

The Effect of Organizational Culture on the Effectiveness of Employees' Administrative Performance in Iraqi Sports Federations: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The operationalization of administrative performance is internally inconsistent and requires correction. In the Methods section, the ACHIEVE-based instrument is described as a 26-item questionnaire with seven dimensions, whereas the measurement-model section states that administrative performance “was represented by 10 indicators coded PER1 through PER10.” The authors need to explain precisely how the original instrument was transformed from 26 questionnaire items into 10 indicators. If 16 items were removed during preliminary screening, this must be reported systematically, including the deleted item codes, their initial outer loadings, and the theoretical justification for retaining the remaining indicators. If the 10 indicators represent aggregated dimension scores rather than individual questionnaire items, the model specification should be rewritten accordingly. Without this information, the construct cannot be replicated or adequately evaluated.

The mediation analysis should be revised conceptually and statistically. The manuscript states that mediation was rejected because “the organizational culture-to-job satisfaction path was nonsignificant... and the job satisfaction-to-administrative performance path was also nonsignificant.” Contemporary mediation analysis does not require the individual component paths to each achieve significance before the indirect effect is tested. The correct procedure is to directly estimate the specific indirect effect, calculate its bootstrapped confidence interval, and determine whether that interval contains zero. The manuscript should therefore report the indirect coefficient for Organizational Culture → Job Satisfaction → Administrative Performance, together with its bootstrap standard error, *t* value, *p* value, and 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. Only then can the mediation hypothesis be formally accepted or rejected.

The bootstrapping procedure is underreported. The Methods section appropriately mentions “5,000 resamples,” but the Findings provide only *p* values for the direct paths and statements that the corresponding *t* statistics were above or below 1.96. The authors should report the actual *t* statistics and preferably 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for every direct and indirect path. SmartPLS also permits specification of one-tailed versus two-tailed testing, confidence-interval type, and sign-change options; these analytical settings should be disclosed. This would make the inferential analysis more transparent and allow readers to independently evaluate the statistical conclusions.

The manuscript should avoid describing nonsignificant coefficients as meaningful negative effects. For example, the Findings initially interpret $\beta = -0.259$ as indicating that “the relationship between these two variables is in the opposite direction,” and $\beta = -0.147$ as demonstrating a “negative and weak relationship.” Because both paths are nonsignificant, the direction of the sample coefficients should be treated cautiously and should not be interpreted substantively as evidence of inverse relationships in the population. The revised wording should state that the estimated coefficients were negative but statistically indistinguishable from zero. This distinction should also be maintained throughout the Discussion, Conclusion, and Abstract to avoid overinterpretation.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

A similar inconsistency exists for organizational culture. The Methods section identifies a 36-item Denison-based questionnaire, whereas the Findings state that organizational culture initially contained “34 observed indicators coded OC1 through OC34.” The manuscript should identify why two items were absent from the measurement model. Were they removed during translation, pilot testing, data screening, or the initial PLS assessment? Item deletion should never appear unexplained because it may alter the theoretical content of the construct. A supplementary table listing all initial items, retained items, deleted items, and corresponding outer loadings would materially improve transparency and replicability.

The description of the job satisfaction instrument needs stronger methodological precision. The manuscript refers to a “25-item version based on the Job Descriptive Index (JDI),” although the original JDI has a different format and item structure. The authors should identify the exact source of the 25-item adaptation, explain whether it has been previously validated, specify how the five dimensions were represented, and indicate which items were reverse-scored. If the 25-item version was developed or adapted specifically for this investigation, the manuscript should not present it as though it were identical to the original JDI. The instrument-development or adaptation procedure, including translation and cultural adaptation for Iraqi respondents, should also be documented.

The manuscript should provide a rigorous description of questionnaire translation and cultural adaptation. The study was conducted among employees of Iraqi sports federations, but the Methods section does not explain whether the Denison, ACHIEVE, and JDI-based instruments were administered in Arabic, Kurdish, English, or another language. If translated, the authors should report the procedure used, ideally including forward translation, independent back-translation, reconciliation, expert review, and pilot testing. The sentence that the questionnaire “was reviewed for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for the organizational and cultural context” is insufficient for internationally published psychometric research. Linguistic

equivalence is especially important because the interpretation of organizational culture, satisfaction, and performance items may vary across cultural and institutional contexts.

The measurement-model evaluation is incomplete because discriminant validity is claimed in the Methods but not reported in the Findings. The Methods state that “discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT),” yet no HTMT values are presented. The authors should report the complete HTMT matrix for organizational culture, job satisfaction, and administrative performance effectiveness and state the criterion applied, such as $<.85$ or $<.90$. If Fornell–Larcker or cross-loadings were additionally examined, these may be reported as supplementary evidence. Without discriminant-validity results, it is not possible to determine whether the three latent variables are empirically distinguishable.

The iterative deletion of indicators requires considerably more justification. The Findings state that items with outer loadings below “0.4 were removed” and subsequently that items with loadings below “0.6 were also removed” to improve AVE. Indicator removal should not be driven solely by statistical optimization because excessive deletion can compromise content validity. The authors should report how many indicators were removed from each construct at each stage, their loading values, whether deletion was theoretically defensible, and whether any subdimension became underrepresented as a result. This issue is particularly important for multidimensional constructs such as organizational culture and administrative performance, because improving AVE at the expense of theoretical coverage may produce a statistically acceptable but conceptually narrowed measure.

The extremely high composite reliability reported for job satisfaction deserves examination. Table 2 reports a composite reliability of “0.974” for job satisfaction. Although high reliability is generally desirable, coefficients approaching .98 may indicate substantial item redundancy or an overly homogeneous set of retained indicators, particularly following item deletion. The authors should report the number of job satisfaction indicators remaining in the final model, their outer loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, and preferably ρ_A . The possibility that iterative deletion resulted in a narrow representation of job satisfaction should also be considered, especially because the theoretical construct was originally defined through five distinct facets.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.