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Clan, Adhocracy and Risk-Taking Cultures as Drivers of Employee Performance in Small and Medium Enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the effect of clan culture, adhocracy culture and risk-taking culture on the employee performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Anambra State, Nigeria, using selected paint manufacturing firms as a study context. The major problem the study addressed was that most SME managers in Anambra State do not fully understand how these dimensions of organisational culture affect employee performance. The specific objectives were to determine the effect of clan culture on employee performance, to examine the effect of adhocracy culture on employee performance, and to ascertain the effect of risk-taking culture on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State. The study adopted a survey research design. The instrument was validated for face and content validity by three experts in management sciences, and reliability was established through a test-retest method with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.80. The population comprised 3,250 employees of selected paint manufacturing SMEs, from which a sample size of 400 was drawn using Taro Yamane's formula, with 380 copies of the questionnaire (95.00%) properly completed and returned. The three hypotheses were tested using simple regression analysis with the aid of SPSS Version 20/27 at 5% level of significance. Findings revealed that clan culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($t = 10.887$, $p = 0.002$), adhocracy culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($t = 15.879$, $p = 0.001$), and risk-taking culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($t = 15.879$, $p = 0.001$) of SMEs in Anambra State. The study concluded that clan culture, adhocracy culture and risk-taking culture significantly and positively drive employee performance in SMEs. It was recommended, among others, that SME managers should implement clan culture strategies that highlight a family-like environment, that top management should emphasise organisational elements that encourage creativity and innovation to engender a strong adhocracy culture, and that managers should create a conducive environment for employees to propose and implement new ideas after careful evaluation of potential benefits and risks.

Keywords: Clan culture, Adhocracy culture, Risk-taking culture, Employee performance, Small and Medium Enterprises

INTRODUCTION

Culture develops organisational norms, guidelines, or expectations that prescribe appropriate kinds of behavior by employees in particular situations and control the behavior of organizational members towards one another (Hary, Akbar & Endang, 2024). Improvement in organisational culture has improved sustainability on the basis of

efficiency, and the improvement in productivity leads to employee commitment through norms, values and objectives which help in improving the culture of an organisation (Eddah, Lagat & Ng'eno, 2017). Research has demonstrated that a robust and flexible organisational culture fosters creativity, enhances information exchange, and fosters creative behaviour among employees, and that organisations nurture and preserve organisational culture as it constitutes their identity and defining characteristics. Most researchers in the relevant literature indicate that organisational culture (OC) elucidates the forms of clan, adhocracy, market, hierarchy and risk-taking cultures, and that a well-established organisational culture guides both the company and its members toward enhanced progress (Ferdinan & Lindawati, 2021).

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) constitute the engine room of most developing economies, including Nigeria, contributing significantly to employment generation, wealth creation and industrialisation. In Anambra State, paint manufacturing SMEs operate in a turbulent and highly competitive business environment where survival is heavily dependent on the ability of firms to manage, adapt, innovate and take calculated risks. Beyond training and financial support, the internal culture that SME managers cultivate has increasingly been identified as a determinant of how employees behave, relate and ultimately perform. Ogwashi, Gbenga and Ngige (2025), examining entrepreneurship training programmes and the performance of SMEs in Delta State, established that deliberate internal capability-building interventions significantly improve the performance outcomes of small enterprises, underscoring the reality that the internal environment which management constructs, whether through training or through culture, has measurable performance consequences.

Despite this growing recognition, most SME managers in Anambra State do not fully understand how specific dimensions of organisational culture, particularly clan culture, adhocracy culture and risk-taking culture, affect the performance of their employees. Many paint manufacturing SMEs in Anambra State continue to record inconsistent productivity, weak employee commitment and high turnover, partly because the prevailing organisational culture is not deliberately managed to support performance. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the effect of clan culture, adhocracy culture and risk-taking culture on the employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, Nigeria, with a view to providing empirical evidence that can guide SME managers in building a performance-enhancing organisational culture.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the effect of organisational culture on the employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State. The specific objectives are to:

1. determine the effect of clan culture on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.
2. examine the effect of adhocracy culture on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.
3. ascertain the effect of risk-taking culture on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

H01: Clan culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

H02: Adhocracy culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

H03: Risk-taking culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organisational Culture

Culture is the shared values and beliefs that enable members of an organisation to understand their roles and norms (Hodgetts et al., 2020). Matijevic, Raguz and Filipovic (2022) note that culture consists of explicit and implicit patterns of behaviour acquired and transmitted through symbols, forming the characteristic achievement of a group of people. Cameron and Quinn (2021) explain organisational culture through the competing values framework, which classifies culture into clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy types, with risk-taking increasingly recognised in the entrepreneurship literature as an additional cultural orientation that shapes how organisations pursue opportunities and respond to uncertainty (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2020).

Employee Performance

Employee performance is a central variable in employment relations and mirrors the extent of goal achievement among employees of an organisation (Ricardo & Wade, 2021). Cascio (2016) defined performance as the extent of achievement of the mission of the organisation that develops an employee's job, while Paais and Setyoko (2020, 2022) describe the management system responsible for evaluating employee or organisational performance as performance management. Employee performance is measured through indicators such as productivity, commitment, efficiency, job satisfaction and service quality (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986). Williams and Okeke (2025), in their study of economic factors of corporate sustainability and performance of foam manufacturing firms, found that internal economic and organisational factors significantly shape firm-level performance outcomes, reinforcing the view that performance is not driven by external market conditions alone but also by how internal resources, including organisational culture, are managed.

Clan Culture and Employee Performance

Clan culture exerts a profound influence on employee performance, encompassing effects ranging from positive to negative. On the positive side, clan culture nurtures robust interpersonal relationships, fostering loyalty, heightened engagement and dedication to the organisation. These cohesive connections foster enhanced teamwork, streamlined communication and seamless collaboration, not only within teams but across the organisation as a whole. Organisations that practise clan culture exhibit elevated levels of employee satisfaction, lower turnover rates and overall superior organisational performance (Cameron & Quinn, 2021). Clan culture also serves as an impetus for innovation and learning; within such an environment, employees feel secure in sharing their ideas, taking calculated risks and leveraging failures as opportunities for growth, which cultivates heightened creativity, effective problem-solving and continuous advancement (Atiqa, Asad, Syeda & Hafeez, 2025).

However, an excessive focus on employee well-being and consensus, while beneficial, may inadvertently shift the balance towards comfort at the expense of performance, leading to complacency or a need for more accountability within the organisational framework (Denison & Mishra, 2025). Clan culture is also a decisive factor in employee retention and talent attraction; organisations exhibiting robust clan culture consistently observe superior employee retention rates by prioritising employee development, fostering a supportive environment and cultivating a profound sense of belonging (Goffee & Jones, 2025). Opuala-Charles and Arunsi (2023), examining clan culture and business performance in Nigeria, similarly

found that a strong clan orientation, with its unwavering focus on nurturing employee well-being and satisfaction, possesses substantial potential to profoundly influence employee engagement and productivity.

Adhocracy Culture and Employee Performance

As a form of culture practised in organisations, adhocracy implies that something is temporary, a dynamic unit, or specialised; just as an ad-hoc committee or task force is formed to address an emergency issue and disbanded once the assignment is complete, adhocracies can change quickly when a new set of circumstances arise (Cameron & Quinn, 2021). The major aim of adhocracy culture is to nurture creativity, adaptability and flexibility in the face of uncertainty. Felipe et al. (2017) note that the information age is characterised by a rapidly changing and turbulent environment where the half-life of products is decreasing daily, so organisations need to be innovative to keep up with the market. According to Arditi (2017), adhocracy culture encourages creativity, experimentation, innovation and individual initiative, and is anchored on eagerness for continuous change and the acquisition of new knowledge and resources (Misigo, 2019).

Chidokwe, Mbah and Gbenga (2026), in their study of organisational culture and employee commitment in Zenith Bank Plc, South-East Nigeria, found that a culture that emphasises adaptability, flexibility and employee empowerment, characteristics central to an adhocracy orientation, significantly strengthens employee commitment and, by extension, performance outcomes. This corroborates Khedhaouria, Nakara, Gharbi and Bahri (2020), who found that adhocracy and market cultures influence small-firm performance by fostering innovative and proactive behaviour among employees.

Risk-taking Culture and Employee Performance

Performance encompasses a forward-looking perspective, with its advantages manifest when a firm embraces a long-term approach to value creation (Benabou & Tirole, 2020), suggesting a plausible connection between risk-taking and performance. Risk-taking refers to the tendency to take bold actions such as venturing into new markets and committing substantial resources to ventures with uncertain outcomes (Kitigin, 2017). Risk handling is the process by which potential risks to a business are identified, analysed, mitigated and prevented, alongside the process of balancing the cost of protecting the firm against a risk versus the cost of exposure to that risk. Risk-taking has a curvilinear relationship with the performance of entrepreneurial firms (Brigham, Lumpkin, Payne & Zachary, 2024); firms exhibiting moderate levels of risk-taking tend to perform better than firms exhibiting either very high or very low levels of risk-taking.

Sirmon and Hitt (2023) identify rewards and recognition, management support, resources, organisational structure, and acceptance of risk as internal organisational factors necessary to support entrepreneurship within firms. Anah-Manafa, G.U. and Okeke, C.O. (2026), examining the effect of organisational climate on organisational citizenship behaviour among employees of public universities in Enugu and Anambra States, found that a climate that tolerates initiative and permits employees to act beyond formally prescribed roles, an orientation closely aligned with a risk-tolerant culture, significantly enhances discretionary, performance-enhancing employee behaviour. This lends further support to the proposition that a culture which accommodates calculated risk-taking creates the conditions under which employees are willing to commit extra effort toward organisational goals.

Empirical Review

Clan Culture and Employee Performance

Atiqa, Asad, Syeda and Hafeez (2025) investigated the antecedents of knowledge sharing on employee performance among technology-related SMEs in Pakistan, using clan culture as a moderator. A total of 451 valid responses were analysed using SPSS and Smart PLS. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between knowledge-sharing antecedents and employee performance, and that clan culture moderated the relationship between motivation, self-efficacy, interpersonal trust and knowledge sharing. Similarly, Oluwa and Ibrahim (2021) assessed the influence of organisational culture on the performance of SMEs in Abuja using Cameron and Quinn's Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument. Using a cross-sectional survey of 127 SMEs, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis revealed that clan culture had a significant relationship ($r = 0.616$) with performance, and the study concluded that organisational culture significantly influences SME performance in Nigeria.

Adhocracy Culture and Employee Performance

Khedhaouria, Nakara, Gharbi and Bahri (2020) explored the relationship between organisational culture and small-firm performance in Tunisia, with entrepreneurial orientation as a mediator. The study, involving 106 small Tunisian firms, mobilised the competing values framework to examine relationships between adhocracy, clan, hierarchy and market cultures and entrepreneurial orientation (innovativeness, risk-taking and proactiveness), and provided empirical evidence that adhocracy and market cultures influence small-firm performance by fostering innovative and proactive behaviour. In a related vein, Chidokwe, Mbah and Gbenga (2026) examined organisational culture and employee commitment in Zenith Bank Plc, South-East Nigeria, and found that dimensions of organisational culture that emphasise adaptability and innovation significantly and positively predict employee commitment, which in turn sustains higher levels of performance.

Risk-taking Culture and Employee Performance

Kitigin (2017) examined the relationship between entrepreneurial intensity and the performance of SMEs in Eldoret town, Kenya, exploring the influence of risk-taking on performance using an ex-post-facto design with a sample of 100 SME owners/managers. Pearson correlation established a strong positive correlation between risk-taking and business performance, indicating that committing business resources to ventures in uncertain and unfamiliar environments could result in increased returns and market share. Khan, Salendu, Azzahra and Hussain (2025) examined how organisational culture influences innovative work behaviour in Indonesian SMEs, focusing on the mediating role of perceived organisational support, and found that a culture emphasising collaboration, adaptability and risk-taking significantly enhances innovation and, by implication, performance-related outcomes. Anah-Manafa, G.U. and Okeke, C.O. (2026) similarly found that an organisational climate that tolerates initiative-taking significantly enhances organisational citizenship behaviour among university employees in Enugu and Anambra States, an outcome closely tied to a risk-accommodating organisational culture.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design, which is well suited to describing and explaining the relationship between and among phenomena such as clan culture, adhocracy culture, risk-taking culture and employee performance. The study covered selected paint manufacturing SMEs

registered with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, located in Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 3,250 employees of the selected paint manufacturing firms. Using Taro Yamane's formula at a 5% error margin, a sample size of 400 employees was drawn, and a stratified random sampling technique was used to distribute the sample proportionately across the selected firms, after which simple random sampling was employed to select respondents within each firm.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on a five-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from textbooks, journals, theses and archival materials. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts in management sciences, and its corrections were incorporated into the final draft. Reliability was established using the test-retest method with 20 respondents, and the responses were correlated using Cronbach Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.80, indicating that the instrument was reliable. Out of the 400 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 380 copies (95.00%) were properly completed and used for analysis. Data were analysed using frequency tables and percentages, while the three hypotheses were tested using simple regression analysis with the aid of SPSS at the 5% level of significance. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis where the p-value of the test statistic was less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis One: Clan Culture and Employee Performance

H01: Clan culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

Table 1: ANOVA and Regression Coefficient for Clan Culture and Employee Performance

Model	F	Beta	t	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Clan Culture (CLC) → EMPERF	118.521	0.988	10.887	0.002	Reject H0

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Output (2026)

Table 1 shows that clan culture has a positive effect on employee performance which is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, since the p-value (0.002) is less than the alpha value (0.05). The regressed Beta coefficient shows that clan culture is significantly related to employee performance up to 99% (0.988). Since the p-value of the test statistic is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis, that clan culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, is accepted.

Hypothesis Two: Adhocracy Culture and Employee Performance

H02: Adhocracy culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

Table 2: ANOVA and Regression Coefficient for Adhocracy Culture and Employee Performance

Model	F	Beta	t	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Adhocracy Culture (ADC) → EMPERF	252.139	0.994	15.879	0.001	Reject H0

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Output (2026)

Table 2 shows that adhocracy culture has a positive effect on employee performance which is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, since the p-value (0.001) is less than the alpha value (0.05). The regressed Beta coefficient shows that adhocracy culture is significantly related to employee performance up to 99% (0.994). Since the calculated p-value is less than the alpha value, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis, that adhocracy culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, is accepted.

Hypothesis Three: Risk-taking Culture and Employee Performance

H03: Risk-taking culture has no significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

Table 3: ANOVA and Regression Coefficient for Risk-taking Culture and Employee Performance

Model	F	Beta	t	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Risk-taking Culture (RIC) → EMPERF	252.139	0.994	15.879	0.001	Reject H0

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Output (2026)

Table 3 shows that risk-taking culture has a positive effect on employee performance which is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, since the p-value (0.001) is less than the alpha value (0.05). The regressed Beta coefficient shows that risk-taking culture is significantly related to employee performance up to 99% (0.994). Since the p-value of the test statistic is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis, that risk-taking culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, is upheld.

Discussion of Findings

The test of hypothesis one revealed that clan culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State (t = 10.887, p = 0.002). This finding is consistent with Cameron and Quinn (2021), who observed that organisations practising clan culture exhibit elevated levels of employee satisfaction, lower turnover rates and superior organisational performance, and with Opuala-Charles and Arunsi (2023), who found that clan culture has substantial potential to influence employee engagement and productivity in Nigerian firms.

The test of hypothesis two showed that adhocracy culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State (t = 15.879, p = 0.001). This finding is supported by Arditi (2017), who held that adhocracy culture encourages employee creativity, experimentation, innovation and individual initiative, and aligns with Chidokwe, Mbah and Gbenga (2026), whose study of Zenith Bank Plc found that a culture emphasising adaptability and innovation significantly strengthens employee commitment and performance.

Finally, the test of hypothesis three showed that risk-taking culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State ($t = 15.879$, $p = 0.001$). This finding is consistent with Benabou and Tirole (2020), who argued that a connection exists between risk-taking and organisational performance, and with Kitigin (2017), who established a strong positive correlation between risk-taking and business performance among SMEs. It also resonates with Anah-Manafa, G.U. and Okeke, C.O. (2026), who found that a climate tolerant of initiative significantly enhances discretionary, performance-enhancing employee behaviour.

Summary of Findings

i. Clan culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, with a t-value of 10.887 and a p-value of 0.002, statistically significant at 5% level of significance.
ii. Adhocracy culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, with a t-value of 15.879 and a p-value of 0.001, statistically significant at 5% level of significance.
iii. Risk-taking culture has a significant positive effect on employee performance of SMEs in Anambra State, with a t-value of 15.879 and a p-value of 0.001, statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that organisational culture, specifically clan culture, adhocracy culture and risk-taking culture, has a significant positive effect on employee performance of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. Clan culture, with its family-like environment of open communication, trust and collaboration, adhocracy culture, with its emphasis on creativity, flexibility and innovation, and risk-taking culture, which accommodates bold and calculated initiative, all combine to shape how employees of paint manufacturing SMEs in Anambra State perform. This underscores the reality that SME survival and competitiveness in Anambra State's turbulent business environment depend not only on financial and market factors but also on the deliberate cultivation of a performance-enhancing organisational culture. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

i. SME managers should endeavour to properly implement clan culture strategies by highlighting a family-like environment where open communication encourages worker output, higher job satisfaction and increased employee performance.
ii. Top management of SMEs should emphasise organisational elements that encourage creativity and innovation among employees in order to engender a strong adhocracy culture in their firms.
iii. SME managers should create a conducive environment for employees to propose and implement new ideas after careful evaluation of potential benefits and risks, thereby institutionalising a healthy risk-taking culture.

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