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RESEARCH ON ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE INNOVATION PERFORMANCE OF ELECTRONIC PAYMENT ENTERPRISES IN CHINA

PESQUISA SOBRE INOVAÇÃO ORGANIZACIONAL, CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL, ESTRUTURA ORGANIZACIONAL E O DESEMPENHO EM INOVAÇÃO DE EMPRESAS DE PAGAMENTOS ELETRÔNICOS NA CHINA

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Abstract
Driven by a new wave of technological and industrial progress, innovation has become critical to national development. This study examines how electronic payment enterprises enhance innovation performance through organizational innovation. Focusing on electronic payment enterprises, it integrates dynamic capability theory, organizational culture theory, and contingency theory to construct a resource-based theoretical model. Within this model, organizational innovation serves as the independent variable, organizational culture and organizational structure as mediating variables, and innovation performance as the dependent variable. To explore the relationships among these variables, a series of hypotheses are proposed. Employing a mixed-methods approach, this study analyzes data from electronic payment enterprises in highly concentrated regions including Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Jiangsu. Findings reveal that organizational innovation positively influences innovation performance, with organizational culture and organizational structure acting as mediators. This research theoretically integrates multiple perspectives, deepens innovation management studies, and confirms the mediating effects. Practically, it offers management insights for enterprises and provides reference for policymakers.

Keywords: Electronic Payment. Enterprises.Organizational. Innovation. Organizational Culture. Organizational Structure. Innovation Performance.

Resumo
Impulsionada por uma nova onda de progresso tecnológico e industrial, a inovação tornou-se fundamental para o desenvolvimento nacional. Este estudo examina como as empresas de pagamentos eletrônicos melhoram seu desempenho em inovação por meio da inovação organizacional. Com foco nessas empresas, ele integra a teoria da capacidade dinâmica, a teoria da cultura organizacional e a teoria da contingência para construir um modelo teórico baseado em recursos. Nesse modelo, a inovação organizacional atua como variável independente, a cultura organizacional e a estrutura organizacional como variáveis mediadoras, e o desempenho em inovação como variável dependente. Para explorar as relações entre essas variáveis, uma série de hipóteses é proposta. Empregando uma abordagem de métodos mistos, este estudo analisa dados de empresas de pagamentos eletrônicos em regiões altamente concentradas, incluindo Pequim, Xangai, Shenzhen e Jiangsu. Os resultados revelam que a inovação organizacional influencia positivamente o desempenho em inovação, com a cultura organizacional e a estrutura organizacional atuando como mediadoras. Esta pesquisa integra teoricamente múltiplas perspectivas, aprofunda os estudos sobre gestão da inovação e confirma os efeitos mediadores. Na prática, oferece insights de gestão para as empresas e fornece referência para os formuladores de políticas.

Palavras-chave: *Pagamento Eletrônico. Empresas. Inovação Organizacional. Cultura*

Organizacional. Estrutura Organizacional. Desempenho em Inovação.

1 INTRODUCTION

Against the backdrop of rapid fintech development, electronic payment enterprises—as a vital component of the digital economy ecosystem—have become a focal point for both academic and industry research. Chinese electronic payment firms have emerged as a core driving force behind fintech transformation and the upgrading of social consumption structures.

This study adopts the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory asits theoretical foundation, emphasizing that electronic payment enterprises gain competitive advantages through unique innovative resources. This theory posits that corporate innovation performance hinges on the ability to acquire and integrate scarce resources, with organizational innovation determining competitiveness within the fintech environment. Furthermore, organizational culture theory and contingency theory underpin the exploration of mediating mechanisms. Organizational culture theory highlights the guiding role of shared values within organizations in innovation activities. In electronic payment enterprises, cultural characteristics such as innovation orientation serve as critical soft factors facilitating the conversion of organizational innovation outcomes into performance. Contingency theory emphasizes that organizational structures should adapt to environmental changes and objectives. Electronic payment enterprises need to enhance information flow and decision-making responsiveness through organizational designs like flattening structures to support the implementation of innovation activities.

This paper examines the relationship between organizational innovation and innovation performance, analyzes the roles of organizational culture and organizational structure, and validates the impact of organizational innovation on innovation performance within electronic payment enterprises.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical foundation

(1) Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) originated from Wernerfelt's (1984) work and was systematized by Barney (1991), who proposed that resources must possess VRIO characteristics to be transformed into sustainable competitive advantage. Unlike traditional strategic schools, RBV emphasizes that the heterogeneity of internal resources and the ability to allocate them determine performance. In this study, organizational innovation is defined as a high-level capability resource, manifested as the enterprise's optimization and restructuring capabilities, aligning with RBV's strategic resource criteria. Innovation Performance represents the outcome of effective resource allocation. Furthermore, Organizational Culture and Organizational Structure serve as the "institutional containers" through which resources are transformed into performance. Without well-organized mechanisms, enterprises struggle to gain competitive advantage even with scarce resources. Chinese electronic payment enterprises have built irreplaceable resource combinations. RBV explains performance differences during digital financial transformation, with the key lying in the integration and organizational capacity of innovation resources.

(2) Organizational Culture Theory

Schein (1985) proposed a three-layered structure for organizational culture, representing the deep psychological framework underlying employee behavior, characterized by path dependency and strong stability. In this study, organizational culture serves as a key mediating variable linking organizational innovation to innovation performance. It moderates the innovation climate while influencing knowledge flow, cross-departmental collaboration, and the efficiency of innovation outcome conversion. Denison & Mishra (1995) and other scholars emphasize the positive correlation between high-performance cultural patterns and Innovation Performance. Within electronic payment enterprises, these cultural dimensions are critical for digital strategic transformation. Chinese enterprises often exhibit "bureaucratic culture"and "controlling culture" issues that stifle innovation. Electronic payment enterprises can maximize

organizational innovation effectiveness by fostering a conducive organizational atmosphere through organizational cultural transformation.

(3) Contingency Theory

Proposed by Burns & Stalker (1961) and expanded by Lawrence & Lorsch (1967), contingency theory emphasizes that organizational structural effectiveness depends on its fit with the external environment. There is no optimal structure; only the "most adaptable structure" exists. In this study, organizational structure serves as the institutional pathway through which organizational innovation influences Innovation Performance. Rigid, hierarchical structures suppress innovation, while flat, open, and decentralized structures accelerate it. Contingency Theory indicates that organizational structures should "vary according to the task." Electronic payment enterprises must dynamically adjust their structures to align with the demands of high-frequency innovation tasks.

2.2 Organizational innovation

Organizational innovation, as a key concept in innovation management, was first proposed by J.A. Joseph Alois Schumpeter in his book Theory of Economic Development. Schumpeter emphasized that innovation extends beyond technology to encompass the renewal of organizational forms and management approaches. Subsequently, scholars have expanded its scope from diverse perspectives, generally recognizing that organizational innovation involves dimensions such as structure, systems, processes, and external relationships. Its essence lies in enhancing performance, adaptability, and competitiveness through the introduction of novel management or organizational practices. Based on existing research and the characteristics of electronic payment enterprises, this paper categorizes organizational innovation into four dimensions: product innovation, management innovation, process innovation, and marketing innovation. These dimensions will be used to construct the subsequent empirical model. Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Organizational innovation has a positive impact on organizational culture.

H2: Organizational innovation has a significant positive impact on innovation performance.

H3: Organizational innovation has a positive promoting effect on organizational structure.

2.3 Organizational structure

Organizational structure serves as the fundamental framework for division of labor, collaboration, and resource allocation within enterprises. Its form has evolved from traditional bureaucratic hierarchies toward more decentralized, flat, and flexible systems to adapt to dynamic environments and drive innovation. Scholars generally agree that modern organizational structures should enhance communication, collaboration, and agility while ensuring efficiency. Considering the characteristics of electronic payment enterprises, this paper defines organizational structure as a multidimensional management system serving both efficiency and innovation. It identifies four core dimensions-flatness, decentralization, flexibility, and communication mechanisms-to explore their impact on innovation performance. Based on this, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: Organizational structure positively influences innovation performance.

2.4 Organizational culture

Organizational culture comprises the shared values and behavioral norms formed through long-term interactions among members, profoundly influencing an organization's innovation, adaptability, and performance. Scholars widely recognize its essence as providing a value framework for internal integration and external adaptation, serving as a vital internal force driving innovation and competitiveness. Within electronic payment enterprises, organizational culture is particularly critical, requiring not only stability and cohesion but also an emphasis on innovation, learning, risk tolerance, and collaboration. Based on this, this paper defines Organizational Culture as a shared value system that influences employee cognition and behavior. It is further refined into four dimensions: innovation orientation, learning orientation, risk tolerance, and collaborative atmosphere, to explore its role in organizational innovation and performance enhancement. Consequently, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: Organizational culture has a positive impact on Innovation Performance.

2.5 Innovation performance

The innovation performance of electronic payment enterprises, as a key indicator for measuring their competitiveness and sustainable development, has evolved from early single-dimensional technological output to a multidimensional comprehensive evaluation. Scholars generally agree that it should not only reflect breakthroughs in technological R&D but also encompass the market conversion capability of innovation outcomes, user value creation, and the realization of economic benefits. Against the backdrop of deep integration between the digital economy and fintech, the Innovation Performance of electronic payment enterprises typically manifests in four dimensions: First, technological achievements, such as breakthroughs in system architecture, algorithmic models, and security protocols, demonstrate foundational innovation capabilities. Second, product updates emphasize the application of technology in functional optimization and service iteration, driving improvements in user experience. Third, market outcomes reflect the effectiveness of innovation in user acquisition, brand recognition, and customer retention, showcasing market adaptability and competitiveness. Fourth, financial performance measures innovation's tangible outcomes in revenue growth, cost control, and capital returns. Collectively, innovation performance in e-payment enterprises represents the synergistic result of technological accumulation, service innovation, market expansion, and economic efficiency. Based on this, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

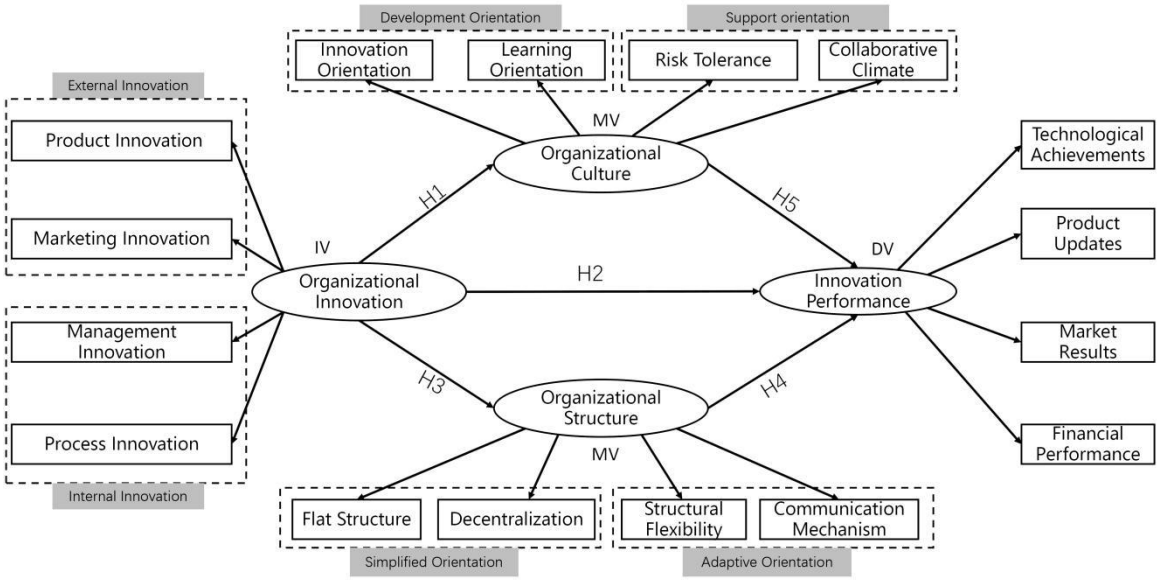
H6: Organizational culture mediates the effect of organizational innovation on innovation performance

H7: Organizational structure mediates the effect of organizational innovation on innovation performance.

2.6 Research theoretical framework

Figure 1

Research Theoretical Framework



3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data collection and sampling

According to the relevant information database of the People's Bank of China, the four regions of Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Jiangsu in China host the largest number of electronic payment enterprises nationwide. Therefore, this study selected these four regions as the population scope for research. These cities encompass multiple categories of electronic payment enterprises, including platform-based, independent third-party payment institutions, specialized acquiring institutions, and prepaid card-based enterprises. The analysis focuses on R&D personnel, technical staff, and mid-to-senior management as the basic units.

To ensure sample representativeness, stratified sampling was employed to select 172 electronic payment enterprises within the study regions that comply with the People's Bank of China's “Administrative Measures for Payment Business Licenses.” These

enterprises were categorized into four types: platform-based, independent third-party payment institutions, specialized acquiring institutions, and prepaid card-based. Enterprises that did not engage in organizational innovation during the observation period (within three years) were excluded, leaving a total of 156 electronic payment enterprises. Following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2016), target enterprises were randomly sampled. Sample size weights were determined based on industry annual reports and statistical bulletins from the China Payment and Clearing Association, which provided transaction volumes and market share data for each payment enterprise category. These weights were combined with the ratio of existing electronic payment enterprises to the sampling scale to establish the sample size for each industry. Ultimately, 320 samples were randomly selected.

Data collection employed a questionnaire survey. R&D personnel, technical staff, and mid-to-senior management of electronic payment enterprises completed the electronic questionnaire by scanning a QR code. Basic sample information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Basic Information of respondents(N=320)

Demographic Variables	Items	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Age of enterprise (years)	1—10	79	24.69	24.69
	11-15	72	22.5	47.19
	16-20	77	24.06	71.25
	＞20	92	28.75	100
Enterprise size (Number of persons)	1—10	73	22.81	22.81
	10—100	75	23.44	46.25
	100—300	55	17.19	63.44
	300—1000	61	19.06	82.5
	＞1000	56	17.5	100
Industry type	Platform-based	138	43.13	43.13

	Independent third-party payment institutions	90	28.13	71.25
	Professional acquiring institutions	62	19.38	90.63
	Prepaid card type	30	9.38	100
Nature of enterprise	State-owned	117	36.56	36.56
	Private	101	31.56	68.12
	Joint venture	102	31.88	100

3.2 Measurement

All variables in this study are second-order constructs. The measurement scales were selected from established scales in existing research and adapted to the context of this study, comprising a total of 64 items. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

This study employed SmartPLS 3.0 software for data analysis. First, the measurement model was analyzed to confirm its structural validity and internal consistency, ensuring the reliability and validity of the measurement tools used. Subsequently, SmartPLS was employed for model fitting and path analysis to evaluate the relationships among knowledge-based organizational innovation, organizational culture, organizational structure, and innovation performance, while testing the significance of these pathways. This data analysis technique enables an in-depth exploration of the mechanism through which organizational innovation influences innovation performance in electronic payment enterprises.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Measurement Model

This study analyzed reliability and validity, primarily encompassing internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha), construct reliability (composite reliability, CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 2, regarding internal consistency, all variables' Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.809 to 0.875, exceeding the widely accepted 0.7 benchmark, indicating strong consistency of the measurement instruments. Regarding construct reliability, the CR values for all variables ranged from 0.875 to 0.914, significantly exceeding the recommended 0.7 benchmark, indicating high construct reliability (Hair et al., 2006). Regarding average variance explained (AVE), all variables' AVE values ranged from 0.636 to 0.728, exceeding the widely accepted 0.5 benchmark. This indicates that the variables explained sufficient variance, demonstrating good convergent validity.

This study employed the Heterogeneous Traits-Homogeneous Traits (HTMT) analysis method to assess the discriminant validity of the measurement scales. Compared to the Forell-Larcker criterion proposed by Fomell and Larcker (1981), this method offers advantages within SmartPLS. Research by Henseler et al. (2015) demonstrated that the HTMT approach can more accurately determine discriminant validity. As shown in Table 3, the heterogenous-to-homogeneous trait (HTMT) ratio was used to assess discriminant validity for each research construct. Generally, HTMT values exceeding 0.9 may indicate potential issues with discriminant validity. However, none of the values in this study exceeded 0.9, suggesting sufficient discriminant validity among constructs.

In summary, the reliability and validity analyses conducted in this study demonstrate that the measurement instruments employed possess high reliability and validity, accurately reflecting the concepts under investigation.

Table 2

Reliability and Validity Analysis

First-ordered Variables	Items	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
Product Innovation	PDI1	0.794	0.829	0.887	0.661
	PDI2	0.834			
	PDI3	0.805			
	PDI4	0.82			
Marketing Innovation	MKI1	0.847	0.862	0.906	0.707
	MKI2	0.826			
	MKI3	0.841			
	MKI4	0.849			
Management Innovation	MGI1	0.83	0.814	0.878	0.642
	MGI2	0.789			
	MGI3	0.767			
	MGI4	0.819			
Process Innovation	PCI1	0.839	0.844	0.896	0.682
	PCI2	0.774			
	PCI3	0.833			
	PCI4	0.856			
Innovation Orientation	IO1	0.823	0.831	0.888	0.664
	IO2	0.815			
	IO3	0.796			

Table 3

Discriminant validity (HTMT Analysis)

	Organizational Innovation	Organizational Culture	Organizational Structure	Innovation Performance
Organizational Innovation				
Organizational Culture	0.58			
Organizational Structure	0.548	0.613		
Innovation Performance	0.711	0.581	0.623	

4.2 Common method biases test

In investigative research, a phenomenon known as “common method bias” frequently occurs. When identical or similar methodologies are employed, biases may arise that compromise the accuracy and credibility of findings. To assess the impact of this bias on research outcomes, this study adopted Harman's univariate test. This method detects common method bias by loading all measured variables onto a single common factor and examining whether this single factor explains the majority of the variance within the data. Results indicate that the variance explained by the single factor is 24.255%, significantly below the 40% critical threshold. This suggests that the data in this study does not exhibit severe common method bias. Consequently, the data can be considered highly valid, providing a reliable foundation for subsequent analyses.

4.3 Direct path analysis

This study employed SmartPLS 3.0 to construct the structural equation model depicted in Figure 1 and tested the path coefficients. The results are presented in Table 4. The path coefficient from organizational innovation to organizational culture was 0.455 ($t=7.637$, $p<0.01$), indicating that organizational innovation exerts a significant positive influence on organizational culture, supporting Hypothesis 1. The path coefficient from Organizational innovation to Innovation Performance was 0.369 ($t=6.577$, $p<0.01$),

indicating a significant positive effect of Organizational innovation on Innovation Performance and supporting Hypothesis 2; The path coefficient from Organizational innovation to Organizational Structure was 0.420 (t=6.427, p<0.01), indicating a significant positive effect of Organizational innovation on Organizational Structure and supporting Hypothesis 3; The path coefficient from Organizational Structure to Innovation Performance was 0.233 (t=4.252, p<0.01), indicating that Organizational Structure significantly and positively influences Innovation Performance, supporting Hypothesis 4. The path coefficient from Organizational Culture to Innovation Performance was 0.170 (t=3.426, p<0.01), indicating that Organizational Culture significantly and positively influences Innovation Performance, supporting Hypothesis 5.

In this study, observing the data in Table 4.15, we find that the R-squared values for latent variables range from 0.537 to 0.711, while the adjusted R-squared values range from 0.536 to 0.710. These results indicate that the model's explanatory power varies across different latent variables. For latent variables with higher R^2 and adjusted R^2 values, such as learning orientation and collaborative atmosphere, the model explains a substantial portion of their variance, indicating a strong fit between the model and these variables. Conversely, latent variables with lower R^2 and adjusted R^2 values, such as flexible structure and process innovation, demonstrate relatively weaker explanatory power from the model. Overall, the model exhibits good explanatory power and accurately describes the relationships among latent variables.

Figure 2

Structural Equation Model in SmartPLS 3.0

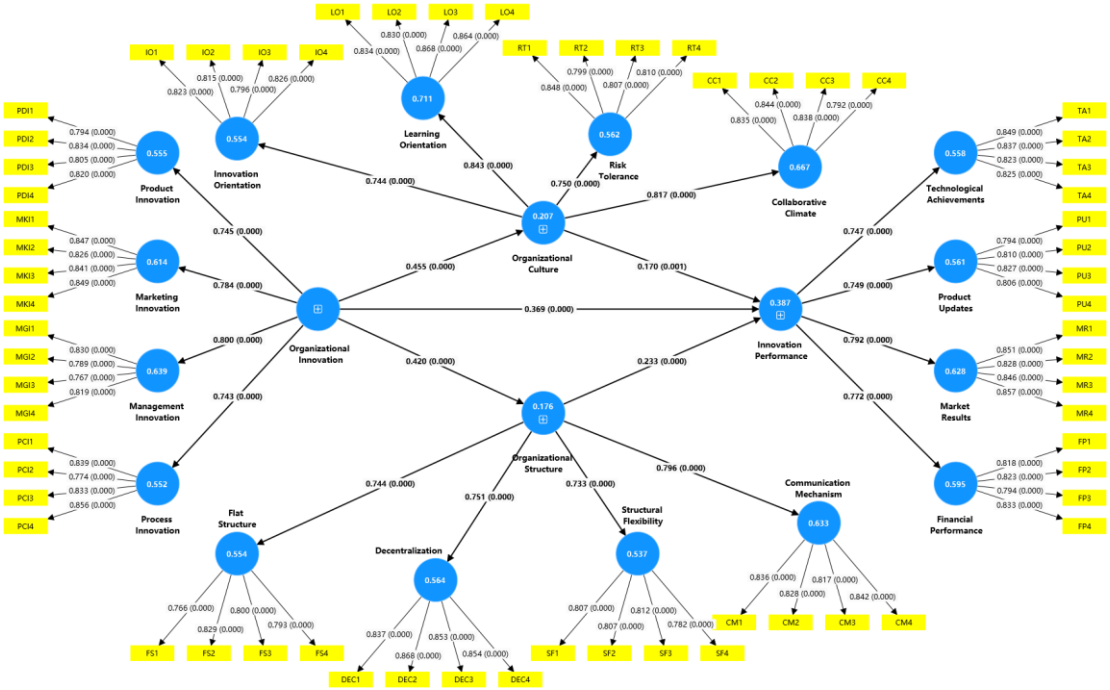


Table 4

Path Coefficient Test of Structural Equation Model

No.	Path	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-value	f^2
H1	Organizational Innovation -> Organizational Culture	0.455	0.060	7.637	0.000	0.262
H2	Organizational Innovation -> Innovation Performance	0.369	0.056	6.577	0.000	0.164
H3	Organizational Innovation -> Organizational Structure	0.420	0.065	6.427	0.000	0.214
H4	Organizational Structure -> Innovation Performance	0.233	0.055	4.252	0.000	0.064
H5	Organizational Culture -> Innovation Performance	0.170	0.050	3.426	0.001	0.033

4.4 Mediation effect in the research model

The results of the mediation effect analysis in this study are presented in Table 5. For the path"Organizational Innovation→Organizational Culture→Innovation Performance,"the estimated mediation effect is 0.077. The bias-corrected 95% confidence interval (CI) ranges from 0.032 to 0.135, excluding zero. The p-value associated with this mediation effect is 0.003, indicating statistical significance. This indicates that Organizational Culture significantly mediates the relationship between Organizational innovation and Innovation Performance. For the "organizational innovation→organizational structure→Innovation Performance" path, the estimated mediation effect is 0.098. The bias-corrected 95% confidence interval (CI) for this effect ranges from 0.049 to 0.165, also excluding zero. The corresponding p-value was 0.001, also statistically significant. This indicates that Organizational Structure also significantly mediates the relationship between Organizational innovation and Innovation Performance.

Table 5

Mediation Effect

No.	Path	Original sample (O)	Bias-corrected 95%CI		P-value
			2.50%	97.50%	
H6	Organizational Innovation->Organizational Culture->Innovation Performance	0.077	0.032	0.135	0.003
H7	Organizational Innovation->Organizational Structure->Innovation Performance	0.098	0.049	0.165	0.001

4.5 Hypotheses test

Based on an in-depth exploration of relevant fields, this study systematically formulated seven hypotheses covering multiple critical dimensions of the research. Through rigorous experimental design and meticulous data analysis, all proposed hypotheses received strong empirical support from the experimental results. This

validation confirms the hypotheses' validity and scientific rigor, providing a solid theoretical foundation and reliable experimental support for subsequent research.

Table 6

Hypotheses Test Results

No.	Hypothesis	Results
H1	Organizational innovation has a positive impact on organizational culture	Supported
H2	Organizational innovation has a significant positive impact on innovation performance	Supported
H3	Organizational innovation has a positive effect on organizational structure	Supported
H4	Organizational structure has a positive impact on innovation performance	Supported
H5	Organizational culture has a positive impact on innovation performance	Supported
H6	Organizational culture plays a mediating role in the impact of organizational innovation on innovation performance	Supported
H7	Organizational structure plays a mediating role in the impact of organizational innovation on innovation performance	Supported

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on exploring the intrinsic relationships among organizational innovation, organizational culture, organizational structure, and innovation performance. It emphasizes analyzing the mediating effects of organizational culture and structure while constructing a systematic holistic relationship model. Based on the Resource-Based View, Dynamic Capabilities Theory, Organizational Culture Theory, and Contingency Theory, this research proposes seven hypotheses and establishes a conceptual framework.

Methodologically, this study employs a mixed-methods approach. During the quantitative phase, 320 valid samples were collected via questionnaire surveys, with empirical analysis conducted using SPSS and SmartPLS software. The results validated all seven hypotheses, indicating that organizational innovation not only directly enhances Innovation Performance but also exerts indirect effects through the mediating roles of organizational culture and organizational structure. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews with 15 practitioners from electronic payment enterprises were

conducted. Combined with thematic analysis using Nvivo software, this phase further elucidated and supplemented the quantitative findings.

The findings reveal that organizational innovation is the core driver of innovation performance growth in electronic payment enterprises, with organizational culture and organizational structure playing crucial mediating roles. This study not only advances theoretical understanding of the relationships among these variables but also provides practical insights for electronic payment enterprises to enhance innovation performance and achieve robust development.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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