Local Work Culture and Employee Performance: The Role of Hotel Industry's Multicultural Conflict Management Mediation in Bali

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Abstract. The Balinese hotel industry is characterized by a culturally diverse workforce, making multicultural conflict management a strategic issue in improving employee performance. This research aims to observe the relationship between local work culture and employee performance, with multicultural conflict management serving as a mediating variable in the Balinese hotel industry. This study employed a cross-sectional quantitative design using a survey method involving 283 hotel employees as respondents. Data were explored using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to assess the direct and indirect relationships between the constructs. The outcomes revealed that local work culture had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.781$, $T = 16.030$, $p < 0.001$) and significantly influenced multicultural conflict management ($\beta = 0.763$, $T = 19.829$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, multicultural conflict management had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.347$, $T = 4.194$, $p < 0.001$). The mediation analysis indicated that multicultural conflict management functions as a complementary mediator in the relationship between local work culture and employee performance ($\beta = 0.265$, $T = 3.905$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that local work culture directly develops employee performance while also strengthening performance through effective multicultural conflict management. Theoretically, this study uses Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory as an explanatory framework to understand how cultural values shape work behavior in multicultural hotel settings. Essentially, the findings highlight the importance of integrating Balinese local work culture values into multicultural conflict management practices to enhance employee performance and support the sustainability of the hotel industry in Bali.

Keywords: Balinese cultural values, Multicultural conflict management, Workplace diversity, Hospitality sustainability, Human resource management

1 Introduction

The hotel industry in Bali, as an important sector within the broader hospitality industry, operates in a culturally diverse environment. In this study, local work culture

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refers to shared values, norms, and behavioral orientations derived from Balinese socio-cultural practices that influence employees' attitudes and behaviors in the office. Unlike organizational culture, which is developed within a specific organization, and national culture, which reflects broader societal values, local work culture emphasizes culturally embedded values originating from a particular community or geographical context. As one of the world's leading tourism destinations, Bali attracts employees from diverse cultural backgrounds, creating dynamic multicultural interactions within hotel organizations.

Local Balinese work culture is influenced by cultural morals, particularly Tri Hita Karana and Tat Twam Asi, which emphasize harmony, cooperation, respect, and social responsibility in workplace relationships. These values contribute to shaping employees' work ethics, behaviors, and organizational harmony (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2024). Although this study is grounded in Balinese cultural values, the measurement of local work culture focuses on observable workplace behaviors adapted from organizational behavior literature (Robbins & Judge, 2016), such as cooperation, respect, and social responsibility. This approach positions Balinese cultural concepts as the contextual foundation for understanding employees' workplace behaviors. The increasing globalization of the hotel industry in Bali has created interactions between global management practices and local cultural values. International hotels often emphasize efficiency, punctuality, and direct communication, while local Balinese culture prioritizes social harmony, collectivism, and flexibility. These differences may create conflicting expectations among employees from diverse cultural backgrounds (Butt et al., 2023). Therefore, effective multicultural conflict management is essential to maintain workplace harmony and enhance employee performance.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory requires an explanatory outline for appreciating how cultural standards affect communication, workplace behavior, and conflict management in multicultural environments. Although originally developed to explain national cultural differences, this study uses Hofstede's theory as an explanatory perspective to interpret how cultural values shape employees' perceptions and behaviors within multicultural workplaces.

Previous studies have shown that cultural differences influence workplace communication, employee interactions, and conflict management processes (Hasim et al., 2021; Saini & Banerjee, 2024; Velkova, 2022). However, existing studies have predominantly focused on organizational culture or national cultural differences, while the role of indigenous local work culture in multicultural hospitality contexts remains underexplored (Idrus et al., 2021; Mekka et al., 2020). Furthermore, lack of research has examined multicultural conflict management as a mechanism linking local cultural values with employee performance in hospitality organizations (Liu, 2024; Saini & Banerjee, 2024).

The role of managers is crucial in managing multicultural conflict, facilitating communication, and creating an inclusive work environment (Velkova, 2022). Effective multicultural conflict management not only resolves disagreements but also strengthens collaboration and workplace harmony through appropriate communication and cross-cultural practices (Liu, 2024; Saini & Banerjee, 2024). Therefore, this study proposes an integrated model by examining multicultural conflict management as a mediating mechanism between employee performance and local work culture. The novelty of this study lies in integrating indigenous cultural perspectives with

multicultural human resource management to explain how local cultural values contribute to workplace effectiveness in multicultural hotel environments. Guided by the theoretical arguments above, this research suggests the following hypotheses: H_1: Local work culture has a positive and statistically significant connection with employee performance. H2: Local work culture has a positive and statistically significant relationship with multicultural conflict management. H_3: Multicultural conflict management has a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance. H_4: Multicultural conflict management mediates the relationship between local work culture and employee performance. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between local work culture and employee performance, with multicultural conflict management serving as a mediating variable.

2 Methodology

This research employed a cross-sectional quantitative research scheme with an explanatory approach to test the relationship between local work culture and employee performance, with multicultural conflict management serving as a mediating variable among employees in the hotel industry in Bali. The study involved 283 hotel employees from 16 hotels in Bali selected using purposive sampling. The respondents were employees who had experience working in multicultural hotel environments. The minimum sample volume was determined using the formulation proposed by Riduwan (2019) for populations with unknown characteristics, as follows:

$$n = \left(\frac{\frac{Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} \times \sigma}{}}{e}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{1{,}96 \times 0{,}25}{0{,}05}\right)^2 = 96{,}04 \approx 97 \quad (1)$$

Thus, the minimum needed sample size was 97 respondents. The 283 respondents obtained in this research exceeded the minimum sample requirement and were considered adequate for SEM-PLS analysis. Data were gathered through offline and online questionnaires using Google Forms and distributed through social media platforms. The research instruments consisted of local work culture derived from Robbins & Judge (2016) and contextualized with Balinese cultural values, multicultural conflict management based on Thomas & Kilmann (1974), and employee performance based on Robbins & Judge (2013). Measurement of all variables was conducted using a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS. The evaluation included the outer model (convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability) and the inner model (R-square, path coefficients, and hypothesis testing). The measurement criteria followed factor loading ≥ 0.70, AVE ≥ 0.50, HTMT < 0.85, and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). Mediation analysis was conducted based on Hair et al. (2017) to classify the mediation type, including complementary mediation.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

The instrument was first confirmed using SPSS for validity and reliability. The Pearson Product Moment showed that all elements are valid (r count > r table, $p < 0.05$). In addition, Cronbach's Alpha scores for all variables are above 0.70, designating good internal consistency. Therefore, all instruments are valid, reliable, and suitable for additional analysis. During the outer model testing phase using SmartPLS, the competing dimension in the multicultural conflict variable was removed because it did not meet the indicator validity criteria. This finding is supported by interview results, which indicated that the competition-based conflict management style does not reflect work practices in the Balinese hotel industry, which emphasizes collectivism, harmony, and social relationships. Furthermore, the seniority-based career system leads to a low competitive orientation in employees, making the indicators in this dimension invalid in representing the multicultural conflict construct.

The outcomes of the discriminant validity test recommend that the research model has good ability to differentiate each construct: multicultural conflict (M), local work culture (X), and employee performance (Y). This is demonstrated by the outer loading values for each construct, with multicultural conflict management ranging from 0.728 to 0.850 (highest M32 = 0.850), local work culture from 0.703 to 0.826 (highest X53 = 0.826), and employee performance from 0.705 to 0.804 (highest Y32 = 0.804). Furthermore, the cross-loading scores indicate that every indicator has the uppermost loading value on its respective construct relative to the other constructs. Thus, all indicators accurately symbolize their respective constructs, thus meeting discriminant validity in this research model. To strengthen the discriminant validity test, further evaluation was undertaken by additional criterion, namely the AVE and HTMT, as presented in Table 1. This test aims to deliver a more comprehensive confirmation of the model's ability to differentiate each latent construct studied.

Table 1. AVE, HTMT, & Composite Reliability

	AVE	HTMT			Composite Reliability	
		M	X	Y	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
M	0,613	1			0,894	0,917
X	0,578	0,826	1		0,944	0,950
Y	0,584	0,805	0,829	1	0,935	0,944

Source: processed data, 2026

The HTMT value is in the span of 0.805–0.829 and is still below 0.85, thus fulfilling the principles of discriminant validity, which indicates that local work culture, multicultural conflict management, and employee performance are empirically distinct constructs but remain conceptually related. The AVE value of all constructs is also above 0.50 (0.578–0.613–0.584), representative that convergent validity is met. Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability scores of all constructs

are overhead 0.70, even approaching or exceeding 0.90, so the research instrument is declared reliable and has excellent internal consistency.

Following the outer model analysis, the inner model was assessed by measuring collinearity, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and structural relations among constructs. The collinearity assessment using the VIF showed that all VIF scores varied from 1.000 - 2.396, which are below the recommended threshold of 5.00, indicating that multicollinearity issues were not present among the predictor constructs. Furthermore, the adjusted R^2 score for employee performance was 0.657, indicating that 65.7% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by local work culture and multicultural conflict management, while the outstanding 34.3% is explained by other variables outside the research model. Meanwhile, the R-square value for multicultural conflict management was 0.583, representing that 58.3% of its variance is described by local work culture, while the outstanding 41.7% is influenced by other factors outside the model. Furthermore, the overall predictive relevance of the structural model was assessed using the Q^2 score. The outcome showed a Q^2 score of 0.857, indicating that the model has strong predictive relevance and demonstrates high predictive capability for the endogenous constructs.

Furthermore, the effect size (f^2) was evaluated to determine the influence of each exogenous construct to the endogenous constructs. The outcomes showed that local work culture had a large effect on multicultural conflict management ($f^2 = 1.396$). In addition, local work culture established a medium-to-large effect on employee performance ($f^2 = 0.326$), while multicultural conflict management showed a small-to-moderate influence on employee performance ($f^2 = 0.148$). These results indicate that local work culture has the strongest contribution in explaining changes in multicultural conflict management and employee performance.



Figure 1. Structural Path Model

Furthermore, the structural model analysis was continued by examining the direct and indirect effects between constructs. The results reveal that all proposed hypotheses are supported, as indicated by the significant path coefficients ($p < 0.05$). This finding demonstrates that local work culture contributes significantly to employee performance, with multicultural conflict management acting as a mediating mechanism in this relationship. Base on table 2, the mediation analysis confirms that multicultural conflict management meanings as a complementary mediator between local work culture and employee performance. The direct effect of local work culture on employee

performance remains substantial, while the indirect effect concluded multicultural conflict management is also substantial. Since both effects are positive and important, the mediation is classified as complementary, suggesting that multicultural conflict management enhances the effect of local work culture on employee performance.

Table 2. Structural Model Path Coefficients and Mediation Analysis

	Coefficient	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Direct Effect			
Local Work Culture -> Employee Performance	0.781	16.030	0.000
Local Work Culture -> Multicultural Conflict Management	0.763	19.829	0.000
Multicultural Conflict Management -> Employee Performance	0.347	4.194	0.000
Indirect Effect			
Local Work Culture -> Multicultural Conflict Management -> Employee Performance	0.265	3.905	0.000

Source: processed data, 2026

3.2 Discussion

The Impact of Local Work Culture on Employee Performance in the Balinese Hotel Industry

The findings of the research suggest that local work culture has a positive and substantial influence on employee performance. This result indicates that strengthening local work culture serves an essential function in determining employee attitudes, mindsets, and work behaviors in the multicultural Balinese hospitality industry. Based on Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede), culture is understood as a collective value system that influences individual behavior within an organization (Alqarni, 2022; Ouyang et al., 2025). In the context of the Balinese hospitality industry, local work culture values function as a collective value system that guides how employees work, interact, and respond to job demands and cultural differences. In the Balinese hospitality context, local work culture encourages teamwork, shared responsibility, and harmony. These values shape employee attitudes and behaviors by promoting cooperation, mutual support, and commitment to service quality. On the other hand, emphasizing adherence to standard operating procedures (SOPs), discipline, and clear work procedures plays an essential role in sustaining service quality and stable employee performance in the hospitality business.

This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that local work culture contributes to employee performance through cultural compatibility, cooperation, and shared values (Idrus et al., 2021; Pasadame & Niu, 2021; Wiratih et al., 2022). Although some studies highlight that local culture may primarily shape organizational culture (Rahmaddian et al., 2021), evidence suggests that culturally aligned work environments can strengthen employee work ethics and performance (Tannoury, 2022). In the

Balinese hotel organization, local work culture supports harmonious workplace relationships and reinforces the relevance of Cultural Dimensions Theory in explaining how cultural values influence employee performance.

Local work culture has an important positive effect on multicultural conflict management in the Balinese hospitality industry.

This result suggests that the stronger the implementation of local work culture, the more effective the organization is in managing conflicts arising from differences in employee cultural backgrounds. This finding aligns with Hofstede's Theory, which interprets culture as a cooperative value system that shapes how individuals and groups think and behave in social and organizational environments (Zheng et al., 2025; Zhong, 2024). In the multicultural situation of Bali's hospitality business, local work culture acts as a shared value system that shapes interaction, communication, and attitudes toward diversity, enabling more constructive conflict management. Interviews show that work is viewed not only as a professional task but also as a moral and cultural responsibility, emphasizing honesty, teamwork, discussion, and harmony. Rooted in values such as Tri Hita Karana, these ideologies foster mutual respect and help reduce potential workplace conflict. These findings confirm that local work culture supports multicultural conflict management by promoting mutual understanding, tolerance, and cooperative conflict resolution (Jason, 2023; Videnová et al., 2013). Values of mutual cooperation and social harmony encourage constructive workplace relationships, while an inclusive culture helps reduce tensions and support shared solutions in multicultural teams (Desrayaud & Hurley, 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2023; Koyuncu & Chipindu, 2019). Overall, the study concludes that strengthening local work culture effectively supports multicultural conflict management and fosters harmonious workplace relationships. It also contributes to the sustainability of Bali's hospitality industry by positioning local cultural values as the foundation of work ethics, service quality, and tourism sustainability.

Multicultural conflict management has a significant positive effect on employee performance in the Balinese hospitality industry.

The research results establish that multicultural conflict has a positive and important impact on employee performance in the Balinese hospitality business. This suggests that cultural diversity in the workplace does not always have a negative impact but can actually be a driving factor in improving performance if the conflicts that arise are managed effectively. This finding can be understood through Cultural Dimensions Theory, which views culture as the collaborative programming of the mind that shapes the thinking and behavior of individuals within an organization (Żemojtel-Piotrowska & Piotrowski, 2023). In the background of the Balinese hospitality business, the dimensions of collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance act a important role in the conflict management process. Collectivist values encourage cooperation and conflict resolution through communication and deliberation, while respect for hierarchy strengthens the role of leaders as conflict mediators. On the other hand, the existence of SOPs and local cultural values provides clarity and a sense of security in the workplace, allowing conflict to be managed constructively. The results of this analysis

align with earlier study results, which suggest that appropriate multicultural conflict management can improve workplace harmony, employee motivation, and performance (Hasim et al., 2021; Safi & Khairkhwa, 2024; Saini & Banerjee, 2024; Syamsuar & Ginting, 2020). Therefore, the application of local cultural values, supported by the principles of Cultural Dimensions Theory, is a crucial element in increasing employee performance while supporting the sustainability of the hospitality business in Bali.

The influence of multicultural conflict management acts as a mediator between local work culture and the performance of hotel industry employees in Bali

The test results show that multicultural conflict management actions as a mediating variable in the correlation among local work culture and the performance of hotel industry employees in Bali. Local work culture has been proven to have a direct and important influence on employee performance, as well as a significant influence on multicultural conflict management. Furthermore, multicultural conflict management also has a positive and important influence on employee performance, with an important indirect path. According to the classification of Hair et al. (2017), these findings include complementary mediation, where the direct and indirect influences are both important and in the same path, so that multicultural conflict management strengthens the influence of local work culture on employee performance. This finding is in line with Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede) which visions culture as collective programming of the mind that shapes individual and cluster thought patterns, values and behavior in social and organizational contexts (Alqarni, 2022; Ouyang et al., 2025; Żemojtel-Piotrowska & Piotrowski, 2023). These quantitative results are supported by qualitative findings showing that employees view work as a moral and cultural responsibility grounded in honesty, sincerity, teamwork, and harmony, as reflected in Tri Hita Karana, Menyama Braya, and Tat Twam Asi. Practices such as deliberation before decision-making, mutual respect in multicultural teams, and adherence to SOPs contribute to work stability, service quality, and cooperative conflict resolution. In terms of sustainability, a culturally grounded and harmonious work environment enhances employee performance while also supporting the social and cultural sustainability of Bali's hospitality industry. These findings support previous studies showing that local work culture contributes to employee performance through shared values, cooperation, and cultural compatibility (Idrus et al., 2021; Tannoury, 2022; Wiratih et al., 2022). Furthermore, multicultural conflict management serves as a complementary mediator by enabling effective communication, constructive conflict resolution, and improved work effectiveness (Desrayaud & Hurley, 2023; Hasim et al., 2021; Saini & Banerjee, 2024). Therefore, local work culture impacts employee performance both directly and indirectly through effective multicultural conflict management in Bali's hospitality industry.

4 Conclusion

This study determines that local work culture is positively associated with employee performance, both directly and indirectly, through the complementary mediating role of multicultural conflict management. The findings highlight the contribution of local

cultural values as an organizational resource in supporting harmonious multicultural workplace interactions within the Balinese hospitality industry. Practically, hospitality organizations are encouraged to integrate local cultural values into human resource practices through employee orientation programs, cross-cultural communication training, deliberation-based conflict mediation systems, and improving managers' competencies in managing multicultural teams. This research has various limitations, including the use of cross-sectional, self-reported data, strategy that limits causal interpretation, a non-probability sampling method, and a limited geographical scope. Future studies are recommended to involve broader tourism sectors and examine additional variables such as leadership, organizational commitment, or job satisfaction.

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