

Psychological Empowerment and Employee Attitudes: Mediating Role of Intrinsic Motivation

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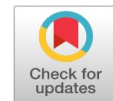
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Abstract: This research aims to shed light on the role of individual empowerment at the workplace in responding to the question regarding capitalism. Using an assorted sample ($N = 180$) of employees from various organizations in Pakistan, the authors investigated the main effects of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation on job satisfaction and turnover intention. Additionally, the unexplored mediated link of intrinsic motivation with psychological empowerment and job attitudes and behavioural intentions was explored. Using structural equation modeling, our results revealed significant direct effects of psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation, while mediated links of intrinsic motivation with psychological empowerment and job satisfaction were supported as hypothesized. However, the mediation results for the turnover intention were not supported. Overall, the study provided a good test of Western theories and concepts in a unique Eastern context.

Keywords: Psychological empowerment, Job satisfaction, Turnover intention, Intrinsic motivation

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last four decades, empowerment has emerged as a vital construct of investigation due to its critical role in determining job attitudes. Since its theoretical inception, two major dimensions have been explained as socio-structural and psychological empowerment (Devanna, 1978). Conger and Kanungo (1988) introduced psychological empowerment as a cognitive source which provides information cues to increase employee self-efficacy resulting in enhanced levels of motivation. Rooted in cognition and motivation theories, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) introduced a comprehensive theoretical framework based on four dimensions of employee task assessment under the umbrella of psychological empowerment. These four task assessments (i.e., meaning, choice, competence and impact) were associated with intrinsic motivation (Seibert, Wang, & Courtright, 2011). Alignment of job roles and self-beliefs is referred to as the meaning (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), Choice and right to initiate/regulate the self- activities is referred to as self determination (Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989); competence is associated with operational, strategic and administrative control over job activities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The role of individual job in organizational/departmental success is referred to as 'impact' (Spreitzer, 1995).

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) proposed that the presence of all these factors of psychological empowerment will predict the highest levels of intrinsic motivation amongst employees. It has been explained as a momentous tactic to improve employee attitudes and work behaviors in a wide range of occupations, geographic regions and industries. We can find detailed literature on the psychological empowerment relationship with employee attitudes and behaviors, but studies explaining the mechanism through which psychological empowerment is linked with different attitudes and behavioral intentions are very rare. A meta-analysis conducted by Seibert et al. (2011) reported that "the strength of the

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relationships between psychological empowerment and various workplace attitudes and behaviors compares favorably with some of the most robust motivation theories in the field". They recommended integrating the psychological empowerment and motivational theories for a clear understanding of its impact in an organizational setting. As per our knowledge, this is an earlier attempt to explain this missing link and responding to the call for the integration of psychological empowerment and motivation theories.

Ryan and Deci (2000) defined "Intrinsic motivation as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequence. When intrinsically motivated, a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external products, pressures, or rewards". Intrinsic motivation tends to provide an employee inner satisfaction, relaxed environment, low work pressure and enables individuals, more competent, to perform tasks (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000), this research has made an advance in literature by explaining the mediated link of intrinsic motivation between psychological empowerment and job attitudes.

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsically motivated attitudes and behaviors are largely determined by choices based on individuals' self-values and desires. Self determined employees are more intrinsically motivated and exhibit a higher level of task performance as compared to extrinsically motivate individuals. Additionally, (Seibert et al., 2011) recommended investigating psychological empowerment mediation with other domains of organizational behavior research, such as leadership, stress behavior innovation, etc. The stance taken in this study is that before checking this mediation, exploration of the mechanism through which psychological empowerment is linked to different job attitudes and behavioral intentions is important.

Another significance of this research is that mainstream investigations in this field of research have been conducted in the Western context, specifically in North America and Europe. Previous research strongly suggested testing these theories in a non-Western setting to increase generalizability and applicability of these theories in diverse cultural context (Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007). So, this study is going to fill the gap in literature due to unique Pakistani context by application and validation of theories mainly developed in the Western setting.

Additionally, this research aims to shed light on the role of individual empowerment at workplace in responding to the question regarding capitalism. Integration motivational and empowerment theories in the work setting may provide solutions to buffer the negative effects of capitalism approaches on individual attitudes and behaviors. So at a minute level, this research is linked to the main theme of this year's meeting capitalism in question. This relevance predicts the significance of this study in the current scenario.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Psychological empowerment and job outcomes

Although literature cited multiple theoretical definitions of psychological empowerment, but this research used a comprehensive definition one based on four dimensions of task assessment (i.e., meaning, choice, competence and impact) explained by Thomas and Velthouse (1990). So, an individual carrying these four dimensions on his/her job will be considered psychologically empowered. On the other hand, the construct of job satisfaction has been defined by Locke (1976) as the attainment of individual work values. An individual attaining his/her perceived value out of a job will feel satisfied. A significant detail of literature and empirical evidence can be found to support the notion that psychological empowerment is a major predictor of attitudes such as job satisfaction (Mayo, 2004). The association between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction has been investigated most commonly (Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004; Spreitzer, 1995). The meaningfulness, a dimension of psychological empowerment, has been reported strongly correlated with job satisfaction along with a significant positive association with the other three dimensions of competence, self-determination and impact (Spreitzer, Kizilos, & Nason, 1997; Thomas & Tymon, 1994). Locke (1976) suggested that if the work of the individual allows him or her to fulfil the desired work values, the individual will be more satisfied as compared to one who does not have value fulfilment option at work. This conceptualization is also consistent with the job characteristics model by (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). It has been argued by motivation scholars that individual will have a

sense of satisfaction when he or she is aware of the task significance for the organization and society (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). So based on the above literary arguments, we can say that the four dimensions of psychological empowerment are the means through which an individual can attain his/her desired work values. It is more likely to replicate the investigation in the Pakistani context that psychologically empowered individuals will be more satisfied as compared to others. So, we offer the following hypothesis:

H1: Psychological empowerment will be positively related to job satisfaction.

Intent to leave refers to probability of ones will to deacease his/her relationships with an organization (Kim, Price, Mueller, & Watson, 1996). (Tett & Meyer, 2006) define turnover intention as employees careful evaluation, feeling, and a thoughtful decision to withdraw his/her relationship at the workplace. Turnover intention has a negative impact on overall organization productivity (Abualrub & Al-Zaru, 2008; Gardner, Thomas-Hawkins, Fogg, & Latham, 2007).

Cai and Zhou (2009) found on a sample from nurses that empowerment (i.e., autonomy in management practices) leads toward a reduction in turnover intention. Previous research reported that psychological empowerment is associated with decreased levels of turnover intentions (Tett & Meyer, 2006). Keeping in view the four major dimensions of psychological empowerment it can be expected that psychologically empowered individuals will evaluate their job positively and will have a feeling of satisfaction, which will ultimately result in decreased levels of turnover intention. The individuals having choice, competence, autonomy and impact on the job are more likely to have positive feelings and a sense of belongingness. So to replicate the above-cited findings in a Pakistani context, we offer the following hypothesis:

H2: Psychological empowerment will be negatively related to turnover intention.

Intrinsic motivation and job outcomes

A large number of scholars have determined that motivation and job satisfaction should be preserved as two separate constructs, as it will result in much-improved understanding about both the constructs (Heneman, Greenberger, & Strasser, 1988). The Motivation-Hygiene Theory of Herzberg (1968) demonstrated motivation factors such as achievement, recognition, and works itself. According to this theory, these factors lead to satisfaction by fulfilling the individuals need for self- actualization (Maslow, Frager, & Fadiman, 1970; Tietjen & Myers, 1998). The studies relevant to SDT are of the view that supportive work environment fosters intrinsic motivation and ultimately contribute toward employee job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Kunz & Pfaff, n.d.). A positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction has been proposed in a recent motivation research by (Stringer, Didham, & Theivananthampillai, 2011). So, we can make a stance here that intrinsically motivated individuals are more likely to achieve their desired work values on the job. Hence, they are more likely to be satisfied. To replicate this notion in a Pakistani cultural setting, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Intrinsic motivation will be positively related to job satisfaction.

Globalization and the rapidly changing competitive environment in capitalism era have pressurized employees to adopt new behaviors at work for continuous high performance demands from capitalists. Employers are using different motivational techniques to achieve this goal of keeping their employees highly dynamic with efficient performance. Currently, the motivation theories and literature are in a debate to explore the exact means which may help to achieve this goal in the organizations. Among intrinsic motivation theories, the SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000) has been emerged as a major theory to help understand the link between employee perception of work environment and outcomes. This theory demonstrates the fulfillment of three psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy. When these three needs are fulfilled, individuals will be more likely to be intrinsically motivated and, in turn, will be more engaged in the job. Previous studies reported that intrinsic motivation and turnover intention are negatively related to constructs (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2010; Kharina, Zulkarnain, & Naulu, 2018; Laraib & Hashmi, 2018; Nissa, Jhatial, Nawaz, & Halepota, 2018). In this connection, it can be

argued that intrinsically motivated individuals will positively evaluate their work and workplace. This positive evaluation will result in a decision to continue with the current job and hence decreased levels of intention to terminate the relationship. For replication of these findings in a different non-Western context, we offer the following hypothesis:

H4: Intrinsic motivation will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Intrinsic motivation aspires the facets of doing work for his/her own sake; it is associated with cognitive benefits of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000) accomplishment of goals (Dermer, 1975), increased levels of responsibility (Herzberg, 1976), self-actualization (Kunz & Pfaff, n.d.) and self-sustainability (Frey & Osterloh, 2001). The two important theories of motivation, Crowding Theory (Frey & Osterloh, 2001) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Kunz & Pfaff, n.d.), are of the view that only psychological or internal factors can play a role in the emergence of true intrinsic motivation. If we include external factors, it hampers the emergence of true intrinsic motivation among individual employees. The employees feel a sense of control which diminishes the emergence of true intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, four major dimensions of psychological empowerment (meaning, choice, competence and impact) are contributing towards the fulfillment of individual need of self-actualization (Maslow et al., 1970). In reported literature, psychological empowerment has been “presumed to be a proximal cause of intrinsic task motivation and satisfaction” (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

The facets of psychological empowerment, such as meaningfulness and self-determination, have been positively reported in previous literature (Koestner, 1984). A recent study of leadership and creativity has demonstrated a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). On the basis of theoretical relevance and supporting arguments, it makes sense to expect that psychologically empowered individuals will be more intrinsically motivated due to the dimensions of meaning, choice, competency, and impact. Hence, we offer the following hypothesis:

H5: Psychological empowerment will be positively related to intrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation as a mediator between job attitudes and behavioral intentions

The main link between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction as well as with turnover intention has been supported in the above sections with strong theoretical and empirical citations from Psychological empowerment literature. On the other hand, the main link between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, the turnover intention has also been elaborated in the above sections of the study. The link between psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation has also been supported by arguments and literature in the previous section. In this section, by explaining the link between SDT and intrinsic motivation, we will try to shed light on the mediated mechanism of intrinsic motivation between psychological empowerment and job attitudes. Identification of this mediated mechanism will result in better integration of motivational theories in psychological empowerment research to fill the gap.

SDT

Amongst the motivational theories, SDT is evolving as a prominent framework to understand employee perceptions and intentions about their work environments and their resulting outcomes (Gagné & Deci, 2005). SDT explains motivation factors as autonomous (based on internal choice and interest) and controlled (based on some external stimuli or pressure (Ryan & Deci, 2000)). Intrinsic motivation is a form of autonomous motivation in SDT paradigm. Individuals who work for their internal enjoyment, satisfaction and fun are considered to be intrinsically motivated. According to SDT perspective, in order to be intrinsically motivated three major characteristics must be fulfilled, which are psychological needs such as the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. These needs serve as growth patterns for individuals; how they perceive their external environments provides them with the opportunity to satisfy these needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The first innate Psychological need is a need for competence which is referred to as a feeling of being effective in handling and availing opportunities available in the social environments. The second psychological need is the need for relatedness, which is referred to as a sense of belongings and care for others and society as well as a feeling of being carried by them. The

third psychological need is a need for autonomy which is the feeling of own choices in decision making regarding goals and resource allocation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When these three needs meet in any social or organizational setting, the individual is more likely to be engaged in activities for personal enjoyment rather than demand of the environment or forced by external factors (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Most recent and broadly used conceptualization of psychological empowerment is defined as a “motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination; and impact” (Spreitzer, 1995). We can see that three major psychological needs of SDT (competence, relatedness and autonomy) are very closely related to four conceptualizations of psychological empowerment (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact). When an employee is psychologically empowered, his or her all three psychological needs mentioned by SDT will be fulfilled, and this fulfilment will result in the emergence of true intrinsic motivation. Here is the key stance of this study that psychological empowerment is linked to employee attitude and behavioral intentions through intrinsic motivation. This intrinsic motivation is the internal cognitive mechanism through which outcomes of employees are determined by psychological empowerment. Consequently, the impact of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction and turnover intention of employees is expected to be mediated by intrinsic motivation. Based on this theoretical and logical argument, we offer the following hypothesis:

H6: Intrinsic Motivation will mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job attitudes such as job satisfaction and turnover intention.

RESEARCH MODEL

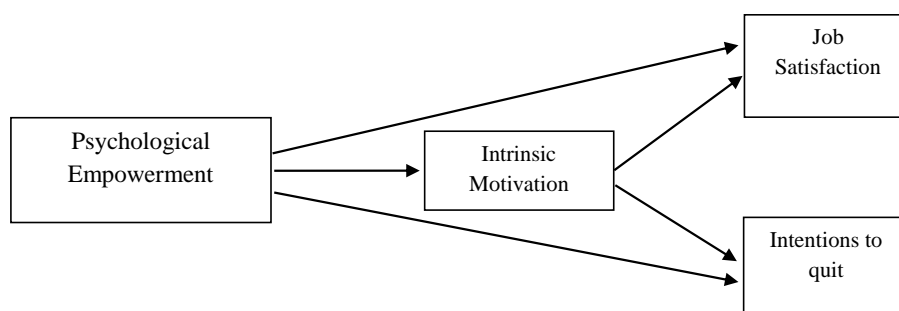


Figure 1. Research model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and procedure

The cross-sectional field data of 180 respondents have been collected from the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. Initially, 310 questionnaires were distributed; out of which, 217 have been returned with a response rate of 70%. After screening and sorting out partially or inappropriately filled questionnaires, we left with 180 useable responses. To access the targeted organization’s personal reference of authors were used to gain consent for voluntary participation in this survey. Data was collected from the middle and lower-level management by using the convenience sampling technique. This strategy resulted in dual benefits, such as management-level employees who were able to easily understand and respond to the survey items in English. Secondly, the nature of assessed constructs (Psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation) suits well with management employees. A cover letter attached to the survey clearly explained the purpose to respondents and assured them for strict anonymity of their responses. The survey was self-administered by one of the study authors on the site. The survey included a questionnaire containing a quantitative measure of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction and intention to quit. Almost 78% of the respondents are male, showing a higher rate of male employment in Pakistan. The similar findings (80% male respondents) have been reported in a recent study by (Abbas, Raja, Darr, & Bouckenoghe, 2012). The mean age of the respondents was 32 years with ($SD = 9.2$ years) ranged from 20 to 70 years. The mean total experience of the respondents was 7.7 years with ($SD = 6.9$ years) ranging from 1 year to 33 years. 56% of the respondents were master degree holders, while

32% were graduates, and 8 per cent were M. Phil. and Ph.D., only 4 per cent of the respondents were below the graduation level. SPSS and AMOS were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics and reliabilities have been gauged through SPSS. Confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis have been conducted by using structural equation modelling in AMOS.

Measures

We use validated scales from previous studies which were used more frequently because of their high reported reliability and acceptability. Questionnaires used the same items and language without any alteration as English is well-understood and normally-used language in the Pakistani organizations, and previous studies conducted in similar context reported no language issues for English as a survey language (Abbas et al., 2012; Butt, Choi, & Jaeger, 2005).

Psychological empowerment

Psychological empowerment was measured by using a 12-item scale developed by Spreitzer (1995). The respondents were asked to rate their psychological empowerment on a 7-point scale ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. First three items pertain to the “meaning” dimension. The sample item includes “My job activities are personally meaningful to me”. Next three items pertain to “competence”. The sample item includes “I am confident about my abilities to do my job”. Next three items are from the third dimension “self-determination”. The sample item includes “I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job”. Last three questions are covering the fourth dimension of psychological empowerment, i.e., impact. The sample item includes “My impact on what happens in my department is large”. The alpha reliability statistics found in this data was (0.85).

Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation was measured by using a 7-item scale of McAuley, Wraith, and Duncan (1991) The respondents were asked to rate their intrinsic motivation on a 5-point scale ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The sample item includes “I would describe this activity as very interesting”. The alpha reliability value for this measure was (0.75).

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured using a 3-item scale by ()Davis and Pandey (2003); they adopted these items from (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983; Lash, Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr, 1983; Seashore, Lawler, Mirvis, & Cammann, 1982). The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the job on a 7-point scale ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The sample item includes “All in all, I am satisfied with my job”. The alpha reliability statistics for this measure was found (0.71).

Turnover intention

Turnover intention was measured using a 3-item scale by Cammann et al. (1983). The sample item includes “I will likely actively look for a new job in the next year”. The alpha reliability statistics were found (0.79).

RESULTS

Table 1 depicts mean, standard deviations, correlations and reliabilities of the data. Moreover, results for the study's major variables also depict high mean values. The mean value of psychological empowerment is 4.99 ($SD = 0.98$) showing employees' perception about being psychologically empowered by their organizations which is quite encouraging. Mean value of intrinsic motivation is 4.09 ($SD = 0.56$) demonstrating employees high motivation regarding their job. Results for mean of job satisfaction is 4.09 ($SD = 1.30$) and mean of intention to quit is 3.01 ($SD = .93$). The results for the correlation coefficient found significance showing strong associations between each variable. Correlation results show a significant positive association of psychological empowerment with job satisfaction ($r = 0.51, p < 0.01$)

and intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.38, p < 0.01$). Nevertheless, the results prove a negative association of psychological empowerment and intention to quit ($r = -0.38, p < 0.01$) and also of intrinsic motivation and intention to quit ($r = -0.31, p < 0.05$). The alpha reliability statistics found for all constructs an acceptable standard of 0.70 and above (Nunnally, Bernstein, & Berge, 1967) indicating it as good reliability.

Table 1: Mean correlation and Cronbach alpha

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	0.23	0.42						
2. Age	32.2	9.22	-0.12					
3. Psychological Empowerment	4.99	0.98	-0.13	.79	(0.85)			
4. Intrinsic motivation	4.09	0.56	-0.11*	0.10	0.50**	(0.75)		
5. Job Satisfaction	4.09	1.30	0.03	0.41	0.51**	0.38**	(0.71)	
6. Intention to quit	3.01	0.93	-0.05	-0.49	-0.38**	-0.31*	-0.55**	(0.79)

N= 200; Reliabilities (α) given in bold along the diagonal

** p_i 0.01

* p_i 0.05

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

SEM has been applied in this study to check the causality between major study variables. In the first phase, confirmatory factor analysis has been conducted to check the measurement model fit so that the discriminant and convergent validity can be confirmed. In the next phase, path analysis has been conducted to test the causality between study variables and model fitness of the structural model.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

We conduct CFA to ensure the discriminant and convergent validity of the scales used to measure the constructs. Moreover, Harmans single-factor test has also been applied to control any possibility of common method bias. Referred to Table 2, our results confirmed the expected factor loadings and showed that all items were loaded on their expected unobserved latent variables. All latent variables were also correlated while performing confirmatory factor analysis recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). Results of test for measurement model found that all factor loadings are significant ($p < 0.001$) in the first phase of confirmatory factor analysis. However, results for adaptability were found slightly problematic as the value of *GFI* and *RMSEA* did not predict a good model fit. Two items of intrinsic motivation have found to be problematic with factor loading values of less than 0.5. These are reverse coded items which, after verification, have been removed from the measurement model as suggested by (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). By retesting the restructured measurement model, we found a better model fit indicating the values within acceptable standards of model fit indices. Values of model fit indices are $\chi^2 = 615.40, df = 224, \chi^2/df = 2.75, RMSEA = 0.07, GFI = 0.88, CFI = 0.84$ and $NNFI = 0.79$ indicating a reasonably acceptable standard of model fit. In support of these values, MacCallum, Browne, and Sugawara (1996) reported that excellent fit value for *RMSEA* is 0.01, best fit value is 0.05, and mediocre fit value is 0.08, while several other studies reported 0.10 as a cutoff point for a poor fit. Further, we also investigate the value of composite reliability, of major constructs, which found to be higher than the accepted value of 0.60. Results also showed support for ensuring the convergent validity as the values of the average variance extracted more than 0.50, demonstrating the convergent validity of constructs (Karatepe, 2006). To gauge the discriminant validity, value of the square correlation coefficient of psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation ($0.502 = 0.25$) has been compared with the average variance extracted for both these variables $(0.63 + 0.56)/2 = 0.595$. Since, the value of the square correlation coefficient of both constructs is less than their average variance extracted ($0.25 < 0.595$), we can state that the tested measurement model also had discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Results of CFA

Items	Standardized Factor Load- ings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT		.79	.63
The work I do is very important to me	.77		
My job activities are personally meaningful to me	.72		
The work do is meaningful to me	.78		
I am confident about my abilities to do my job	.66		
I am self assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities	.67		
I have mastered the skill necessary for my job	.51		
I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job	.53		
I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work	.71		
I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job	.74		
My impact on what happens in my department is large	.67		
I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department	.74		
I have significant influence over what happens in my department	.77		
TURNOVER INTENTIONS		.71	.58
I will likely actively look for a new job in the next year,	.77		
I often think about quitting	.64		
I probably look for a new job in the next year	.85		
JOB SATISFACTION		.68	.67
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	.72		
In general, I dont like my job(R)	.52		
In general, I like working here	.85		
INTRINSIC MOTIVATION		.70	.56
I enjoyed doing this activity very much	.65		
This activity was fun to do	.53		
I would describe this activity as very interesting	.75		
I thought this activity was quite enjoyable	.69		
While I was doing this activity, I was thinking about how much I enjoyed it	.70		

Path analysis

After conducting confirmatory factor analysis, we performed path analysis to check the causality between variables and to verify the proposed hypotheses of the study (see Table 3). Path analysis of two different structural models has been conducted. The first path model represents the direct relationships between independent and dependent variable. The second structural model demonstrates the full mediation effect of intrinsic motivation.

Table 3: Results for fit indices of structural model

Model	χ^2	χ^2/df (<3)	$\Delta\chi^2$	GFI ($<.90$)	CFI	NNFI	RMSEA ($<.08$)
Direct effect model	615.40*** ($df = 224$)	2.75	–	.883	.843	.838	.079
Full mediation model	446.17*** ($df = 209$)	2.13	169.23	.938	.913	.911	.060

Note: $\Delta\chi^2$ present differences between model and the following model.

Fit indices criteria refers to Hair et al., (2006).

***p-value < 0.001

Results of both models have been compared, and model to better fit has been considered acceptable for validating hypotheses of the study. Values of model fit indices illustrate that full mediation model indicates a better fit with a difference ($\Delta\chi^2$) of 169.23 and values of $GFI = .938$, $CFI = .913$, $NNFI = .911$ and $RMSEA = .060$ also indicates a much better fit for adaptability and thus, signifying the acceptance of full mediation model.

Table 4: Path analysis of structural model

	Standardized path coefficients (Significance)		
	Direct Effects Model	Test Model	Full Mediation Model
Psychological empowerment → Job satisfaction	0.68(***)		
Psychological empowerment → Intentions to quit	-0.29(***)		-0.36(***)
Psychological empowerment → Intrinsic motivation		0.21(**)	0.28(***)
Intrinsic motivation → Job satisfaction		0.23(**)	0.87(***)
Intrinsic motivation → Intentions to quit		-0.39(In-sig)	

*p-value < 0.05

**p-value < 0.01

***p-value < 0.001

(In-sig) indicating insignificant relationship

Lastly, Table 4 illustrates the results of estimates of path regression which enables them to validate the hypotheses of the study. We follow the approach suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986), which advocate a three-step process to check the mediation effect. By following the same approach, we first analyzed the path regression between independent and dependent variables (which should be significant). The results of the path regression demonstrate a significant positive relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction indicating that employees perception of being psychologically empowered significantly increases their level of job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$); thus, validating the first hypothesis of the study. Results of path regression also found a significant negative relationship between psychological empowerment and intention to quit ($\beta = -0.29$, $p < 0.001$) exemplifying the notion of diminution in employees intention to quit if they feel psychologically empowered; thus, supporting H2 of the study. In the next step, the relationship of independent variables with the mediator and the relationship of the mediator with dependent has been recommended to verify, which should also be significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). We draw a dummy testing model to meet this requirement and to investigate these relationships. The results of this model illustrate a significant relationship between independent and mediator (psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation, ($\beta = .21$, $p < .01$), which proves H5 of the study. Results for the relationship between the mediator and one dependent variable (Intention to quit) has not been found significant ($\beta = -0.39$, $p < .13$, ns), thus not supporting H5 of the study. However, path regression of relation between the mediator and another dependent variable (job satisfaction) has been found significantly ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$), illustrating that employees level of job satisfaction has significantly been explained by their intrinsic motivation proving H3 of the study. As one relationship is found to be insignificant, so we have to eliminate the mediation path for that particular relationship. Therefore, mediation analyses have been performed, whereby the path for mediation of intrinsic motivation has been

eliminated for psychological empowerment-intention to quit the relationship.

Full mediation model results in Table 4 reveal that indirect path regression of psychological empowerment to intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.001$), and intrinsic motivation to job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.87, p < 0.001$) predicted stronger model fit indices values and also make direct relationship of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction insignificant, thus signifying the role of intrinsic motivation as a mediator in relationship of psychological empowerment and job attitude (i.e., job satisfaction). Results also illustrate a significant negative but the direct relationship between psychological empowerment and intention to quit ($\beta = -0.36, p < 0.001$) as shown in Figure 2, thus partially validating H6.

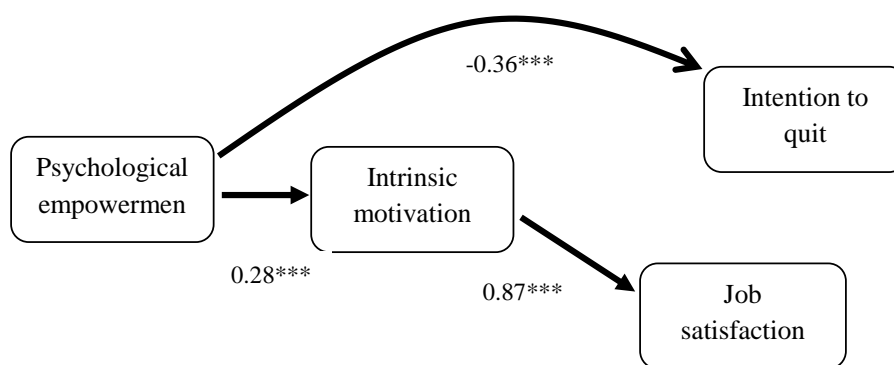


Figure 2. Path results of research model

DISCUSSION

Our research has five distinct contributions in literature; the first and major contribution is the integration of motivation theories with theories of empowerment. Our research conceptualized that psychological empowerment is related to job attitudes through the mechanism of intrinsic motivation. We can find a large body of literature on the linkage between psychological empowerment and job attitudes and behaviors, but the studies explaining the internal mechanism of this linkage are very rare. As per our knowledge, this is one of the early efforts to explain the mediated mechanism of intrinsic motivation between psychological empowerment and job attitudes. Our study is inspired by the effort of [Zhang and Bartol \(2010\)](#), as they focused the intrinsic motivation as mediated mechanism while exploring the linkages between leadership and creativity. Similarly, our focus is on a minute level to explain the internal link between psychological empowerment and job attitudes. This is an advance in the body of empowerment and motivation literature.

This research is in response to the meta-analytic call for studies investigating mediation of psychological empowerment between different motivational frameworks and organizational phenomenon ([Seibert et al., 2011](#)). This research adds value in literature by clearing this conceptualization of linkage between job attitudes and psychological empowerment. Future research responding to the call of an investigation by [Seibert et al. \(2011\)](#) will get benefited from the explained mechanism in this research.

The second major contribution of our research is the use of SDT and psychological empowerment theory to clarify the mediating link of intrinsic motivation between psychological empowerment and job attitudes. This integration of motivation theories with empowerment theory is an advance in existing literature in response to a recent meta-analysis of psychological empowerment ([Seibert et al., 2011](#)).

The third major contribution is that our research also advanced the literature by providing empirical support for models in an Eastern context which are originally developed and validated in a North American & Western context. So this study will contribute towards generalizability and the applicability of empowerment and motivational theories across different cultures and geographic regions. Normally, very rare research is being carried out in this region, so our findings are significant contributions to the literature of motivation and empowerment.

The results of our study about the proposed positive relationship between psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation are consistent with the findings of [Spreitzer \(1995\)](#); [Thomas and Velthouse](#)

(1990); Zhang and Bartol (2010). The proposed and the proven link between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction is consistent with (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Kunz & Pfaff, n.d.; Stringer et al., 2011). Opposite to the findings of previous research about the direct negative relationship between intrinsic motivation and turnover intention (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2010; Richer, Blanchard, & Vallerand, 2002; Vansteenkiste et al., 2007), our study did not find significant support for this relationship. The possible reason for this contradictory result could be that psychologically empowered individuals may also be linked to job behaviors through some other possible mediators other than intrinsic motivation. The argument for these opposite results is that in countries like Pakistan, employment opportunities are very low as compared to the population. So, people may not only intend to leave the organization just because of intrinsic factors. There are other economic and environmental factors which may prohibit the intention to leave in case of low intrinsic motivation. A study reported significant variation of environmental, socioeconomic and cultural context between developed and developing countries. Specifically, these variations may affect job characteristics and turnover intention (Mgaya, Uzoka, Kitindi, & Shemi, 2009). So, these results are a vital finding in a different cultural context. The results of the main link between psychological empowerment and job attitude, such as job satisfaction, are consistent with (Seibert et al., 2004; Spreitzer et al., 1997; Stringer et al., 2011; Thomas & Tymon, 1994).

The fourth major contribution is the use of structural equation modelling, and confirmatory factor analysis on data from a different cultural context adds value in the validity of the constructs investigated in this research. This investigation in a non-Western setting is in response to the recommendation by Tsui et al. (2007).

The fifth major contribution of this study is in line with the theme of “capitalism in question”. As it is a general “myth” about capitalism that it only strives for higher and higher gains and lacks in focusing employee welfare and empowerment strategies. In this connection, this study has not only proven the importance of psychological empowerment and motivational theories but also explained the mechanism by which the negative effects of capitalism on individual attitudes can be mitigated.

Managerial implications

These results are important for managers and practitioners who are keen towards motivating their employees for a better job and organizational outcomes. Our findings prove that job attitudes are linked to psychological empowerment through intrinsic motivation. So, any factor or element which affects the intrinsic motivation of employees like an extrinsic reward or control system proposed by Cognitive Evaluation Theory, by Deci (1975), will undermine the impact of this relationship. Our results prove that psychological empowerment is a true antecedent for the emergence of intrinsic motivation. So, our results may be help managers in dealing with complex jobs and environments where extrinsic rewards are no more fruitful for increasing the effectiveness/productivity of employees. Managers are continuously facing challenges related to dynamic market conditions, frequent mergers, acquisitions and downsizings as well as restructuring; all these strategic actions need the employees motivation as a driving force. So, this current scenario makes our findings more vital for practitioners.

Future research directions

Future research is also recommended to explore other pure antecedents of intrinsic motivation, so that managers may use these techniques for successfully motivating their human resource. Future research may also look for moderators of the relationships between psychological empowerment and job attitudes as well as between intrinsic motivation and job attitudes. A potential recommended moderation in light COR theory Deci (1975) could be the external factors/rewards. A longitudinal study is recommended to validate the causality of our conceptualized and proved model in different cultural context, specifically in other Asian economies, so that the contradiction regarding labor market conditions and turnover intentions may be addressed.

Limitations of the study

As each research effort has some limitations, so is the case with this study; its cross-sectional study

design is one of the major limitations of the research. The second major limitation is the self-reported nature of data which may result in common method bias. However, Harman's single-factor test has also been applied to control any possibility of common method bias. Moreover, due to the psychological and cognitive nature of the explored relationship, we are of the view that it is rational to gather the self-reported data for current research.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has a unique contribution by integrating motivational theories with empowerment theories, and also providing empirical evidence for the newly proposed mechanism of intrinsic motivation mediation between psychological empowerment and job attitudes. This study responded to call for investigation in the field and advanced the literature by providing empirical evidence from a unique cultural context of Pakistan. With the emergence of the global economy concept, Asian context becomes more important specifically for multinationals operating across the globe. This study provides more insight in the generalizability of concepts, such as psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation and job attitudes as well as behaviors in the Eastern cultural setting.

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