



Job Performance Reimagined: Insights from the Job Characteristics Model and the Power of Fairness, Engagement, and Emotional Intelligence

Original Article

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Abstract

With emotional intelligence acting as a mediator, this quantitative study of 320 telecom workers in Pakistan looks at how job qualities affect engagement and fairness perceptions, which in turn affect performance. By improving fairness and engagement, job design features like skill variation and feedback have been shown to improve performance, according to structural equation modeling. This mediated association was reinforced by emotional intelligence. The results highlight the importance of creating richer employment to enhance performance via psychological processes.

Keywords: Job Performance, Job Characteristics, Power, Fairness, Engagement, Emotional Intelligence.



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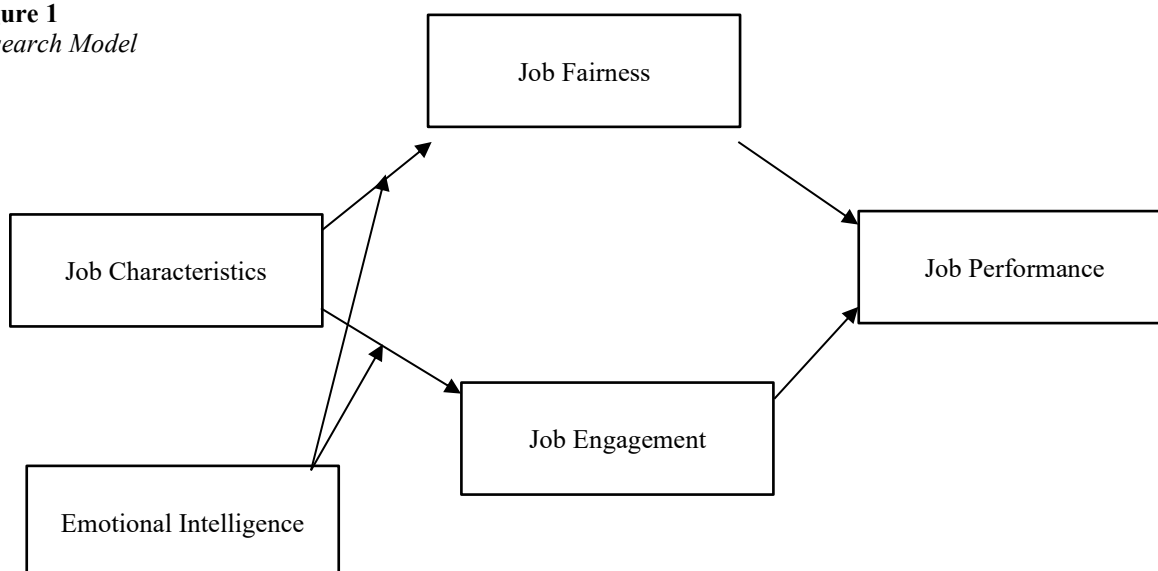
Introduction

Although the Job Characteristics Model—which includes autonomy, feedback, task identity, task significance, and skill variety—is well-established (Bakker *et al.*, 2023; Johari *et al.*, 2022), little is known about how it affects job satisfaction in the telecom industries of developing nations (Mushtaq *et al.*, 2021; Rai & Maheshwari, 2021). Through the mediating functions of work engagement and job fairness perceptions, this study investigates how job features affect performance (Kulikowski *et al.*, 2022). As a mediator of these mediated connections, it puts emotional intelligence to the test even more. This study fills a contextual vacuum and supports the generalizability of the model by focusing on Pakistan's dynamic telecom industry and highlighting important psychological mechanisms that convert job design into better results (Sparks & Cooper, 2024; Yang *et al.*, 2021).

Literature Review

Job attributes that promote fulfillment, ownership, and real-time improvement—task identity, significance, autonomy, and feedback—improve performance. In the telecom industry, measurable tasks (such as fixing mistakes yourself) and unambiguous feedback (like network metrics) boost accountability and engagement and produce better results (Sparks & Cooper, 2024; Yang *et al.*, 2021). By encouraging views of impartiality and equitable treatment, job qualities (such as autonomy and feedback) improve job fairness (Faraji *et al.*, 2008; Wang *et al.*, 2020). By offering psychological resources, they also encourage job engagement by fostering resilience, vitality, and emotional connection (Krishnan *et al.*, 2015; Ramos *et al.*, 2016). These relationships are moderated by emotional intelligence: while employees with high emotional intelligence are better able to utilize job resources, which increases engagement, those with low emotional intelligence suffer from stress, which undermines engagement even in the case of well-designed roles (O'Boyle *et al.*, 2011; Urquijo *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the favorable effects of job qualities on engagement and fairness are reinforced by emotional intelligence.

Figure 1
Research Model



H1: There is a positive relationship between job characteristics and job performance.

H2: Job fairness perceptions mediate the link between job characteristics and job performance.

H3: Job engagement mediates the effect of job characteristics on job performance.

H4: Emotional intelligence moderates the mediating role of job fairness perceptions in the link between job characteristics and job performance, such that as the emotional intelligence increases, the mediation effect becomes stronger.

H5: Emotional intelligence moderates the mediating role of job engagement in the link between job characteristics and job performance, such that as emotional intelligence increases, the mediation effect becomes stronger.

Materials and Methods

The Research Context

The study focuses on contractual workers at Pakistan Telecommunication Limited (PTCL), where job redesign and contractual employment are given priority in recent strategic changes to remain competitive in the market. Once a public sector organization with little emphasis on performance, PTCL now places a strong emphasis on dynamic roles to improve service quality, speed, and cost-effectiveness—all of which are vital in Pakistan's very competitive telecom sector. Maintaining market share in the face of competition over bandwidth, cost, and service quality depends heavily on employee performance. To ensure operational excellence and customer happiness in a high-pressure industry, this study looks at how job characteristics affect the job performance of contractual staff, who make up the majority of PTCL's changing workforce.

Population and Sampling

All 3,288 contractual employees who had worked for PTCL for more than three years and were identified by the HR department made up the study population. A 95% confidence level was used to calculate the sample size, which came to 320. Convenience sampling was used to gather data from the Islamabad headquarters and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regional offices. 320 surveys in all were filled out and examined. 31% of the sample's respondents had bachelor's degrees, and 63% of them were men. 6.7 years was the average organizational tenure. This strategy made sure that different departments and levels were represented, which made it easier to examine how job factors affect performance among PTCL's contract workers.

Results and Findings

The mean score, standard deviation, reliability, and correlation of the study variables are shown in Table 1. Results indicate that job characteristics are significantly associated with employees' job performance ($r=.47, p<.01$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities

Variables	Mean (SD)	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Job characteristics	3.76(.47)	.84	1									
2 Job fairness perceptions	3.83(.32)	.85	.38***	1								
3 Job engagement	3.74(.51)	.81	.34**	.25	1							
4 Job performance	3.61(.32)	.90	.47**	.35***	.31*	1						
5 Emotional intelligence	3.08(.71)	.91	.21	.27	.24	.12	1					
6 Age	31.8(7.9)		.13*	.05	.02	.18*	.02	1				
7 Gender	.72(.17)		.03	.05	.03	.04	.03	.04	1			
8 Education	3.01(.72)		.03	.18*	.15*	.05	.02	.02	.03	1		
9 Tenure	8.84(1.86)		.13**	.08	.17*	.02	.03	.04	.02	.02	1	
10 Marital status	0.91(0.73)		.03	.02	.02	.04	.01	.03	.04	.03	.05	1

* $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$

Strong model fit ($\chi^2/df=2.86$, CFI=.96, RMSEA=.061) was verified by confirmatory factor analysis, which also validated discriminant validity. High reliability was demonstrated by all constructions ($\alpha=.81-.91$). Job attributes were found to be a significant predictor of job performance ($\beta=0.44, p<.001$), job fairness ($\beta=0.36, p<.01$), and job

engagement ($\beta=0.32$, $p<.05$) using structural equation modeling. Job fairness ($\beta=0.47$, $p<.001$) and job engagement ($\beta=0.16$, $p<.05$), two mediators also showed significant direct effects on performance, confirming all direct associations that were expected.

Table 2
Path coefficients

Paths	Path coefficients	R ²
job characteristics→job performance	.44***	.43
job characteristics→job fairness perceptions	.36*	.29
job characteristics→job engagement	.32**	.25
job fairness perceptions→job performance	0.47***	.39
job engagement →job performance	.16**	.26

Note. * $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.001$

Job fairness (impact = 0.341, 95% CI [0.0216, 0.0729]) and job engagement (effect = 0.277, 95% CI [0.1272, 0.2851]) are two important indirect effects of job attributes on performance that support H2 and H3. Emotional intelligence strongly moderates both mediation routes, according to a moderated mediation study. H4 was supported by confidence intervals that excluded zero for the indirect effect via job fairness for high and low emotional intelligence levels. Likewise, H5 was confirmed by the intervals for the indirect effect through job engagement, excluding zero. The mediation functions of engagement and job fairness in the relationship between job qualities and performance are both strengthened by emotional intelligence.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study demonstrates that employment attributes that have a beneficial impact on employee performance include autonomy, feedback, task relevance, task identity, and skill variety. These characteristics raise work engagement and improve views of workplace justice, both of which boost performance. When jobs are well-designed, workers feel valued and acknowledged because they see their workplace as fair, unbiased, and courteous. How structured job roles result in better outcomes is explained by this psychological process (Johari *et al.*, 2022; Kulikowski *et al.*, 2022; Mushtaq *et al.*, 2021; Rai & Maheshwari, 2021; Sparks & Cooper, 2024).

Table 4
Indirect effect and moderated mediation effect

Indirect effect					
	Boot indirect effects		LLCI	ULCI	
JOB FAIRNESS PERCEPTIONS	0.341		0.0216	0.0729	
Job engagement	0.277		0.1272	0.2851	
Moderated mediation effect					
	Boot effects	indirect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Job fairness perceptions x emotional intelligence					
-1 SD	0.0636		0.0251	0.0493	0.3472
Mean	0.1284		0.0471	0.0710	0.4429
+1 SD	0.1933		0.0619	0.0928	0.5387
Job engagement x emotional intelligence					
-1 SD	0.0589		0.0239	0.0117	0.1282
Mean	0.1035		0.0347	0.0664	0.2237
+1 SD	0.1482		0.0455	0.1211	0.3193

Note: LLCI is for lower-level confidence interval; ULCI is for upper limit confidence interval

Strong feelings of employment fairness are fostered by well-designed job qualities, such as autonomy, feedback, and skill variation. When distributive and procedural fairness are upheld, workers view workloads, compensation, and promotions as fair. Feelings of equity and value are increased by the consistent implementation of the norms, open communication, and courteous treatment. Employee engagement and performance increase because of this fairness, which helps workers concentrate better on their work. Organizations may improve perceptions of fairness and foster a work climate where employees feel valued and inspired to give their best efforts by making sure that qualifications and efforts are given equal recognition.

The relationship between job qualities and performance is mediated by job engagement. Psychological resources that promote energy, purpose, and emotional attachment to work are provided by well-designed roles that offer task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Bakker *et al.*, 2023; Johari *et al.*, 2022). Workers feel more energized, resilient, and committed, which motivates them to work harder in spite of obstacles. Performance is improved by this sense of pride and involvement, especially when activities are seen as significant and well-defined (Kulikowski *et al.*, 2022; Mushtaq *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, work attributes foster engagement, which enhances results.

Limitations and Future Research Work

This study has some limitations. First, only one company was considered in this research. This makes the generalizability of findings difficult. Therefore, future studies should consider employees from other industries and companies. Second, the developing country's context makes it challenging to generalize the research model in other countries. Third, the moderating role of emotional intelligence is another avenue for future research. It is difficult to measure emotional intelligence through self-reporting. Future studies should collect data from multiple sources, and time-lagged studies should also be included in the future.

Contributions

By dissecting the "black box" between job design and performance and revealing fairness perceptions and engagement as important mediators, this study makes a substantial contribution to the field of job characteristics theory. It establishes emotional intelligence as a key moderator and merges positive psychology, justice, and job design uniquely. These observations, which come from the telecom industry in Pakistan, provide insightful cross-cultural data and useful advice for improving performance through job redesign and emotional intelligence development.

Recommendations

Roles should be proactively audited and redesigned by organizations to incorporate essential job attributes such as feedback, work identification, skill variety, and relevance. Employees will be better able to utilize these enriched occupations if emotional intelligence training is implemented concurrently. Promoting a corporate justice culture by openness and equitable practices is equally important. Contractual workers should also be specifically included in these investments because they have a major positive impact on retention and performance.

Declarations

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate: This study strictly adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki and relevant national and institutional ethical guidelines. Informed consent was not required, as secondary data available on websites was obtained for analysis. All procedures performed in this study were by the ethical standards of the Helsinki Declaration.

Consent for Publication: The authors give their consent for publication.

Availability of Data and Materials: Data will be made available upon request from the corresponding author.

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