Empowering Leadership's Influence on Employee Task Performance: Sequential Mediation of Psychological Capital and Employee Engagement

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Abstract

The current study is conducted with the aim to classify the impact of empowering leadership on employee behavior i.e. task performance of employees through the sequential mediation of Psycap (Psychological Capital) and employee attitude i.e. employee engagement. In the literature it has been identified that less research is conducted on the role of such types of leaders in the development of psychological capabilities in their followers. The research philosophy employed for this investigation is grounded in positivism, aligning with the study's objectives. To fulfill these objectives, a deductive approach was adopted, complemented by survey methods, and a time-lagged data collection methodology was implemented. A total of 241 respondents from the telecommunications sector related organizations were took part in the study. The subsequent data analysis was conducted by using AMOS software and employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant role of empowering leadership on the task performance of employees. Moreover, the results indicate that this relationship is mediated by both Psycap and employee engagement. This methodical and empirically driven approach contributes to the scholarly understanding of the complicated dynamics involved in the influence of empowering leadership on task performance within the specified context.

Keywords: Psycap, Employee Engagement, Empowering Leadership, Task Performance

Introduction

In the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of contemporary business, organizations find themselves navigating a complex terrain, striving not only for sustainable financial performance and growth but also for overall survival within the fiercely competitive milieu (Malik et al., 2023). At the heart of this multifaceted pursuit lie the critical roles played by leadership and employees, emerging as the primary catalysts in propelling organizations towards both sustainability and a competitive edge (Burhan et al., 2022). The synergistic interplay between adept leadership and engaged employees emerges as an unparalleled source of strength, driving organizations towards enduring success in an increasingly competitive ecosystem (Malik et al., 2022). Leadership, as a focal point within this dynamic, has been subject to extensive scholarly exploration, resulting in the identification of various leadership styles (Kim & Beehr, 2022). The extant literature highlights key paradigms such as ethical, transformative leadership, transactional, servant and situational leadership. These diverse leadership styles contribute significantly to shaping the organizational landscape, playing a pivotal and imperative role in the attainment of strategic objectives and fostering a climate of

sustained success (Arshad et al., 2022). Amidst the plethora of leadership styles, the pivotal role of empowering leadership has gained prominence, particularly in unprecedented situations such as the Covid-19 (Khatoon et al., 2023).

The literature posits that empowering leader with their qualities of developing their followers at workplace to come-up with positive behaviors such as fulfilment of their assigned task (Ahmed et al., 2022). On the basis of the literature, it is defined that empowering leadership developed their followers and then assigned tasks to them so they contribute positively organization (Arwab et al., 2022). While the literature underscores the importance of empowering leadership, it also sheds light on certain elements related to followers that remain underexplored (Bucher et al., 2022). Notably, significant amount of research is available which is defining that the literature is still silent about the relationship between empowering leadership and follower's task performance and specific mechanisms related to mediation is need to be tested in the upcoming researches (Burhan et al., 2023). In the context of empowering leadership, leaders aim to foster necessary skills in followers, not only motivating them but also developing their psychological capabilities (Cai et al., 2023). Leaders, being the primary influencers, play a crucial role in cultivating psychological aspects (Hamza et al., 2022). The research of Hassan et al., (2023) presented that the literature noticed that particular interest is the concept of psychological capital, recognized as a pivotal psychological element due to its unique nature and components. Similarly, another study of Joo et al., (2023) also came in to the views that there is a need to further study the impact of leaders with empowerment tendencies on the psychological development of their followers. Despite its significance, there is limited research on the impact of empowering leadership on the psychological capital of followers (Kwan et al., 2023). The significant amount of literature is available which is defining that the role of leaders and psychological aspects of the employees are important determinants of positive attitude and behavior.

This gap in the literature becomes particularly pertinent when considering the current challenges in employee engagement. A survey conducted by Gallup on employee engagement revealed a disconcerting reality—only 17% of the global workforce is engaged at the workplace. This statistic is even more alarming when applied to middle to low-income countries, such as Pakistan, where employee engagement rates are notably lower (Malik et al., 2023). The global pandemic further exacerbated the situation, leading to a decline in the psychological capabilities of the workforce, significantly impacting employee attitudes and, consequently, their performance. Most of the businesses went down from the pandemic and most got survived even got significant increase in their revenue and profit due to their strategies. Among all other strategies, the role of leaders of the organization capture the attention of the scholars. The scholars noted that some of the leadership style found efficient during the whole period of pandemic. Globally some of the firms related to selected sector were survived due to the workforce of the organization. In the telecom sector of Pakistan, this decline in employee engagement is palpable, affecting overall organizational performance. Identifying a leadership style that positively influences and boosts the psychological capabilities of followers becomes crucial in addressing this challenge. Scholars assert that empowering leaders, by fostering psychological capital and motivating their followers, emerge

as the most effective catalysts for cultivating a positive attitude, exemplified by enhanced employee engagement (Malik et al., 2022). As organizations navigate these challenges, understanding and embracing empowering leadership may well be the key to unlocking the full potential of their workforce and achieving sustained success in a rapidly changing business landscape.

In response to the identified research gap and challenges prevalent in the sector, the current study aims to address critical objectives, shedding light on the role of leaders with empowering tendencies on the performance. However, the study also took sequential mediation of the variables to test the true impact of the leaders and their role in behavior of their followers. Present research is also exploring the sequential mediation of Psycap and engagement in the defined relationship. The research questions guiding this study are twofold: firstly, to discern the direct impact of empowering leaders on the task performance of employees, and secondly, to unravel the nuanced roles of psychological capital and employee engagement in mediating the relationship between empowering leadership and task performance. By scrutinizing these questions, the study aspires to provide comprehensive insights into the multifaceted interplay of leadership, psychology, and employee engagement within the unique context of the Pakistani telecom sector (Arshad et al., 2023). The timeliness of this study cannot be overstated, especially in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is noteworthy that numerous organizations experienced a notable upswing in their performance by embracing and implementing empowering leadership practices. Empowering leaders, in particular, played a pivotal role in fostering positive attitudes and behaviors among employees (Zhang et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2022; Wang, 2022; Wang et al., 2022).

However, the specific context of Pakistan, and more specifically, the telecom sector, has seen a dearth of studies investigating the sequential mediation of psychological capital and employee engagement in the realm of empowering leadership. The study is underpinned by the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that employees reciprocate initiatives taken by their supervisors and organizations when empowered. This reciprocation manifests in heightened engagement in work-related activities, ultimately leading to more effective and efficient task performance (Li et al., 2017; Limon, 2022; Lin et al., 2022). The incorporation of this theoretical framework enriches the study, providing a robust foundation for understanding the dynamics between empowering leadership, psychological capital, employee engagement, and task performance (Nong et al., 2022; Park et al., 2022; Peng et al., 2022). On the basis of unexplored territories of research, this study significantly contributes to the existing literature, offering fresh insights and perspectives. Furthermore, it serves as a practical guide for top management in organizations, advocating the adoption of empowering leadership tendencies. The study suggests that such an approach is instrumental in achieving the desired levels of organizational effectiveness and efficiency. As organizations grapple with the complexities of the contemporary business landscape, the findings of this study are poised to inform strategic decisions, fostering a culture of empowerment and enhancing overall organizational performance in the challenging environment of the Pakistani telecom sector.

Literature Review

Empowering Leadership and psychological capital

The available literature, and empirical evidences categorized empowering leaders as a form of participative leadership, has emerged as a pivotal determinant in the development of capabilities specifically psychological within followers. The literature consistently underscores the positive impact that empowering leadership has on the psychological state of employees e.g. empowerment, well-being, capital, and safety positioning it as a key influencer in organizational dynamics. This leadership style stands out, particularly for its ability to foster a positive psychological state in followers, contributing to their overall well-being and performance. Before delving into the unique relationship between empowering leadership and psychological capabilities, it is essential to note that other leadership styles sharing similar characteristics have also been explored in the literature. For instance, authentic leadership, which aligns with the traits of empowering leadership, has been found to have a significant relationship with psychological capital. Additionally, the features of empowerment and individual consideration from transformational leadership exhibit noteworthy correlations with psychological capital, as highlighted by Gooty et al. (2009). Walumbwa et al. (2010) categorize empowering leadership as a positive leadership behavior with numerous beneficial outcomes. Specifically, empowering leaders who enhance the intrinsic motivation of their team members directly impact the positive psychological state of employees, as noted by Avey (2014).

The capacity of empowering leadership to positively influence the psychological state of subordinates is a key finding highlighted by Rego et al. (2012). This lends credence to the idea that empowering leaders play a crucial role in shaping the mental and emotional well-being of their team members. Luthans et al. (2007) contribute to this discourse by asserting that empowerment tendencies from supervisors significantly boost the confidence of subordinates and elevate their level of self-efficacy, an integral component of psychological capital. Avey et al. (2008) further emphasize the enabling aspect of empowerment, stating that it empowers employees to be resilient in the face of challenges. The close relationship between empowerment and core factors of psychological capital, such as self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope, is succinctly articulated by Avey (2014). In essence, the literature converges on the idea that empowering leadership, with its participative and motivational attributes, plays a vital role in shaping the psychological landscape of employees. Psychological capital theory is also supporting the empowerment is the significant antecedent of psychological capital. The positive outcomes associated with empowering leadership resonate across various dimensions of psychological capital, contributing to the overall well-being and resilience of individuals within the organizational context. As organizations increasingly recognize the importance of employee psychological well-being, the insights from these studies underscore the significance of fostering empowering leadership as a strategic approach to enhance both individual and collective psychological capabilities within the workforce.

H1: Empowering leadership has significant impact on psychological capital
Psychological capital and employee engagement
Psychological capital, as evidenced by research, emerges as a crucial predictor of employee engagement (Kang & Jang, 2019). Empirical studies, including those by Wandeler et al. (2016) and Kang & Busser (2018), consistently indicate that employees with positive psychological capital exhibit a proclivity for self-engagement and demonstrate positive behavior in fulfilling their assigned tasks. Mouton (2022) underscores the substantial and positive impact of Psycap on employee engagement, emphasizing the significance of employees feeling acknowledged and appreciated by the human faces of the organization—namely, their supervisors. Employees with heightened psychological capital are recognized as invaluable assets for organizations due to their elevated engagement rates (Yoon et al., 2019). Psychological capital possesses the capacity to evoke goal-directed behavior, motivation, and resilience. Within organizational settings, employees harboring positive psychological capital are not only motivated but also exert the necessary effort to achieve their goals, contributing to the organization's objectives through active engagement (Khan & Malik, 2017). Zhong et al. (2021) shed light on how psychological capital fosters a positive state in employees, serving as a source of belief that their efforts will yield favorable outcomes. Such employees embrace challenges and persevere in adversity, showcasing the resilience associated with positive psychological capital. Moreover, psychological capital acts as a driving force, encouraging employees to set ambitious yet attainable objectives. Individuals are more likely to establish ambitious goals and diligently work towards achieving them when they believe in the possibility of success (Bakar, 2013). As employees successfully achieve their objectives and make progress, their engagement and satisfaction levels experience a notable boost (Yoon et al., 2019).

H2: Psychological capital has significant impact on Employee Engagement
Employee engagement and task performance
In the literature, it has been defined that the concept of employee engagement takes center stage as a crucial factor influencing various facets of employee behavior and performance. Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010) emphasize that employees who are deeply involved in their work experience a heightened sense of ease and excitement, fostering devotion, strength, and absorption in their tasks. This heightened engagement not only contributes to a positive mindset but also translates into employees providing exceptional customer service (Hao, He, and Long 2018). Building on this foundation, Sonnentag's study in 2003 underscores the impact of employee engagement on organizational citizen behavior, proactive behavior, and in-role behavior. The interconnected relationship between employee engagement and performance is a cornerstone in organizational effectiveness. As organizations strive to foster a positive work environment and enhance employee well-being, understanding and promoting engagement become integral components of a strategic approach to achieving excellence in customer service and overall organizational success. The literature defined that the engagement is basically the attitude of employees and the performance is the behavior of employees. If the attitude is positive it will work as guiding mechanism to display the positive behavior at workplace. It is found in the empirical studies that both are working as the

important determinant and having a positive outcome in the context of individual as well as the organization. Most of the literature is consisted upon the developmental mechanisms of such positive attitude and behavior. The organizations are keen to implement the strategies that foster such attitude and behavior in the employees.

Motivated employees, driven by a sense of engagement, tend to view their roles comprehensively, engaging in a broader spectrum of job-related activities. This expanded engagement positively influences employees in carrying out their responsibilities, further enhancing their ability to provide exceptional customer service. The ramifications of employee engagement extend beyond individual job performance to impact critical organizational metrics. employee engagement. Researchers e.g. Seibert, Silver, and Randolph, (2004) initially identified that the motivated personnel, deeply engaged in their work, are more likely to exhibit helpfulness, attentiveness to customer needs, prompt delivery, and recommend products that best satisfy customers. Most of studies are significantly defining that the behavior of employees is basically outcome of their attitude and positive attitude is contributing positively in the formation of positive behavior. Amundsen and Martinsen's (2014) findings contribute to the understanding that employee engagement has the capacity to significantly influence an employee's ability to perform their work. This underscores the notion that an employee's actions are inherently tied to their mindset, further highlighting the pivotal role of engagement in shaping employee behavior and performance. Defining work engagement as the employee's attitude and performance within an organizational environment, researchers and theorists have established a direct link between engagement and performance (task). Lin et al. (2019) explicitly state that engagement has the capacity to impact the performance of the employees because it is identified as attitude and performance is categorized as behavior which is guided by attitude of employees.

H3: Employee engagement has significant impact on task performance.

Mediation

The significance of empowered leadership in influencing the behaviors and attitude of employees has been a subject of substantial research. Elkhwesky et al. (2022) and Kwan et al. (2022) independently emphasize the profound impact that empowered leaders have on employee performance, asserting that their influence extends beyond isolated instances to the development of their followers' capabilities. Within this context, empowering leadership is recognized as a pivotal force shaping employee performance. Empowering leaders, characterized by attributes such as support, feedback, and opportunities for skill development, play a crucial role in fostering employees' psychological capabilities (Lin et al., 2020). The construct of Psycap is consisted upon four dimensions and all the dimensions are defining the concept of higher order Psycap with a positive outcome. The dimensions of Psycap were taken and study as mediators in the prior studies and found that there is a significant role of these psychological capabilities in the development of positive attitude and behavior. The work of Zhong et al. (2021) reinforces the idea that employees equipped with a sufficient level of psychological capital are more likely to exhibit confidence, motivation, and commitment to their work, resulting in heightened engagement. Mouton's study (2022) introduces the concept that employee engagement serves as a mediator between psychological

capital and employee task performance. Employee engagement, defined by characteristics such as putting in extra effort to fulfill task requirements, significantly contributes to improved task performance (Yoon et al., 2019). The Social Exchange Theory further supports this relationship, underscoring the norms of reciprocity. When leaders empower employees and foster positive psychological capital, it creates a reciprocal relationship that leads to increased engagement and, consequently, enhanced task performance. Plethora of research is available which is defining that the leaders are the best source in the development of psychological capabilities in the organization by using the said theory.

Empowering leadership, recognized as a motivating leadership style, serves as a foundation for cultivating positive behavior among employees (Ahearne et al., 2005). On an individual level, empowering leaders have been shown to enhance employee creativity and overall employee performance. Empowerment in various forms demonstrates a significant association with employee performance, contributing substantially to team effectiveness. Leadership, in general terms, holds substantial sway over the attitudes and behaviors of employees, particularly through the empowering approach. Acknowledging the pivotal role of empowerment, the management field has increasingly emphasized its importance in recent years. The prior stud i.e. Vecchio et al. (2010) tested the impact of empowering leadership as a model that emphasizes power-sharing between leaders and subordinates, highlighting its capacity to elevate subordinates' sense of responsibilities in such a way where the employee took job as an important determinant of overall success. This approach is founded on the belief that employees given more opportunities for self-direction will produce superior results in task, contextual, and creative performance (Ahearne et al., 2005). Through effective managerial techniques encompassing motivation, emotional support, and information sharing, empowering leadership provides robust support for employees to achieve higher levels of performance (Li et al., 2015). In essence, empowering leadership emerges not only as a management strategy but as a transformative force that shapes organizational dynamics and enhances overall performance.

H4: Psycap, and engagement are mediating between empowering leadership and task performance.

Methodology

The present research employs a quantitative research design and also selected a deductive approach to investigate the identified research questions. To ensure robust data collection, a time-lagged methodology is employed, utilizing self-administered questionnaires as the primary data-gathering instrument. The questionnaire comprises two separate sections, with the initial part dedicated to capturing demographics related data, whereas, the main variables were assessed in the second section where participants provide ratings to each item of the variable on a 5-point Likert scale. The second section encompasses items pertinent to each variable under investigation. The study focuses on employees within organizations affiliated with the telecom sector, seeking their assessments of leadership empowerment tendencies. Most of the respondents were from the middle management of the organization. The selection of participants is facilitated through purposive sampling, ensuring that respondents possess relevant insights into the leadership dynamics within their respective organizations. A total

of 241 employees actively participated in the study, providing a substantive dataset for the ensuing analysis and findings. The meticulous approach to data collection, coupled with the strategic selection of participants, aims to enhance the study's validity and contribute to the comprehensiveness of the research outcomes. Empowering leadership is measured by the scale of Zhang and Bartol, (2010). The said scale is consisted upon 12 items. Dudasova et al., (2021) questionnaire of psychological capital is used to collect employees' responses related to their psychological capital. The said scale is consisted upon 12- items. Employee engagement is measured with the help of Shaufeli and Bakker, (2003) engagement scale. The dependent variable i.e. Task Performance is assessed through Fernandez-del-Rio, Koopmans, Ramos-Villagrasa, and Barrada, (2019) scale. The collected data is analyzed by using the AMOS-SEM techniques.

Results

The quantitative data analysis techniques were adopted to test the hypotheses. In the current study, we used the AMOS-SEM techniques to test the hypotheses and overall model. At first stage, demographic profile of the respondents is generated and analyzed. The results revealed that 217 male and 24 females were participated in the study. Moreover, most of the respondents, on the basis of the data, revealed that they have closed interaction with their supervisors/ leaders.

Table 1

Demographics (n=241)

	Frequency	%age	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	217	90.0	90.0	90.0
Female	24	10.0	10.0	100.0
Experience				
0-5	130	53.9	53.9	53.9
6-10	89	36.9	36.9	90.9
11-Above	22	9.1	9.1	100.0
Interaction with Supervisor				
Once per month of less	219	90.9	90.9	90.9
Once every other week	22	9.1	9.1	100.0

After assessment of the demographics, the formal data analysis is carried through where at first stage items loadings were assessed along with reliability and validity. Table 2 is displaying the items loadings, composite reliability and AVE values which are in the range as defined by Hiar et al., 2014.

Table 2

Items Loading, Composite Reliability, and AVE

Items	Estimate	CR	AVE
Psycap1	0.837	0.962	0.739
Psycap2	0.819		

Psycap3	0.905		
Psycap4	0.884		
Psycap5	0.793		
Psycap6	0.897		
Psycap7	0.910		
Psycap8	0.855		
Psycap9	0.825		
EL2	0.827		
EL4	0.738		
EL5	0.922		
EL3	0.885	0.943	0.676
EL7	0.806		
EL8	0.796		
EL9	0.700		
EL10	0.876		
WE1	0.782		
WE2	0.869		
WE3	0.688		
WE5	0.643	0.92	0.625
WE6	0.795		
WE7	0.783		
WE8	0.936		
TP1	0.824		
TP2	0.952	0.872	0.697
TP3	0.709		

Note: Model Fit Measures CMIN/DF= 2.404, RMSEA= 0.076, CFI= 0.945, SRMR= 0.057

Discriminant Validity

Table 3

Discriminant Validity

Variables	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	1	2	3	4
Psychological Capital	0.962	0.739	0.287	0.966	**0.86**			
Empowering Leadership	0.943	0.676	0.299	0.953	0.536***	**0.822**		
Engagement	0.92	0.625	0.299	0.943	0.307***	0.547***	**0.79**	
Performance	0.872	0.697	0.294	0.928	0.260***	0.246***	0.542***	**0.835**

Note. ***p‹0.001

The discriminant validity table is contained the correlation among different variables along with the AVE and the values of CR. Moreover, the bold values are related to the reliability of the scales used in the study. All the values are according to the range defined by different researchers.

Regression Analysis

Table 4

Regression Analysis

Relationships			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PsyCap	<---	Empowering	0.835	0.075	11.112	***
Engagement	<---	Empowering	0.605	0.066	9.175	***
Engagement	<---	PsyCap	0.303	0.046	6.588	***
Task Performance	<---	Empowering	0.296	0.055	5.359	***
Task Performance	<---	Engagement	0.264	0.044	5.933	***

The formal regression analysis revealed that there is a signficant role of empowering leadership on Psycap. Similary, Psycap is also having singnficant impact on engagement which is further having signficant imapct on task performance. The results presented in the table above and in the figure 1 are interpreted as all the relationships are having signficant impact on the outcome variable. On the basis of the results, and the level of significance, it is confirmed that Psycap is also having the signficant imapct on the engagement of employee and is mediating sequentially the relationship of empowering leadership and task performanc.
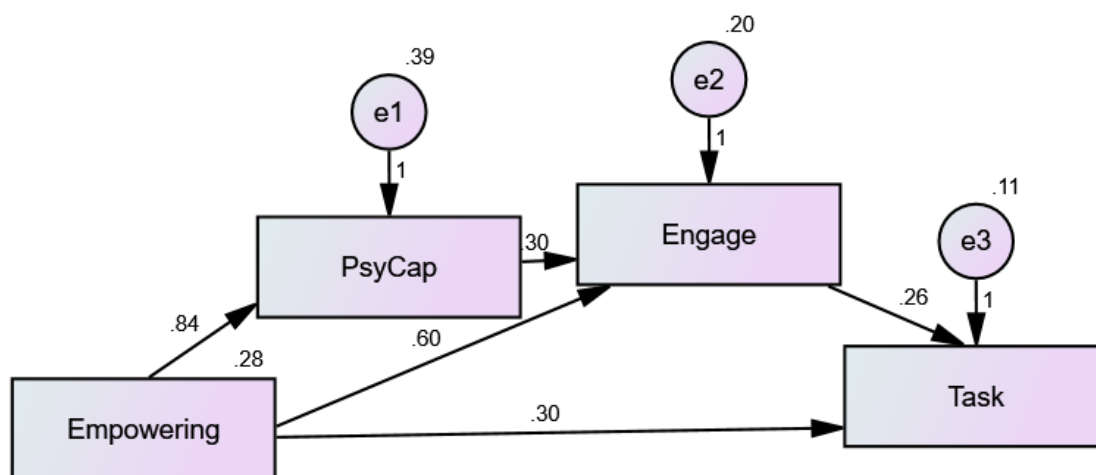

Figure 1: Path Model

Discussion and Conclusion

While adopting an innovative culture inside an organization is a difficult task, innovation is becoming seen as essential to an organization's ability to thrive in harsh circumstances. Research indicates that well-being HRM is becoming more and more important in the innovation process (Shipton et al., 2017). However, high engagement work systems and other HRM approaches that promote innovation (Li et al., 2018) are probably not good for workers' well-being. The study conducted by Oppenauer and Van de Voorde (2018) demonstrates how high participation work systems might result in emotional weariness. This is how the wellbeing-oriented HRM dark side (Godard, 2010; Peccei, 1977) emphasizes how wellbeing-oriented HRM methods, such high participation work systems, negatively impact employees' health. However, wellbeing-oriented HRM strategies appear to lessen employee fatigue when

they offer opportunities (participation and dissemination of corporate knowledge) or work variety (Oppenauer and Van de Voorde, 2018). In this way, the mutual gains model (Guest, 2017) suggests that human resource management (HRM) can reconcile the interests of employees and business profits. What kinds of HRM practices benefit companies and employees alike remains an open question. Moreover, no guiding framework exists that specifies which HRM approaches, when innovation is the main focus, have a favorable effect on workers and businesses.

Three important contributions in this paper were made. First, we advance the field's understanding of wellbeing-oriented HRM and employee outcomes by emphasizing the social exchange theory, proactive motivation and the work demands-resources model. The performance of employees has been the primary emphasis of wellbeing-oriented HRM strategies up to this point instead of the wellbeing of employees. There are valid justifications for conducting more research on the wellbeing of employees. Long-term absences caused by poor health have a significant financial impact on organizations. According to Van de Voorde and Van Veldhoven (2016), there are no convincing theoretical justifications for believing that high-performance, high-commitment, or high-involvement HRM models will improve performance and improve workers' quality of working lives. Conversely, there exist other rationales for anticipating a potentially heterogeneous and indeterminate impact of wellbeing-oriented HR strategies on work experiences. According to Van De Voorde and Beijer (2015), job strain was lessened by support and social resources, but it was exacerbated by high-performance work systems. Conversely, companies that make investments in the well-being of their workforce are likely to see increases in both short- and long-term profits. The "mutual gains model" is the name given to this (Guest, 2017).

On the basis of the data analysis, and values generated through adoption of rigorous data analysis techniques the study is providing support to prior studies. As outlined the research questions, objectives, and hypotheses formed in the current study are mainly defining and determining the impact of empowering leaders on employee behavior such as task performance through their psychological capabilities and the attitude i.e. engagement. On the basis of the questions, and objectives, the first hypothesis is to identify the impact of empowering leaders on the follower's tendency of achievement of desired level of performance. The results significantly supported the hypothesis and revealed that the role of empowering leadership is positive and significant in determining their performance related to tasks. The prior literature posits that any positive type of leadership is having the potential to impact the performance of their followers such as the empirical studies of Limon (2022), Peng et al. (2022), Ahmed et al. (2022), and Cai et al. (2023) concluded their researches by defining that the role of leadership is imperative and inevitable in achievement of the goals of the organization through leaders. Similarly, the literature came into the view that the employee performance in the workplace settings is dependent upon the leaders and supervisors in the organization. In the similar vein, the second hypothesis formulated and tested in the current study is to assess the impact of empowering leadership and employees' Psycap. It is found in the literature that the psychological abilities of an employee are very much important for achievement of their tasks and come- up with positive attitude and behavior. The study found

through the data that there is a substantial impact, corroborating findings from Khatoon et al. (2022) where it has been identified that leaders are important predictor of employee's positive attitude and behavior. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2022), and Kim and Beehr (2023) also concluded that the role of leaders is considered an important factor which is significantly contributing in the development of positive attitude and behavior. Furthermore, the hypothesis regarding the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement also garnered support from the data. These results align with existing literature, indicating that Psycap serves as a determinant of employee engagement (Singh et al., 2023).

Another study of Peng & Chen, (2022) and Raza et al., 2022) also presented the results which are validated in the current study. It is evident that employee behavior is dependent upon the attitude of employees and if there is a positive attitude of employee then there behavior is displayed accordingly. This suggests that actively engaged employees tend to achieve the required level of task performance, consistent with studies conducted by Awab et al. (2022), where the authors concluded that there is a significant role of leaders in formation of the behavior of employees. Hamza et al. (2022) also found that the relationship between both variables is evident (Akhtar et al., 2022). Park et al. (2022) also conducted and tested the results and found significant relationship between both variables. The study is conducted in the setting of the organization and it has been identified that in the organization it is important to work for the psychological development of the employees to gain maximum output from the employees. Moreover, the joint impact of Psycap and employee engagement was examined, revealing their mediating role in the relationship between empowering leadership and employee task performance. In the specific context of Pakistan, particularly within the telecom sector, the study identified that empowering leadership has the capacity to influence employee behavior, specifically task performance, through the mediating roles of psychological capital and employee engagement. Empowering leadership emerges as a crucial factor for developing the psychological capital of employees, acting as a motivational mechanism and significantly contributing to the adoption of engagement tendencies in the workplace. This, in turn, plays an imperative role in achieving the desired level of performance. While most literature studies these relationships in isolation, the current study stands out by presenting an integrated model, demonstrating the importance of identifying the impact of empowering leadership on task performance.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

While all formulated hypotheses received acceptance and robust support from the collected data, it is imperative to acknowledge certain limitations identified in the current study, which, in turn, offer avenues for future research to explore and address. Firstly, it is crucial to note that the study focused exclusively on the telecom sector within Pakistan. Given that the disengagement of the workforce poses a liability to organizations in the government sector, future research should encompass government-related organizations to comprehensively investigate the impact of empowering leadership in diverse organizational settings. Secondly, the study treated psychological capital as a singular construct. To deepen our understanding, future researchers are encouraged to explore the various dimensions of psychological capital. Analyzing these dimensions could shed light on the nuanced impact of empowering leadership

on different aspects of employee attitudes. Lastly, the study solely examined one dimension of employee performance—task performance. To provide a comprehensive perspective, future researchers should consider exploring other dimensions of employee performance, such as contextual and creative performance. This broader examination will enable a thorough understanding of the role of empowering leadership in shaping various behavioral outcomes in the workplace.

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