

# Investigating the effect of national culture and affective commitment on employee performance: An empirical study in Indonesian banking sector

Investigar el efecto de la cultura nacional y el compromiso afectivo en el desempeño de los empleados: un estudio empírico en el sector bancario indonesio

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## Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effect of national culture (i.e., power distance, collectivism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation) and affective commitment on employee performance. Two hundred and eleven employees of the Indonesian banking sector participated in this study. Structural equation modeling (SEM) with SPSS Amos 24 software was applied to test the hypotheses proposed. The results revealed that national culture (i.e., power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and long-term orientation) significantly affects affective commitment, which, in turn, increases employee performance.

**Keywords:** national culture, Affective commitment, Employee performance

## Resumen

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo investigar el efecto de la cultura nacional (es decir, distancia de poder, colectivismo, masculinidad, evitar la incertidumbre, orientación a largo plazo) y el compromiso afectivo en el desempeño de los empleados. Doscientos once empleados del sector bancario indonesio participaron en este estudio. Se aplicó el modelado de ecuaciones estructurales (SEM) con el software SPSS Amos 24 para probar las hipótesis propuestas. Los resultados revelaron que la cultura nacional (es decir, distancia de poder, colectivismo, masculinidad y orientación a largo plazo) afecta significativamente el compromiso afectivo, lo que, a su vez, aumenta el rendimiento de los empleados.

**Palabras clave:** cultura nacional, compromiso afectivo, desempeño de los empleados

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## 1. Introduction

The organization in carrying out its activities is inseparable from the surrounding environment, but always interacts with the existing environment through employees, customers, and suppliers. The role of culture that is

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applied in the organization has a very profound influence on the values and behavior exhibited by members of the organization, which in turn can have tangible consequences (Bloom, Sadun, & Reenen, 2012).

National culture is recognized as one of the most fundamental determinants of differences, not only in individuals but also in organizations in various countries (G. Hofstede, 2001). Empirical literature has shown that national culture influences many aspects in organizations, such as improving organizational innovation capabilities (Chen, Podolski, & Veeraraghavan, 2017; Wong, Everett, & Nicholson, 2008), organizational commitment (Kwantes, 2009; Ryu, Lee, & Lee, 2011; Top, Öge, Atan, & Gümüş, 2015), and organizational performance (Boubakri, Mirzaei, & Samet, 2017; Lu, 2008).

However, in the study of Ringov and Zollo (2007) which examined 463 companies consisting of 23 countries in North America, Europe, and Asia found that national culture (individualism and uncertainty avoidance) had no effect on company performance. They further concluded that a national culture that supports regulatory orientation and strong work stability does not materially influence corporate behavior in the domain of corporate responsibility. Likewise, the results of the study of Calza, Cannavale, and Tutore (2016) prove that national culture (in-group collectivism, performance orientation, assertiveness, and uncertainty avoidance) negatively affects company performance.

Given these inconsistent findings, further research is needed to confirm the findings. Therefore, this study tries to explore the relationship between national culture and performance, especially employee performance by including affective commitment as a mediating variable.

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## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

### **2.1 Employee Performance**

Performance is a set of behaviors or actions of individuals in accordance with organizational goals. Gavin, Frederiksen, Robbins, Pazol, and Moskosky (2017) define performance as the accumulation of the final results of all work processes and activities in the organization. According to Dessler (2000), performance is work performance, which is a comparison between work results and established standards.

Performance, according to Mathis and Jackson (2009), is related to the quantity of work, quality of work, timeliness, attendance at work, work efficiency and work effectiveness. Achieving a high level of performance is very important for all organizations because employee performance is directly related to sustainable organizational growth (Burney, Henle, & Widener, 2009).

Every organization feels great pressure to improve overall performance because it is caused by globalization. Under these conditions, employees are also demanded to increase their physical and psychological resources, thereby causing them to experience high levels of tension to achieve maximum work results (Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014). Therefore, by emphasizing the emotional ties of high affective commitment and the suitability of values and culture in the organization, this is believed to be able to produce higher performance (Curcuruto & Griffin, 2018; Hirunyawipada & Xiong, 2018; Latan, Jabbour, de Sousa Jabbour, Wamba, & Shahbaz, 2018).

### **2.2. Affective Commitment**

Affective commitment describes the relationship of engagement, both personally and emotionally, between employees and the organization. According to Bingham, Mitchell, Bishop, and Allen (2013), affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment of employees to the organization. Glazer and Kruse (2008) view that affective commitment is the desire of an employee to remain a member of the organization, do business for the organization and believe in the values and norms of the organization. Employees who have a strong affective

commitment always want to keep working in the organization and like to be part of the organization because they believe in the values and goals of the organization (Ng & Allen, 2018).

Affective commitment is built because there is a match between individual values and goals with the interests of the organization. Affective commitment occurs when individuals are identified with the values and goals of the organization, where individuals feel that they are members and parts of the organization, and the organization cares about their circumstances (Casimir, Ng, Wang, & Ooi, 2014). Individuals who are emotionally attached to the organization will be happy to continue their membership in the organization and regard every problem in the organization as their problem as well. As a result, they will be totally involved in the organization and happy to work for the organization (Ugboro, 2006).

Committed employees affectively identify themselves with the organization, participate in organizational activities, and pursue organizational goals (Bingham et al., 2013). Affective commitment is one of the driving forces that make employees contribute to improving performance in the organization. When employees are affectively committed to the organization, emotionally, they will be motivated to show performance. In academic research, scientists have paid considerable attention to the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Marshall, 2005; Riketta, 2002). Employees with high organizational commitment have positive work attitudes and show better performance in their work than non-committed employees (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & LaryssaTopolnytsky, 2002).

### **2.3. National Culture**

According to G. Hofstede (2001), culture is a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes between group members and other groups. Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) defines culture as motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events resulting from the general experience of collective members transmitted between generations (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

Mammadov and Galusca (2005) emphasized that culture has many definitions, depending on the themes and general characteristics conveyed, such as (1) members in a cultural system share a set of ideas and values; (2) transmitted from one generation to another through symbols; (3) culture is produced by the actions of groups, and their members; (4) culture can be learned; and (5) culture shapes behavior and influences individual's perception of the world. In this view, culture is acquired through learning and sharing experiences, which produce beliefs, values, perceptions, attitudes, and hopes. In line with this opinion, Geert Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) state that culture is learned and not inherited. Culture also comes from the social environment, and not from one's genes.

National culture is defined as values, beliefs, and assumptions that distinguish one group from another (Geert Hofstede et al., 2010). A country's culture will influence the values and beliefs of the population of that country and determine and prohibit certain behaviors (Ren & Gray, 2009).

Many concepts that explain the national culture, as proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), Triandis (2004), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), dan House et al. (2004). Each of these concepts has advantages, but in this study using the concept of national culture developed by G. Hofstede (2001), such as power distance, collectivism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation because it has a level of validity, reliability, and uses that have been confirmed from time to time and in various places (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006; Li & Parboteeah, 2015).

### **2.3.1 Power distance**

Power distance refers to the extent to which less powerful members in an organization expect and accept that power is distributed unevenly (G. Hofstede, 2001). The organization inherently creates a power hierarchy among its members to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. In addition, organizations create certain roles and positions that allow individuals to compare and recognize different positions in the power hierarchy.

Members of organizations with high power distance cultures feel comfortable with the hierarchical nature of the organization so that they become better when they are in the organization. In contrast, members of organizations with low power distance cultures agree with egalitarian ideas and are more critical of organizational hierarchy (Deephouse, Newburry, & Soleimani, 2016). The results of the study conducted by (Gul, Usman, Liu, Rehman, & Jebran, 2018; Stammerjohan, Leach, & Stammerjohan, 2015) prove that the lower the level of power distance in an organization, the more it encourages greater organizational commitment. Therefore,

**H1:** Power distance has a significant effect on affective commitment

### **2.3.2. Collectivism**

In organizations that embrace the culture of collectivism, people tend to be integrated and incorporated into groups that are strong and cohesive, who, throughout their time, care for each other with high loyalty and loyalty (G. Hofstede, 2001). People in organizations with a collectivist culture tend to value joint efforts, give high respect to groups, and achieve goals that benefit the organization as a whole.

Parboteeah, Addae, and Cullen (2012) state that there is a positive relationship between collectivism culture and the tendency to support organizational sustainability. In a collectivist culture, people are more likely to choose attitudes and behaviors that support what is best for the organization as a whole, and they consider that organizational sustainability as a very important goal.

The study of Ryu et al. (2011) in Korea proves that collectivism influences commitment to togetherness in organizations. Likewise, Finkelstein (2014); Kwantes (2009) found that collectivism in the context of non-collectivism American society has a significant effect on affective commitment. Therefore,

**H2:** Collectivism has a significant effect on affective commitment

### **2.3.3. Masculinity**

Masculinity culture tends to lead to aggressiveness, assertiveness, and achievement (G. Hofstede, 2001). Members of organizations with a culture of masculinity tend to feel more comfortable with a goal-oriented organization, has a strong relationship with progress, challenges, recognition, higher income, performance, and competition among colleagues facilitated by the organization (Newburry & Yakova, 2006). Research findings of (Ganesh & Paramasivam Ganesh, 2014; Stergiou-Kita, Lafrance, Pritlove, & Power, 2017) prove that the higher the level of masculinity in an organization, the more it encourages greater organizational commitment. Therefore,

**H3:** Masculinity has a significant effect on affective commitment

### **2.3.4. Uncertainty avoidance**

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the extent to which members of an organization feel threatened by an uncertain situation (G. Hofstede, 2001). Li and Parboteeah (2015) emphasized that managing uncertainty is a major concern for organizations. Organizations reduce uncertainty by creating and developing rules and procedural arrangements for work relations, social interaction, and economic transactions.

Members of an organization with a culture of high uncertainty avoidance will have a greater interest in the organization and tend to give better evaluations to the organization. Conversely, members of organizations with a culture of low uncertainty avoidance will more easily accept uncertainty and less respect for the rules and planning inherent in the organizational structure (Deephouse et al., 2016).

Szolucha (2013) emphasized that through the process of learning and practicing decision making, employees were able to avoid uncertainty by increasing organizational responsibility and commitment. Therefore,

**H4:** Uncertainty avoidance has a significant effect on affective commitment

### **2.3.5. Long-term orientation**

Long-term orientation refers to the values of virtue that are oriented to the future, especially related to perseverance, savings, and investment (G. Hofstede, 2001). This dimension represents a set of Confucian values or commonly referred to as Confucian Dynamism.

G. Hofstede (2001) argues that high long-term orientation has a strong influence on organizational behavior. Business organizations with a long-term orientation culture are accustomed to working to build strong positions in the market, where they do not expect immediate results, but rather are oriented towards building long-term relationships.

Employees of organizations with high long-term orientation tend to participate actively in various activities. They also tend to have open attitudes towards challenging values and opportunities. This makes it easier for employees to build social networks, which will increase their social acceptance in the community (Sam & Berry, 2010). As a result, future orientation allows employees to have more opportunities to gather information about their work, career development, and skills. Future orientation can also motivate employees to develop relevant skills so as to be able to show more effective performance (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). Therefore,

**H5:** Long-term orientation has a significant effect on affective commitment

Meyer et al. (2002) believe that strong affective commitment can improve the application of behavior that is beneficial to the goals set by the organization. Employees who have high affective commitment have a sense of belonging to the organization, so they have a high level of enthusiasm to do the work and achieve the goals set. Chang and Chen (2011) assert that affective commitment has a strong relationship with employee performance. Committed employees have a greater tendency to do business consistently than what the organization expects. The results of this study are also supported by many studies that affective commitment has a significant effect on employee performance (Akbar, Udin, Wahyudi, & Djastuti, 2018; Djastuti, Perdhana, & Udin, 2019; H. K. Kim, 2014; Semedo, Coelho, & Ribeiro, 2016; Sharma & Dhar, 2016; Swalhi, Zgoulli, & Hofaidhllaoui, 2017; Udin, Handayani, Yuniawan, & Rahardja, 2017). Therefore,

**H6:** Affective commitment has a significant effect on employee performance

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## **3. Research Methods**

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

Population is a group of individuals or objects that are known to have common or similar characteristics or characteristics, while the sample is part of the population taken to generalize the results of research (Dornbos & LaPres, 2017). The population of this study is all employees who work at BRI Bank, Central Java, Indonesia. The research sample was determined using a simple random sampling technique of 300 employees. The data collected was 219 employees. Data collection techniques were carried out using a questionnaire covering

national culture (power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance), affective commitment, and employee performance.

### 3.2. Measurement

The questionnaire distributed to respondents consisted of 20 question items. All question items are measured using a Likert scale of points 1–5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. National culture is measured using 5 dimensions adopted from G. Hofstede (2001), namely power distance, collectivism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation. Affective commitment is measured using 4 items adopted from Vandenberghe, Bentein, and Stinglhamber (2004). Furthermore, employee performance is measured using 4 indicators adopted from the In-role Performance Scale (Ghosh, Sekiguchi, & Gurunathan, 2017).

### 3.3. Technique of data analysis

Data collected in this study will be processed and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SPSS Amos 24 software. SEM is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is very useful for developing theories in management research. SEM has a high level of flexibility for interactions between theory and data, especially those related to the development of more holistic cause and effect pathways (Nitzl, 2016). SEM is not limited by identification and other technical aspects, so it is possible to test complex models with various constructs and indicators (Rigdon, 2014).

## 4. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis, the value of standardized loadings for each indicator of the research variable (i.e., Power Distance, Collectivism, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-term Orientation, Affective Commitment, and Employee Performance) has met the criteria above 0.6. Therefore, all variables in this study were declared valid. This can be seen in the following Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Standardized Loadings

	Estimate	p
CA1 <--- Affective Commitment	0.952	
CA2 <--- Affective Commitment	0.925	***
CA3 <--- Affective Commitment	0.931	***
CA4 <--- Affective Commitment	0.930	***
EP4 <--- Employee Performance	0.933	
EP3 <--- Employee Performance	0.794	***
EP2 <--- Employee Performance	0.896	***
EP1 <--- Employee Performance	0.844	***
PD1 <--- Power Distance	0.711	
PD2 <--- Power Distance	0.885	***
PD3 <--- Power Distance	0.666	***
MA3 <--- Masculinity	0.934	
MA2 <--- Masculinity	0.932	***
MA1 <--- Masculinity	0.900	***
LO3 <--- Long-term Orientation	0.911	
LO2 <--- Long-term Orientation	0.908	***
LO1 <--- Long-term Orientation	0.914	***

		Estimate	p
UA3	<--- Uncertainty Avoidance	0.830	
UA2	<--- Uncertainty Avoidance	0.824	***
UA1	<--- Uncertainty Avoidance	0.790	***
CO3	<--- Collectivism	0.750	
CO2	<--- Collectivism	0.651	***
CO1	<--- Collectivism	0.927	***

Note: \*\*\* significance level 5%

The normality test results (see Table 2) show that the data of this study are normally distributed because the critical ratio (CR) value of Multivariate is below 5. This indicates that the research data is very good for further processing until the test phase of the model and hypothesis.

**Table 2**  
Assessment of Normality

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
CO1	4.000	5.000	-0.212	-1.284	-0.589	-1.786
CO2	3.000	5.000	-0.369	-2.238	-0.050	-0.153
CO3	3.000	5.000	-0.164	-0.996	-0.566	-1.717
UA1	4.000	5.000	-0.064	-0.390	-0.208	-0.633
UA2	4.000	5.000	0.168	1.022	-0.414	-1.255
UA3	4.000	5.000	-0.137	-0.833	-0.197	-0.599
LO1	3.000	5.000	-0.082	-0.496	-0.051	-0.154
LO2	3.000	5.000	-0.206	-1.248	-0.172	-0.520
LO3	3.000	5.000	-0.297	-1.802	0.307	0.932
MA1	3.000	5.000	-0.401	-2.434	-0.003	-0.009
MA2	3.000	5.000	-0.307	-1.860	-0.523	-1.586
MA3	3.000	5.000	-0.345	-2.096	-0.236	-0.716
PD3	3.000	5.000	-0.344	-2.087	0.645	1.957
PD2	3.000	5.000	-0.338	-2.050	-0.087	-0.263
PD1	3.000	5.000	-0.371	-2.250	0.469	1.423
EP1	4.000	5.000	-0.304	-1.844	-0.679	-2.060
EP2	4.000	5.000	-0.260	-1.576	-0.830	-2.519
EP3	3.000	5.000	-0.342	-2.078	0.146	0.443
EP4	3.000	5.000	-0.412	-2.502	-0.281	-0.851
CA4	3.000	5.000	-0.108	-0.653	-0.756	-2.293
CA3	3.000	5.000	-0.334	-2.026	-0.736	-2.232
CA2	3.000	5.000	-0.139	-0.843	-0.622	-1.889
CA1	3.000	5.000	-0.224	-1.358	-0.721	-2.187
Multivariate					19.524	4.279

The test model (see Table 3) on exogenous variables shows that the value of Chi-square = 116.309; DF = 85; Significance = 0.014; GFI = 0.936; TLI = 0.981; AGFI = 0.909; CFI = 0.984; RMSEA = 0.041; CMIN/DF = 1.368. Test models on endogenous variables indicate that the value of Chi-square = 24.174; DF = 19; Significance = 0.190; GFI = 0.973; TLI = 0.996; AGFI = 0.950; CFI = 0.997; RMSEA = 0.035; CMIN/DF = 1.272. Tests on the full model

show that the Chi-square value = 237.676; DF = 223; Significance = 0.012; GFI = 0.904; TLI = 0.985; AGFI = 0.881; CFI = 0.987; RMSEA = 0.032; CMIN/DF = 1.227. The model test results show that these values meet the criteria so that they can indicate a fit model.

**Table 3**  
Model Fit Testing

Model	Chi-square	DF	Significance	GFI	TLI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA	CMIN/DF
Exogenous	116.309	85	0.014	0.936	0.981	0.909	0.984	0.041	1.368
Endogenous	24.174	19	0.190	0.973	0.996	0.950	0.997	0.035	1.272
Full model	237.676	223	0.012	0.904	0.985	0.881	0.987	0.032	1.227

Hypothesis test results (see Table 4) show that C.R values for H1, H2, H3, H5, and H6 are above 1.98. This indicates a significant influence. Therefore, the proposed hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H5, and H6 are accepted. The results of hypothesis testing H4 were rejected because the value of C.R (1.682) was below 1.98. This shows that uncertainty avoidance has no significant effect on affective commitment. This is caused by the employee's inability to make decisions to avoid uncertainty in the future, thereby reducing organizational responsibility and commitment. This result is in line with the findings of Szolucha (2013) that improper decision making in avoiding uncertainty impedes organizational commitment.

**Table 4**  
Hypotheses Testing

			Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p
Power Distance	→	Affective Commitment	0.602	0.984	2.244	0.025
Collectivism	→	Affective Commitment	0.222	0.202	2.244	0.025
Masculinity	→	Affective Commitment	0.521	0.313	4.427	***
Uncertainty Avoidance	→	Affective Commitment	0.156	0.141	1.682	0.092
Long-term Orientation	→	Affective Commitment	0.382	0.284	3.201	0.001
National Culture	→	Affective Commitment	0.684	0.439	4.211	***
Affective Commitment	→	Employee Performance	0.192	0.066	2.733	0.006

Note: \*\*\* significance level 5%

Squared multiple correlations show that power distance, collectivism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation affect affective commitment by 46.8%. Furthermore, power distance, collectivism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and affective commitment together affect employee performance by 70.3%.

The results of this study found that power distance has a significant effect on affective commitment. Power distance is related to individual beliefs about status, authority, and power in an organization. The lower the level of power distance in an organization, the more it encourages higher organizational commitment (Gul et al., 2018; Stammerjohan et al., 2015).

Collectivism shows a caring attitude to others and is not selfish (S. K. Kim, 2003). Employees who identify with an organization are more likely to feel a strong commitment to the organization's vision, values and long-term goals by maintaining their loyalty and membership. Employee collectivism orientation is also able to encourage a sense of pride in the organization (Oo, Jung, & Park, 2018).

Masculinity measures the extent to which social gender roles are differentiated in organizations. Members of organizations with a culture of masculinity tend to feel more comfortable with an organization that is goal-



oriented, has a strong relationship with progress, challenges, recognition, higher income, performance, and competition among colleagues facilitated by the organization (Newburry & Yakova, 2006). The findings of this study are supported by (Ganesh & Paramasivam Ganesh, 2014; Stergiou-Kita et al., 2017) that the higher the level of masculinity in an organization, the more it encourages greater organizational commitment.

Experts argue that trust and strong ties in organizations are driven by long-term orientation through an emphasis on social sanctions (Patterson, Cowley, & Prasongsukarn, 2006). As a result, employees who have long-term orientation norms and values are more likely to choose long-term relationships with the organization. Employees with high long-term orientation tend to participate in various activities actively. They also tend to have open attitudes towards values and challenging opportunities that further enhance affective commitment. Khunsoonthornkit and Panjakajornsak (2018); Meyer et al. (2002) believe that strong affective commitment can improve the application of behavior that is beneficial to the goals set by the organization. Employees who have high affective commitment have a sense of belonging to the organization, so they have a high level of enthusiasm to do the work and achieve the goals set.

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## 5. Conclusion

This study concludes that national culture (i.e., power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and long-term orientation) significantly affects affective commitment, which, in turn, increases employee performance. The findings of this study contribute to the development of literature by showing that national culture influences affective commitment and employee performance.

Despite contributing to the literature, this study has limitations. The research data comes only from one type of organization that prevents the generalization of the findings. Therefore, future studies are urgently needed to overcome the limitations of this research and expand understanding of the role of effective national culture, for example, in hospitality, SMEs, educational institutions, and government.

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