

Job Characteristics and Job Satisfaction: The Role of Normative Commitment and
Perceived Organizational Support in the Telecom Sector

Dr. Bakhtiar Ali

Department of Management Studies, Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Islamabad
Campus at- bakhtiar.buic@bahria.edu.pk

Zareen Naz

Department of Management Studies, Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Islamabad
Campus at- zareensh33@gmail.com

Dr. Umm-e-Habiba

Department of Management Studies, Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Islamabad
Campus at- habiba.phd@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of job characteristics on job satisfaction, with a focus on the mediating role of normative commitment (NC) and the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the competitive telecom sector. Drawing on Hackman's Job Characteristics Model, the research examines five core dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Data were collected from 208 employees through structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that all job characteristics dimensions significantly influence job satisfaction. Additionally, normative commitment mediates the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction. However, perceived organizational support does not moderate the relationship between normative commitment and job satisfaction. These results offer insights into the complex dynamics of employee commitment and satisfaction within telecom organizations.

Keywords: Job Characteristics, Normative Commitment, Perceived Organizational Support, Job Satisfaction, Telecom Sector.

Introduction

Technological advancements, globalization, and evolving work paradigms are compounding factors that contribute to the increasing complexity of organizational environments (Dwivedi, Chaturvedi, & Vashist, 2023). These developments have transformed the nature of work, making tasks more intricate and altering the characteristics of traditional jobs. As a result, organizations are continuously compelled to enhance employees' skills, abilities, and autonomy

to meet the changing demands of their roles (Dopeso-Fernández, Giusti, & Kucel, 2023). The alignment between job characteristics and these demands is essential to ensuring that employees remain committed and fulfill their responsibilities, ultimately contributing to the organization's overall performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Schermerhorn Jr, Osborn, Uhl-Bien, & Hunt, 2011). Higher levels of job satisfaction foster positive emotions in employees, motivating them to exert maximum effort in fulfilling their obligations, which in turn enhances job satisfaction (Kammerhoff, Lauenstein, & Schütz, 2019).

William (2002), in agreement with Campbell (1990), posited that both “personal factors” and “system factors” drive performance. Personal factors include individual values, while system factors refer to elements of the organizational environment, such as culture and job attributes (Williams, 2002). Job characteristics, which fall under the category of system factors, can significantly impact job satisfaction. These characteristics are often measured through motivating potential scores (MPS) derived from five key workplace factors (Liu & Zhou, 2023). The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976), provides a framework for understanding how the task environment influences employee outcomes. In examining job satisfaction, it is crucial to explore the relationship between job characteristics and the outcomes they produce (Saavedra & Kwun, 2000). Employee performance is closely tied to an organization's efforts to foster employee commitment, which encourages individuals to take greater responsibility for their assigned tasks (City, Tenggara, Malelak, & Hum, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic further complicated the challenge of maintaining employee commitment, with organizations struggling to sustain performance under the new conditions (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020; Nemteanu, Dabija, & Stanca, 2021). Commitment, as explored in the literature, comes in various forms (Meyer & Allen, 1991), each addressing different stakeholder relationships (Becker, 1992). This study focuses specifically on normative commitment (NC), which holds significant potential for organizational advantage. Meyer et al. (2010) define NC as an attitude of responsibility—whether toward staying with an organization or facilitating organizational change. NC is particularly relevant in the context of Pakistan, a collectivistic society (Hofstede, 1984). In addition, the study examines the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between job satisfaction and normative commitment. Using the conservation of resources (COR) theory, this paper proposes

practical methods to assess job characteristics and their implications for job satisfaction, normative commitment, and perceived organizational support. According to COR theory, employees who derive happiness from the availability of resources are more likely to engage fully in subsequent tasks, leading to higher job satisfaction (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009).

Despite the growing scholarly interest in job satisfaction, research on the effects of job characteristics on employee outcomes remains limited (Zhang & Zhao, 2021). In previous studies, Hackman's job characteristics have been explored individually in relation to employee outcomes (Gu, Li, Tan, Amin, Mostafiz, & Yeoh, 2022; Jiang, Di Milia, Jiang, & Jiang, 2020; Stoermer, Lauring, & Selmer, 2022). For instance, Stoermer et al. (2022) demonstrated that a combination of job autonomy and job clarity, with cultural novelty as a mediator, enhances job satisfaction. Gu et al. (2022) also found a positive relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction, particularly when viewed through the lenses of JCM and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Their findings suggest the need for further exploration using different theoretical frameworks to deepen our understanding of these relationships. Moreover, Jiang et al. (2020) observed that job satisfaction is positively influenced by task identity and autonomy, with mentoring serving as a moderator.

This study seeks to examine whether job characteristics play a pivotal role in determining job satisfaction, with the novel mediation of normative commitment and moderation of perceived organizational support. Pakistan's telecommunications industry, which garners significant international private investment, contributes considerably to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through the widespread use of smartphones and internet connectivity. Therefore, implementing appropriate job characteristics for each employee is critical to the continued expansion of the telecommunications sector (Razzaq, Aslam, Bagh, & Saddique, 2017). Given the sector's dynamism, robust job characteristics are essential for maintaining its vitality.

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a central focus for organizations, influencing numerous outcomes including employee commitment and performance. McGregor (1960) highlighted in his Theory X and Y that employees either view their work as a burden, pursued solely for monetary gain, or as a source of intrinsic delight. For decades, job satisfaction has been recognized as a primary indicator of an individual's utility and productivity in the workplace (Hamermesh, 1999). Satisfied employees tend to show higher organizational commitment, greater work involvement, and enhanced pleasure in their tasks, which ultimately leads to improved performance (Subagja & Safrianto, 2020). Numerous studies have demonstrated that job satisfaction affects a variety of factors contributing to productivity and effectiveness (Tria, 2023). Glisson and Durrick (1988) defined job satisfaction as "a favorable circumstance that results from a person's worth being attached to their work." Furthermore, work happiness is closely tied to an employee's intrinsic motivation (Statt, 2004). Job satisfaction reflects positive or negative internal feelings that employees experience towards job characteristics, co-workers, and external organizational factors (Tria, 2023).

Job Characteristics

Job characteristics provide a conceptual framework for designing or improving work roles by emphasizing essential job attributes that enhance employee motivation and satisfaction (Lussier & Hendon, 2017). Positive job attributes can reinforce an employee's motivation, leading to better performance outcomes. Hackman and Oldham's (1975) Job Characteristics Model (JCM) identifies five core dimensions—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—that shape work outcomes through the Motivating Potential Score (MPS). These dimensions can significantly affect employee performance and job satisfaction (Ahmad, 2018; Grobelna, 2019). Well-designed jobs are associated with positive outcomes such as higher employee engagement and job satisfaction (Ho, Choo, Teo, & Kaliappen, 2020).

The five key job characteristics, as outlined by Hackman and Oldham, impact behavioral outcomes such as employee performance. Task variety refers to the extent to which a task

requires diverse actions, utilizing a range of skills and abilities (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Task identity is defined as the degree to which an employee completes an entire task, from start to finish (Hackman, 1980). Task significance, along with task variety and identity, fosters a sense of meaningfulness in work, which enhances internal motivation, job satisfaction, and reduces turnover (Allan, Duffy, & Collisson, 2018). Job autonomy allows employees significant freedom and flexibility in how they carry out tasks (Langfred & Moye, 2004), while feedback provides them with critical information about their performance, allowing real-time adjustments (Pritchard, Jones, Roth, Stuebing, & Ekeberg, 1988).

Task Variety and Job Satisfaction

Variety in tasks has been shown to positively influence job satisfaction and performance (Roelen, Koopmans, & Groothoff, 2008). Employees benefit from diversity in their tasks, as monotony and repetitive work can lead to boredom and decreased satisfaction (Smith, 1981). A job offering appropriate task variety reduces boredom and boosts employee engagement (Zaniboni, Truxillo, & Fraccaroli, 2013). On the other hand, work overload can have detrimental effects on both the physical and mental health of employees (Brown & Benson, 2005) and may also hinder social interaction, as employees have less time for collaboration with colleagues (Bowling, Alarcon, Bragg, & Hartman, 2015). While numerous studies have examined the impact of job autonomy and other job characteristics on job satisfaction, research specifically addressing task variety (TV) and its effect on job satisfaction is limited. Therefore, based on this discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Skill variety has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

Task Identity and Job Satisfaction

Task identity encourages employees to develop a comprehensive understanding of their tasks and the relationships among them, leading to integrated job knowledge (Jiang et al., 2020). According to Johari et al. (2018), task identity fosters a sense of purpose in completing tasks, which contributes to greater pride in one's work. Additionally, Hauff et al. (2015) documented a positive relationship between task identity and job satisfaction. Task identity refers to the responsibility of selecting the appropriate approach to complete tasks within the given

timeframe, ensuring the best possible outcomes (Österberg, Rydstedt, Kleiven, & Brandebo, 2017). It is one of the job characteristics that positively influences job satisfaction (Yuen, Loh, Zhou, & Wong, 2018). Previous studies have highlighted task identity as a critical factor in employee retention, although its impact on job satisfaction in the context of this study population remains unexplored. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. Task identity has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

Task Significance and Job Satisfaction

Task significance refers to the degree to which a task has a substantial impact on the lives of others within an organization or community (Hackman, 1980). Beyond individual and organizational factors like self-efficacy, job-role fit, socio-moral context, and self-transcendent orientation, task significance is a key indicator of meaningful work (Schnell, Höge, & Pollet, 2016). Task significance leads to enhanced job performance, increased personal initiative, helpfulness, and improved job satisfaction (Raub & Blunschi, 2014). Although prior studies have explored other job characteristics, few have investigated task significance (TS) independently and its potential influence on job satisfaction. Based on this gap, the following hypothesis is generated:

H3. Task significance has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

Employees with greater autonomy are better equipped to understand the consequences of their decisions and feel more confident in their ability to complete assigned tasks (Dedahanov, Rhee, & Gapurjanova, 2019; Sousa, Coelho, & Guillamon-Saorin, 2012). Autonomy in the workplace fosters intrinsic motivation, simplifies problem-solving, and increases productivity (Ryan & Deci, 2006). Granting high autonomy to employees provides several benefits, such as the flexibility to manage their work schedules and procedures. This, in turn, boosts their confidence, time management skills, and energy levels (Jing et al., 2021; Wiertsema, Kraaykamp, Hoekman, & Beckers, 2023). Research suggests that lower autonomy correlates with lower job satisfaction (Lopes, Lagoa, & Calapez, 2014). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. Autonomy has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

Feedback and Job Satisfaction

Feedback enhances employees' awareness of their performance and is positively linked to learning, motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Aguinis, Gottfredson, & Joo, 2012; Ozturk, Hancer, & Im, 2014). While feedback is generally acknowledged as beneficial, some empirical studies suggest that its effects on performance can be mixed (Alvero, Bucklin, & Austin, 2001; DeNisi & Kluger, 2000). Several studies have explored feedback's role in performance appraisals and its impact on job satisfaction (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979; Keeping & Levy, 2000), but there is limited research on how feedback related to work and attitudes might affect job satisfaction. Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5. Feedback has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

Normative Commitment (NC)

Normative commitment (NC) is a well-established component of the three-component model of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). NC refers to the internalized obligation an employee feels to align their goals with the interests and values of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This sense of responsibility and loyalty drives employees to stay with the organization.

NC as a Mediator between Task Variety and Job Satisfaction

NC is often perceived as a desire to "do the right thing" rather than a means of avoiding negative consequences (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Greater commitment from employees typically results in more effort toward advancing organizational goals (Riketta, 2002). Task variety has been positively associated with both job satisfaction and performance (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). While previous research has shown a strong relationship between NC and job satisfaction, limited studies have examined NC as a mediator between task variety and job satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6. Normative commitment mediates the relationship between skill variety and job satisfaction.

NC as a Mediator Between Task Significance and Job Satisfaction

Task significance, defined as the degree to which one's work benefits others, has been shown to improve job satisfaction (Grant, 2007, 2008). Task significance is a socially constructed subjective judgment, shaped through interpersonal interactions, and influences work performance by using social cues to enhance employees' perceptions of task relevance (Griffin, 1983). While no previous studies have examined NC as a mediator between task significance and job satisfaction, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7. Normative commitment mediates the relationship between task significance and job satisfaction.

NC as a Mediator Between Task Identity and Job Satisfaction

Positive organizational outcomes are more closely associated with organizational commitment when it stems from an employee's emotional attachment to their job or organization (Lee, Lee, & Lum, 2008; Mostafa et al., 2019). Task identity reflects an employee's emotional bond to their tasks or job (Lee et al., 2008). This sense of attachment, fostered by the organization's commitment, serves as a stabilizing force linked to favorable outcomes such as performance, motivation, and job satisfaction (Meyer, Stanley, & Parfyonova, 2012). Research has historically focused on the combined effect of different types of commitment on task identity, but this study isolates normative commitment as a mediator. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H8. Normative commitment mediates the relationship between task identity and job satisfaction.

NC as a Mediator Between Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

An environment that encourages autonomy fosters organizational commitment (Tega & Onuoha, 2023). Autonomy is a key job characteristic that enhances job satisfaction and reduces absenteeism (Taylor, Bradley, & Nguyen, 2003). However, excessive autonomy may have

negative effects, leading to job fatigue and reduced commitment (Zhou, 2020; Lu et al., 2017).

Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9. Normative commitment mediates the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction.

NC as a Mediator Between Feedback and Job Satisfaction

Supervisors can enhance employee satisfaction and commitment by actively engaging in feedback processes (Anseel & Lievens, 2007). Positive feedback has been found to foster leadership potential and increase commitment (Steffens et al., 2018). When employees receive feedback that shows appreciation for their efforts, they are more likely to become normatively committed, which can increase job satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H10. Normative commitment mediates the relationship between feedback and job satisfaction.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) as a Moderator Between Normative Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' perception that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Employees who feel supported by their organization are more likely to be committed and less likely to engage in absenteeism or turnover (Meyer & Allen, 1997). According to the norm of reciprocity, employees who perceive high levels of support from their organization will reciprocate with greater commitment (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H11. Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between normative commitment and job satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework: Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The conservation of resources (COR) theory suggests that individuals strive to acquire and conserve resources that they value, including situations, tasks, and other job-related aspects (Hobfoll, 1988). Job characteristics are crucial resources for promoting positive organizational

outcomes (Zhao et al., 2016), and both organizational commitment and perceived organizational support significantly impact employee performance (Ridwan, Mulyani, & Ali, 2020). Research has demonstrated that job satisfaction is a key indicator of commitment (Mathur & Salunke, 2013). This study builds on COR theory by proposing that job characteristics create an environment that fosters cooperative culture, where organizational support enhances employees' commitment, leading to increased job satisfaction. Moreover, perceived organizational support may strengthen or weaken the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction.

Methodology

This research aims to investigate the mediating role of normative commitment (NC) in the relationship between job characteristics (JC) and job satisfaction (JS), as well as the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the telecom sector of Pakistan. A quantitative approach was employed to achieve the research objectives. The study utilized purposive sampling to select participants, with a final sample size of 208 respondents, determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling method.

To mitigate the issue of common method variance, data were collected in two phases (Conway & Lance, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2003). In the first phase, data were gathered regarding respondents' demographics, job characteristics, and normative commitment. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 700 individuals via email and social media platforms, yielding 355 initial responses. In the second phase, the questionnaire was sent again to the 355 respondents from the first phase, resulting in 321 responses. After cleaning the data to remove incomplete or inconsistent responses, 208 valid responses remained for analysis.

Table 1 details the frequency of the respondents. The results based on demographics indicate that 75 % of the respondents were females and 25 % males. However, 53.84% of the respondents aged between 26-35, 34.61% belonged to the age group of 36-45, and 11.53% were above 45. 85.57% of the sample were graduates, 12.98% were masters, and 1.44% postgraduates. Most of the respondents were found to be performing entry-level positions, with experience ranging from 1-5 years.

Table-1. Demographics

Measures	Items	Frequency	%
GENDER	Male	156	75
	Female	52	25
AGE	25-35	112	53.84
	36-45	72	34.61
	Above 45	24	11.53
EDUCATION	Undergraduate	178	85.57
	Masters/MS/MBA	27	12.98
	Postgraduate	3	1.44
JOB TITLES	Top Management	2	0.96
	Middle Management	62	29.80
	Entry Level	144	69.23
WORK EXPERIENCES	Less Than 1 Year	37	17.78
	1-5 Years	138	66.34
	6-10 Years	25	12.01
	Above 10 Years	8	3.84

Measures

The scales utilized in this study were adopted from established literature to ensure reliability and validity, thereby minimizing the likelihood of instrumentation errors (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). A five-point Likert scale rating was used for response tapping. JC (IV) scale consists 5 dimensions of Hackman's job characteristics i.e. skill variety, the scale of Job characteristics (SV, TI, TS, A, F) was adopted from the study of Hackman & Oldham (1975). The overall alpha value of the variable is $\alpha = 0.81$, which is in accordance with the previous studies that used the same scale with $\alpha = 0.84$. the Cronbach alpha value for SV was 0.80 (3-items), TI was 0.81 (3-items), TS was 0.79 (3-items), A was 0.83 (3-items), and F was 0.86 (3-item). The scale for job satisfaction is adopted from the study of The scale is adopted from the study of Macdonald & MacIntyre (1997) consist of 10-items scale with Cronbach alpha value of 0.8. Moreover, the scale of NC is adopted from the study of Allen & Mayer (1990). The scale consists of 8-items, alpha value of 0.784. and the POS scale is adopted from the scale of Eisenberger et al., (1986). The scale consists of 16-items. Furthermore, Cronbach alpha value for POS is 0.75 (Table 2).

Table-2. Instruments

S. No	Variable	Author	No of Items
1.	Job Characteristics	(Hackman & Oldham, 1975)	15
2.	Job Satisfaction	(Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997)	10
3.	Normative Commitment	(Allen & Meyer, 1990)	8
4.	Perceived organizational performance	(Eisenberger et al., 1986)	16

Analysis

The data for this study were analyzed using SPSS and the PROCESS macro for moderation and mediation analyses.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 presents the mean scores and standard deviations across the key variables: Job Characteristics (JC), Normative Commitment (NC), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), and Job Satisfaction (JS). The results show the following descriptive statistics: JC (Mean = 2.32, SD = 0.54), NC (Mean = 2.32, SD = 0.55), POS (Mean = 2.32, SD = 0.60), and JS (Mean = 3.60, SD = 0.60). Correlation analysis reveals several significant relationships among the variables. There is a moderate positive correlation between POS and JC ($r = 0.44, p < 0.01$), suggesting that higher perceived organizational support fosters improved job characteristics. Additionally, a positive relationship exists between JC and JS ($r = 0.23, p < 0.01$), indicating that job characteristics contribute to job satisfaction, although the correlation is relatively low. Similarly, the correlation between JS and NC ($r = 0.25, p < 0.01$) also shows a low positive relationship. Notably, the strongest correlation observed is between JS and POS ($r = 0.46, p < 0.01$), suggesting that perceived organizational support significantly enhances job satisfaction. Overall, the correlation analysis indicates that job characteristics are positively related to normative commitment and play a significant role in improving job satisfaction within the telecom sector.

Table-3. Descriptive and correlation

Variables	Alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4
JC	0.70	2.32	0.54	1			
NC	0.75	3.21	0.55	0.25	1		
POS	0.77	2.23	0.69	0.44	0.30	1	
JS	0.87	3.60	0.60	0.23	0.13	0.46	1

Note: JC- job characteristics, NC- Normative commitment, POS- Perceived organizational support, JS- Job satisfaction

Hypotheses Testing: Direct and Indirect Analysis

Direct effect: The direct effects of job characteristics (JC) on job satisfaction (JS) were tested by regressing the individual dimensions—Skill Variety (SV), Task Identity (TI), Task Significance (TS), Autonomy (A), and Feedback (F)—on job satisfaction. The results presented in Table 4 indicate that all five hypotheses (H1-H5) were moderately accepted, showing that each of the job characteristics had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. Skill Variety

(SV) had a positive relationship with job satisfaction ($B = 0.445, t = 3.452, p < 0.05$). This suggests that employees who experience a variety of tasks feel more satisfied in their roles. Task Identity (TI) also showed a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ($B = 0.222, t = 2.476, p < 0.05$), indicating that employees who can identify with the entirety of their work are more likely to be satisfied. Task Significance (TS) had a moderately significant effect on job satisfaction ($B = 0.216, t = 2.351, p < 0.05$), suggesting that when employees perceive their tasks as meaningful, it increases their satisfaction levels. Autonomy (A) also demonstrated moderate relationship positive effect on job satisfaction ($B = 0.123, t = 4.471, p < 0.05$), indicating that giving employees control over their tasks significantly enhances their job satisfaction. Feedback (F) also contributed positively to job satisfaction ($B = 0.344, t = 3.371, p < 0.05$), suggesting that providing regular and constructive feedback helps employees feel more fulfilled in their roles.

These findings are consistent with earlier research by Spector and Jex (1991), where moderate correlations between JC and JS were reported, ranging between 0.32 and 0.46. In this study, the correlation coefficients for SV, TI, TS, A, and F were similarly moderate but statistically significant, with values such as $r = 0.221$ for SV, $r = 0.201$ for TI, and $r = 0.444$ for TS.

Table 4. Direct relationships

Hypothesis	T	B	Sig
H1: SV have moderately significant positive effect on JS	3.452	0.445	0.05
H2: TI have moderately significant positive effect on JS	2.476	0.222	0.05
H3: TS have moderately significant positive effect on JS	2.351	0.216	0.05
H4: A have moderately significant positive effect on JS	4.471	0.123	0.05
H5: F have moderately significant positive effect on JS	3.371	0.344	0.05

Indirect effect: The mediating role of normative commitment (NC) between the job characteristics (SV, TI, TS, A, F) and job satisfaction was tested using the PROCESS macro. The results (Table 6) show that NC significantly mediates the relationships between all five dimensions of JC and JS, confirming hypotheses H6-H10. The mediation effect of NC on the

relationship between Skill Variety (SV) and job satisfaction was significant ($B = 0.1033$, $t = 3.35$, $p < 0.005$). This indicates that employees who experience diverse tasks and feel a sense of obligation towards their organization (NC) report higher job satisfaction. For Task Identity (TI), NC significantly mediated the relationship with job satisfaction ($B = 0.0186$, $t = 4.88$, $p < 0.005$), suggesting that the ability to identify with the entirety of a task, combined with a strong sense of commitment, enhances satisfaction. Similarly, Task Significance (TS) had a significant mediating effect through NC ($B = 0.0193$, $t = 7.25$, $p < 0.005$), reinforcing the idea that perceiving work as meaningful, when accompanied by a sense of commitment, boosts satisfaction. Autonomy (A) also had a significant indirect effect via NC ($B = 0.0652$, $t = 2.18$, $p < 0.005$), indicating that employees who have control over their tasks, coupled with normative commitment, experience greater job satisfaction. Feedback (F) followed the same pattern, with NC mediating the relationship with job satisfaction ($B = 0.0173$, $t = 5.59$, $p < 0.005$), highlighting the importance of feedback and commitment in enhancing employee satisfaction. These results further validate the argument put forth by Meyer and Allen (1991) that normative commitment plays a crucial mediating role in the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction. Employees who feel a moral obligation to stay with their organization are more likely to be satisfied when they have well-designed jobs.

Moderation Effect of Perceived Organizational Support

The moderating role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) on the relationship between NC and JS was tested, and the results did not support the hypothesis (H11). The findings ($B = -0.07$, $p > 0.05$) suggest that POS does not significantly moderate the relationship between NC and job satisfaction. The bootstrapped lower and upper confidence intervals (LLCI = -0.0247 , ULCI = 0.0232) confirmed the lack of significance. This result deviates from the findings of Eisenberger et al. (2002), who suggested that POS enhances job satisfaction by making employees feel valued. In the present study, the lack of significant moderation by POS may be due to sector-specific factors in the telecom industry in Pakistan, such as high stress, work overload, or insufficient leadership support. These factors may overshadow the positive effects of organizational support, making it less effective in enhancing job satisfaction.

Table-6. Indirect relationships

	Hypothesis	Point estimate	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	P
H6	SV → NC → JS	.1033	.0654	.1534	< 0.05
H7	TI → NC → JS	.0186	.0010	.0483	< 0.05
H8	TS → NC → JS	.0193	.0079	.0370	< 0.05
H9	A → NC → JS	.0652	.0340	.1157	< 0.05
H10	F → NC → JS	.0173	.0011	.474	< 0.05
H11	NC * POS → JS	-0.07	-.0247	.0232	> 0.05

Note: SV- Skill variety, TI- Task identity, TS – Task significance, A- Autonomy, F-Feedback, NC- Normative commitment, JS- Job satisfaction

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study build on existing literature by demonstrating the significant impact of job characteristics (JC) on job satisfaction (JS), with a specific focus on the mediating role of normative commitment (NC). While previous research has explored the individual dimensions of Hackman's Job Characteristics Model (JCM) in relation to employee outcomes (Jiang et al., 2020; Wiertsema et al., 2023; Zhou, 2020), this study is unique in that it integrates all dimensions—skill variety (SV), task identity (TI), task significance (TS), autonomy (A), and feedback (F)—and examines their collective impact on job satisfaction with the mediation of normative commitment.

The results align with earlier studies that have found positive relationships between job characteristics such as task identity and autonomy with job satisfaction (Jiang et al., 2020). However, this study extends those findings by showing that skill variety, task significance, and feedback also significantly contribute to job satisfaction when mediated by normative commitment. These results support Hackman and Oldham's (1976) argument that well-designed jobs enhance employees' psychological states, leading to higher levels of satisfaction. In particular, task significance (TS) appears to play a pivotal role, consistent with Grant's (2008) findings, where employees who perceive their tasks as meaningful are more engaged and committed to their work.

The positive mediation of NC suggests that employees who internalize a sense of obligation towards their organization tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. This finding is in line with Meyer and Allen's (1991) commitment model, which emphasizes that normative commitment stems from a moral obligation or loyalty towards the organization. The presence of NC strengthens the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction, indicating that fostering a culture of commitment can amplify the positive effects of job design on employee outcomes.

However, the non-significant moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in this study offers an interesting deviation from prior literature. Eisenberger et al. (2002) suggested that employees who feel appreciated and supported by their organization are more likely to exhibit positive work behaviors and experience higher job satisfaction. In this case, the lack of a significant moderation effect of POS could be attributed to contextual factors within the telecom sector. Organizational dynamics such as insufficient leadership, communication gaps, work overload, and high levels of stress may diminish the perceived value of organizational support, thus weakening its influence on job satisfaction. This aligns with findings from studies on high-stress environments, where organizational support may be overshadowed by the pressures of the job (Brown & Benson, 2005).

Additionally, the competitive and fast-paced nature of the telecom sector in Pakistan could exacerbate these challenges. Employees in such environments may experience high levels of job-related stress, which could mitigate the positive effects of POS, as employees may not perceive the organization's support as sufficient to alleviate their workload or improve working conditions. The results underscore the importance of addressing leadership and communication strategies in high-pressure environments to ensure that organizational support is both perceived and felt by employees.

In summary, this study makes a valuable contribution to the literature by confirming the positive impact of Hackman's job characteristics on job satisfaction through normative commitment, while also highlighting the limitations of perceived organizational support in certain organizational contexts. Future research should explore additional factors, such as leadership style and employee well-being, that could further explain the role of POS in moderating employee outcomes.

Theoretical and Practical implications

Organizations today operate in unpredictable and diverse environments, relying heavily on internal resources and competencies. Job characteristics offer distinctive competencies that can enhance job satisfaction, particularly at the individual level, which is more influential in determining job-related outcomes. Despite the importance of job characteristics, limited research has explored the alignment between job characteristics (JC) and normative

commitment (NC) and its impact on job satisfaction (JS). This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of the Job Characteristics Model by providing empirical evidence of how JC-NC alignment can improve JS, viewed through the lens of Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. According to COR, employees facing challenges tend to equip themselves with stronger resources, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction.

In practice, telecom organizations with varied market shares in Pakistan's industry can benefit from embedding valuable job characteristics into their structures. Positive job characteristics can yield favorable work outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, by fostering a collaborative and motivating environment conducive to optimal performance. The findings suggest that organizations should regularly evaluate and adjust job characteristics to boost employee commitment and satisfaction, as evidenced by prior literature (Arthur, 1994; Wood & Menezes, 1998).

Conclusion

The study concluded that all dimensions of the job characteristics positively impact JS. It is worth mentioning that the organization does not always require individuals with specialized skills rather prefers having “T” shape individuals who go the extra mile to complete assigned tasks. POS does not support this model. Comprehending the correlation between JC and JS is imperative for seeking to improve employee welfare, outcome, and retention. Strategically leveraging the JC and JS relationship would result in a more motivated workforce and that would lead to a substantial outcome.

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. First, the research focused solely on the telecom sector in Pakistan (Jazz, Ufone, Telenor, Zong), which limits the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or countries. Second, the study employed a multistage data collection method. Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to better capture the causal relationships, as individual attitudes and behaviors are likely to change over time. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into how job characteristics influence job satisfaction through normative commitment. As per the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), jobs hold the most value when they score high across all five

dimensions (Ali et al., 2014). Unlike previous studies, this research found that all job characteristic dimensions positively influence JS, except for POS.

Future recommendation

This study opens several avenues for future research. Replication with a larger sample size and broader population is recommended to confirm and generalize the findings. Future studies could explore additional job characteristics such as achievement, career development, and task responsibility, expanding beyond Hackman's model. Since POS did not have a significant impact in this study, future research should focus on understanding moderating mechanisms at both the individual level (e.g., personality traits) and organizational level. Further investigation into these areas can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how job characteristics and support structures interact to influence job satisfaction.

References

- Aguinis, H., Gottfredson, R. K., & Joo, H. (2012). Delivering effective performance feedback: The strengths-based approach. *Business Horizons*, 55(2), 105-111.
- Ahmad, A. (2018). The relationship among job characteristics organizational commitment and employee turnover intentions: A reciprocation perspective. *Journal of Work-Applied Management*, 10(1), 74-92.
- Ali, S. A. M., Said, N. A., Abd Kader, S. F., Ab Latif, D. S., & Munap, R. (2014). Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model to job satisfaction. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 129, 46-52.
- Allan, B. A., Duffy, R. D., & Collisson, B. (2018). Task significance and performance: Meaningfulness as a mediator. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 26(1), 172-182.
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of occupational psychology*, 63(1), 1-18.
- Alvero, A. M., Bucklin, B. R., & Austin, J. (2001). An objective review of the effectiveness and essential characteristics of performance feedback in organizational settings (1985-1998). *Journal of organizational behavior management*, 21(1), 3-29.
- Anseel, F., & Lievens, F. (2007). The long-term impact of the feedback environment on job satisfaction: A field study in a Belgian context. *Applied Psychology*, 56(2), 254-266.
- Arthur, J. B. (1994). Effects of human resource systems on manufacturing performance and turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(3), 670-687.
- Becker, T. E. (1992). Foci and bases of commitment: Are they distinctions worth making? *Academy of Management Journal*, 35(1), 232-244.
- Belzunegui-Eraso, A., & Erro-Garcés, A. (2020). Teleworking in the Context of the Covid-19 Crisis. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3662.

- Bowling, N. A., Alarcon, G. M., Bragg, C. B., & Hartman, M. J. (2015). A meta-analytic examination of the potential correlates and consequences of workload. *Work & stress*, 29(2), 95-113.
- Brown, M., & Benson, J. (2005). Managing to overload? Work overload and performance appraisal processes. *Group & Organization Management*, 30(1), 99-124.
- City, K., Tenggara, E. N., Malelak, M. L., & Hum, M. (2023). The Influence of Affective Commitment, Continuous Commitment and Normative Commitment to Employee Performance at Sotis Hotel Kupang during the COVID-19. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the International Conference on Applied Science and Technology on Social Science 2022 (iCAST-SS 2022).
- Conway, J. M., & Lance, C. E. (2010). What reviewers should expect from authors regarding common method bias in organizational research. *Journal of business and psychology*, 25, 325-334.
- Dedahanov, A. T., Rhee, C., & Gapurjanova, N. (2019). Job autonomy and employee voice: is work-related self-efficacy a missing link? *Management Decision*, 57(9), 2401-2413.
- DeNisi, A. S., & Kluger, A. N. (2000). Feedback effectiveness: Can 360-degree appraisals be improved? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 14(1), 129-139.
- Dopeso-Fernández, R., Giusti, G., & Kucel, A. (2023). Only the smartest? Motivating job characteristics for all ability levels and their impact on job satisfaction. *Bulletin of Economic Research*, 75(3), 742-775.
- Dwivedi, P., Chaturvedi, V., & Vashist, J. K. (2023). Innovation for organizational sustainability: The role of HR practices and theories. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 31(3), 759-776.
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of applied psychology*, 71(3), 500.
- Eisenberger, R., Stinglhamber, F., Vandenberghe, C., Sucharski, I. L., & Rhoades, L. (2002). Perceived supervisor support: contributions to perceived organizational support and employee retention. *Journal of applied psychology*, 87(3), 565.
- Grant, A. M. (2007). Relational job design and the motivation to make a prosocial difference. *Academy of Management review*, 32(2), 393-417.
- Grant, A. M. (2008). The significance of task significance: Job performance effects, relational mechanisms, and boundary conditions. *Journal of applied psychology*, 93(1), 108.
- Griffin, R. W. (1983). Objective and social sources of information in task redesign: A field experiment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 184-200.
- Grobelna, A. (2019). Effects of individual and job characteristics on hotel contact employees' work engagement and their performance outcomes: A case study from Poland. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(1), 349-369.
- Gu, M., Li Tan, J. H., Amin, M., Mostafiz, M. I., & Yeoh, K. K. (2022). Revisiting the moderating role of culture between job characteristics and job satisfaction: a multilevel analysis of 33 countries. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, 44(1), 70-93.
- Hackman, J. R. (1980). Work redesign and motivation. *Professional psychology*, 11(3), 445.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1975). Development of the job diagnostic survey. *Journal of applied psychology*, 60(2), 159.
- Hamermesh, D. S. (1999). The changing distribution of job satisfaction. In: National Bureau of Economic Research Cambridge, Mass., USA.

- Ho, T. C., Choo, L. S., Teo, P.-C., & Kaliappen, N. (2020). Attracting Gen Z to small and medium enterprises (SMEs): A view through the Job Characteristic Model. Paper presented at the 2020 international conference on decision aid sciences and application (DASA).
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1988). *The ecology of stress*: Taylor & Francis.
- Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values (Vol. 5)*: sage.
- Humphrey, S. E., Nahrgang, J. D., & Morgeson, F. P. (2007). Integrating motivational, social, and contextual work design features: a meta-analytic summary and theoretical extension of the work design literature. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(5), 1332.
- Ilgen, D. R., Fisher, C. D., & Taylor, M. S. (1979). Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. *Journal of applied psychology*, 64(4), 349.
- Jiang, Z., Di Milia, L., Jiang, Y., & Jiang, X. (2020). Thriving at work: A mentoring-moderated process linking task identity and autonomy to job satisfaction. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 118, 103373.
- Jing, S., Li, Z., Stanley, D. M., Guo, X., & Wenjing, W. (2021). Work-family enrichment: influence of job autonomy on job satisfaction of knowledge employees. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 726550.
- Kammerhoff, J., Lauenstein, O., & Schütz, A. (2019). Leading toward harmony—Different types of conflict mediate how followers' perceptions of transformational leadership are related to job satisfaction and performance. *European Management Journal*, 37(2), 210-221.
- Keeping, L. M., & Levy, P. E. (2000). Performance appraisal reactions: Measurement, modeling, and method bias. *Journal of applied psychology*, 85(5), 708.
- Langfred, C. W., & Moye, N. A. (2004). Effects of task autonomy on performance: an extended model considering motivational, informational, and structural mechanisms. *Journal of applied psychology*, 89(6), 934.
- Lee, S. H., Lee, T. W., & Lum, C. F. (2008). The effects of employee services on organizational commitment and intentions to quit. *Personnel Review*, 37(2), 222-237.
- Liu, Q., & Zhou, H. (2023). Impact of self-leadership on employee voice behavior: a moderated mediating model. *Current Psychology*, 1-17.
- Lopes, H., Lagoa, S., & Calapez, T. (2014). Work autonomy, work pressure, and job satisfaction: An analysis of European Union countries. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 25(2), 306-326.
- Lu, J. G., Brockner, J., Vardi, Y., & Weitz, E. (2017). The dark side of experiencing job autonomy: Unethical behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 73, 222-234.
- Lussier, R. N., & Hendon, J. R. (2017). *Human resource management: Functions, applications, and skill development*: Sage publications.
- Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2007). Emerging positive organizational behavior. *Journal of management*, 33(3), 321-349.
- Macdonald, S., & MacIntyre, P. (1997). The generic job satisfaction scale: Scale development and its correlates. *Employee Assistance Quarterly*, 13(2), 1-16.
- Mathur, G., & Salunke, M. (2013). Organizational commitment and job satisfaction: A study of manufacturing sector. *APOTHEOSIS: Tirpude's National Journal of Business Research*, 4(1), 129-143.
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human resource management review*, 1(1), 61-89.

- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application*: Sage publications.
- Meyer, J. P., & Herscovitch, L. (2001). Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model. *Human resource management review*, 11(3), 299-326.
- Meyer, J. P., & Parfyonova, N. M. (2010). Normative commitment in the workplace: A theoretical analysis and re-conceptualization. *Human resource management review*, 20(4), 283-294.
- Meyer, J. P., Stanley, L. J., & Parfyonova, N. M. (2012). Employee commitment in context: The nature and implication of commitment profiles. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80(1), 1-16.
- Morgeson, F. P., & Humphrey, S. E. (2006). The Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ): developing and validating a comprehensive measure for assessing job design and the nature of work. *Journal of applied psychology*, 91(6), 1321.
- Mostafa, A. M. S., Bottomley, P., Gould-Williams, J., Abouarghoub, W., & Lythreatis, S. (2019). High-commitment human resource practices and employee outcomes: The contingent role of organisational identification. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(4), 620-636.
- Nemteanu, M., Dabija, D., & Stanca, L. (2021). The Influence of Teleworking on Performance and Employees. *Counterproductive Behaviour*, 23, 58.
- Österberg, J., Rydstedt, L. W., Kleiven, J., & Brandebo, M. F. (2017). The path to job satisfaction. Applying the theory of purposeful behavior to military conditions. *Journal of Defense Resources Management*, 8(1), 27-42.
- Ozturk, A. B., Hancer, M., & Im, J. Y. (2014). Job characteristics, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment for hotel workers in Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 23(3), 294-313.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of applied psychology*, 88(5), 879.
- Pritchard, R. D., Jones, S. D., Roth, P. L., Stuebing, K. K., & Ekeberg, S. E. (1988). Effects of group feedback, goal setting, and incentives on organizational productivity. *Journal of applied psychology*, 73(2), 337.
- Raub, S., & Blunschi, S. (2014). The power of meaningful work: How awareness of CSR initiatives fosters task significance and positive work outcomes in service employees. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 55(1), 10-18.
- Razzaq, S., Aslam, U., Bagh, T., & Saddique, S. (2017). The impact of human resources management practices on employee commitment: evidence from Pakistan telecom sector. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(7), 649-667.
- Ridwan, M., Mulyani, S. R., & Ali, H. (2020). Improving employee performance through perceived organizational support, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, 11(12).
- Ricketta, M. (2002). Attitudinal organizational commitment and job performance: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 23(3), 257-266.
- Roelen, C., Koopmans, P., & Groothoff, J. (2008). Which work factors determine job satisfaction? *Work*, 30(4), 433-439.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68.

- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2006). Self-regulation and the problem of human autonomy: Does psychology need choice, self-determination, and will? *Journal of personality*, 74(6), 1557-1586.
- Saavedra, R., & Kwun, S. K. (2000). Affective states in job characteristics theory. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 21(2), 131-146.
- Schermerhorn Jr, J. R., Osborn, R. N., Uhl-Bien, M., & Hunt, J. G. (2011). *Organizational behavior*: John Wiley & sons.
- Schnell, T., Höge, T., & Pollet, E. (2016). Predicting meaning in work: Theory, data, implications. In *Positive psychology in search for meaning* (pp. 87-98): Routledge.
- Smith, R. P. (1981). Boredom: A review. *Human factors*, 23(3), 329-340.
- Sousa, C. M., Coelho, F., & Guillaumon-Saorin, E. (2012). Personal Values, Autonomy, and Self-efficacy: Evidence from frontline service employees. *International journal of selection and assessment*, 20(2), 159-170.
- Statt, D. A. (2004). *The Routledge dictionary of business management*: Routledge.
- Stoermer, S., Lauring, J., & Selmer, J. (2022). Job characteristics and perceived cultural novelty: Exploring the consequences for expatriate academics' job satisfaction. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(3), 417-443.
- Subagja, I. K., & Safrianto, A. S. (2020). Pengaruh Kepuasan Kerja Dan Loyalitas Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Pt Bank Sahabat Sampoerna Jakarta. *Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis Krisnadwipayana*, 8(2).
- Taylor, J., Bradley, S., & Nguyen, A. (2003). Job autonomy and job satisfaction: new evidence.
- Tega, O. O., & Onuoha, B. (2023). EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF AUTONOMY ON AFFECTIVE AND NORMATIVE COMMITMENT IN DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN PORT HARCOURT. *Research Journal of Management Practice* | ISSN, 2782, 7674.
- Tria, J. Z. (2023). Job satisfaction among educators: A systematic review. *International Journal of Professional Development, Learners and Learning*, 5(2), ep2310.
- Van Knippenberg, D., & Sleebos, E. (2006). Organizational identification versus organizational commitment: self-definition, social exchange, and job attitudes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 27(5), 571-584.
- Wiertsema, S., Kraaykamp, G., Hoekman, R., & Beckers, D. (2023). Job autonomy and leisure-time physical activity across Europe: a multilevel perspective. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 1-21.
- Williams, R. S. (2002). *Managing employee performance: Design and implementation in organizations*. (No Title).
- Wood, S., & Menezes, L. d. (1998). High commitment management in the UK: Evidence from the workplace industrial relations survey, and employers' manpower and skills practices survey. *Human relations*, 51(4), 485-515.
- Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Reciprocal relationships between job resources, personal resources, and work engagement. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(3), 235-244.
- Yuen, K. F., Loh, H. S., Zhou, Q., & Wong, Y. D. (2018). Determinants of job satisfaction and performance of seafarers. *Transportation research part A: policy and practice*, 110, 1-12.

Zaniboni, S., Truxillo, D. M., & Fraccaroli, F. (2013). Differential effects of task variety and skill variety on burnout and turnover intentions for older and younger workers. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 22(3), 306-317.

Zhang, M., & Zhao, Y. (2021). Job characteristics and millennial employees' creative performance: a dual-process model. *Chinese Management Studies*, 15(4), 876-900.

Zhao, X. R., Ghiselli, R., Law, R., & Ma, J. (2016). Motivating frontline employees: Role of job characteristics in work and life satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 27, 27-38.

Zhou, E. (2020). The "too-much-of-a-good-thing" effect of job autonomy and its explanation mechanism. *Psychology*, 11(2), 299-313.