

# Building adaptive performance through knowledge competence, organizational culture, and perceived organizational support

Sri Wahyu Lelly Hana Setyanti, Singgih Bektiarso, Muhammad Ilham Naufal, Deki Zulkarnain

*Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Jember, Indonesia*

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## Abstract

This study aims to enhance adaptive performance through knowledge competence and organizational culture, combined with organizational support as the contributing factor or mediating variable. This study focused on MSMEs across various business sectors in Jember Regency, with a total of 295 respondents. For data analysis, this research utilized the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0. The results indicate a significant impact of knowledge competence and organizational culture on adaptive performance, which manifests directly and indirectly through perceived organizational support ( $p < 0.05$ ). The study's framework also reports  $R^2$  values of 0.826 for perceived organizational support and 0.848 for adaptive performance, indicating strong explanatory power. These findings highlight the need to incorporate individual competencies into the organizational factors to improve workers' adaptability. The practical implication is that MSME owners should invest in continuous professional development and cultivate a supportive work environment. Fair treatment, recognition, and sufficient resources are ways to improve organizational support within an institution, thereby further enhancing overall work performance and competitiveness in the long run.

**Keywords:** *adaptive performance, knowledge competence, organizational culture, perceived organizational support*

## Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) constitute a fundamental pillar of the national economy, contributing significantly to employment generation, income distribution, and the strengthening of domestic economic structures (Nasra et al., 2025). However, the increasingly dynamic and complex business environment requires MSMEs to demonstrate high adaptability. In this context, adaptive performance becomes a strategic necessity for sustaining and enhancing competitiveness.

Adaptive performance refers to an individual's ability to adjust behaviors and responses to changing work demands and environmental conditions (Gorostiaga et al., 2022; Vakola et al., 2022). In today's rapidly evolving workplace characterized by shifting organizational structures, changing job roles, and continuous technological advancements, employees are expected to be more flexible and responsive (Kaltiainen & Hakanen, 2022). Consequently, effective human resource management is critical, as organizational performance largely depends on the quality and capabilities of its human resources (Nasra et al., 2025).

One key factor influencing adaptive performance is knowledge competence, which reflects an individual's ability to acquire, integrate, share, and apply knowledge effectively in accomplishing work tasks (David et al., 2022; Sheng, 2024). In knowledge-driven organizations, employees are expected not only to possess expertise but also to continuously develop and apply their knowledge to support organizational objectives (Jun & Ming, 2022). However, in the absence of adequate learning systems and knowledge mechanisms, organizations may fail to fully leverage this competence (Rass et al., 2023).

In addition to individual competence, organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping employee behavior and performance. Organizational culture encompasses shared values, beliefs, and norms that guide how individuals interact and perform within an organization (Zakariyyah et al., 2021; Rass et al., 2023). A supportive culture that promotes learning, collaboration, and innovation can enhance employees' adaptability and improve overall performance (Aboobaker & Zakkariya, 2021; Prieto et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Perceived Organizational Support (POS) functions as a key psychological mechanism that strengthens the relationship between employees and the organization. According to organizational support theory, employees who perceive fair treatment, recognition, and supervisory support are more likely to feel valued and cared for (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Sartori et al., 2023). This perception fosters stronger commitment, motivation, and a willingness to contribute, which in turn enhances adaptive performance (Ekmekci et al., 2021; Jun & Ming, 2022).

Previous studies have demonstrated that knowledge competence and organizational culture significantly influence both POS and adaptive performance (Choi et al., 2022; Dawam et al., 2023; Bili et al., 2024; José et al., 2025). In addition, POS has been shown to affect adaptive performance (Chillakuri & Vanka, 2020; Sarwar et al., 2023; Zubair et al., 2021). However, inconsistent findings remain regarding the effect of POS on adaptive performance (Fetriah & Herminingsih, 2023). Moreover, limited research has examined the mediating role of POS in the relationships among knowledge competence, organizational culture, and adaptive performance, particularly in the MSME context. MSMEs in Jember frequently face constraints such as limited access to structured training, informal management practices, and resource limitations, which may influence how organizational support is perceived and how employees adapt to change.

While theory suggests POS enhances performance, MSMEs in Jember face unique hurdles such as limited knowledge competence, weakly embedded organizational culture, minimal managerial formalization, low digital literacy, and inconsistent perceptions of organizational support across informal work arrangements. Therefore, investigating how localized support systems can trigger adaptability is not just academically relevant, but economically vital for the region's resilience. Based on these gaps, this study aims to examine the effects of knowledge competence and organizational culture on adaptive performance while incorporating Perceived Organizational Support as a mediating variable. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of human resource management literature and, practically, to assist MSMEs in designing strategies that enhance adaptive, innovative, and sustainable workforce performance.

Knowledge competence refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to acquire, integrate, share, and apply knowledge effectively in accomplishing work tasks and achieving organizational objectives (David et al., 2022; Sheng, 2024). In dynamic work environments, knowledge competence enables employees to respond to change, solve problems, and adapt to new situations, thereby enhancing adaptive performance (Pelgrim et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2023).

From an organizational perspective, the development of knowledge competence is closely associated with the level of support provided by the organization. When organizations facilitate learning, knowledge sharing, and skill development through supportive policies and practices, employees are more likely to perceive higher organizational support (Chillakuri & Vanka, 2020; Choi et al., 2022). This perception, in turn, strengthens employees' motivation to utilize their competencies effectively. Empirical studies have confirmed that knowledge competence significantly influences both perceived organizational support and adaptive performance (Dawam et al., 2023; Bili et al., 2024; Nasra et al., 2025). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H1a: Knowledge competence has a significant effect on perceived organizational support.*

*H1b: Knowledge competence has a significant effect on adaptive performance.*

Organizational culture refers to a system of shared values, beliefs, and norms that guide employee behavior and interactions within an organization (Schein, 2010; Robbins & Judge, 2017). A strong organizational culture fosters a supportive work environment that encourages collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning. Such a culture not only enhances employees' adaptability but also strengthens their perception of organizational support. When organizations emphasize fairness, recognition, and open communication, employees are more likely to feel valued and supported, which in turn positively influences their attitudes and performance (Choi et al., 2021; José et al., 2025). Previous studies have demonstrated that organizational culture significantly affects both perceived organizational support and adaptive performance (Bili et al., 2024; Prieto et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H2a: Organizational culture has a significant effect on perceived organizational support.*

*H2b: Organizational culture has a significant effect on adaptive performance.*

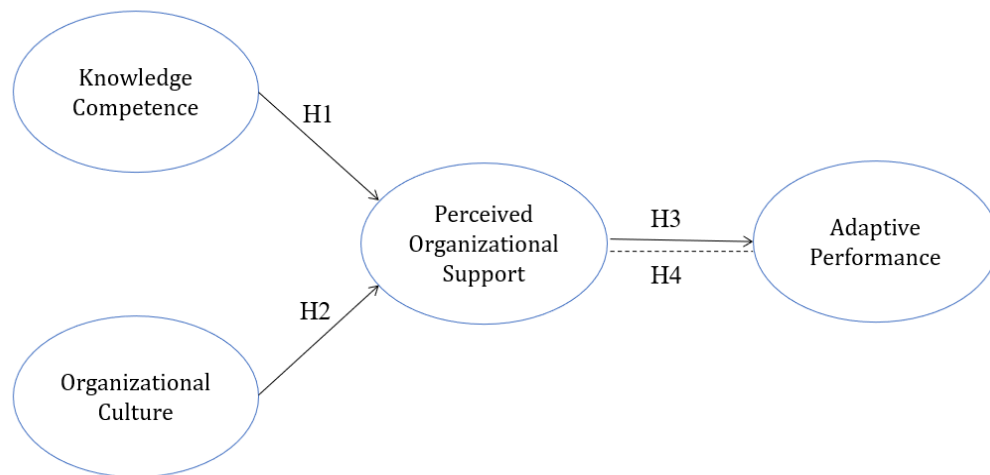
Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Usadolo et al., 2022). POS plays a critical role in shaping employees' psychological states, including motivation, commitment, and willingness to contribute. When employees perceive high levels of organizational support, they tend to feel psychologically secure and more confident in adapting to changes in their work environment. This condition encourages proactive behavior, knowledge sharing, and adaptability, which are essential components of adaptive performance (Ahli et al., 2024; Sarwar et al., 2023). Although numerous studies have found that POS significantly influences adaptive performance (Chillakuri & Vanka, 2020; Zubair et al., 2021), some have reported inconsistent findings (Fetriah & Herminingsih, 2023). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H3: Perceived organizational support has a significant effect on adaptive performance.*

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) can function as a mediating variable that explains how organizational factors influence employee performance. When organizations invest in developing knowledge competence and fostering a supportive culture, employees are more likely to perceive greater organizational support, which subsequently enhances their adaptive performance. Through this mechanism, POS strengthens the relationship between knowledge competence, organizational culture, and adaptive performance by reinforcing employees' motivation and willingness to meet organizational expectations (Kao et al., 2023; Wahyono & Hutahayan, 2021). Previous research has also highlighted the mediating role of POS in linking organizational factors to performance outcomes (José et al., 2025). Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H4a: Perceived organizational support mediates the effect of knowledge competence on adaptive performance.*

*H4b: Perceived organizational support mediates the effect of organizational culture on adaptive performance.*



**Figure 1. Research Framework**

**Methods**

This study employs a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among knowledge competence, organizational culture, perceived organizational support, and adaptive performance. The research was conducted in February 2026 among MSMEs in Jember Regency, involving 295 respondents selected through simple random sampling. From this population, 295 respondents were selected using simple random sampling based on the following criteria: (1) MSMEs that had been operating for at least one years, (2) Including several sectors such as manufacturing, service, fashion, culinary and others. Data were collected using structured questionnaires based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement instruments were adapted from previously validated studies.

**Table 1. Respondent Characteristics**

Demographic Characteristics		n	Percent
Education	Senior High School	148	50.2%
	Diploma	82	27.8%
	Bachelor	65	22.0%
Age	21 - 30 years old	72	24.4%
	31 - 40 years old	109	36.9%
	41 - 50 years old	78	26.4%
	> 50 years old	36	12.2%
Gender	Male	140	47.5%
	Female	155	52.5%
Sector	Services	63	21.4%
	Manufacturing	48	16.3%
	Fashion	37	12.5%
	Culinary	109	36.9%
	Other	38	12.9%
Years of Operation	1 - 5 years	104	35.3%
	6 - 10 years old	86	29.2%
	11 - 15 years old	61	20.7%
	> 15 years old	44	14.9%

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling

(PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0. This method was selected due to its capability to analyze complex relationships and test both direct and indirect effects simultaneously. The sample size meets the minimum requirement for PLS-SEM, which recommends a sample size of at least ten times the maximum number of structural paths (Hair et al., 2019). Knowledge competence (X1) and organizational culture (X2) were treated as independent variables, perceived organizational support as the mediating variable, and adaptive performance as the dependent variable. The respondents' characteristics are presented in Table 1 below.

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents have a senior high school education (50.2%), followed by diploma holders (27.8%) and bachelor's degree holders (22.0%). Most respondents (36.9%) fall within the age range of 31 to 40 years, indicating that individuals in their productive years are highly engaged in entrepreneurial activities. The gender distribution is relatively balanced, with 52.5% female and 47.5% male respondents. In terms of business sectors, culinary enterprises account for the largest proportion (36.9%). Furthermore, 35.3% of businesses have been operating for one to five years, suggesting a relatively young and developing MSME landscape.

### Result and Discussions

To ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs, this study employed a comprehensive measurement approach. Each construct was assessed using a set of indicators adapted from prior studies. The main statistical results are presented in the following tables. The measurement and structural models were analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0.

**Table 2. Measurement Variable**

Item	Reference Adopted	Item	Loading Factor
KC	(Chen et al., 2023)	Job-related knowledge	0.732
		Conceptual understanding	0.913
		Knowledge application	0.860
		Organizational/contextual knowledge	0.931
		Knowledge updating/learning	0.739
OC	(Prieto et al., 2021)	Shared values & beliefs	0.796
		Norms	0.846
		Performance orientation	0.839
		Team orientation	0.798
		Adaptability	0.705
POS	(Bhatti et al., 2022)	Employee Wellbeing	0.870
		Contribution Recognition	0.735
		Fair Treatment	0.757
		Supervisory Support	0.752
		Resource Availability	0.868
AP	(Gorostiaga et al., 2022; Kaltiainen & Hakanen, 2022)	Handling change	0.740
		Creative problem solving	0.764
		Learning agility	0.757
		Interpersonal adaptability	0.846
		Resilience under stress	0.827

The PLS-SEM approach enables the evaluation of complex relationships among variables, including hypothesis testing through bootstrapping, as well as the assessment of construct validity and path coefficients (Richter et al., 2022). Validity testing was conducted to determine whether the collected data met the required measurement standards. The results of the variable measurements are presented in Table 2. Referring to Table 2, the indicators used in this study were adapted from prior research, along with their corresponding outer loading values. The results indicate that all loading factors exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, suggesting that the indicators meet the criteria for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, all indicators are considered valid and suitable for further analysis. Furthermore, discriminant validity was assessed to ensure that each construct is distinct from the others. The results of the discriminant validity test are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity**

Item	Adaptive Performance	Knowledge Competence	Organizational Culture	Perceived Organizational Support
X1.1	0.644	<b>0.732</b>	0.608	0.661
X1.2	0.724	<b>0.913</b>	0.727	0.727
X1.3	0.708	<b>0.860</b>	0.684	0.660
X1.4	0.696	<b>0.931</b>	0.722	0.722
X1.5	0.709	<b>0.739</b>	0.718	0.691
X2.1	0.650	0.610	<b>0.796</b>	0.607
X2.2	0.694	0.693	<b>0.846</b>	0.684
X2.3	0.703	0.686	<b>0.839</b>	0.704
X2.4	0.701	0.689	<b>0.798</b>	0.682
X2.5	0.600	0.611	<b>0.705</b>	0.657
Z1.1	0.669	0.734	0.750	<b>0.870</b>
Z1.2	0.744	0.604	0.742	<b>0.735</b>
Z1.3	0.600	0.611	0.605	<b>0.757</b>
Z1.4	0.677	0.660	0.652	<b>0.752</b>
Z1.5	0.749	0.711	0.668	<b>0.868</b>
Y1.1	<b>0.740</b>	0.672	0.713	0.639
Y1.2	<b>0.764</b>	0.604	0.752	0.735
Y1.3	<b>0.757</b>	0.645	0.678	0.618
Y1.4	<b>0.846</b>	0.768	0.728	0.708
Y1.5	<b>0.827</b>	0.734	0.690	0.730

As shown in Table 3, all indicators for adaptive performance, knowledge competence, organizational culture, and perceived organizational support exhibit loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70, with most values ranging from 0.73 to 0.93. This indicates that each indicator adequately represents its respective construct.

In addition, each indicator loads more strongly on its corresponding construct than on other constructs, confirming that the model satisfies the criteria for discriminant validity. Overall, these findings suggest that the measurement model demonstrates good validity and reliability. Further assessment of construct reliability and validity, including Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha, is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. AVE, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha Test**

Analysis Type	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Knowledge Competence	0.677	0.911	0.874
Organizational Culture	0.581	0.872	0.815
Perceived Organizational Support	0.582	0.871	0.823
Adaptive Performance	0.621	0.891	0.846

Referring to Table 4, all constructs meet the recommended thresholds for validity and reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, both Composite Reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory internal consistency. These results indicate that all variables in this study are valid and reliable for further analysis. The effect size and predictive relevance of the model are presented in Table 5.

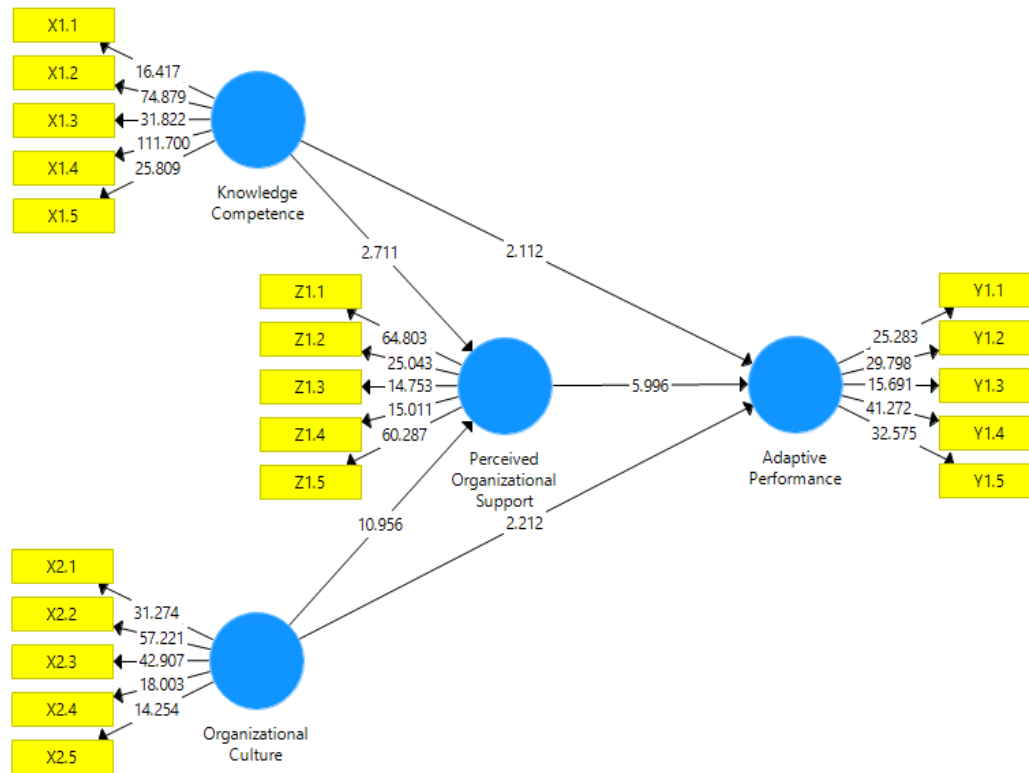
**Table 5. R-Square and F-Square Test**

Analysis Type	Path/Variable	Value	Interpretation
R Square	POS	0.826	82.6% variance explained
	AP	0.848	84.8% variance explained
F Square	KC – POS	0.045	Medium relation
	KC – AP	0.028	Medium relation
	OC – POS	0.537	Large relation
	OC – AP	0.034	Medium relation
	POS - AP	0.396	Large relation

The R-square ( $R^2$ ) values indicate the extent to which the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variables. As shown in Table 5, the  $R^2$  value for perceived organizational support (POS) is 0.826, indicating that its predictors explain 82.6% of the variance. Similarly, the  $R^2$  value for adaptive performance (AP) is 0.848, indicating that the model explains 84.8% of the variance in adaptive performance. These findings demonstrate that the structural model has strong explanatory power.

The F-square ( $f^2$ ) values were examined to assess the effect size of each exogenous variable on the endogenous constructs. The results indicate that organizational culture and perceived organizational support have stronger effects on adaptive performance compared to other variables. Meanwhile, knowledge competence also contributes to the model, although with a relatively smaller effect size.

According to Hair et al. (2019), the structural model explains the relationships among variables, whereas the measurement model specifies how each construct is operationalized and measured. The proposed research model and hypothesis development are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Structural Model of the Research**

Figure 2 illustrates the structural model of this study. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for this analysis, as it enables the assessment of complex relationships among variables and the evaluation of the model’s predictive capability (Hair et al., 2019).

Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the significance of the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables using a bootstrapping procedure. A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant (Hair et al., 2019). The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Hypothesis Testing**

Path/Variable	H	T Stat	P-Value	Remark
Knowledge Competence – POS	H1a	2.711	0.007	Accepted
Knowledge Competence – Adaptive Performance	H1b	2.112	0.035	Accepted
Organizational Culture – POS	H2a	7.956	0.000	Accepted
Organizational Culture – Adaptive Performance	H2b	2.212	0.027	Accepted
POS – Adaptive Performance	H3	5.996	0.000	Accepted
KC – POS - AP	H4a	2.610	0.009	Accepted
OC – POS – AP	H4b	5.147	0.000	Accepted

Based on Table 6, all proposed hypotheses are supported by the empirical results. Both direct and indirect effects are statistically significant, as indicated by T-statistics exceeding 1.96 and p-values below 0.05. These findings confirm that all hypothesized relationships among the variables are accepted. The findings indicate that knowledge competence has a significant effect on perceived organizational support (POS). This suggests that employees with higher levels of knowledge and skills are more likely to recognize and appreciate organizational support. When organizations invest in employee development and promote

knowledge sharing, employees tend to feel more valued, thereby strengthening their perception of organizational support (Choi et al., 2022; Dawam et al., 2023).

In addition, knowledge competence significantly influences adaptive performance. Employees with strong competencies are better equipped to respond to change, solve problems, and manage dynamic work demands. This finding reinforces the view that individual capability is a key driver of performance and highlights the importance of continuous investment in human capital development (Nasra et al., 2025; Setyanti et al., 2026). The results also demonstrate that organizational culture has a significant effect on POS. A work environment characterized by transparency, collaboration, and shared values enhances employees' sense of support and belonging. When employees trust the organization's goals and feel involved in decision-making processes, they are more likely to perceive the organization as supportive (Prieto et al., 2021; José et al., 2025).

Furthermore, organizational culture significantly influences adaptive performance. A culture that promotes learning, innovation, and collaboration enables employees to adapt more effectively to changing conditions. This finding confirms that organizational values and norms play a crucial role in shaping employee behavior and performance (Bili et al., 2024; Choi, 2020). Perceived organizational support is also found to have a significant effect on adaptive performance. When employees feel supported, they tend to experience greater psychological safety and confidence in dealing with work-related challenges. This condition encourages proactive behavior and flexibility, which are essential for adaptive performance (Sarwar et al., 2023; Zubair et al., 2021). Finally, the results confirm that POS mediates the relationship between knowledge competence, organizational culture, and adaptive performance. This indicates that organizational support functions as a key mechanism that strengthens the influence of both individual competence and the organizational environment on employee adaptability. When employees perceive strong organizational support, they are more motivated to apply their competencies and contribute to organizational goals (Peng et al., 2023; Seo, 2023).

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study indicate that knowledge competence and organizational culture significantly enhance adaptive performance, both directly and indirectly through perceived organizational support. This study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the role of perceived organizational support as a key mechanism linking individual competence and organizational context to adaptive performance in MSMEs. These results suggest that adaptive performance is shaped not only by individual capabilities but also by a supportive organizational environment and shared cultural values. For MSMEs, strengthening employee competencies, fostering a positive organizational culture, and enhancing perceived organizational support are essential strategies for maintaining resilience and competitiveness in dynamic business environments.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal inferences regarding the relationships among knowledge competence, organizational culture, perceived organizational support, and adaptive performance. This limitation has now been clearly stated, along with suggestions for future studies to test the model in different regions and settings to enhance external validity. Second, the use of questionnaires may introduce social desirability bias and common method bias, potentially affecting the accuracy of the findings. In addition, this study focuses solely on perceived organizational support as a mediating variable and does not examine other potential antecedents or mechanisms that may influence adaptive performance.

Future research is encouraged to adopt longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches to capture better causal relationships and changes in adaptive performance over time. The use of objective performance measures is also recommended to complement self-reported data.

Furthermore, expanding the research context to include larger organizations or cross-country settings may enhance the findings and provide deeper insights into the role of institutional and cultural factors.

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