

Does Gender Discrimination affect the Employees' Performance and Satisfaction in Healthcare Sector of Pakistan?

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Abstract: Gender discrimination is considered as the most negative attribute an organization in every field. A lot of research has been pertaining to outcomes of gender discrimination at workplace in different fields but the medical sector of Pakistan is not covered in depth up till now in this regards. Though, the common jargon for medical field is "female dominant field" in Pakistan but the prominent gap has been observed between the female medical students and the female doctors. The medical field is reliably one of the most outstanding fields to enter due to the positive work status and significant pay. This may not be valid for female employees, in any case, the enormous measure of gender inequality and sexual abuse might be sufficient to get women distant from the medical jobs. The main objective of this research paper is to evaluate the mediating effect of Empowerment and Harassment on employees' performance and satisfaction assisted by gender discrimination, wage gaps, career growth opportunities, work load and work-life balance policies. The sample of 270 medical worker was collected from different hospitals of Karachi including giant ones as well. Addition to this, the model fitness was tested by assessment carried out using the Smart PLS 3.0 software. The outcomes of the tests confirmed that the gender discrimination (independent variable) does significantly affect job performance (dependent variable 1) and job satisfaction (dependent variable 2). The study also revealed that the mediating effect of Harassment (mediator 1) and Empowerment (mediator 2) also exists between independent and dependent variables of the study. The outcome of this study is essential for the hospital management to dig into the streamlines of healthy work environment for their employees especially for females. This will aid the management to device strategies to minimize gender discrimination and provide equal opportunities for each gender.

Keywords: Gender discrimination, wage gap, career growth, job satisfaction, job performance, empowerment, harassment, work-life balance, work load.

Introduction

The ancient myths about men being leaders are still in deep roots of our culture. Men are always considered as leaders and influencers whether it comes to home or a workplace. At workplace, men enjoy higher positions than women due to their capability and knowledge. But this was the myth years ago, recently the paradigm has shifted and women now gain more degrees than ever. The diversification of gender is now even out somehow but there are still some factors which adequately impact the willingness, performance and satisfaction levels of women workforce at workplace. These factors contribute high wages gap with unequal opportunities due to gender (Ziman, 2013).

This is the main reason of selecting healthcare sector for this study because for years this sector is being labelled as "female oriented" but the reality has been always two-faced. Women doctors are underrepresented, differentiated and pestered basically on account of their gender. Gender discrimination can affect the advancement in career growth at different stages. However,

the female medical workers are strongly motivated to pursue superior career, irrespective of their lifestyles but the gender inequality at workplace resists them to achieve their goals (Kawase et al. 259). The same pattern is witnessed in Pakistan as well. As per the study carried out in Pakistan for female doctors thus suggested that there is an unbalanced equation between female medical students and female medical workforce (Mariam Mohsin, 2020). This outcome is due to difference in society and thoughts but also the working environment available for women in Pakistan which clearly highlights gender discrimination at workplaces deriving towards less employee opportunities for them and obviously no opportunities available for them as well (Farooq et al., 2019).

Our Pakistani society comprises of female workforce who are saturated with their personal obligations as well. Therefore, the element which attracts the female workforce to remain on the field is work-life balance. There also has been a chivalrous expansion in the number of female workforce in specific occupations, who tries to manage their personal and professional lives and excel as well but on contrary due to illness of workload women prefer to quit jobs after their personal commitments (Ziman, 2013). This is because the management usually do not consider work-life balance policies important for organization's growth. This study also covers the effect of poor work-life balance with job performance and satisfaction.

Another factor included in this study is wage gap. The unfilled cavity of wages among men and women have been in debates for a long time. There is a severe pattern of remuneration that females are always paid lesser than males. There has been critical efforts made to fill the cavity, but the issue is not even close to settled (Ziman, 2013). Therefore, this study also shows non-significant effect on job performance and satisfaction.

Research Objective and Questions

Enormous studies have been done in terms of job satisfaction and job performance in past years. The core purpose of this study to carry out again is to evaluate whether employee empowerment or harassment at workplace can mediate the influence of gender discrimination on job performance and satisfaction. Therefore, the core questions of the study are:

1. What is the role of gender discrimination on job performance and job satisfaction?
2. Do Empowerment and Harassment effect the relationship between:
 - i. Gender discrimination & Job performance
 - ii. Gender discrimination & Job satisfaction
 - iii. Wage gap with job satisfaction and performance
 - iv. Career growth with job satisfaction and performance
 - v. Work load with job satisfaction and performance
 - vi. Work-life balance with job satisfaction and performance

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Studies have shown that men are multiple times almost certain than ladies to stand firm on administration footholds (Babalola et al., 2021). It is conceivable as the social and cultural assumptions would separate the administration capital that people bring to the working environment (Kark et al., 2012). No big surprise, Groysberg and Abrahams (2014) and Reichl et al. (2014) elaborated that social elements could impact administration abilities and approaches across orientation in the working environment as females are shown the excellences of additional cooperative methodologies and relational comprehension (Reichl et al., 2014). This also effects the

performance of the females coming out from a conservative cultural background who are intended to face gender discrimination in Pakistan.

The organizations with firm financial standings and sound internal processes are considered to be successful. To bring this success to another threshold is the most challenging task for organizations (Iqbal et al., 2013). As per many scholars and researchers, the chief asset of organizations is their employees therefore, the overall performance of employees directly proportionate the organizations performance. Additionally, the employee performance is the outcome of good administrative norms, knowledge and skill, commitment gender equality.

The organization's performance and efficiency are attached to the excellent performance of its workers (Shin & Konrad, 2017). A lot of evidences have proved that how employee's performance is interlinked with organization's outcomes (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2017). As per Al Hammadi and Hussain (2019), Shin and Konrad (2017), for authoritative results and achievement has driven researchers to try to grasp what drives employees' performance. Personality traits (Tisu et al., 2020), work conditions and hierarchical attributes (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Basic predecessors of employees' performance. The gender disparity additionally hits individual prosperity of representatives, which eventually caters employee performance (HewettetalIJHRMacceptedversion, n.d.).

Theoretical Underpinnings

The hypotheses of this study are derived from Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivation-Hygiene theory, created by Frederick Herzberg in late 1950s. The theory talks about two main factors which comprise of satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors. In light of this theory, satisfaction factors are motivation factors which enable an employee to remain in workforce and work accordingly. The second variable dissatisfaction is referred as hygiene factors which may cause dissatisfaction of employees therefore, the management should convert hygiene factors into motivation factors.

This study is also focused on job satisfaction and job performance impacted by different hygiene factors like gender discrimination, wage gap, harassment and work load. It also derives that how motivating factors like career growth, empowerment and stable work-life balance policies effect job satisfaction and job performance.

Job Performance

The one of the critical success factors of an organization is its employees' performance (SHAIKH et al., 2017). Many scholars like (Campbell, n.d.) and (Scotter & Motowidlo, 2000), defined job performance as the amount and quality of work for which a person was supposed to do well and completes those tasks. Not only the completion of task is job performance but it also includes managerial judgment and assessment process (Sonnentag & Frese, 2005). Literature also defined job performance as tangible measurement of activities completed (Campbell, n.d.). Similarly, many more researchers have concluded that job performance is impacted by different factors of motivation, leadership, organization commitment, appraisal and many more. The present study also highlights some other factors like gender discrimination, career growth, and workload impacts.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is usually linked with the internal satisfaction of human beings when their desires meet the actual or equitable demands. Job satisfaction has been a part of many studies. Different scholars have different opinions that how employees are satisfied at workplace. The

results of many studies has shown that the job satisfaction at workplace is the outcome of the positive work environment. Also the ethical climate drives the job satisfaction of an employee (Disorbo et al., 2017). Job satisfaction alludes to a feeling of completion, delight, or happiness that creates because of working in a particular working condition (J & Hong, 2009). The idea of job satisfaction is contained various factors like impression of limited time valuable open doors, sufficiency of pay and advantages and friend relations (David et al., 2015). Job satisfaction in the internal demand of workers regarding the working conditions or some of the parts of working environment (Federici, 2013). The focus of this study also surrounds the fact that can Gender discrimination be also one of the factors that can significantly affect job satisfaction of female workers in healthcare sector.

Gender Discrimination

Discrimination is always a negative impacted value and can be present in any field. This has been defined by many scholars differently like (Sparck Jones, 1972) defined discrimination as “those actions designed to maintain own-group characteristics and favored position at the expense of the comparison group” (Kawakami & Dovidio, 2001). It has been comprehensively characterized discrimination as conduct that includes denying “ones equal opportunities (Allport, 1954) and may affect the employee wellbeing and performance (Kawakami & Dovidio, 2001). Alluding explicitly to discrimination with regards to the work environment, (Cornejo, 2010) zeroed in on disparities that address a distinction by other job-related activities of the employee. In this study, (Cornejo, 2010) construct of discrimination i.e. gender discrimination is considered. Centuries ago, this was a deadly threat to the organization’s success but in today’s modern world many industries have covered this negative impact into positivity with gender diversity in workforce. This study also intends to evaluate whether it is supported in healthcare sector or not.

Wage Gap

Past studies have declared that the prominent wage gap was used to be a part of employees’ dissatisfaction at workplace. The gender wage gap is unadjusted and is characterized as the contrast between fundamental earning of people comparative with essential profit of men. Nearly half of the workforce is comprised of women employees but sadly they are not equally paid as compare to men. They receive more college degree than men (Aly, 2017). This study also shows the relationship between wage gap effect on job performance and job satisfaction in present times especially in healthcare sector.

Career Growth

Researchers called attention to that career growth is the course of individual from inactive reliance to dynamic freedom, from being dependent to being independent (Bai & Liu, 2018). Another study underlined the advantages of word related portability between organizations to individual qualities expanding in his portrayal of profession development, and characterized vocation development as the speed of work series that concludes career advancement (Baugh & Graen, 1997). The elevation in career supports employee’s satisfaction and job performance. This research also shows that how career growth can drive towards the employees’ job satisfaction and job performance of female medical employees.

Work Load

Work load is defined as the stress borne by the employees at workplace which negatively impact their satisfaction and performance. Generally, workload is a stressor which is defined by

a study as a condition requiring a versatile reaction from a person (Beehr & Newman, 1978). Hence workload by many scholars are defined as “any condition or circumstance that gets a pessimistic passionate reaction” (Spector & Angeline Goh, 2001). The work load in inclusive and common stressor (Kahn et al., 1964). Different studies have shown different factors which are effected by extensive workload. The study carried out for nurses in medical field also concluded that medical caretakers under extreme work pressure shows destructive emotions, which adversely impacted their work satisfaction (Lanz, 2015).

Work-Life Balance

Balance between work and personal commitments is important equation in an individual’s life. An individual ought to keep balance so that their efficiency isn't affected (SHAIKH et al., 2017). In the event that an employee isn't given an appropriate schedule and characterized working hours so there is a more noteworthy possibility that their satisfaction will go down and his interest and inspiration level will diminish (Rasheed & Younas, 2018). Work balance is assumed to be an imperative part in employee, responsibility and it additionally help employee emotional wellness. Adjusted work life bring about worker fulfillment and powerful responsibility for the organization. Making appropriate balance between work and personal life isn't just representative commitment yet additionally its equivalent obligation of organization (SHAIKH et al., 2017). Therefore, organizations are keen to adapt feasible work-life balance policies to increase their employees satisfaction levels (Rasheed & Younas, 2018).

Empowerment

Empowerment is the degree of self-esteem an employee can have. The freedom an employee can enjoy at workplace strengthens its capabilities and desire to work happily. Employee empowerment has been the part of extensive studies in the presence of factors like organizational commitment, leadership styles and job performance. According to a scholar, empowerment is characterized as natural assignment inspiration that mirrors a functioning direction to one's work job and in this manner a feeling of command over one's work (Spreitzer, 1995). Giving employee chances to expand their degrees of significance, skill, self-assurance, and effect - as such, expanding their sensations of strengthening - is supposed to bring about representatives who are bound to respond with more elevated levels of emotional obligation to their associations (Van Buskirk, 2020).

Harassment

Sexual harassment is societal issue which is faced by many women around the world at workplace. Similarly, men can also be harassed by other genders. The focal point of inappropriate behavior concentrates inside the working environment is besides significant as it influences the employees, managers and the work environment in general. Lewd behavior has been inspected regarding inconsistent power relations (Uggen & Blackstone, 2004), concerning predecessor’s and results of working environment lewd behavior (Chan et al., 2008). Considering the abovementioned, harassment stays a common issue in public or private associations, is viewed as a public issue (Engel, 2014). Literature concisely characterize lewd behavior as any undesirable sex-related conduct that is seen by a target(s)/ victim(s), whether male or female, individual of the same or other gender, to terrible and scare (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). It is seen that inappropriate behavior actually affects employees (Lockwood & Rosenthal, 2011). Discussing about the impact of sexual harassment one of the scholars concluded that there may be generally decline in proficiency; efficiency might diminish; collaboration could be

compromised; and individuals might feel demotivated and discouraged by their experience. Therefore, the work environment is one of the movers of the employee's performance as the general advancement and development at workplaces might be postponed due to the lack of trust and camaraderie (Pryor et al., 2010). This study also focuses if harassment in medical field can impact performance or satisfaction.

Mediating Effect of Empowerment

Empowerment is acted as a mediator in many studies in past times. The one of the studies carried out in order to pertain how leadership effect job satisfaction, the empowerment was taken as a mediator (Ahmed et al., 2019). Also the study carried out in California also proposed employee empowerment as a mediator for leadership and organizational commitment (Van Buskirk, 2020). The drivers of the Empowerment from study of Hackman & Oldham, 1980 also supported that how skill, or self-viability, alludes to a confidence in one's capacity to successfully perform work exercises strengthen the employees to perform outclass. Self-determination in other word empowerment is a feeling of decision or independence over the inception and guideline of one's activities (Deci et al., 1989). In conclusion, empowerment is how much an individual can affect fundamental, administrative, or working outcomes at work (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Keeping all of the definitions defined by different scholars, this study shows the potential of Empowerment between the relationships of independent and dependent variable of this study especially gender discrimination with job performance and job satisfaction. On this basis, the hypothesis derived are as follows:

H1: Empowerment has a mediation effect between:

- H1a: Gender Discrimination and Job Performance
- H1b: Wage gap and Job Performance
- H1c: Career growth and Job Performance
- H1d: Work load and Job Performance
- H1e: Work-life Balance and Job Performance

H2: Empowerment has a mediating effect between:

- H2a: Gender Discrimination and Job Satisfaction
- H2b: Wage gap and Job Satisfaction
- H2c: Career growth and Job Satisfaction
- H2d: Work load and Job Satisfaction
- H2e: Work-life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Mediating effect of Harassment

Harassment is the biggest social issue around the world. Though, gender diversification is increasing and large number of women conclude workforce but the traces of sexual harassment is in the residue. Though, harassment is the mediator which is not used in much studies but used in several studies around the world (Gadlin, 1991). Similarly, one more study was carried out to determine how sexual harassment disrupts the brand in which it was also mentioned that how customer's satisfaction is effected by the harassment (Wearmouth et al., 2012) This study also focuses harassment as mediator for job satisfaction and job performance with gender discrimination and other independent variables of this study. The hypothesis derived on the basis of said study are:

H3: Harassment has mediating effect between:

- H3a: Gender Discrimination and Job Performance
- H3b: Wage gap and Job Performance

- H3c: Career growth and Job Performance
- H3d: Work load and Job Performance
- H3e: Work-life Balance and Job Performance

H4: Harassment has mediating effect between:

- H4a: Gender Discrimination and Job Satisfaction
- H4b: Wage gap and Job Satisfaction
- H4c: Career growth and Job Satisfaction
- H4d: Work load and Job Satisfaction
- H4e: Work-life Balance and Job Satisfaction

2.4 – Conceptual Framework

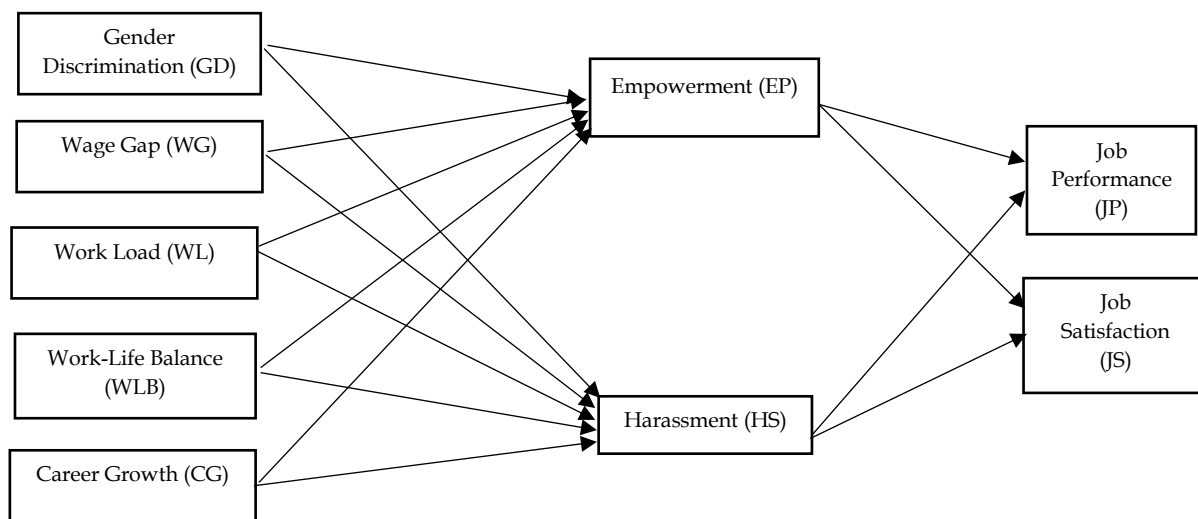


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Methodology

The methodology of the study includes the strategies that have been adopted for the testing of the constructed hypothesis along with the research design, reliability, validity, sampling technique, size and the mechanisms used for the data collection. Our research is a quantitative study for which experimental testing of the hypothesis is considered apposite. For the collection of data, a sample from the population is required as getting responses from the entire designated population is troublesome. Our population includes all the people working in the healthcare sector of Pakistan which is around to 390,006 as mentioned in the Economic Survey of 2020-2021 by the Government of Pakistan. Researchers propose having no less than 30 respondents for every variable, to lead a multivariate examination (Sekaran, 2003). Moreover, different researchers recommend that the sample size ought to be 250 to be thought of as suitable for a review. We have adopted the technique of Purposive sampling in our study to collect the data from the respondents. After the collection of data, we used SPSS 25 and Smart PLS 3.0 to conduct the descriptive analysis, reliability and validity.

Instrument Development

The instrument was created based on nine constructs. Empowerment (12 items) was adopted from (Van Buskirk, 2020), Discrimination (8 items) was adopted from (Cornejo, 2010), Harassment (15 items) was adopted from (Engel, 2014), Job Satisfaction (13 items) was adopted from (Disorbo et al., 2017), Wage gap (3 items) was adopted from (Aly, 2017), Work Life Balance (6 items) was adopted from (Tanner, 2018), Job performance (4 items) was adopted from (Reaves, 2015), work load (5 items) was adopted from (Lanz, 2015) and career growth (4 items) was adopted from (Wang et al., 2014).

Results

As far as the demographics considered, the data shows; the respondents whose age lie between 21-30 years are 54.1 percent followed by 29.6 percent of respondents whose age lie between 31-40 years and 16.3 percent of respondents are 41 and above. All these respondents belong to the healthcare sector of Pakistan. Regarding education, 135 (50.2%) respondents have a graduate degree, 121 (45%) respondents have a postgraduate degree while the remaining 14 (4.8%) respondents completed Matriculation and Inter.

Descriptive Statistics

To check the normality of data we perform descriptive analysis. If the data lies between the range of -1 and +1 of Skewness and Kurtosis, then the data is considered to be normally distributed. Below table highlights outcomes of descriptive analysis of our data inclusive of mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and the Cronbach's alpha of the constructs.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Career Growth	3.48	1.367	-0.430	-1.229	0.955
Job Performance	2.90	1.715	0.125	-1.776	0.991
Job Satisfaction	3.47	1.184	-0.552	-1.037	0.956
Harassment	2.88	1.473	0.122	-1.454	0.986
Gender Discrimination	2.36	1.205	0.589	-1.0	0.981
Wage Gap	2.32	1.175	0.441	-1.085	0.934
Workload	4.35	0.869	-1.441	1.355	0.963
Empowerment	3.31	1.456	-0.168	-1.567	0.989
Work Life Balance	4.03	1.207	-0.970	-0.514	0.986

Reliability of the Constructs

To ensure the reliability of the data, the value of Cronbach's alpha is checked. If the value is greater than 0.7, the data is reliable, whereas 0.7 is the cut-off. Though, the instrument being utilized in this study is taken from another study however it is still required to check the validity of the data (Santos, 1999). The summary of the result is presented in above Table 1.

The reliability of Job Performance is the highest (0.992) while that of Wage gap (0.934) is the lowest. Since the values are greater than 0.7 therefore it the data is reliable. The overall reliability of the instrument in this study is 0.971 which includes both the dependent and independent variable as well as mediating variable.

Correlation Analysis

To check the existence of relationship between two variables, the common practice of Correlation analysis is preferred. This analysis identifies presence of multi-collinearity among the variables and is also a pre-requisite for regression analysis. Many researchers suggest that the

acceptable range for correlation is 0.2 – 0.9 correlation amongst the value should lie between 0.2 and 0.9, if it is beyond this range then the item should be discarded. The correlation results are presented in the below Table.

Table 2: Correlation

	GD	JP	JS	HS	CG	WG	WL	EP	WLB
GD	1								
JP	-.670**	1							
JS	-.837**	.803**	1						
HS	-.768**	.818**	.750**	1					
CG	-.780**	.787**	.886**	.761**	1				
WG	.705**	-.475**	-.662**	-.581**	-.600**	1			
WL	-.600**	.306**	.547**	.389**	.493**	-.570**	1		
EP	-.745**	.898**	.897**	.760**	.869**	-.539**	.422**	1	
WLB	-.772**	.501**	.777**	.590**	.677**	-.650**	.737**	.638**	1

Construct Validity

When adopting constructs, their validity should be guaranteed as variance might arise due to the difference of cultural and demographics. The constructs used in this study have been previously used before for different cultures therefore to adjust in Pakistani culture, validity of construct were tested. The validity of the constructs is determined by “convergent validity” and “divergent validity” (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Average Variance Explained (AVE) is determined for convergent validity which should surpass 0.5. Since the all the values of AVE are surpassing 0.5 in our research therefore the data satisfies the requirements of the convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity identifies the distinctiveness of the correlated variables. It establishes that the variables are discrete in nature (Hair et al., 2009). The course of carrying out DV includes calculating the square of the AVE which must be greater than each pair of correlation (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table below shows the discriminant validity of the respondents’ data.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

	CG	EP	GD	HS	JP	JS	WG	WL	WLB
Career growth	0.940								
Empowerment	0.871	0.945							
Gender Discrimination	-0.780	-0.749	0.939						
Harassment	0.765	0.765	-0.765	0.917					
Job Performance	0.789	0.893	-0.670	0.824	0.987				
Job Satisfaction	0.889	0.897	-0.856	0.761	0.805	0.910			
Wage gap	-0.599	-0.544	0.704	-0.578	-0.475	-0.669	0.940		
Workload	0.491	0.430	-0.602	0.382	0.306	0.562	-0.568	0.934	
Work life balance	0.675	0.645	-0.774	0.583	0.500	0.788	-0.650	0.736	0.967

Structural Equation Modeling and Mediation Analysis

The Smart PLS-SEM Analysis was selected to test model fitness. For this purpose, Smart PLS 3.0 software was used during this study. The method carried out to test the model is Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The all required tested values were found to be as per the requirement that is values of Cronbach’s alpha were surpassing 0.7 benchmark for each construct, AVE was summed up greater than 0.5, composite reliability was also greater than 0.7 and factor loadings also found satisfactory. Model fit indicates NFI = 0.752 and SRMR = 0.092. SRMR is

suggested to be under 0.08 however 0.1 is cut-off (Henseler et al., 2015) consequently the model addresses an satisfactory goodness of fit.

Table 4: Specific Indirect Effect

	Coefficient	T Statistics	P-Value	Hypothesis
CG -> EP -> JS	0.546	11.654	0.000	Supported
WG -> HS -> JS	-0.015	1.402	0.162	Not supported
CG -> EP -> JP	0.457	8.706	0.000	Supported
WLB -> HS -> JS	-0.004	0.335	0.738	Not supported
WLB -> HS -> JP	-0.007	0.340	0.734	Not supported
GD -> EP -> JP	-0.117	2.216	0.027	Supported
WG -> EP -> JS	0.026	0.862	0.389	Not supported
GD -> EP -> JS	-0.139	2.132	0.033	Supported
WG -> EP -> JP	0.021	0.874	0.383	Not supported
WL -> HS -> JP	-0.050	2.854	0.004	Supported
GD -> HS -> JS	-0.087	3.004	0.003	Supported
GD -> HS -> JP	-0.162	4.262	0.000	Supported
WL -> HS -> JS	-0.027	2.700	0.007	Supported
WLB -> EP -> JP	0.068	1.208	0.228	Not supported
WLB -> EP -> JS	0.082	1.222	0.222	Not supported
CG -> HS -> JS	0.079	3.356	0.001	Supported
WL -> EP -> JS	-0.073	2.852	0.005	Supported
WL -> EP -> JP	-0.061	2.837	0.005	Supported
CG -> HS -> JP	0.147	5.132	0.000	Supported
WG -> HS -> JP	-0.028	1.600	0.110	Not supported

The bootstrapping technique with subsamples of 500 is used in this study for testing the mediation analysis.

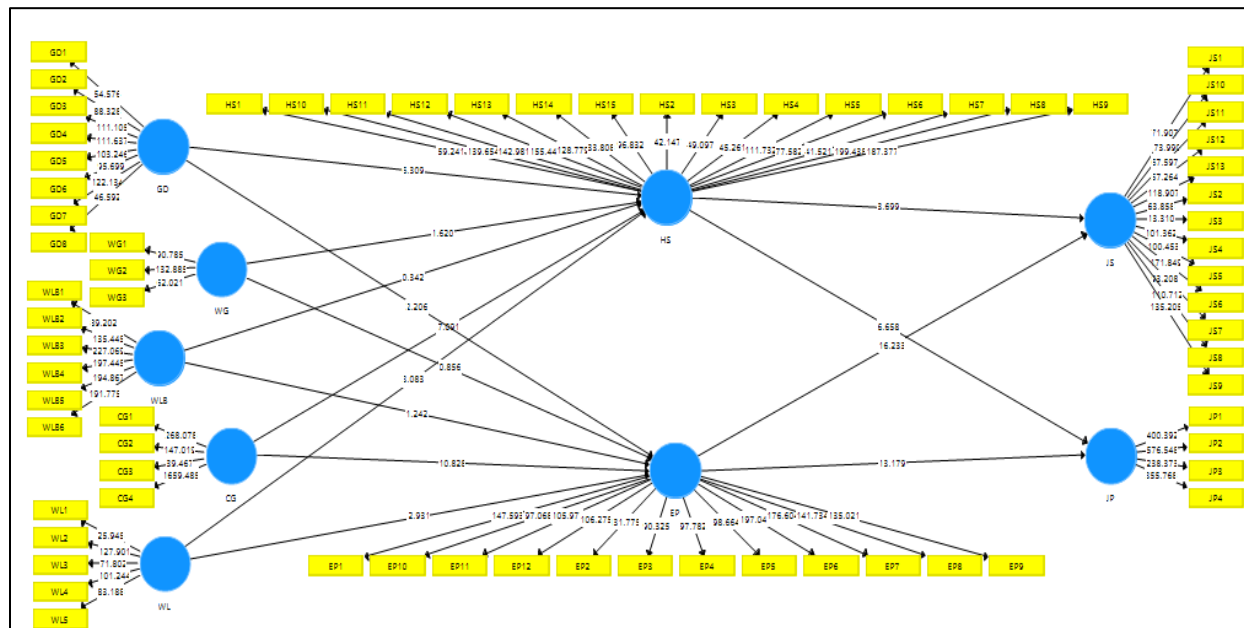


Figure 2: Measurement Model

Discussions and Conclusions

Through this study, we attempted to make sense of the meaning of Empowerment and Harassment, and the impact they have exclusively on the job satisfaction and performance. The

consequences of hypotheses of this research is aligned with the outcomes of previous studies. To additionally make sense of the validation of the hypotheses, in association with the past researches, the described outcomes of this study are talked about below:

Hypothesis 1: Mediating effect of Empowerment

H1a: Empowerment has mediating effect on Gender discrimination and Job performance

Refer to table # 4, the hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that gender discrimination effects the job performance of female medical workers. The result reveals that when employees face gender discrimination at workplace automatically their performance declines showing the inverse relationship as already mentioned in studies (Kawakami & Dovidio, 2001). The impact of gender discrimination is more strongly imposed via the Empowerment on job performance. Through bootstrapping method, we checked the mediation analysis. P value is significant. Therefore, Empowerment is a mediator between gender discrimination and job performance. Hence, the hypothesis H1a is failed to reject.

H1b: Empowerment has mediating effect on Wage gap and Job performance

The hypothesis suggested the mediating effect of empowerment on career growth and job performance, but the results rejected the hypothesis. This shows that wage gap does not affect job performance of female employees in medical sector. Therefore, as per previous studies that wage gap was an issue for employees years ago now the diversity in workforce has resolved this issue (Ziman, 2013). The bootstrapping results of this present study showed no mediation effect of empowerment between wage gap and job performance. Hence, the hypothesis H1b is rejected.

H1c: Empowerment has mediating effect on career growth and Job performance

Referring to table # 4, the hypothesis H1c is supported by bootstrapping test. This means that empowerment plays a mediating role between career growth and job performance and career growth does effect the job performance of female medical employees. The career advancement does effect performance of workers (Baugh & Graen, 1997). The table # 4 shows p-value significant therefore, H1c is failed to reject.

H1d: Empowerment has mediating effect on workload and Job performance

The hypothesis suggests that there is a mediating effect of empowerment between workload and job performance. Through bootstrapping, this is supported that empowerment can be a mediator between workload and job performance (table # 4 supports the hypothesis) also supported by (Lanz, 2015). The result declare p-value significant therefore, the hypothesis H1d is failed to reject.

H1e: Empowerment has mediating effect on work-life balance and Job performance

Empowerment is considered as the mediator in many studies in past years. Hence in this study, empowerment plays a mediator between other independent variable and job performance. But while running bootstrapping, the result showed greater p-value which means that empowerment is not a mediator for work-life balance and job performance. Work-life balance policies effect the mental well-being of employees but in stressful work environment usually

employees get used to of work stress. Organizations are more interested to develop work-life balance policies to cater the effectivity of their employees (SHAIKH et al., 2017). Hence, this is also supported by the present study. As the p-value is greater hence hypothesis H1e is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Mediating effect of Empowerment

H2a: Empowerment has mediating effect on Gender discrimination and Job Satisfaction

The p-value is significant (refer to table # 4), which shows that empowerment is a mediator for gender discrimination which impacts the job satisfaction of female medical workers. The hypothesis in present study declares that gender discrimination may affect job satisfaction having inverse relationship but this relationship is well supported by the mediation effect of empowerment. Employees face biasness and their satisfaction level effects (Disorbo et al., 2017). Through bootstrapping, empowerment is supported as a mediator hence H2a is failed to reject.

H2b: Empowerment has mediating effect on wage gap and Job Satisfaction

The above said hypothesis is not supported, referring to table # 4. The hypothesis H2b suggests that there empowerment is not as a mediator for wage gap and job satisfaction and the p-value calculated through bootstrapping is greater hence H2b is rejected. Hence, as per previous studies the wage gap has been normalized in different industries (Ziman, 2013).

H2c: Empowerment has mediating effect on career growth and Job Satisfaction

Career growth may affect job satisfaction supported by previous studies as well. This study also indicates a positive effect of career growth on job satisfaction but in the presence of empowerment (mediator). This means that when female medical employees feel opportunities of career growth, they also feel empowerment and self-determination which ultimately effects job satisfaction of employees (Baugh & Graen, 1997). Refer to table # 4, the p-value is significant therefore, H2c is failed to reject. Empowerment is a mediator between career growth and job satisfaction.

H2d: Empowerment has mediating effect on workload and Job Satisfaction

The outcome declares that the workload negatively impacts job satisfaction of female medical employees. Previous studies also supports the claim (Lanz, 2015). The bootstrapping results show significant p-value which means that empowerment acts as a mediator between workload and job satisfaction of employees (refer table # 4). Hence, hypothesis H2d is failed to reject.

H2e: Empowerment has mediating effect on work-life balance and Job Satisfaction

The balance between personal and professional life is ignored by many organizations which may affect their employees' satisfaction (Rasheed & Younas, 2018). But employees also adjust in work culture and limited work-life balance policies are provided to upkeep the satisfaction levels (SHAIKH et al., 2017). As per the bootstrapping results, the p-value is not significant therefore, empowerment is not a mediator between work-life balance and job satisfaction. Hence, H2e is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: Mediating effect of Harassment

H3a: Harassment has mediating effect on Gender Discrimination and Job Performance

Gender Discrimination may or may not necessarily bring about better performance and satisfaction of the employees but it does affect the overall performance and environment of the organization (Tesfaye & Yodit, 2011). The P-value (0.001) calculated through bootstrapping is significant indicating that there is a prominent effect of Harassment on Gender Discrimination and Job Performance. The hypothesis is failed to reject.

H3b: Harassment has mediating effect on Wage Gap and Job Performance

According to a research, wage gap was an issue for employees years ago but that has been overcome by the inclusion of diversity in the organizations (Ziman, 2013). The bootstrapping results shows that P-value (0.121) is not significant indicating that Harassment does not have a mediating effect on wage gap and job performance therefore the hypothesis is rejected.

H3c: Harassment has mediating effect on Career growth and Job Performance

Referring to Table # 4, the above hypothesis is supported by bootstrapping test. As the P-value (0.000) is significant, there is a mediating effect of Harassment between Career growth and job performance of the employees. Career growth and advancement has significant effect on the performance of employees (Baugh & Graen, 1997). The said hypothesis is failed to reject.

H3d: Harassment has mediating effect on Workload and Job Performance

According to previous studies by scholars, workload has significant impact on the job performance of the employees. One study conducted by (Ali et al., 2014) concluded that there is an inverse relation between the two meaning higher workload leads to lower performance. The P-value calculated from bootstrapping test is significant (0.006) indicating there is a mediating effect of harassment on workload and job performance therefore the hypothesis is failed to reject.

H3e: Harassment has mediating effect on Work life balance and Job Performance

In this study, Harassment does not play a mediating role between work life balance and job performance. The bootstrapping results indicated a greater value concluding that harassment does not have a mediating effect between the two variables. Good work-life policies should be implemented in the organizations as it directly effects the mental well-being of the employees. Work life balance has positive relation and significant effect on the job performance of the employees (Banu et al., 2019). While work life balance directly effects the job performance of the employees, it is insignificant when harassment plays a mediating effect between them therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 4: Mediating effect of Harassment

H4a: Harassment has mediating effect on Gender Discrimination and Job Satisfaction

Gender discrimination plays a key role in shaping up the environment of an organization as job satisfaction has been shown to directly affect the organization (Disorbo et al., 2017). While gender discrimination may or may directly affect the job satisfaction of employees, the P-value

(0.001) obtained from bootstrapping is significant which shows that Harassment has a mediating effect on Gender Discrimination and Job satisfaction hence the hypothesis is failed to reject.

H4b: Harassment has mediating effect on Wage Gap and Job Satisfaction

Wages have been seen as significant variable for the job satisfaction of employees and have impact on employee's choice to leave the organization (Kline & Hsieh, 2007). The above Hypothesis H3a suggests that there is a mediating effect of harassment on wage gap and job satisfaction, but the P value calculated through bootstrapping is greater (0.175) hence the hypothesis is rejected concluding that Harassment does not have a mediating effect on wage gap and job satisfaction in the healthcare sector of Pakistan.

H4c: Harassment has mediating effect on Career growth and Job Satisfaction

According to a study, career growth directly effects the satisfaction of the employees (Nkechi & Dialoke, 2017). The boot strapping results indicate that the P-value is significant (0.002) therefore there is a mediating effect of harassment on career growth and job satisfaction hence the hypothesis is failed to reject.

H4d: Harassment has mediating effect on Workload and Job Satisfaction

According to a study conducted (Sayin et al., 2021), workload is adversely connected with job satisfaction and this is mediated by harassment. In particularly, workload is emphatically connected with harassment and adversely associated with job satisfaction. The outcome shows that workload has inverse relation with Job satisfaction. The bootstrapping results shows that P-value is significant (0.016) which confirms that Harassment has a mediating effect on workload and job satisfaction hence the hypothesis is failed to reject.

H4e: Harassment has mediating effect on Work life balance and Job Satisfaction

A work-life balance can make employee satisfied with the job. Good quality of work-life increases employee's job satisfaction which ultimately increase the employee retention as a result company has to face lesser problems of employee retention (Silaban & Margaretha, 2021). As per the bootstrapping results indicated in Table # 4, the P value is not significant therefore harassment is not a mediator between work life balance and job satisfaction. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Implications for Managers / Policy Makers

In the past, several studies have been conducted to conclude the impact of different factors affecting the job satisfaction and performance of the employees in the Pakistani culture, but Empowerment and Harassment as a mediator is less studied. This study serves as an important guide for the Managers, policy makers, human resource officials for motivating their employees by empowering them and devising strict policies for workplace harassment. As the results are indicating that empowerment and harassment are partially and fully mediating job satisfaction and performance, the HR of healthcare sector should work on empowering their employees and implement policies for workplace harassment. Training sessions should be held to guide the management on the most proficient method to treat their sub-ordinates professionally. Harassment of any sort should not be tolerated at any level and empowerment needs to be supported as they effect the satisfaction and performance of the employees.

Research Limitations and Scope for Future Research

This research focuses on the workers of the healthcare sector within a single city i.e. Karachi. Many variables were not considered in this study that may affect the job satisfaction and performance of the employees. The leadership styles are also not considered in our study. Further exploration in this area can serve to more profound comprehension of the employee's satisfaction and performance of the healthcare sector. For better insights, this research can be expanded to include other cities or cities within a province to check the overall effect of the variables. Moreover, there could be other factors that may affect the job satisfaction and performance of the employees within an organization. Other variables can also be taken as mediators and moderators to test their significance.

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