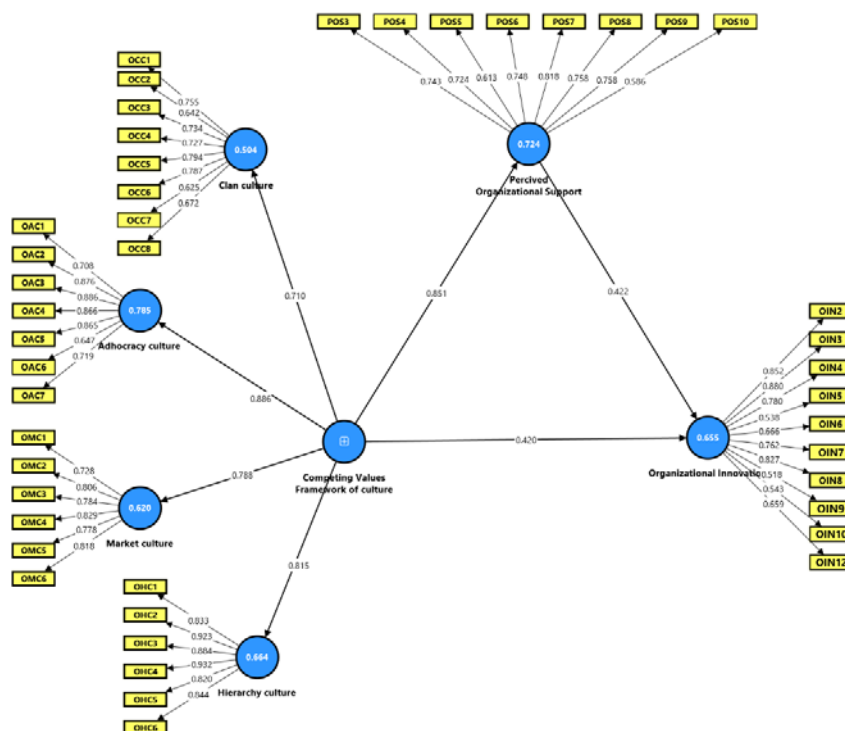


Figure 2. Measurement model

During the measurement model assessment, items with factor loadings below the recommended threshold of 0.50 were removed to enhance construct reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2016). In total, four items were eliminated due to low loadings that adversely affected the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of their respective constructs. Specifically, two items (OIN1, OIN11) were removed from the Organizational Innovation construct, and two items (POS1, POS2) were removed from the Perceived Organizational Support construct. The removal of these items resulted in improved reliability and convergent validity across the constructs. Notably, the deleted items represent less than 10% of the total 89 indicators, which is well below the 20% threshold suggested by Ramayah et al. (2016). This supports the retention of a confirmatory approach and indicates that the final measurement model maintains adequate indicator representation for all constructs.

5.2 Path Coefficient

Following the confirmation of measurement model reliability and validity, the structural model was evaluated using path coefficients. These coefficients indicate the strength and direction of relationships between constructs, with statistical significance assessed via bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2016; Ramayah et al., 2016). Table 2 presents the standardized path coefficients (β), t-statistics, and p-values for hypothesized relationships.

Table 2. Significance test for the structural model path coefficient, t-statistics, and p-values

Direct hypotheses	Std β	Std Error	t-statistic	p-value	Result
Competing Value Framework of culture → Organizational Innovation	0.420	0.069	6.113	0.000	Positive
Competing Values Framework of culture → Perceived Organizational Support	0.851	0.016	52.021	0.000	Positive
Perceived Organizational Support → Organizational Innovation	0.423	0.069	6.102	0.000	Positive

The results reveal that the Competing Values Framework (CVF) culture has a significant positive effect on Organizational Innovation ($\beta = 0.420$, $t = 6.113$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. This finding is consistent with prior studies that report a positive relationship between organizational culture and innovation outcomes (McCausland, 2022; Vargas-Halabi & Yagüe-Perales, 2024). In addition, CVF culture demonstrates a strong positive effect on Perceived Organizational Support ($\beta = 0.851$, $t = 52.021$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that supportive cultural environments enhance employees' perceptions of organizational support. This aligns with previous findings suggesting that organizational context and culture play a key role in shaping perceived support (Ekmekcioglu, 2023). Furthermore, Perceived Organizational Support significantly influences Organizational Innovation ($\beta = 0.423$, $t = 6.102$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. This result is in line with earlier studies that highlight the positive impact of perceived organizational support on innovation and innovative work behavior (Ekmekcioglu, 2023; Satrio & Suryanto, 2022; Kasemsarn, 2022).

Therefore, the findings confirm that organizational culture not only directly influences innovation but also indirectly contributes by enhancing perceived organizational support. These results are consistent with the literature reviewed in the hypothesis development section, reinforcing the critical role of both organizational culture and perceived organizational support in fostering organizational innovation. Table 3 presents the mediation analysis results examining the role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between organizational culture and organizational innovation.

Table 3. Mediating results of perceived organizational support

Mediating hypothesis	Std β	Std Error	<i>t</i> -statistic	<i>p</i> -value	Result
Competing Values Framework of culture → Perceived Organizational Support → Organizational Innovation	0.359	0.058	6.223	0.000	Mediated

The mediation results presented in Table 3 indicate that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) significantly mediates the relationship between Competing Values Framework (CVF) culture and Organizational Innovation ($\beta = 0.359$, $t = 6.223$, $p < 0.001$). This finding supports the proposed mediation hypothesis, confirming that CVF culture enhances organizational innovation indirectly through employees' perceptions of organizational support. Specifically, the significant indirect effect suggests that a supportive cultural environment strengthens employees' sense of organizational support, which in turn promotes higher levels of innovation. Figure 3 illustrates the hypothesized structural model.

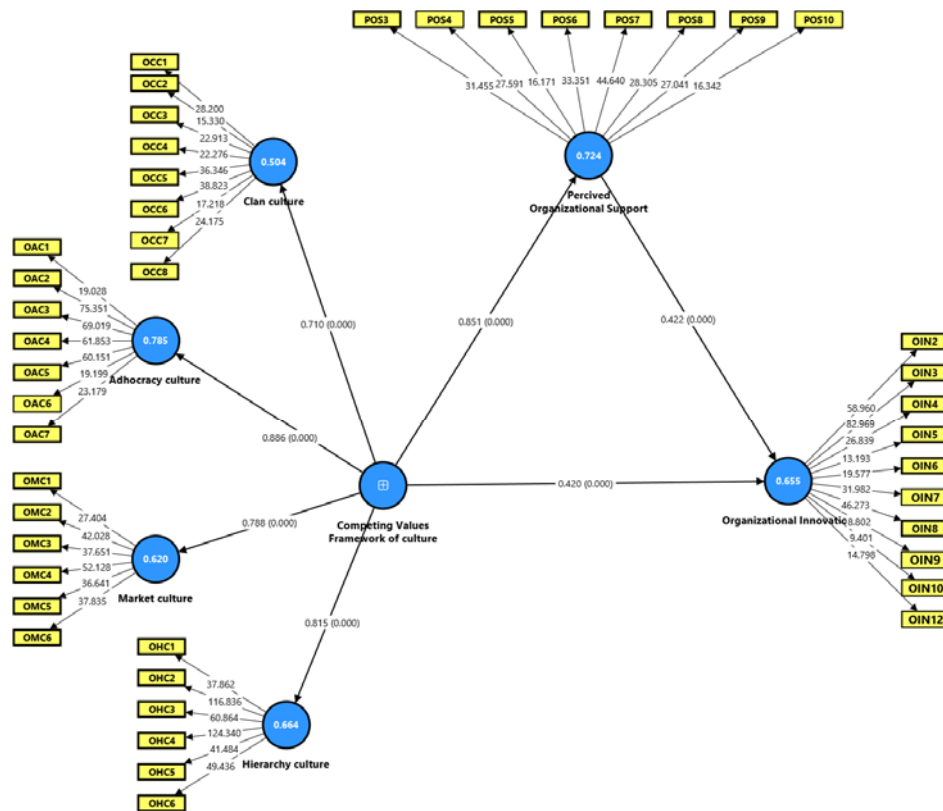


Figure 3. Structural model

The findings of this study are consistent with prior research emphasizing the mediating role of POS in innovation-related processes. Specifically, the results align with Nazir et al. (2018), who demonstrated that POS mediates the relationship between organizational factors and employees' innovative behavior. Similarly, Aslan (2019) reported that POS partially mediates the link between leadership and innovative work behavior, highlighting the importance of employees' perceptions in translating organizational practices into innovation outcomes.

In addition, the present findings are supported by Ekmekcioglu (2023), who identified POS as a key mechanism through which organizational culture and leadership influence innovative behavior. This reinforces the argument that organizational culture does not directly translate into innovation but operates through employees' psychological perceptions of support. Furthermore, Le and Lei (2019) and Fan et al. (2022) provide additional evidence that POS enhances employees' motivation and proactive behaviors, which are critical drivers of innovation.

Thus, these findings confirm that POS plays a crucial mediating role in transforming organizational culture into innovation outcomes, thereby extending existing literature by empirically validating this mechanism within the UAE context.

6. Implication

6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from the UAE energy

sector, a context that has received relatively limited attention in organizational culture and innovation research. Much of the existing literature has focused on organizations in Western or developed economies, often within private-sector settings. By examining public-sector energy organizations in the UAE, this study extends the geographical and sectoral scope of prior research and offers insights into how cultural frameworks and organizational support mechanisms operate within highly regulated and strategically important environments. Furthermore, the findings highlight the significant role of the Competing Values Framework (CVF) in shaping organizational innovation. The results confirm that CVF culture positively influences innovation both directly and indirectly through perceived organizational support. This underscores the importance of considering mediating mechanisms when examining the culture–innovation relationship, as organizational culture may exert its influence not only through direct effects but also by shaping employees’ perceptions of organizational support. Therefore, this study advances the theoretical understanding of how organizational culture translates into innovation outcomes by identifying perceived organizational support as a key explanatory mechanism within the CVF framework.

6.2 Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer important practical implications for managers and policymakers within UAE energy sector organizations. In an environment characterized by rapid technological change, sustainability pressures, and increasing competition, fostering innovation has become essential for long-term organizational effectiveness. The results highlight the critical role of organizational culture and perceived organizational support in enabling innovation outcomes. First, the findings underscore the importance of cultivating a supportive organizational culture that promotes innovation. The positive influence of the Competing Values Framework (CVF) culture on organizational innovation suggests that managers should emphasize cultural values such as collaboration, flexibility, and openness to new ideas. Encouraging teamwork, knowledge sharing, and experimentation can enhance employees’ willingness to engage in innovative activities and contribute creative solutions to organizational challenges. Second, organizations should strengthen perceived organizational support by implementing policies and practices that demonstrate care for employees’ well-being and professional development. Providing adequate resources, training opportunities, and recognition systems can enhance employees’ perceptions of support, which in turn fosters greater engagement in innovation-related behaviors. Thus, organizations that align supportive cultural values with strong organizational support mechanisms are better positioned to create an environment conducive to sustained innovation.

7. Conclusion

This study sets out to examine the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between organizational culture, as conceptualized by the Competing Values Framework (CVF), and organizational innovation within the UAE energy sector. The findings provide clear empirical evidence that organizational culture plays a significant role in enhancing innovation, both directly and indirectly through POS. Specifically, the results demonstrate that CVF culture positively influences organizational innovation and strongly

predicts employees' perceptions of organizational support. In turn, perceived organizational support significantly contributes to higher levels of innovation, confirming its role as a key mediating mechanism. These findings highlight that organizational culture alone is not sufficient to drive innovation unless it is reinforced by supportive organizational practices that shape employees' perceptions and behaviors. By validating the mediating role of POS, this study advances the understanding of how organizational culture translates into innovation outcomes. It emphasizes that fostering innovation requires not only the development of appropriate cultural values but also the creation of a supportive organizational environment that enables employees to actively engage in innovative activities. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on organizational innovation by providing evidence from the UAE energy sector, a context that remains underexplored. The findings offer both theoretical and practical insights, demonstrating that organizations seeking to enhance innovation should strategically align their cultural frameworks with strong support mechanisms to maximize their innovation potential.

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