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The effect of organisational culture on interorganisational relationship and firm performance

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Abstract: Interorganisational relationships have often been associated as antecedents of financial and market performance. However, little is known about its effects on operational performance that is relevant to firm competitiveness and sustainability. On the other hand, studies relating to firms' culture within interorganisational relationships are scarce. In this sense, this study is unique in that it explores the influence of cultural dimensions on operational performance within interorganisational relationships. Using a survey questionnaire, 154 responses were collected from suppliers of a large service organisation. A regression analysis was accomplished, demonstrating a significant moderating effect of cultural dimensions (governance formalism and strategic focus) on relationship commitment, investment, and operational performance. This research helps managers to reveal the cultural characteristics of suppliers that improve operational performance, suggesting the significance of additional studies focusing on culture, performance, and interorganisation relationships. Besides, it demonstrates the importance and impact of cultural dimensions on interorganisational relationships and firms' operational performance.

Keywords: relationship marketing; performance; organisational culture; interorganisational networks; supply chain management.

JEL codes: M100, M140.

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1 Introduction

Attempts made by marketers and researchers to uncover the factors driving supply chain performance are recurring in the literature, understanding that interorganisational relationships can support managers' actions in developing strategies to improve outcomes and efficiency (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Theron and Terblanche, 2010; Schneider et al., 2017; Singh and Misra, 2021).

Companies have increasingly prioritised process improvement initiatives and organisational and productive efficiency as crucial elements to maintaining competitiveness (Hagemeister and Rodríguez-Castellanos, 2019). They have focused on their *core business*, and with outsourcing being a growing practice with intensification since the early 1990s, it represents a fertile field for studies on the subject (Dieese, 2010). The outsourcing process is challenging due to the efforts required to manage a *business-to-business* (B2B) relationship. In the utilities sector, firms frequently outsource over 50% of their consumer services, besides the observed variability in contractor's performance, whether operational (increasing costs or generating inefficient services) or financial. These behaviours often entail, among other consequences, financial losses, curtailment of services provided to consumers, and ending many times with the bankruptcy of the contracted companies (IAB, 2019).

Long-term relationships contribute to reduce transaction costs and promote investments in assets that support these relationships (de Souza and Brito, 2011). In this sense, the relational view of strategic management offers an appropriate theoretical background for the research, as the relational theory gets the inter-organisational level of

analysis and focus on the extent to which relational abilities create the foundation of sustainable strategic advantages (Paulraj et al., 2008; Chen et al., 2013; Jääskeläinen, 2021). The relational view contributes and broadens the resource-based view (RBV), focusing on endogenous and firm-individual resources. On the other hand, the relational view brings theory analysis to the interorganisational level and is considered a driver of firm performance (Paulraj et al., 2008; Jääskeläinen, 2021). The literature suggests that well-structured interorganisational relationships positively influence contractors' financial performance because most companies take advantage of other organisations' resources and capabilities to be more effective and competitive Rajagopal and Davila, 2020). Relationship marketing, in the interorganisational context, is associated with performance, profit, and sales in a relevant number of scientific studies (Palmatier et al., 2006; Palmatier et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2016; Itani et al., 2019). In this sense, these studies applied specific performance measurements, as financial measures (such as profitability and sales growth rate) and subjective measures (i.e., perceived satisfaction and intention to leave the relationship). However, studies that relate relationship marketing variables to the contractor's operational performance are non-existent, despite its importance for sustainability, margins, and costs levels.

On the other hand, one of the factors frequently pointed to contribute to a firm's performance is its organisational culture. The definition of organisational culture suggests that it is composed of a set of values, beliefs, and assumptions shared by certain social groups, affecting organisations' long-term performance and effectiveness (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Schneider et al., 2017). In this sense, besides the literature points to the relevance of structured supply chains and organisational networks as drivers of firm performance, culture is frequently studied in a focal organisation, not considering its interoganisational context. Therefore, scarce research associated culture and performance in interorganisational contexts (Cameron et al., 1991; Schein, 2004; Cameron and Quinn, 2006; Itani et al., 2019). Samaha et al. (2014) explored how culture affects interorganisational relationships, demonstrating relevant impacts. However, the research compared country cultures and not companies cultures, leaving the gap in the triad of organisational culture-relationship-performance opened. In a rare attempt to explore the phenomena, Zhang et al. (2016) classified the interorganisational relationships' development into states according to trust, commitment, dependence, and relational norms. The results suggest that companies' characteristics could be involved in relationship development and influence their relationships and performance.

Therefore, relevant research was produced relating to interorganisational relationships and performance, being measured bet and financial indicators (Chen et al., 2013; O'Connor et al., 2020). On the other hand, operational performance (de Souza and Brito, 2011; Al-Tit, 2017) is a source of competitive advantage and firm sustainability. Liu et al. (2020) consider operational performance as strategic dimensions of competing firms and consist of operating excellence, achieved through indicators such as flexibility, efficiency, quality, and delivery levels. The literature suggests that operational performance is relevant to support the market and financial performance. In some cases, it is the unique source of a firm's competitive advantage and sustainability (Al-Tit, 2017). Besides this, the research on interorganisational relationships and performance has focused on market and financial performance and does not reveal how interorganisational relationships could contribute to operational excellence.

Instead, significant research was produced regarding organisational culture (OC) since the term was introduced by Dr. Elliott Jaques in his book *The Changing Culture of a Factory* (Jaques, 1951). The results of the research produced are mostly focused on the individual firm as the locus of the studies and point to a significant impact of OC on innovation and financial/market performance of firms (Hock et al., 2016; Jogaratnam, 2017).

Nevertheless, despite the relevance of interorganisational relationships, the acceptance that culture is an antecedent of a firm's performance, and the fact that operational performance is considered a relevant driver of competitive advantage and sustainability of firms, no research has been accomplished with a scope that associates the phenomenon regarding these three domains.

Accordingly, the following two research objectives frame our study's intended contribution:

- 1 to empirically demonstrate the influence of organisational culture on operational performance
- 2 explore the relationships among cultural dimensions and firm investments regarding interorganisational relationships.

This study thus contributes to the previous research in the following ways. First, we extend interorganisational research, revealing antecedents of operational performance. Second, the study demonstrates how organisational culture moderates the effects of commitment on operational performance. Third, we show how culture could enhance investments in the relationship. Finally, we develop managerial insights from our research as it explains a significant part of operational performance, allowing improvements in management practices with relevant theoretical implications.

The article is structured as follows: the introduction is presented in Section 1, and the conceptual background is outlined in Section 2. The development of the research hypotheses is provided in Section 3, and the methods are described in Section 4. The results and discussion are provided in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 sets forth the final considerations, presented as managerial implications, research limitations, and future research directions.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Organisational culture

According to Lim (1992), a definition of culture is related to the values, attitudes, and behaviour shared within a society, organisation, or group. Bauman (1998) argues that the notion of culture was born in the late eighteenth century on the threshold of modernity. Bauman (1998, p.163) asserts that "the notion of culture was coined after the factory's pattern of order". It was a vision centred on the time and existing theoretical development. For the author, certain early notions of culture have resisted the passage of time, such as the belief that culture is related to the establishment of order; the necessity of coherence and non-contradiction of its norms, and the notion of functionality or utilitarianism of cultural aspects and the notion of structurality of the cultural system.

As early as 1960, Elton Mayo envisioned symbolic, ideological systems in organisations. The same author also notes that as early as 1951, Elliot Jaques used the expression 'corporate culture', focusing on the process of integrating new members of an organisation (Silva, 2003). Yet, it was not until the 1980s that culture studies emerged as a new field of work for anthropology: private organisations, which turned to anthropologists to solve organisational problems. This movement occurs precisely with the strengthening of the notion of corporate culture, developed by theorists such as Pettigrew (1979), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Peters et al. (1982) and Schein (2004). However, these authors, belonging to the collective defined by Smircich (1983) as corporate culture, believe that organisations are themselves producers of culture. They would then be seen as producers of material goods and having a culture as a byproduct, as an abstraction, with concrete behavioural and attitudinal consequences (Schein, 2004).

2.2 Organisational culture and performance

The way an organisation conducts its business and seeks to achieve its goals and objectives (beliefs, values, attitudes, symbols, and behaviours) characterises the cultural organisation (Iljins et al., 2015; Ramos and Silva, 2019). Under these circumstances, culture influences a company's internal procedures and interacts with members and interacts with partners, stakeholders, and the market (Barney, 1986). Besides, though an organisation may have an organisational culture that permeates all its units, different subunits may have unique characteristics (Quinn et al., 1991; Cameron and Quinn, 2006; Tan, 2019).

Organisational performance has many facets and frequently changing goals (Singh and Misra, 2021), associated with an organisation's ability to sustain long-term profitability. According to Tan (2019), two theories support this perspective: the first is developing competitive advantage through the organisational resource. The second suggests that the focus should be on product and market competition. In this perspective, McGahan and Porter (1997) found that the first 'specific effect of the organisation' managed to explain 32% of the variations that happen in profitability. The second, the 'industrial effect', can explain 19%, reinforcing both perspectives' relevance.

Many academics who follow the organisational culture line claim that culture affects organisations' long-term performance and effectiveness (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Cameron and Quinn, 2006; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Tan, 2019). Of the 100 largest companies of 1900, only 16 still exist. Such a dramatic change in organisational survival is associated with shifting from an industry-based economy to an information-based economy. From the 1990s onwards, more investments were made in computing and communication equipment than on combined industrial, mining, agricultural, and construction equipment, suggesting a relationship between their adaptability culture to change and sustain their longevity (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). These contemporary characteristics result in changing competitive environments becoming ubiquitous, frequent, and unpredictable. Those characteristics imply organisations must be able to transform themselves to survive effectively, and the challenge is, therefore, how to change to increase organisational effectiveness (Cameron et al., 1991; Cameron and Quinn, 2006).

One argument may be that many companies' competitiveness is related to their employees' performance (and collaborators), associated with personal and organisational

factors (Matthews et al., 2020; Harris and Ogbonna, 2011). For Cameron and Quinn (2006), the most successful firms in the American market of the last twenty years are derived from their distinctive and identifiable organisational culture.

2.3 Organisational culture typologies

Organisational culture is very broad and inclusive in scope, comprising a complex, interrelated, and ambiguous set of factors (Gerhart, 2009). For this reason, no single approach can comprehensively address organisational culture completely or definitively (Quinn et al., 1991; Cameron and Quinn, 2006). According to Kalemci et al. (2019) substantial efforts to verify how organisational culture impacts performance in different countries and cultures have been observed based on Hofstede's (1991) models. In this sense, Gerhart (2008) observed empirically that the country does not justify most of the variations found in organisational cultures. For this, he presented a model that favours the most variations and that as differences would be associated at the company level.

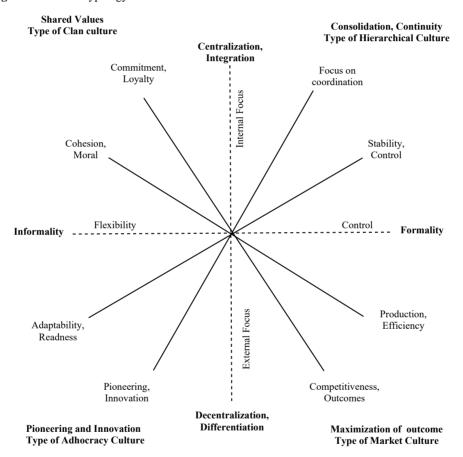
On the other hand, it is worth mentioning specific relevant efforts on organisational culture typologies, such as the models proposed by Cameron and Freeman (1991) and Ouchi (1980). In this sense, Tsui et al. (2006) explored organisational clusters in China through a study with three stages. The authors identified four clusters of organisational culture. They observed that the cultural clusters identified as highly integrative (high external adaptation and high internal integration) and market-oriented presented a higher impact on the firms' performance. Despite the differences between countries, we observe some similarity to our results as the clusters classified as 'market-oriented', and 'adhocracy' presented higher impacts on operational performance.

The typology proposed by Deshpandé et al. (1993) is a development of previous perspectives of Cameron and Freeman (1991) and Quinn (1988), and considered two key dimensions to define culture types, establishing a merge of two major theoretical traditions from the organisational behaviour literature: the systems-structural perspective (van de Ven, 1976) and the transaction cost perspective, which is also grounded in economics (Williamson, 1975). The framework proposed and the related proposals of Deshpandé et al. (1993) were adopted by many researchers, as the original paper has 6,417 citations, including 303 from 2020 to 2021 (Google Scholar, 2021). This approach and its variants have been used as an antecedent of firm development (Sun and Xu, 2012), service level (Mandal et al., 2020), innovativeness and customer orientation (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Ergun, 2018;), employee performance (Fletcher, 1998; Al-Shammari and Al-Am, 2018), cooperative firms outcomes (Kyriakopoulos et al., 2004), marketing orientation (Steinman et al., 2000), performance (Deshpandé and Farley, 2004; Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2016) and competitive advantage (Shaari, 2019).

Therefore, this study used a taxonomy that classifies organisational cultures into four quadrants, based on Carl Jung's typology of four psychological archetypes. Each cultural type is associated with a particular kind of leadership that reinforces and shares its values: clan (or group), hierarchy (or formality), adhocracy, and market (Cameron et al., 1991). While they may seemingly be contrasting, typological approaches can coincide, contributing to understanding organisational dynamics' complexity (Quinn et al., 1991). The types that make up the typology are modal or dominant, rather than mutually exclusive, implying that there may be several types of culture present in an organisation. However, over time, a cultural variety will become dominant (Deshpandé et al., 1993). This proposal is presented in Figure 1, which consists of four quadrants defined by

two axes. Vertical axes range from an internal focus to external focus, and horizontal axes range from flexibility to control. Each quadrant of the model represents one of the cultural typologies. The quadrant called clan culture emphasises the value of human resources, training, in addition to morality and cohesion. Then, in the adjacent quadrant entitled adhocracy culture, we observe characteristics emphasising acquiring resources, external support, adaptability, growth, and readiness. The focus is on efficiency, productivity, goal setting, and planning in the market culture quadrant. Finally, the hierarchy quadrant, control, stability, management, and communication of information, are the main relevant elements.

Figure 1 Culture typology used in the research



Source: Adapted from Quinn et al. (1991), Deshpandé et al. (1993) and Cameron and Quinn (2006)

Clan culture is based on shared values and common goals, which are developed over time under stable conditions, lack of institutional alternatives, and intense interaction between members. Seeking to build relationships of commitment and loyalty is a typical family organisation culture (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

An adhocracy culture type is based on temporary strategies modified every time organisational goals are achieved and resumed or whenever new plans emerge. It evaluates and innovation with stimulation to creativity. Adhocracy is a culture commonly associated with project development organisations such as the entertainment, software development, and space industries (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

Market culture focuses on transactions with the environment outside the organisation rather than internal management, with an emphasis on competitiveness, productivity and focus on outcomes (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

Hierarchical culture already has a formal organisational structure, well-defined norms, rules and procedures, control and responsibilities, and a focus on coordination (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

According to Tsui et al. (2006), organisational culture types are incredibly relevant to impact organisational performance. Those types are more expressive than the unity or strength of the organisational culture. The four cultural profiles described consist of an idealised typology, as the dimensions that are observable in firm's culture. They have been applied in classic models such as the *competing values approach* (CVF), which is related to the study of effectiveness in organisations (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018). In their research, Deshpandé et al. (1993) used a scale adapted from the work of Cameron et al. (1991), based on CVF.

The dynamic of the continuum between flexibility and stability exhibits the contrast between order and control values at one end of the spectrum and values related to change and innovation at the other end (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

The dynamics between internal and external values is another continuum that is examined. From an external point of view, the organisation must perform its tasks and acquire resources to improve its position in the environment. While from an internal point of view, the emphasis is on stability and relationships in the workplace to enhance employees' well-being (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019).

According to Quinn et al. (1991), the vertical axis of the model represents a continuum of instrumental questions (differentiation of parts) to questions of attainment (integration of elements), and the horizontal axis represents a continuum of internal problems for solving external questions.

3 Development of hypotheses

Based on the authors presented in the review, the hypotheses were developed, involving culture, relational variables, and performance.

Deshpandé et al. (1993) regard performance as a complex and multicausal issue that depends on factors internal to an organisation and its strategy. According to these authors, the internal or external focus is the classification. Internally focused companies that commit to the hierarchical-type relationships and created a culture focused on the internally centralised defined goals (Cameron et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Yu and Wu, 2009; Morgan and Vorhies, 2018; Ramos and Silva, 2019). Organisations with

external focus are already recurrently cited and studied empirically as having the highest performance. For instance, is mentioned Narver and Slater (1990), Deshpandé et al. (1993) and Kohli and Jaworski (1990).

Conversely, organisational commitment to a relationship is considered an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship (Jap and Ganesan, 2000; Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Effects of impairment in the interorganisational context have been the motive of studies such as Palmatier et al. (2007), which find significant impacts. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment-trust perspective argues that a party's commitment and trust to the exchange partner determine relationship performance.

However, culture believed to be a trigger, a characteristic that permeates commitment, leading it to transform into deliberate actions that effectively increase or decrease performance. In this sense, it hoped that the cultural dimension 'internal/external strategic focus' could moderate companies' commitment to interorganisational relationships. As it is a matter of checking operational performance antecedents, the internal focus would broaden commitment by positively influencing operational performance. In contrast, companies with external focus priorities external effect actions (sales, market, environment and customers). The effect of the internal focus, in this case, would be to affect the commitment, and therefore, positively the operational performance since the production is an internal activity (Liu et al., 2020; Jap and Ganesan, 2000; Palmatier et al., 2007). Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1 There is a positive moderating effect of the cultural dimension strategic focus on organisational commitment's effect upon operational performance.

Organisational investment can be defined as the "investment made by a company in time, effort, expense and resources focused on building a strong relationship" [De Wulf et al., (2001), p.35]. According to Palmatier et al. (2007), transaction cost economics argues that specific investment transactions and opportunism influence parties in a business relationship and affect interorganisational performance (Heide and John, 1990).

Centralised companies with an internal focus would theoretically have more difficulty converting their investments into best practices. Unlike more informal companies, they are not aware of the external environment, especially technological changes (Harris and Ogbonna, 2011). The effective investment would require a better understanding of the market, customer needs, and processes to increase their effectiveness. Investments with external focus would be more targeted towards maximising resource use or reducing costs. Still, as it is in services, the provider is nothing more than a contracting company's continuity. In this sense, any investment centred on external focus and supply chain efficiency and contractor processes could positively affect performance (Cajuela and Galina, 2020). The following hypothesis was therefore proposed:

H2 There is a negative moderating effect of the cultural dimension strategic focus on organisational investment's effect upon operational performance.

'Extremely formal to extremely informal' is the classification considered for Deshpandé et al. (1993) as a governance dimension under the cultural. It is believed that companies with formal governance cannot adequately use their resources and investments to adapt to the demands and specifics of the environment due to the indirect emphasis on internal control, systems, and activities (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983; Cameron, 1985; Quinn et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993).

Compliance with defined practices that drive higher operational performance is usually related to commitment in companies with formal governance (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983; Cameron, 1985; Quinn et al., 1991; Deshpandé et al., 1993). In this sense, the Governance aspect moderates the effect of commitment on performance, as more formal companies tend to orient themselves more internally in their local processes and relationships, while informal companies tend to seek flexibility, which can undermine operational performance (Chen and Manley, 2014; Ke et al., 2015). The following hypothesis has therefore been proposed:

H3 There is a positive moderating effect of governance's cultural dimension on organisational commitment's effect upon operational performance.

Indicative of the impacts of specific investments in the relationship, it has been the subject of empirical research and evidence. Palmatier et al. (2007) demonstrated similar and equally essential roles in relationship investments and trust/commitment as precursors and main drivers of financial performance. There is also empirical and theoretical evidence that a firm's investment decisions are related to its governance style and that both aspects reflect its performance (Hutchinson and Gul, 2004). Claro et al. (2003) observe that managers must carefully consider each of the determinants of relational governance for managing a relationship, as they demonstrate governance impacts on financial performance and partner satisfaction. On the other hand, Wathne et al. (2018) study governance in the context of supplier-dealer relationships. Using a longitudinal study, the authors examine the roles of vendor selection efforts and specific mutual investments in vendor *ex-post* transaction costs, suggesting impacts on their performance.

According to Palmatier et al. (2007), managers can increase performance through specific investments to improve their relationship's effectiveness and efficiency to create value. Their research outcomes indicate that managers may find it productive to allocate more relationship marketing and investment efforts and exchanges in markets with higher uncertainty levels, suggesting a governance alignment of informal characteristics. Given this context, we have the following hypothesis:

H4 There is a negative moderating effect of governance's cultural dimension on organisational investment's effect upon operational performance.

4 Methods

This research was conducted at an electricity distribution concessionaire denominated, basically, by 'concessionaire alpha' or by 'borrower of services'. The observation units are from 1,342 concessionaire alpha suppliers who, through their legal representatives, participated in an electronic *survey* (using the *Survey Monkey* platform) of a descriptive and quantitative nature.

Via convenience sampling, 154 responses considered valid were obtained (11.48%). To verify a response pattern, the first and last 33% of responses were compared according to the time taken to complete the survey (divided the database into the first and last 33% respondents). No significant differences were found between the group means, indicating the absence of response patterns. Data analysis was performed in SPSS version 23.0.

The scales were adapted from previous studies, such as the scale developed by Deshpandé et al. (1993) through a study of marketing and purchasing executives from Japanese companies. This scale is adapted from Cameron et al. (1991) and Quinn (1988). In this adaptation of the CVF scale, Deshpandé et al. (1993) adopted the method of distributing 100 points among four descriptions, which are the four typologies of Cameron et al. (1991), concerning how similar the reports presented in the scale items are to those of the researched company. The result creates a score that will then be evaluated. Following is the description Table 1 of the operationalisation scales of the constructs used in this research.

 Table 1
 Operationalisation of the constructs

Construct	Source
Organisational culture	Deshpandé et al. (1993)
Organisational commitment	Morgan and Hunt (1994)
Organisational investment	Palmatier et al. (2007)
Operational performance	Devaraj et al. (2007)

4.1 Sample profile

Most suppliers are in the service sector (92%), 6% in the industrial sector, and 2% in commerce, while in terms of the CNAE or National Classification of Economic Activities, a higher prevalence of services is perceived (31%), construction (26%), electricity and gas (18%) and professional activities (15%). Suppliers had an average relationship of 12.1 years with the company studied (s = 13.9) and had an average existence of 18.7 years (s = 13.3).

4.2 Data analysis and validity of the measurements

The survey collected 165 questionnaires with 11 questionnaires contained more than 50% of missing data and were excluded. Therefore, 154 questionnaires were considered for analysis of outliers and statistical assumptions of multivariate techniques that were deemed adequate. Common method bias was evaluated using Harman's single-factor test (Hyman and Sierra, 2012). Therefore an unrotated exploratory factor analysis was accomplished, revealing a multi-factor structure. The first factor explained variance was 41%, below the threshold of 50%, implying that common method bias was not a concern.

In the subsequent step, evaluating the instrument's measuring quality was conducted (one-dimensionality, convergent validity, discriminant, reliability/ consistency). principal component analysis (PCA) was employed to verify the scale's unidimensionality (Dunn et al., 1994; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988), revealing the adequacy of structural models and measurements. Given these considerations, we proceeded to analyse the convergent (by the significance of factor loadings) and discriminant (intra and inter-construct variance method suggested by Fornell and Larcker, 1981) validity. While still regarding the reliability parameters, *Cronbach's alpha* (CA), the composite reliability (CR) (cutoff point 0.70), and the VME itself (cutoff point 0.50) were analysed (Hair et al., 2019). Table 2 summarises these validation steps and the correlation between the constructs and the overall measurement quality.

CR

CA

		1	2	3
1	Supplier commitment	0.71	0.36	0.54
2	Operational performance	0.13	0.77	0.37
3	Supplier investment	0.29	0.14	0.87
AVE		0.71	0.77	0.87

0.91

0.86

0.87

NA

0.96

0.95

 Table 2
 Evaluation of discriminant validity and overall quality of measurement

Notes: The table's data show the squared correlation, and the main diagonal is the AVE. When a value below the diagonal is higher than the AVE of the column or row, we would have the situation where the constructs' variance exceeds the items' explained variance, violating discriminant validity.

Source: Research data

It was no included previous analyses from the dimensions of the culture scale. They are constant sum scales, which generate full rank covariance/correlation matrices, i.e., inapplicable to analyses structural or factor equations (possessing perfect multicollinearity).

5 Results and discussion

5.1 Classification of cultural types of firms studies

The model's dimensions suggesting, the companies that obtained a higher score in that type of culture be in that clan. Therefore, the method classified firms according to the four culture types, using the indicators of the dimensions of the two axes, representing the organisation's focus (internal versus external) and the type of governance (formal versus informal). The internal focus was operationalised as the sum of the clan and hierarchical culture level, while the external focus was considered the sum of the adhocracy and market scores. Formal governance was considered the sum of hierarchical and market culture, while informal governance is the sum of clan and adhocracy culture. Therefore, it was possible to classify all company suppliers according to their predominant culture. According to the suppliers' cultural typology (see Table 3), attempted to elucidate the scores in the axes and dimensions. The main objective was to demonstrate the positioning of each distinct culture in their respective dimensions and axes and the percentage distribution of the sample according to its predominant cultural typology.

5.2 Moderating effect

This paper hypothesises that there is an interaction between the dimensions of organisational culture ('internal-external focus' [F] and 'formal-informal governance' [G]) on the impact of the commitment (C) and investment (I) relational variables on operational performance (OP). The regression models were accomplished following the approach suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). Auxiliary variables are created by multiplying independent variables and the moderators; both centred around two averages. The second step is to test whether there is a significant effect of the multiplicative terms

between the independent variables (IVs) and the moderators (Mod) on the dependent variables when controlled by the direct impact IVs. The existence of a significant moderator relationship shows that the size of the *beta* effect of each IV changes according to the magnitude of the moderator values. To test this hypothesis, we tested a multiple linear regression model with the dependent variable Operational Performance (OP), as shown in Table 4.

 Table 3
 Descriptive statistics for different cultural typologies

Dimensions	Clan –34%	Adhocracy –28%	Hierarchical –22%	Market –17%
Internal focus	65.1	42.0	56.6	40.1
External focus	34.9	58.0	43.4	59.9
Formal governance	35.1	36.9	60.1	62.5
Informal governance	64.9	63.1	39.9	37.5
Clan	46.3	23.0	18.2	18.2
Adhocracy	18.6	40.1	21.7	19.4
Hierarchical	18.8	19.0	38.4	21.9
Market	16.3	17.9	21.7	40.6
Internal (+) vs. external (-) focus	30.3	-16.0	13.2	-19.9
Formal (+) vs. informal (-) governance	-29.8	-26.2	20.2	24.9

 Table 4
 Regression model for operational performance (OP)

Variable	Coefficient			t-Te	t-Test	
variable	Original	Error	Beta	Statistic	Sig.	
(Constant)	3.823	0.601		6.359	0.000	
Commitment (C)	0.208	0.078	0.240	2.661	0.009	
Investment (I)	0.185	0.072	0.227	2.558	0.012	
Focus: internal (+) vs. external (-) (F)	0.003	0.005	0.038	0.484	0.629	
Governance: formal (+) vs. informal (-) (G)	0.006	0.005	0.107	1.361	0.176	
H1: Interaction: C × F	0.008	0.003	0.233	2.267	0.025	
H2: Interaction: I × F	-0.008	0.003	-0.251	-2.346	0.020	
H3: Interaction: C × G	0.000	0.003	0.006	0.058	0.954	
H4: Interaction: I × G	-0.002	0.003	-0.050	-0.492	0.623	

Note: $R^2 = 0.220$.

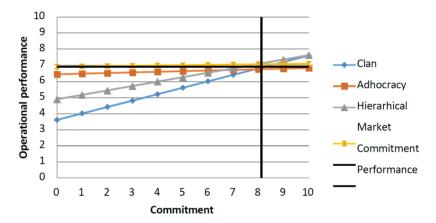
The initial regression model results showed a significant and positive interaction between commitment and internal-external, focus with a positive weight, and indicate that internally focused vendors achieve higher operational performance when they are most committed. Suppliers with an external focus get lower performance when they are more committed. The interaction graphs' resolution considering a standard deviation from the mean and taking the other variables in their mean values can be seen in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 1 shows that in those suppliers where an *internal focus* predominates, there is a tendency for operational performance to grow with increasing commitment. In companies

with an external focus, the effect of increased commitment is null to an increase in operating performance. It is also worth noting that different cultural typologies have distinct focus levels, with the clan and hierarchical cultures being internally focused. In contrast, the adhocracy and market cultures have an external focus. Considering the dimensions of internal and external emphasis in each predominant culture, the expected effect of commitment on different cultures' operational performance can be determined. It should be noted that the market and adhocracy cultures virtually do not experience an increased understanding from increased commitment. On the other hand, clan and hierarchical cultures tend to perform better with increasing commitment, with the most noticeable effect on Clan culture.

Also notable, in Table 4, is the significant effect of the interaction between supplier investment and focus. Conversely, for commitment, externally focused companies are those that increased investment in the relationship (adaptability and learning), obtained higher operational performance. However, in companies with an internal emphasis, more investment does not generate higher operational performance, perhaps due to the greater rigidity and difficulty of change required in more centralised power and control structures. In terms of culture, the following pattern is observed, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Effects of commitment on operational performance in different cultural typologies (see online version for colours)



On the other hand, Figure 3 demonstrates that *market* and *adhocracy* cultures can best transform their relational investments in operational performance, which is not the case for the *clan* and *hierarchical* companies.

The study results indicated that Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, while Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not empirically supported. Overall, the results suggest that organisational culture dimensions influence and shape how relational variables impact organisational performance in the service sector. In this sense, firms should understand their suppliers' culture if they want to receive efficient, responsive service, and in consequence, could pursue adequate cost structures, bringing competitive and higher levels of service to the contracting firm.

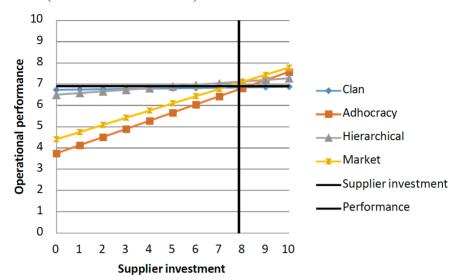


Figure 3 Effects of investment on operational performance in different cultural typologies (see online version for colours)

6 Conclusions

The establishment of relationships between culture and performance is recurrent in the literature and presents distinct approaches and methods. This search finds academic and professional support, given that culture is one of the determinants of the practices and institutional norms that dictate organisational functioning. In this regard, the search for idealised culture types that allow superior performance achievement is a usual goal in scientific studies.

These challenges are illustrated in the different ways the services sector, which, through increasing digital transformation, deals with a progressively dynamic and heterogeneous institutional environment, articulated through service providers' organisational networks. Thus, establishing cultural norms capable of promoting productivity is essential to maintain quality of services and country competitiveness and firm sustainability.

This study sought to shed light on this problem, emphasising culture not as an antecedent but as a mediator between relational antecedents and contractors' financial and operational performance in the services sector. The results suggest that cultural dimensions have a significant effect on these organisations' performance. In particular, commitment is the most relevant factor that determines performance in organisations with cultures with an internal focus ('clan' and 'hierarchical'). On the other hand, in organisations with external focus ('market' and 'adhocracy'), it is an investment in the relationship that determines the increase in operational performance.

Therefore, this work contributes to the research regarding the performance in supply chains, demonstrating the impacts of organisational culture on operational performance. The results generate a better understanding of the phenomenon and suggest how these

constructs interact within interrogational relationships, contributing to improving supply chain management knowledge (Theron and Terblanche, 2010; Liu et al., 2020).

6.1 Theoretical implications

This is the first study that relates organisational culture with operational performance with interorganisational relationships. It demonstrates the effect of specific culture types on performance and investment. In this sense, it broadens the study of interorganisational relationships' phenomenon to explain operational performance (OP), as the extant research has focused on practices as antecedents of OP. The cultural level can contribute to the sustainability of interorganisational relationships. It could be a relevant element to be added in supplier selection and supply chain management. It enables a new level of analysis regarding the performance research in supply chains. Therefore, the research agenda that adds culture as a relevant predictor of supply chain performance is a relevant theoretical contribution.

6.2 Managerial implications

As managerial contributions, the results suggest that suppliers' specific cultural dimensions contribute to their operational performance and increment investments in the relationships. In this sense, firms should care about these characteristics to contract suppliers, especially in service companies. Suppliers with higher operational performance would operate with lower costs, higher efficiency, and service level. These elements contribute to the contracting firm's performance and its results, as higher service quality is provided to its final consumers. They also contribute to the relationships' longevity, as they became more fruitful, enabling investments in the structure and resources inside the supplier to support the contractor's demands, providing a relevant basis as an antecedent of sustainability of the relationships and to the firms involved.

6.3 Suggestions for future studies and limitations

As suggestions for future studies, similar applications in other sectors may expand the field of knowledge relating to culture and performance and allow the identification of cultural patterns that lead to increased productivity, i.e., operational performance, as it is referred to in this study. The application is also suggested in different economic and political contexts in other countries. New studies could include more relational variables as subjective norms, trust, innovativeness, investment of the contracting firm to determine the effects of organisational culture on operational performance in the interorganisational context. On the other hand, studies could be conducted involving analysing how the relationship behaves over time, using time series, regarding cultural influences and operational performance, as suggested by Zhang et al. (2016).

The study was limited to researching the power sector of an emerging country, corroborating the field of study that relates performance with culture, analysing its effect now not necessarily as a predictor, but as more of a moderator of the relationship between relational antecedents and performance. Moreover, these results help develop exchanges of practices that seek to shape the culture to achieve superior performance in a way.

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