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Conflict of Interest

The author (s) declared no conflict of interest and have not received any funds for the project.

Dynamics of Workplace Environment with the Mediating Role of Motivations in the Telecom Sector of the Emerging Economy

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of “workplace environment and reward systems on motivation and employee performance.” It also examines the mediating role of motivation and moderating role of communication in the telecom sector of Karachi, Pakistan. Based on the self-administered questionnaire, we collected 418 responses from the telecom sector employees. This research is quantitative, and the approach is deductive. Using Smart PLS for analysis, we found workplace environment and reward systems affect motivation. The workplace environment and reward system promote employee performance. Motivation has a mediating effect on (i) the workplace environment and employees’ performance and (ii) the reward system and employee performance. The study did not find support for the moderating effect of internal communication on motivation and employee performance.

Keywords: *Workplace environment, reward system, motivation and employee performance, telecom sector and Path-Goal theory.*

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Introduction

Organizations cannot afford to mismanage their workforce's potential in today's competitive business environment. Several key workplace factors significantly impact employee motivation and performance (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Firms with a conducive and positive environment attract talented employees and retain existing ones, enhancing employees' motivation and productivity (Sanyal & Hisam, 2018; Sitopu, Sitinjak, & Marpaung, 2021). Many factors help in retaining employees, enhancing employees' performance, and achieving organizational goals.

Employees can focus on their goals in a clean, clutter-free environment (Kong et al., 2021). Sanyal and Hisam (2018) assert that the success of an organization aligns with employee performance and the quality of the workplace environment. A conducive work environment (physical and intangible) enhances employees' motivation resulting in increased productivity (Kanwal & Syed, 2017). Both are significant components in a typical working environment. Physical environment refers to an employee's ability to physically attach to the office environment, While office etiquette aligns with environmental and behavioral components (Yu et al., 2020). Each individually and collectively affects employees' motivation and performance. Employees' comfort on the job depends on the workplace conditions. In a healthy workplace, employees' motivation increases, and they strive to achieve rewards associated with their performance (DP & Riana, 2020).

Reward systems provide a systematic way to motivate employees to accomplish their tasks and contribute to desired performance (Halilbegovic, Celebic, & Idrizovic, 2018). The reward system also influences "performance by recognizing and rewarding good performance" and providing incentives to improve it. Vanden-Broeck et al. (2021) studied employee performance and found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are precursors to employees' performance. Motivation promotes organizational loyalty leading to organizational growth and sustainability.

Most workplace environment in developing countries is insecure and hazardous. A healthy and safe working environment can significantly increase productivity; however, most organizations consider it an extra cost and do not incur resources to maintain a comfortable working environment (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Employee productivity is affected by furniture design, ventilation, noise, light, supervisor support, workspace, communication, and fire safety (Eberendu, Akpan, Ubani, & Ahaiwe, 2018). Employees face severe environmental issues, especially in the telecom industry.

Given the above discussion, this study has focused on the telecom industry and examines the impact of the workplace environment and reward system on motivation. It also examines the mediating effect of motivation on (i) workplace environment and employee performance, and (ii) rewards and employee performance. The study also examines the moderating effect of internal communication on motivation and employee performance.

Theoretical Underpinning and Conceptual Framework

Theoretical Underpinning

This study has extended the Ecological Systems Theory and Path-Goal Theory for developing the conceptual framework. The Ecological System Theory emphasizes that employees in a particular environment have a vibrant relationship with their social, physical, and natural environment (Snell & Morris, 2021). Additionally, employees' performance increases in a vibrant workplace environment. This theory implies that work and life are inextricably linked, affecting each other in processes, time, context, and characteristics (Bergefurt et al., 2022).

The Path-Goal Theory is a well-known theory of human resource management used in many domains. The "Path-Goal Model" is a proven method of describing the "relationship between the reward system and employee performance" (Afifi & Tikkanen, 2021). The Path-Goal theory suggests that a leader's actions affect employees' satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Yazici, 2008). The manager's role is to assist employees in selecting the most appropriate paths to achieve both their personal and the corporation's goals. Employees who perceive high productivity to achieve personal and organizational goals will be more efficient. In contrast, they will be less efficient if they view low productivity with their objectives. In other words, if employees believe that the management rewards them based on their past efforts, they will be more motivated and productive (Ignacio, 2022).

Conceptual Framework

Based on the above theoretical discussions, the study has developed a conceptual framework containing five direct, one moderating, and two mediating hypotheses. Figure 1 depicts the developed conceptual framework.

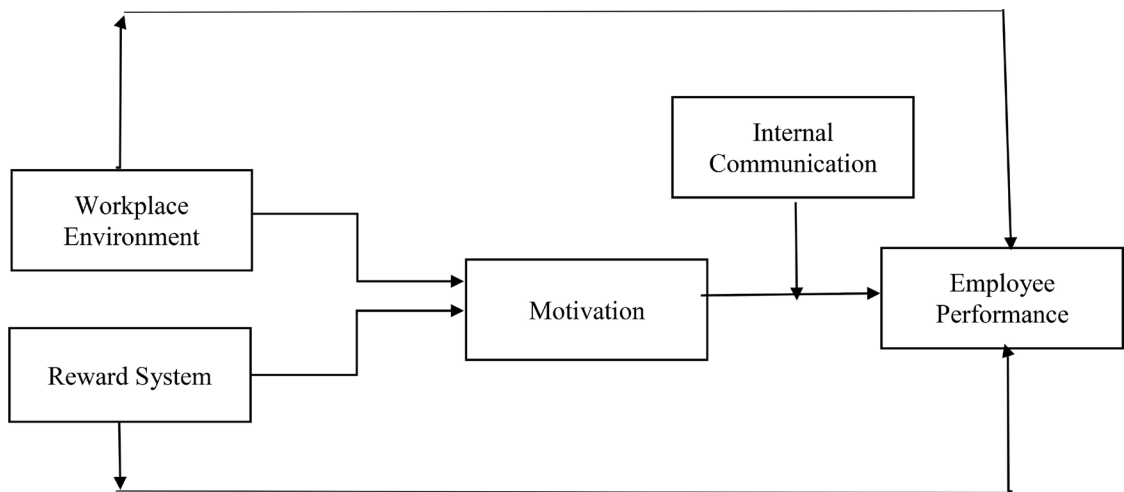


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis Development

Workplace Environment and Motivation

Extant literature documents that firms, by a conducive work environment, can enhance employee enthusiasm, passion, and motivation (Agusra et al., 2021). Apart from the tangible part of the work environment, intangible aspects also promote motivation. A conducive relationship between employees with their co-workers and supervisors enhances their motivation. When an organization provides all the facilities and support to their employees, their attitudes change, and they respond positively by achieving their assigned goals. Alam, Lawalata, Maricar, and Halim (2021) suggests that while designing a workplace's ambiance, management must focus on the nature of the employee's job. For managerial positions, the room's design must be spacious so that managers can concentrate on their work. Operational workers' job is monotonous. Therefore suitable colors can enhance their motivation. Pallawagau (2021) asserts that a pleasant working environment that aligns with employees' needs will enhance their motivation. At the same time, a poor working environment will negatively affect the employees' morale and satisfaction. Yusuf (2021) asserts that an inadequate work environment negatively affects employees' morale resulting in low energy and enthusiasm.

H1: The workplace environment in the mobile telecommunication industry positively affects motivation.

Reward System and Motivation

In the present competitive era, businesses realize that investing in human resources is necessary for growth and sustainability. Motivated employees increase organizational performance. Makambe and Charles (2020) assert that appropriate rewards and motivation are positively associated. Many past studies have documented that alignment between rewards and motivation has a resilient impact on the sustainability of business entities (Halilbegovic, Celebic, & Idrizovic, 2018). Thus firms must develop an appropriate reward policy to motivate employees and achieve organizational goals and objectives (Hayat et al., 2020). Setiawan and Mardiana (2022) assert that a well-structured incentive system enhances employees' motivation and organizational commitment.

Many studies have documented that the effect of rewards on motivation depends on the employees' perception. If they believe they are a pawn in an organization, their response to reward will be negligible (Utami & Wahidi, 2022). At the same time, if they believe they are part of the organization, their response to rewards will be more significant. If a reward enhances employees' autonomy, it will enhance motivation. Locus of control is essential for reward (Levi, Philip, & Kechukwu, 2018). Self-Determination Theory also postulates that employees' response to rewards depends on their perception of who is in control (Manganelli et al., 2018). Self-Determination Theory also argues that motivation stems from the human desire for autonomy and competence. Employees are more responsive to external rewards if it aligns with their personal goals and abilities. Extant literature suggests that introjected regulation adds positive and negative emotions to rewards (Howard et al., 2021). Introjected rewards mean feeling embarrassed for not receiving the rewards and feel pride when receiving rewards. An integrated extrinsic motivator relates to employees' core self-identity, while intrinsic rewards relate to employees' values on their tasks (Ryan, Donald, & Bradshaw, 2021).

H2: The reward system in the mobile telecommunication industry has a significant and positive relationship with motivation.

Workplace Environment and Employee Performance

The workplace environment is an essential precursor of employee performance. A comfortable environment promotes employees' morale, wellbeing, and job satisfaction leading to organizational performance (Hafeez et al., 2019; Sugma, 2022). Rasool et al. (2021) assert that many firms do not believe in incurring expenses to improve the physical aspects of the working environment. Such firms believe that productivity and physical environment have no association and think it is a resource-consuming non-productive activity that reduces employees' performance. Such firms believe employees' skills are the key to productivity, which is irrelevant to the environment (Alameeri et al.,

2020). Such firms are often unaware that the working environment's malfunction results in poor productivity and low morale.

Riyanto, Endri, and Hamid (2021) assert that the working environment is essential to quality work and productivity. An improper working environment is unsafe for workers, increases the chances of unwarranted accidents, and reduces employee productivity. A non-conductive working environment promotes stress in the employees, committing unwarranted errors. Many studies based on empirical evidence have documented that poor working conditions at the workplace results in employee underutilization. Basuki and Khalid (2021) also validate past literature by stating a conducive workplace environment improves employees' physical and mental capabilities leading to improvement in job-related duties. The physical workplace environment of the local telecommunication industry is inappropriate. As a result, it exposes employees to unnecessary noises and harmful radiation. Consequently, it adversely affects employees' motivation and job performance (Tarigan, Assaly, Gunwane, & Harnjo, 2022).

H3: The workplace environment in the mobile telecommunication industry positively affects employee performance.

Reward System and Employee Performance

An individual receives rewards for good performance or attainment of goals (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). In modern business rewards and environment enhance employees' motivation, performance, and productivity. The reward is important for the organization and the employees. From the employees' perspective, reward satisfies the employees and fulfills their needs. And they become motivated and productive employees (Ahmad et al., 2019)

The reward system in an organization aligns with its policies and practices, often based on employees' contributions, abilities, and skills (Sidhu & Nizam, 2020). Reward systems are often intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic rewards are intangible and are internal drives like the satisfaction of successfully attaining a goal and being proud to perform better (Zafar, Sarwar, Zafar, & Sheeraz, 2020). Extrinsic rewards are tangible and highly impact motivation and employee performance. For some employees, intrinsic rewards are important, and for others, extrinsic rewards are important (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). Thus to enhance employee performance, firms must use both modes of rewards.

H4: Reward system in the mobile telecommunication industry positively affects employee performance.

Motivation and Employees Performance

Motivation is critical for employee performance and productivity. Employees' productivity will be low if their motivation levels are also low (Sudiardhita et al., 2018; Kuswati, 2020). Motivation provides the energy to perform a task. A motivated employee is always conscious of the goal to be achieved and directs his/her efforts toward attaining it (Chien, Mao, Nergui, & Chang, 2020). Motivation enables the employees to be "active, efficient, and hardworking." Motivated employees are more willing to exert more effort to achieve their goals. Furthermore, researchers believe work performance stems from motivation. Many studies have documented a strong association between motivation and employee performance (Khairunnisa et al., 2021; Wuryani et al., 2021).

H5: Motivation in the mobile telecommunication industry positively affects employee performance.

Workplace Environment, Motivation, and Employee Performance

Motivation steers the behavior toward achieving a specific goal (Kuswati, 2020). According to Howard et al. (2021), rewards, motivation, and working conditions significantly impact employee performance. Previous studies have also examined motivation's moderating and mediating roles in job related outcomes. As a result, academics suggest more research on mediating variables in workplace conditions (Ryan, Donald, & Bradshaw, 2021). Sansone and Harackiewicz (2000) assert that motivation mediates several different relationships and it has a varying impact on the antecedents and consequences of work-related variables.

H6: Motivation of the telecommunication industry mediates workplace environment and employee performance.

Reward System, Motivation, and Employee Performance

There are several reasons for awarding or compensating employees. Appropriate remuneration or compensation improves employee performance. It builds a sustainable relationship between the company and employees, boosts employee morale, and helps retain talented employees (Kuswati, 2020). Many studies have documented that motivation mediates reward and employee performance (Francis et al., 2020).

H7: Motivation of the telecommunication industry mediates reward systems and employee performance.

Internal Communication as a Moderator

Internal communication within an organization is necessary to enhance employees' performance. It helps develop relationships between employees and supervisors

(Ophelia & Hidayat, 2021). Past studies stress a weak internal communication in a firm can decrease the association between motivation and employee performance (Kucaladevi, et al., 2021). At the same time, a firm with strong internal communication enhances the relationship between motivation and job performance (Kim, 2021). Given the varying effect of internal communication, many studies have used it as a moderator between different antecedents of job performance, including motivation.

H8: Internal communication in the telecommunication industry moderates motivation and job performance

Research Methodology

Research Population and Sample size

The population of mobile users in Pakistan is more than 100 million. It is one of the fastest-growing industries in Pakistan that significantly contributes to employment generation and GDP (Tanveer et al., 2021). Given the importance of the mobile sector, the study has targeted the Ufone, Telenor, Jazz, and Zong. We recruited five enumerators to collect the data from targeted companies, who distributed 450 questionnaires and received 418 questionnaires. The study used convenience sampling to collect the data since the sample frame for the target population was not available.

Research Instrument

This study's research instrument is a questionnaire structured into different sections. The first section of the questionnaire assesses the respondents' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational qualification, and years of working experience. The second section measures the reward system, motivation, employee performance, work environment, and internal communication. The questionnaire used in the study measured the responses on a "five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)." Table 1 shows the summary of the instrument used in the study.

Table 1: Summary of the Instrument

Variable	Authors / Source	No. of items	Scale
Work Place Environment	Mahmood and Sarwar (2020)	4	1-5
Reward System	Parashakti and Ekhsan (2020)	10	1-5
Motivation	Kanwal and Syed (2017)	6	1-5
Employee Performance	Culbertson Mills and Fullagar (2012)	5	1-5
Internal communication	Ruck and Welch (2012)	5	1-5

Respondent Profile

The study collected 418 samples from the employees of the targeted mobile companies (i.e., Ufone, Telenor, Jazz, and Zong). Table 2 depicts the summary of the respondents' profiles.

Table 2: Respondents' Profile

		Frequency	Percentage
Age	20 to 30	210	50.24%
	31 to 40	124	29.66%
	41 to 50	65	15.55%
	51 to 60	13	3.11%
	61 and above	6	1.44%
Gender	Female	189	45.21%
	Male	229	54.79%
Education	High School	9	2.15%
	Certificate	54	12.92%
	Bachelors	196	46.89%
	Masters	137	32.78%
	Doctorate	22	5.26%
Designation	Assistant Supervisor	74	17.71%
	Supervisor	80	19.14%
	Director	75	17.94%
	Deputy Manager	24	5.74%
	Manager	50	11.96%
	Any Other	115	27.51%
Years of Experience	1-5 Years	199	47.61%
	5-10 Years	118	28.23%
	10-15 Years	85	20.34%
	15 Years and Above	16	3.82%

The age profile shows most employees are in the age group 20-30 years (50.24%), followed by the age group 31-40 years (29.66%), age group 41-50 (15.55%), and the rest are at least 51 years old. The gender profile suggests that 45.21% of the respondents are females, and 54.79% are males. The educational profile shows that 46.89% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree, 32.78% have master's degrees, and the rest have other qualifications. Regarding designation, the statistics show that 19.14% are supervisors, 17.94% are directors, 5.74% are deputy managers, 11.96% are managers, and 27.51% are in other positions. The experience profile shows that 47.61% of respondents had experience in the range of 1-5 years, 28.23% in the range of 5-10 years, 20.34% in

the range of 10-15 years, and 3.82% in the range of 15 years and above.

Statistical Analysis

We have used Smart PLS for data analysis as researchers recommend it for a complex model. In addition, it generates the predictive power of the model. We initially generated a measurement model for results related to reliability, validity, predictive power, and model fit indices. Subsequently, we generated a structural model for the results related to direct and indirect hypotheses.

Results and Findings

Measurement Model

The study generated the measurement model for the results related to reliability and validity, presented in Figure 2. The study has depicted other results in the following sections.

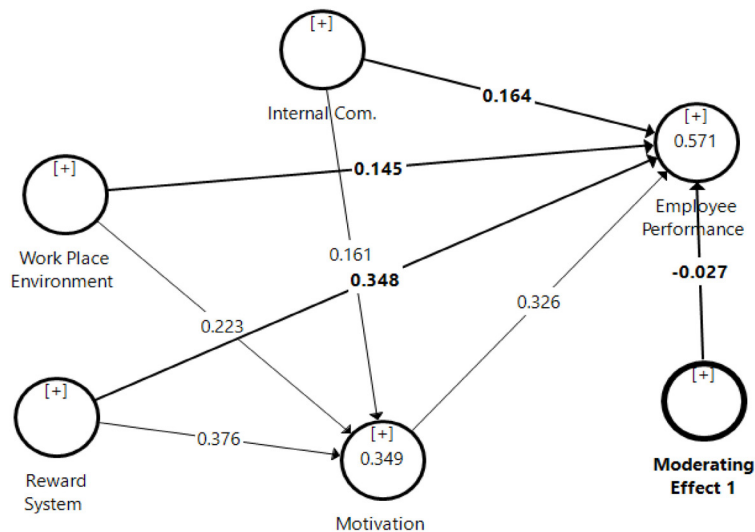


Figure 2: Measurement Model

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 depicts the results related to internal consistency and the shapes of Skewness and Kurtosis, which we have used for assessing internal consistency and univariate normality of the constructs.

Table 3: Descriptive Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Employee Performance	0.862	4.442	1.486	1.944	1.632
Internal Communication	0.848	4.361	1.882	-2.237	1.544
Motivation	0.876	3.784	1.314	-2.354	1.924
Reward System	0.835	3.809	1.302	1.442	2.215
Work Place Environment	0.896	4.201	0.987	1.595	1.688

Reliability measures the internal consistency of the constructs. Studies have used Cronbach's Alpha values for measuring internal consistency and suggested they should be at least 0.70. Since the Cronbach's Alpha values presented in Table 3 fulfill this criterion, we infer that the constructs based on the data collected from the telecom industry have adequate internal consistency.

The study has assessed univariate normality based on the Skewness and Kurtosis values of the constructs. We found all the Skewness and Kurtosis values are between ± 3.5 , suggesting that the constructs based on the data collected from the telecom sector aligns with the requirement of univariate normality.

Convergent Validity

The study has summarized the results related to convergent validity in Table 4.

Table 4: Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Performance	0.862	0.864	0.901	0.646
Internal Communication	0.848	0.850	0.908	0.767
Motivation	0.876	0.880	0.892	0.707
Reward System	0.835	0.840	0.890	0.669
Work Place Environment	0.896	0.808	0.927	0.761

The results presented in Table 5 show that AVE values are at least "0.60 and composite validity values are more than 0.80." Thus we have inferred that the latent variables used in the study have a theoretical association with the respective indicator variables

Discriminant Validity

The study used Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria for assessing the discriminant validity. Discriminant validity assess "uniqueness and distinctiveness of latent variables". We have presented summarized results in Table 5.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity

	Employee Performance	Internal Com.	Motivation	System Reward	Work Place Environment
Employee Performance	0.804				
Internal Communication	0.529	0.876			
Motivation	0.631	0.439	0.817		
Reward System	0.618	0.441	0.504	0.818	
Work Place Environment	0.447	0.502	0.400	0.254	0.872

Table 5 shows all "Pearson correlation values are lesser than the square root of AVE (presented diagonally). Given these results, we have inferred the latent variables used in the study are "unique and distinct".

Predictive Power of the Measurement Model

The study assessed the measurement model's predictive power based on R^2 and Q^2 values. Table 6 depicts the summary of the results.

Table 6: Predictive Power of the Model

	R Square Value			Q Square Value	
	R Square	R Square Adjusted	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (1-SSE/SSO)
Employee Performance	0.571	0.570	5990	3803.748	0.365
Motivation	0.349	0.348	5990	4613.993	0.230

The Q^2 values depicted in Table 6 are more than zero, and R^2 values are at least 0.20, suggesting the measurement model based on the data collected from the mobile sector has adequate predictive power.

Fit Indices

The study has assessed the measurement model's fitness based on SRM and NFI values, presented in Table 7. Since the SRMR values are lesser than "0.08 and NFI values are greater than 0.80" therefore, it is safe to assume the model has adequate fitness.

Table 7: Fit Indices

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.071	0.071
d_ULS	1.180	1.179
d_G	0.455	0.455
Chi-Square	3336.843	3334.689
NFI	0.801	0.802

Structural Model

As advised by the researchers, we have used bootstrapping to generate a structural model, presented in Figure 3, and the results of the hypothesis are discussed in the following section.

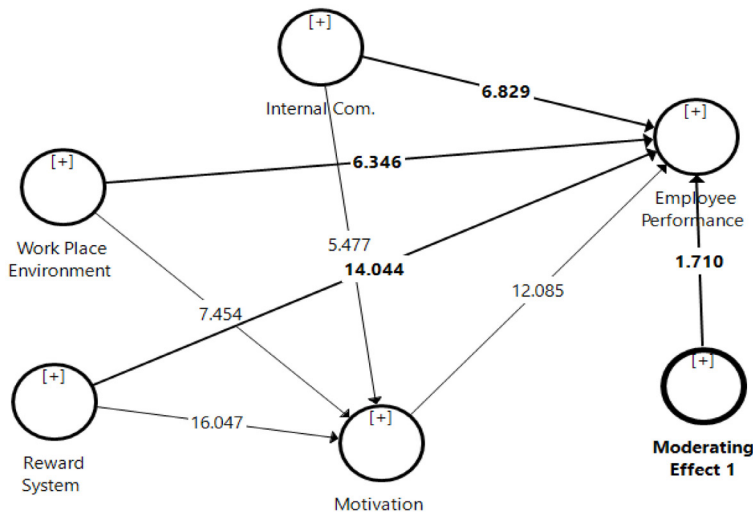


Figure 3: Structural Model

Hypothesis Results

Based on bootstrapping, we have tested five direct, two mediating, and one moderating hypotheses and have summarized the results in Table 8.

Table 8: Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis	β	T Stat.	P Values	Results
Direct Relationships				
Work Place Environment -> Motivation (H1)	0.223	7.454	0.000	Accepted
Reward System -> Motivation (H2)	0.376	16.047	0.000	Accepted

Work Place Env. -> Employee Performance (H3)	0.145	6.346	0.000	Accepted
Reward System -> Employee Performance (H4)	0.348	14.044	0.000	Accepted
Motivation -> Employee Performance (H5)	0.326	12.085	0.000	Accepted

Indirect Relationships

Work Place Env. -> Mot. -> Employee Per.. (H6)*	0.073	6.348	0.000	Accepted
Reward -> Mot. -> Employee Per. (H7)*	0.123	9.503	0.000	Accepted
Motivation. -> Int. Com -> Employee Per. (H8)**	-0.027	1.710	0.087	Rejected

Note: * and ** denotes mediating and moderating relationships, respectively.

We found support for “all the direct and two mediating hypotheses” except the moderating, which suggests internal communication insignificantly moderates motivation and employee performance ($\beta=-0.027$, $t=1.710$, $p=0.087>0.05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

We extended the “Ecological Systems Theory and Path-Goal Theory” to develop a model containing five direct, two mediating, and one moderating relationships. The following section discusses the results and their relevance to past studies.

Hypothesis one postulates that the “workplace environment promotes motivation.” The study’s finding is consistent with past literature. Extant literature documents that firms, by a conducive work environment, can enhance employee enthusiasm, passion, and motivation (Agusra et al., 2021). Apart from the tangible part of the work environment, intangible aspects also promote motivation. A conducive relationship between employees with their co-workers and supervisors enhances their motivation. When an organization provides all the facilities and support to their employees, their attitudes change, and they respond positively by achieving their assigned goals. Thus, we suggest that while designing a workplace’s ambiance, management must focus on the nature of the employee’s job.

Hypothesis two suggests “reward system positively affects motivation.” The result is in line with past studies. Many studies have documented that the effect of rewards on motivation depends on the employees’ perception. If they believe they are a pawn in an organization, their response to reward will be negligible (Utami & Wahidi, 2022). At the same time, if they believe they are part of the organization, their response to rewards will be more significant. If a reward enhances employees’ autonomy, it will enhance motivation. Locus of control is essential for reward (Levi, Philip, & Kechukwu, 2018). Self-Determination Theory also postulates that employees’ response to rewards depends on their perception of who is in control (Manganelli et al., 2018). Self-Determination Theory also argues that motivation stems from the human desire for autonomy and

competence. Employees are more responsive to external rewards if it aligns with their personal goals and abilities. Extant literature suggests that introjected regulation adds positive and negative emotions to rewards (Howard et al., 2021).

Hypothesis three assumes “workplace environment stimulates motivation” which our result support and is also in line with extant literature. Riyanto, Endri, and Hamid (2021) assert that the working environment is essential to work quality and productivity. An improper working environment is unsafe for workers, increases the chances of unwarranted accidents, and reduces employee productivity. A non-conductive working environment promotes stress in the employees, committing unwarranted errors. Many studies based on empirical evidence have documented that poor working conditions at the workplace results in employee underutilization. Basuki and Khalid (2021) also validates past literature by stating a conducive workplace environment improves employees’ physical and mental capabilities leading to improvement in job-related duties. The physical workplace environment of the local telecommunication industry is inappropriate. As a result, it exposes employees to unnecessary noises and harmful radiation. Consequently, it adversely affects employees’ motivation and job performance (Tarigan, Assaly, Gunwane, & Harnjo, 2022).

The result of hypothesis four suggests “reward system positively affects employee performance.” The result aligns with past studies. The reward system in an organization aligns with its policies and practices, often based on employees’ contributions, abilities, and skills (Sidhu & Nizam, 2020). Reward systems are often intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic rewards are intangible and are internal drives like the satisfaction of successfully attaining a goal and being proud to perform better (Zafar, Sarwar, Zafar, & Sheeraz, 2020). Extrinsic rewards are tangible and highly impact motivation and employee performance. For some employees, intrinsic rewards are important, and for others, extrinsic rewards are important (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). Thus to enhance employee performance, firms must use both modes of rewards.

The study support hypothesis five, suggesting “motivation positively affects employee performance.” The results are in line with many past studies. Motivation is critical for employee performance and productivity. Motivation enables employees to be active, efficient, hardworking, and take risks. Motivated employees are more willing to exert more effort to achieve their goals.

Our study support hypothesis six and seven, articulating “motivation mediates workplace environment and employee performance,” and motivation mediates rewards and employee performance. Motivation steers the behavior toward achieving

a specific goal (Kuswati, 2020). According to Howard et al. (2021), rewards, motivation, and working conditions significantly impact employee performance. Previous studies have also examined motivation's moderating and mediating roles in the workplace capabilities and consequences relationships. There are several reasons for awarding or compensating employees. Appropriate remuneration or compensation improves employee performance. It builds a sustainable relationship between the company and employees, boosts employee morale, and helps retain talented employees (Kuswati, 2020). Sansone and Harackiewicz (2000) assert motivation mediates several different relationships and concluded that motivation has a varying impact on the antecedents and consequences of work-related variables.

The study supports the hypothesis eight suggesting "internal communication moderates motivation and employee performance". Internal communication within an organization is necessary to enhance employees' performance. It helps in developing a relationship between employees and supervisors (Ophilia & Hidayat, 2021). Past studies stress a weak internal communication in a firm can decrease the association of motivation and employee performance (Kucaladevi et al., 2021). At the same time, a firm with strong internal communication enhances the relationship between motivation and job performance (Kim, 2021). Given the varying effect of internal communication, many studies have used it as a moderator between "different antecedents of job performance, including motivation."

Conclusion

This study has developed a model, which we empirically tested by collecting data from the mobile sectors of Pakistan. Study results support all the hypotheses except the hypothesis on the moderating effect of internal communication. The results suggest workplace environment and reward systems affect motivation. The workplace environment and reward system promote employee performance. Motivation has a mediating effect on (i) the workplace environment and employees' performance and (ii) the reward system and employee performance. The study did not support the moderating effect of internal communication on "motivation and employee performance."

Implications and Recommendations

The study examined the workplace environment and reward system in the telecom sector of Karachi, Pakistan. The telecom sector can improve employees' performance by developing a conducive work environment and reward system that aligns with employee needs. Both financial and non-financial rewards are important for enhancing employee performance. Since motivation mediates antecedents of employee performance, the telecommunication sector must focus on improving employee morale and motivation.

Internal communication is important for a conducive working environment. It allows employees to give feedback and suggestion. Consequently, they feel that the management cares about them, resulting in owning organizations and their growth and sustainability.

Limitations of the Research

The study has focused on the telecommunication sector of Karachi, Pakistan. Future studies may extend the developed conceptual framework to other sectors. The study used non-random sampling. We recommend others use probability sampling to increase its generalizability. The study used motivation as a mediator, and we recommend using it as a moderating variable as it has a varying impact on the antecedent and consequences of employee performance. The study has focused on five variables. Other researchers can have a holistic approach by using more work-related variables. Cultures affect the work environment, which other studies can use.

Annexure 1

Constructs and Items used in the Questionnaire

Employee Performance

EP1. I efficiently complete assigned duties.

EP2. I responsively complete assignments related to my job description.

EP3. I complete all tasks beyond the supervisor's expectation.

EP4. I always volunteer for challenging assignments.

EP5. I engage in activities that affect my performance.

Work Place Environment

WP1. The relationship between supervisor and employees is necessary for the work environment.

WP2. Fair treatment of the employees is important for the workplace environment.

WP3. Environmental factors (safety, healthy and friendly Environment) are important for the conducive work environment.

WP4. The tangibility, like lights and seating arrangements, is important for the workplace environment.

Reward System

R1. Reward with special cash bonuses for "long-term" recognition (sustained outstanding performance over a long period is important.

R2. Reward with special cash bonuses for "on the spot" recognition is important.

R3. Reward with trips to resort locations for "winners" with spouses.

R4. Reward with special recognition by top management at national meetings.

R5. Reward with special recognition by team management at team meetings.

R6. Reward with a certificate for “dinner for two” or evening out.

R7. Reward with plaques/certificates/trophies.

R8. Reward with a tangible gift.

R9. Reward with time off with pay.

R10. Reward with a letter of appreciation.

Internal Communication

IC1. How problems that I report in my job are dealt with.

IC2. How my job contributes to the organization.

IC3. Things that go wrong in my organization.

IC4. Staff development opportunities.

IC5. My performance in my job.

Motivation

M1. The relations with the colleagues affect motivation.

M2. Authority/responsibility and dependence requests in the workplace affects motivation.

M3. Participation in decision-making process affects motivation.

M4. The match between overtime hours and lifestyle affect motivation.

M5. The holiday, off-day and resting periods and their match with the lifestyle affect motivation.

M6. Working period affects motivation.

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