THE IMPACT OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING: MODERATING ROLE OF SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

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ABSTRACT

Using a sample of 112 different universities' lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors and professors in Islamabad and Peshawar. This study examined whether work-family conflict has an impact on knowledge sharing. This study also examined how supervisor support moderated the relationship between work-family conflict and knowledge sharing. Results showed that there is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and knowledge sharing. But, supervisor support moderated the relationship between work-family conflict and knowledge sharing.

KEYWORDS: Work-Family Conflict (WFC), Knowledge Sharing, Supervisor Support, Conservation Of Resource (COR) Theory, Islamabad, Peshawar And Education.

INTRODUCTION

Work family conflict is an important issue for today's business world and getting attention from recent decades with the increase in dual earner couples. This issue is of great importance as far as organization and employee performance is concerned. Prior literature highlighted that the issue of work-family conflict has got more consideration because of the demographic shifts and also the competitive working environments is facing by the organizations from the last recent years (Byron, 2005). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work family Conflict is a form of inter-role conflict that arises when work role interfere family role and made it difficult for person to perform both work and family role. WFC is defined: it is raised when there is an interference of work with family (Netemeyer et al., 1996). Family and work are two important constituents of individual life and both require a considerable amount of time and energy is require to fulfill the responsibility of both work and family domain (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011). WFC is the cause of wreckage between a person's roles at work and their responsibilities to their families.

Knowledge Management is very important in a competitive world and to be one of the effective organizations (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Quigley, Tesluk, Locke, & Bartol, 2007). There is importance for this concept many organizations have introduced knowledge management and also implemented Knowledge Management System (KMS) (Wang & Noe, 2010).

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However, many organizations have implemented this system but alone these systems can't guarantee that employees would share their knowledge with others (Cabrera, Collins, & Salgado, 2006). Cabrera & Cabrera, (2002) suggested that knowledge is distinctive resource of each employee. It is very difficult to know that when an employee wants to share their knowledge and when they don't want to share it (Liu & Liu, 2011). Kim, Lee, Park, & Yun, (2015) mentioned it is very important to give enough resources to encourage employees for knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing is defined as an individual who shares job related ideas and information with colleagues (Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006). Knowledge sharing possesses a great value because it enhances the effectiveness of an organization (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002; Quigley et al., 2007). Prior studies suggested that, employees with high WFC score are more likely to not share their knowledge (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Kim et al., 2015). Those employees who have WFC issues they are less likely to spend remaining resources on such thing which has no physical benefit from it.

Supervisor support describes the extent to which an employee's supervisor is sensitive to the employee's non-work responsibilities and is willing to accommodate those when conflicting work and non-work demands arise (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2006). With regard to the treatment of supervisor support in the previous research, several past researchers have shown the effectiveness of supervisor support in buffering the adverse impact of job stress (Noblet, Rodwell, & Allisey, 2009). Many researchers have reported that supervisor support may increase affective commitment (Casper, Harris, Taylor-Bianco, & Wayne 2011; Gagon & Michael, 2004; Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001). The downward spiral of energy loss occurs when employees keep using up their resources without replacing those (Wilk & Moynihan, 2005). As a result, those employees are likely to experience negative consequences such as low job-related performance (Lam, Huang, & Janssen, 2010). Since supervisor support is one of the valuable resources, it can replace the resources that are lost from WFC (Kim et al., 2015). When supervisors involved in providing support to their employees will weaken the effects of WFC on employees in the organization.

In today's economy, growing number of employees suffer from stress related to work-family conflict (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Balancing work life and family life has become more serious issue, not only for the employees but also for the organizations (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). As organizations have been pushed to make prompt changes in competitive environments, job burdens have increased (Hall, Dollard, Tuckey, Winefield, & Thompson, 2010). Moreover, the improvement of new information technologies such as the internet and cellular phones has unclear the boundaries between work and family life (Chesley, 2005). All these recent changes have led to increases in work-family conflict, which in turn have resulted in different adverse consequences (Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011).

Although the importance of knowledge sharing and work-family conflict, there has been a small contribution of research regarding investigation how work-family conflict (WFC) might be negatively related to employees' knowledge sharing, which describes the critical effects to job-related performance. The work-family conflict in education sector of Pakistan needs to be addressed at initial stages as it negatively harms the overall workplace environment, and create hurdles in achieving the basic objectives of the institute. This study will help the education sector in understanding the fact that WFC is not a type of issue which can be ignored. Pakistani culture is power distant culture where power is mostly concentrated at the topmost level and the

decisions are typically taken by the higher authority in the hierarchy. Similarly, in educational institutes, the teachers are not permitted to make the decisions on their own, that binds them to follow the instructions only, rather than to take some innovative steps for the improvement of the organizations.

From a Conservation of Resources (CoR) theory Hobfoll's (1989) perspective, that why employees experiences work-family conflict face stress, and ultimately ended up in reducing their efforts to improve their job-related performance (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). Hobfoll, (1989) mentioned that since these employees tend to drain their resources when dealing with their incompatible roles, work and family, they may decide to decrease their efforts for knowledge sharing as a way of conserving their resources. Recently Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, (2014) mentioned that the basic view of COR theory is that: humans are motivated to defend their existing resources and obtain new resources. So individuals stuck in between their roles at work and responsibilities to their families will take conservative actions in sharing knowledge with others in order to keep their own interests.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict that occurs when engaging in one role makes it more difficult to engage in another role (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, Rosenthal, 1964). This inter-role conflict can take two directions (Frone, 2003): The work role can interfere with the family role (WFC), or the family role can interfere with the work role (FWC). The antecedents and outcomes of each domain are known to be different (Amstad et al., 2011). For example, the impact of WFC is more related to work-related outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit, whereas FWC is more linked to family-related outcomes such as life satisfaction, marital satisfaction and family satisfaction (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Lingard & Francis, 2005). But this study focuses on only Work-family conflict (WFC).

Work-family conflict is a common source of work stress (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). Family roles are no longer confined to traditional gender roles. Single-parent households have proliferated while a decline in traditional families remarkably adds up to work and family demands for many individuals (Beigi, Ershadi, & Shirmohammadi, 2012). Many researchers believe that work is the main source of work family conflict since people usually cannot control their work and working schedule. Work family conflict occurs when individuals perform multiple roles (e.g. worker, spouse, and parent), each of which places demands on their time, energy, and commitment (Stoeva, Chiu, & Greenhaus, 2002).

Because work-family conflict is a state where the demands of the work role diminish resources (e.g., time, energy, emotions) required to contribute in the family role (Lappiere & Allen, 2006), individuals with greater access to workplace social support gather additional job psychological resources (Bakker & Demorouti, 2007) that provide a stress buffer to manage strain. When individuals feel socially supported at work, they feel cared for by social others and feel that they have access to help (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Research studies have established that work-family conflict has been associated with many forms of harmful employees' attitudes such as to job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, turnover intention, and low organizational commitment (Eby et al., 2005).

In this study the Conservation of Resource (CoR) Theory is taken as the underpinning theory and on the basis of this theory the relationship between WFC and Knowledge Sharing can be explained as: According to COR theory, stress is occurred when 'there is (a) the threat of a net loss of resources; (b) the net loss of resources; and (c) a lack of resource gain following the investment of resources' (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). Consistent with the above statement employees' who are facing WFC they are most likely to spend their resources such as time and energy while dealing with both domains e.g.: work and family (Amstad et al., 2011). And as a result the employees undergo with the incompatible roles from the work and family domains and employees observes that their precious resources are lost somewhere in the process of manipulating from both domains (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

Kim et al., (2015) mentioned that employees who has high WFC are likely to reduce their level of knowledge sharing for the following two reasons. Cabrera & Cabrera, (2005) suggested that: knowledge sharing may entail more resources to engage. When individuals engage in knowledge sharing, they not only have to spend time and effort, but they also need to share their knowledge with others. Given that knowledge is a resource unique to each individual, they may perceive a risk of losing their competitive advantages by sharing their knowledge. On the other side Kim et al., (2015) mentioned that: knowledge sharing is considered a long-term risky investment, since the practice of sharing knowledge may not be reciprocated immediately or equally. It may take a long time to realize additional resources from one's investment in knowledge sharing. Moreover, since it is difficult to evaluate the value or quality of knowledge, there is a good chance that knowledge providers may not feel satisfied with the repayment. Thus, it is difficult to promote employees' knowledge

sharing without offering compensatory resources.

Though, it is not easy to encourage knowledge sharing, since it is a voluntary behavior, and is not defined as an obligation of employees, even though it is valuable to the organization (Connelly & Kelloway, 2003). Additionally, sharing knowledge with others can be considered as giving up one's competitiveness, meanwhile knowledge is a valuable resource for each individual as well as for organizations (Wang & Noe, 2010). Recognizing the growing issue of work-family conflict, based on COR theory, this study suggests that employees who face high WIF or FIW are less likely to share their knowledge, due to a lack of resources.

Studies suggested that recognizing the growing issue of work-family conflict, that employees who face high WFC are less likely to share their knowledge, due to a lack of resources (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999: Kim et al., 2015), they may spend their scarce resources in roles that may require fewer resources or offer higher returns to maximize their outcomes.

H$_1$: Work family conflict (WFC) will negatively related to knowledge sharing.

MODERATING ROLE OF SUPERVISOR SUPPORT BETWEEN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Supervisor support describes the extent to which an employee's supervisor is sensitive to the employee's non-work responsibilities and is willing to accommodate those when conflicting work and non-work demands arise (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2006).With regard to the treatment of supervisor support in the previous research, several past researchers have shown the effectiveness of supervisor support in buffering the adverse impact of job stress (Noblet, Rodwell, & Allisey, 2009).

Thus, supervisory and organizational support can act as facilitators in the process of matching the employee with the work environment (Galletta et al., 2011). Typically, supervisors have broad discretion over whether an employee has control over the timing of hours worked or other work arrangements (Kelly & Kalev, 2006).

Supervisor support is viewed as characteristic of the work environment that provides a social, psychological and tangible resource that influences the psychological state of engagement (Saks, 2006). From this perspective, the relationship between the employee and the supervisor is essential to energizing and motivating workers to excel (Swanberg, McKechnie, Ojha, & James, 2011). Many researchers have emphasized the moderating role of social support (e.g. supervisor support in the workplace) in mitigating the adverse effects of role stressors on job burnout (Duke, Goodman, Treadway, & Breland, 2009). Hence, scholars suggest that supervisor support may make one's work situation less stressful by providing emotional support, instrumental aid or greater control over one's situation (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002).

Researchers have reported that supervisor support may increase affective commitment (Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001; Gagon & Michael, 2004; Casper et al., 2011) and furthermore employees who perceive high supervisor support are likely to demonstrate high job-related performance, since these employees have adequate resources to perform their work (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

According to the buffering effect, supervisor support is able to moderate the relationship between stressors and strains, because employees who perceive that they are socially supported are less pertinent than others to appraise a situation as threatening (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Biron, 2010; van Emmerik, Euwema, & Bakker, 2007).
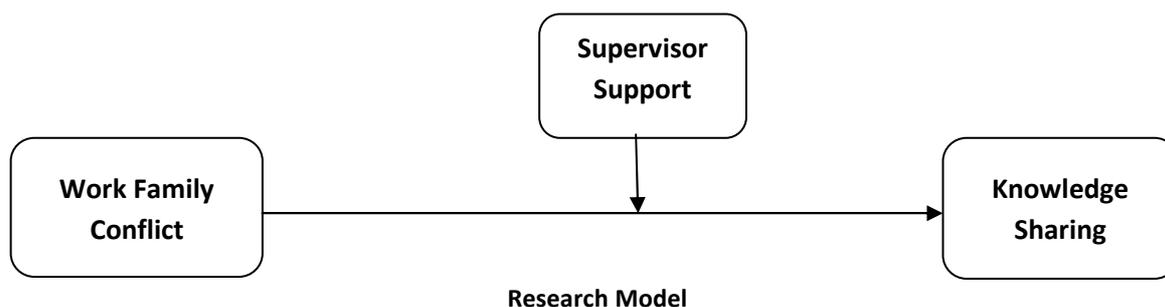
In accordance with COR theory, obtaining valuable resources is very important, whereas the loss of one's resources is most threatening for each individual (Cole, Bernerth, Walter, & Holt, 2010). Based on COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the downward spiral of energy loss occurs when employees keep using up their resources without replacing them (Wilk & Moynihan, 2005). As a result, those employees are likely to experience negative consequences such as low job-related performance (Lam, Huang, & Janssen, 2010).

Since supervisor support is one of the valuable resources, it can replace the resources that are lost from work family conflict. Hobfoll (1989) argued that social support can not only widen one's pool of available resources but also replenish other resources that have been lost. For instance, when employees face WFC, they may reduce their level of knowledge sharing due to a lack of work resources. In this scenario, supervisor support as a work resource may successfully replenish the work resources lost from WFC, and buffer the negative effect of WFC on knowledge sharing. Taken together, the role of supervisor support may reduce the negative effects of WFC on knowledge sharing, by providing needed resources based on COR theory (Premeaux, Adkins, & Mossholder, 2007).

H$_2$: *Supervisor support moderates the relationship between work family conflict (WFC) and knowledge sharing: the negative relationship between WFC and knowledge sharing is weakened when supervisor support is high rather than when it is low.*

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research model of current study considers one independent variable i.e. Work Family Conflict, while Knowledge Sharing as dependent variable, while Supervisor Support has a moderating role for independent and dependent variables.

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           │  Supervisor  │
           │   Support    │
           └──────┬───────┘
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│ Work Family  │─────▶│  Knowledge   │
│   Conflict   │      │   Sharing    │
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Research Model

METHODOLOGY

PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE

Data collection was done through questionnaires; Population of current study was teaching staff (Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professor and Professors) of different universities of Islamabad and Peshawar. Sampling was done using the convenient sampling technique. A total of 151 questionnaires were distributed out of which 115 were received back and 112 were usable. So the response was 74.17%. Likert Scale with five responses was used. Responses included (1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly Agree).

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The sample consists of 57.1% males and 42.9% females and in which were 36.6% single and 63.4% married.

The sample consist of participants belongs to different age groups. 37.5% were between the age of 20-30, 46.4% between 31-40 years, 11.6% were between 41-50 years and 4.5% were between 51 and above.

In the term of qualification, 42.9% of the respondents were M.S., 24.1% of the respondents were M.Phil. 29.5% were Ph.D. degree and 3.6% were Post Doc...

MEASURES

All constructs were measured using self-reported instruments. Responses for all variables were assessed using a 5-point Likert type scale with anchors of 1 = 'Strongly Disagree', 2 = 'Disagree', 3 = 'Neutral', 4 = 'Agree', and 5 = 'Strongly Agree'.

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

5-item measure of work-family conflict from the scales developed by Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian, (1996), and sample items include, "The demands of my work interfere with my home family life" and "The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities" and the Cronbach's Alpha for this variable is 0.85.

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

Supervisory Support Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli (1997) 7-item scale was used to measure supervisory support. The sample items are "My supervisor is considerate of subordinate's feelings" and "My supervisor seems willing to listen to my problems". The Cronbach's Alpha for this variable is 0.78.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The measure of internal knowledge sharing combined items adopted from prior research on intrafirm (Song, Montoya-Weiss, & Schmidt, 1997) and interfirm (Mohr & Nevin, 1990) relationships.

The sample items are, "When I have learned something new, I tell my colleagues in my department about it" and "Knowledge sharing with my colleagues within my department is considered a normal thing". The Cronbach's Alpha for this variable is 0.80.

CONTROL VARIABLES

Before controlling the control variables One-Way ANOVA test was run in this study to check whether there is impact of demographics on other variables or not. If the results shows the significant correlation of demographics with dependent variable(s) then the demographics must be controlled during analyses but if there non-significant correlation occurs, there is no need to control it. In this study gender (p= .056), marital status (p= .140) and qualification (p= .593) has non-significant correlation with knowledge sharing. Only age (p= .043) has a significant correlation with knowledge sharing. In keeping with prior studies (Ang et al., 2003; Chen et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2013: Kim, et al., 2015), Age of respondents has been treated as control variable for all statistical analyses.

RESULTS

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The very purpose of correlation is to indicate the relation between two variables or to examine whether the two variables move in similar or opposite directions.

Table: 1.Correlation Analysis

Variables	WFC	KS	SS
WFC	1		
KS	-.131	1	
SS	-.479**	.176	1

WFC= Work-Family Conflict; SS = Supervisor Support; KS = Knowledge Sharing; n = 112.
** $p < 0.01$.

Results indicate a statistically negative but non-significant relationship of Work-Family Conflict with Knowledge Sharing (r=-.131, p = .170), and negatively significant relationship with Supervisor Support (r=-.479**, p= .000). Knowledge sharing also has a statistically non-significant positive relationship with Supervisor Support (r= .176, p= .063).

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

For drawing conclusions regarding the dependence of one variable on another, regression analysis is used. Regression shows the extent to which a variable depends on another, independent variable on which it is being regressed. After controlling demographic variable Age.

Table 2.Regression

Predictors	Knowledge Sharing		
	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Work-Family Conflict (WFC)			
Step1			
Control Variable		.040	
Step 2			
WFC	-.069	.047	.007

Control variable: Age, n = 112.

Hypothesis 1 assumes that *Work-Family Conflict will negatively related to Knowledge Sharing*. Table 2 indicates that WFC is negatively non-significantly associated with knowledge sharing with β=-.069 and p=.372, so on the basis of the above results, hypothesis 1 (H₁) is rejected.

Table 3.Moderated Regression Analysis

Predictors	Knowledge Sharing		
	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Supervisor Support			
Step1			
Control Variables		.040	
Step 2			
Work-Family Conflict	-.016*		
Supervisor Support	.146	.063	.022
Step 3			
WFC x SS	.265*	.098	.035*

Control variable: Age, WFC = Work-Family Conflict, SS = Supervisor Support, n = 112.

*p<.05

Result of Moderated Regression Analysis indicates that Supervisor Support does moderate the relationship between WFC and knowledge sharing (β=.265*, p=.043). Before taking interaction term of WFC and supervisor support the value of R^2= .063 and then after taking the interaction term the value of R^2= .098, by which the ΔR^2= .035* with p= .043. .Hence, on the basis of above results second hypothesis (H$_2$) is accepted.

Moderation of supervisor support between WFC and knowledge sharing can be understand through graphical presentation in below figure: 1.
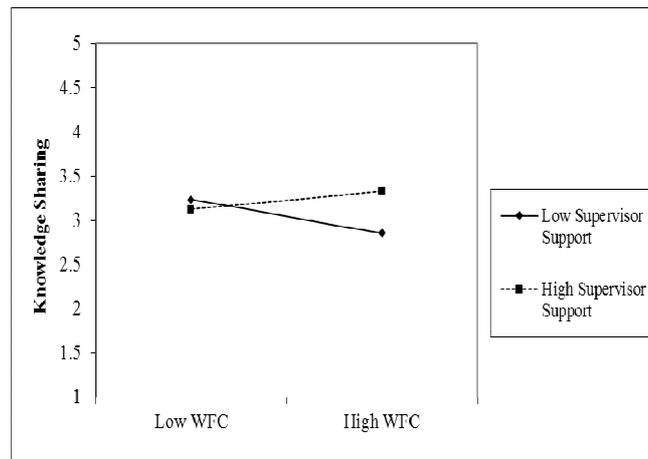

Figure 1.Graphical presentation of moderation of supervisor support between work-family conflict and knowledge sharing

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of work-family conflict on knowledge sharing with moderating role of supervisor support. First hypothesis was that work-family conflict will negatively related with knowledge sharing. Work-family conflict is negatively related to knowledge sharing (Wang & Noe, 2010). But in this study the first hypothesis is rejected with values of (β=-.069, p= .372). Which is inconsistent with previous studies, because Pakistan is a collectivist country (Hofstede, 1980) and previous studies has been conducted in individualistic societies (Kim et al., 2015). In a collectivist societies like Pakistan there is no problem to co-op with work and family responsibilities. They (employees) can easily manage responsibilities of both the domains (work and family). There is also social support from home to support their family member during working hours and by doing this there is very less chances of depletion of

psychological resources which can be easily use during office timings. Consistent with above statement cultural dimension is vital phenomena and cannot be ignored (Hofstede, 1993). Secondly, the sector which is being chosen for the study was the education sector and in this sector the timings are very flexible in which the employees can do their other chores very effectively and also there is no negative impact on work.

Second hypothesis was Supervisor support moderates the relationship between work family conflict (WFC) and knowledge sharing: the negative relationship between WFC and knowledge sharing is weakened when supervisor support is high rather than when it is low, which is accepted with these values (β= .265*, p= .043). Discussion with many lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors they mentioned that whenever we are in a difficult situation from home or work domain our supervisor is always there for us to avoid conflict between both the domains (work and family). They also argued that we are allowed to go for our important household tasks and not to ask from supervisor every time to safe his and our time, this make us better feeling at work and also making family happy and most importantly our psychological resources are not been easily depleted. Consistent with the above statements Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) stated that supervisor is vital and prominent role at workplace. Ultimately the knowledge sharing process cannot be affected by any chance to co-op either with family or work that must not be a big issue for us while in working hours. On the other hand organizations can get benefits from it because knowledge sharing is very important in a current scenario of the global world.

CONCLUSION

The current study was to examine the impact of work-family conflict on knowledge sharing with moderating role of supervisor support. This study

found that there is no significant relationship of work-family conflict with knowledge sharing, it can be assumed that employees are not going to reduce the process of knowledge sharing while facing WFC. On the other side there was significant positive relationship of supervisor support between work-family conflict and knowledge sharing.

On the basis of the above discussion and considering the fact that the relationship of variables is tested in Pakistani context, it is concluded that most of the education sector specially universities is facing great amount of social support during working hours to minimize the maximum impact of work-family conflict, which in return maximize the output. Supervisors in the education sector are playing an important role in organizations. So, on this relationship also they (supervisors) plays vital role between employees and organizations' task and also for handling different complex workplace issues.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As many studies have some limitations so does this study has also some limitations. First, the cross-sectional design was used to conduct for sampling and data collection. Second, data which were collected for the study was from convenient sampling because of time constraint and also other resources like cash. Third, the industry type (sector) chosen for the study was the education sector of Pakistan.

First, for future research longitudinal design can be used to collect the data for better results and consistent outputs. Second, the random sampling technique should be used for collecting data for efficient results. Third, another industry type can be used for further analyses to examine different results from it. Industries like banking sector, construction and developmental sector, health and hospitality industry. Learning organization, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

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