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Factors Affecting Employee Performance: A Quantitative Study of UMT Lahore

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Abstract

Employee is a blood stream of any business. The accomplishment or disaster of the firm depends on its employee performance. This study aims to investigate the employee performance. The main objective of this study to explores the connection among task autonomy, task significance and employee performance. Employee performance is a central issue that effects productivity and work environment of a company. Research data were collected through random sampling approach by using structured questionnaire and the sample consisted of 310 employees of UMT Lahore. The data were interpreted using SPSS. The findings underscore strong significant correlations between task autonomy, task significance and employee performance. The study in hand provides brief overview of the literature about task autonomy and task significance effectiveness and how it contributes in enhancing the employee performance and ultimately concludes along with recommendation to give directions for future research by applying different level of analysis on exploring the impact of task practices on employee performance. These findings also proved to be helpful for policy makers.

Keywords: employee performance, task autonomy, task significance.

Introduction

The term "performance" encompasses job performance or actual achievement, referring to the quality and quantity of work completed by an individual. Defined as the outcome of an employee's efforts in line with their assigned responsibilities, performance is often evaluated against established standards, goals, or agreed criteria (Al Mehrzi & Singh, [2016](#)). According to Yang et al. ([2016](#)), performance encapsulates an employee's actions or inactions.

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Employee performance is influenced by various factors that encompass both individual and organizational aspects. Job fit, as highlighted by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005), is a crucial determinant, emphasizing the importance of aligning employees' skills and interests with the demands of their roles. Motivation, as theorized by Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1968), plays a significant role in driving performance with factors like recognition and intrinsic satisfaction serving as potent motivators. Furthermore, training and development as supported by research from Noe et al. (2013), contribute to improved performance by enhancing employees' competencies and capabilities. As described by Shmailan (2016), employee performance reflects actions undertaken in the context of company tasks. This performance is intertwined with job satisfaction and reward levels and is influenced by personal skills, abilities, and traits.

Task autonomy is the degree to which employees are free to choose how to carry out the duties and tasks that have been given to them at work. Research by Hackman and Oldham (1976), emphasizes the significance of task autonomy as a critical component of job design and employee motivation. Task autonomy allows employees to exercise discretion and control over their work processes, which can lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and overall performance. According to the researches, such as Ryan and Deci (2000), autonomy increases intrinsic motivation and engagement by satisfying people's basic psychological demands for relatedness, competence, and autonomy.

The perceived value and effect of a person's work actions on other people, the company, or society at large is referred to as task significance. According to the theory presented by Hackman and Oldham (1976) in their Job Characteristics Model, workers are more motivated and content when they feel that their work makes a significant contribution to a greater purpose or objective. Grant (2008a) and Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) highlighted the importance of task significance in shaping employees' perceptions regarding the meaningfulness of their work. Meyer and Allen (1991), suggested that employees who perceive their work as significant are more committed to their organizations and less likely to engage in turnover intentions.

Organizational managers continue to place a high priority on employee work performance (Kelidbari et al., 2011). Employee performance, according to Ahmad and Shahzad (2011), includes a person's assessment of

their own activities and contributions in accomplishing company goals. This study further underscores the influence of compensation practices, performance evaluation, and promotional strategies on employee performance. In delving into the examination of employee performance, it becomes imperative to explore key elements such as task autonomy and task significance as pivotal contributors to its sustainability. The objective of this article is to explore the correlation between these variables and their effect on employee performance. Through an analysis of the intricate interplay between task/job autonomy and task significance, this research aims to shed light on how these independent factors impact the extent and depth of employee performance across the diverse socio-economic contexts.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to respond to the following inquiries.

RQ1: Is there a connection between employee performance and task autonomy?

RQ2: Is there a connection between employee performance and task significance?

Research Objectives

Following are the study's particular goals.

RO1: To investigate the connection between employee performance and task autonomy.

RO2: To investigate the connection between task significance and employee performance.

Significance Of the Study

Improving employee performance has long been a difficult task in the field of organizational management. All companies try to implement strategies that will inspire workers to perform better on the job, which will increase the organization's competitiveness (Ogbulafor, [2011](#); Wu et al., [2011](#)). It is often known that employee performance is a key factor in determining the expansion and profitability of a firm. Workers are the main resource that propels an organization's daily operations and activities (Guest., [2002](#)). In a similar vein, Huray et al. ([2010](#)) emphasizes the idea that employee performance determines an organization's efficacy and efficiency. A crucial element in this equation lies in an employer's ability to

comprehend employee satisfaction with their schedules and daily responsibilities, a factor that significantly impacts employee productivity and overall performance.

Literature Review

Training, however, may not significantly address performance issues resulting from the knowledge or skill gaps. In such cases, companies often invest more resources in training, seeking to counterbalance decreased productivity associated with poor performance (Uma & Padmavathi, [2013](#)). Conversely, Singh and Mohanty ([2012](#)), assert that training is crucial for enhancing employee productivity which in turn impacts overall organizational effectiveness.

Elevated organizational performance signifies concerted efforts towards goal realization, necessitating enhanced employee performance (Ellinger et al., [2003](#)). By offering chances for training and development, learning organizations significantly contribute to improving employee performance (Gitongu et al., [2016](#)). Previous researches showed that there are two different ways to look at performance, namely employee performance and organizational performance. Organizational performance, to put it simply, is the degree to which goals and objectives are achieved within an organization (Gilboa et al., [2008](#); Kieffer et al., [2004](#)). Employee performance, on the other hand, is a more complex idea that takes into account a person's behavioral, cultural, and physical contributions.

Literature underscores that employee performance shapes an organization's marketplace. Some studies emphasize on the diverse individual benefits stemming from employee performance (Barrick et al., [1991](#); Cote & Miners, [2006](#)). The notion of employee production closely aligns with employee performance, In various instances, performance is assessed based on the tangible goods generated by the employees (Kieffer et al., [2004](#)), often quantified for precise measurement. As a sign of togetherness that fosters a team-oriented workplace, teamwork has become a highly appreciated quality in contemporary enterprises (Farh et al., [2012](#); West, [2012](#)). In their discussion of the aspects of teamwork, Crawford and Lapine ([2013](#)) contend that leaders and supervisors are essential to improving organizational performance.

Autonomy plays a significant role in directing individuals to enhance their performance to contribute to the organizational targets (Hood &

Peters, [2004](#)). Lack of autonomy is often associated with reduced responsibility and introspection, potentially impacting the performance (Teherani et al., [2009](#)). Autonomy refers to the belief that individuals can work independently without relying on others, especially concerning their ability to perform (Edwards et al., [2002](#)). It signifies an individual's confidence in problem-solving and effectively managing stress (Harrison et al., [2012](#)).

Employee performance serves as a catalyst for overall organizational productivity (Berberoglu, [2015](#)). It reflects the individual contributions to achieving organizational goals (Griffith, [2004](#); Schermerhorn & Bachrach, [2017](#)). Performance encompasses behaviors relevant to the production of goods and services (Hughes et al., [1988](#)). Moreover, it stands as a fundamental benchmark for organizational outcomes and triumph (Kreitner & Kinicki [2010](#)). In any organization, employee performance occupies a pivotal role in influencing the outcomes positively, such as success or negatively, like failure (Osunde & Saheeb, [2015](#)). Organizations aspire for all the employees to contribute towards the organizational goals with high performance, representing a tangible expression of such contributions (Lee & Bruvold, [2003](#)).

Performance is the sum of a person's controllable acts and behaviors that support the objectives of the business (Rotundo & Sackett, [2002](#)). It entails all the activities involving employees to fulfil their responsibilities for achieving organizational objectives (Baloglu & Kocak, [2006](#)). Similarly, performance signifies the extent to which individuals effectively execute their duties and job responsibilities (Kreitner & Kinicki, [2010](#)). It also encompasses the action of engaging in activities with a focus on monitoring progress and achieving objectives through measurable criteria (Meyer et al., [2011](#)). Therefore, it can be defined as the measurable outcome of work endeavors (Swanepoel et al., [2008](#)).

Discipline holds the potential to positively impact performance, fostering responsibility, and goal-oriented behavior (Duckworth & Gross, [2014](#); Robbins et al., [2009](#)). Work discipline significantly influences employee behavior thus, ultimately affecting their performance (Panjaitan et al., [2016](#)). Employees exhibiting work discipline tend to achieve better performance, given their commitment to the organizational goals (Mangkunegara & Waris, [2015](#)).

H1: Task autonomy and employee performance are significantly correlated.

H0: Task autonomy and employee performance do not significantly correlate.

Task significance is the degree to which a person's employment affects other people's lives and work. It gauges the influence a job has on co-workers, consumers, and the broader environment, whether within the organization or externally (Moorhead & Griffin, 2008). This concept encompasses the significance and sway a job holds over the well-being of colleagues and those affected by the job's outcomes. Employees who grasp the importance of their tasks are inclined to enhance their skills and knowledge. Such individuals consistently strive to enrich their understanding of the work to uphold its value.

Learning takes shape through diverse avenues, either through individual efforts to acquire new skills or via interactions with co-workers, leading to the accumulation of varied information from peers (Habibian & Kermanshah, 2011). On the other hand, task importance is viewed more as a motivator for goal commitment within the framework of Goal Setting Theory (GST) than as a separate moderator of goal attainment. The current state of this field's theory and research largely centers on managerial strategies that are thought to increase the goal commitment.

Task significance is "the degree to which the job has a significant impact on other people's lives or work, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment" (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Grant (2008a) emphasizes that task significance is important for studies based on work design and social information processing. Task significance is seen by proponents of social information processing theory as a socially produced aspect of a job that is shaped by managerial signals and interpersonal interactions. On the other hand, task significance is viewed by job design academics as a variable that may be altered by work redesign model (Grant, 2008b).

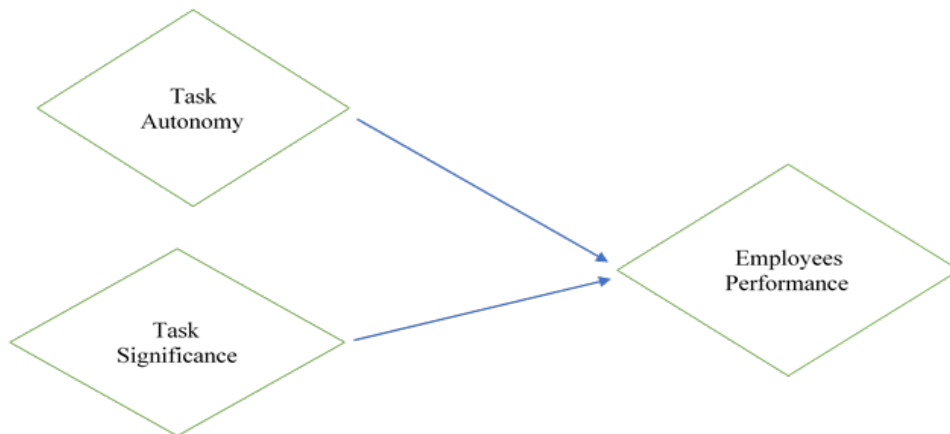
This dynamic encourages people who are aware of how their work affects other people to put in a great deal of time and effort into their work, which improves job performance. According to Vallerand et al. (2003), passion is characterized as a strong propensity to focus energy on a task or activity that aligns with one's values, motivated by the fulfillment that comes from investing time in the endeavor. Significant influence jobs are

highly valued as they create a work atmosphere where employees are driven to put in their efforts and time and are excited about what they do. This eventually keeps them motivated to perform at a high level (Franco et al., 2004). Hence, previous researches have demonstrated that a person's performance is greatly impacted by their level of love for their profession (Astakhova & Porter, 2015; Burke et al., 2015; Ho et al., 2011).

H2: Task Significance and employee performance are significantly correlated.

H0: Task significance and employee performance do not significantly correspond.

Research Framework



Research Methodology

The current study was conducted in Lahore campus of UMT and employed a quantitative methodology. The employees of UMT participated through personally administered questionnaires. The study specifically concentrated on employee performance, task autonomy, and task significance data collected from the responses of UMT employees. The data collection involved a survey method utilizing structured close-ended questionnaire. The assessed population of UMT employees is 1600. According to Krejcie and Morgan, (1970), the sample size of current study was 310. Hence, the employees of UMT serve as the analysis's primary unit for this research. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed to analyze the study's data. It employed SPSS for data summary, tabular presentation creation, and frequency of occurrence measurement of the

outcomes. A 5-point Likert scale was employed by the researchers in this investigation.

Results and Discussions

Response Rate

The data was gathered in Lahore from the UMT employees. As considered appropriate, 310 employees were polled in accordance with the study's design. The researcher immediately received all 310 surveys back, resulting in a 100% response rate. Nonetheless, 299 of the 310 disseminated surveys were deemed legitimate, yielding a 93% valid response rate. There were no cases of questionnaire rejection because direct communication was established with the respondents.

Table 1

Summary of General Response Rate

No. of distributed questionnaires	310
No. of returned questionnaire	310
No. of unreturned questionnaire	0
Ratio of response rate	100%
No. of incomplete questionnaires	11
No. of final usable questionnaires	299
Ratio of valid response rate	91%

Cronbach Alpha

The questionnaire's validity and reliability were evaluated by using the Cronbach's alpha. Finding Cronbach's alpha was crucial in assessing the validity and dependability of the tool. All 310 employees participated in this process and they were urged to give honest answers. The purpose behind using Cronbach's alpha was to assess the dependability and the ideal results fell between 0 and 1. Although there was a disagreement over the acceptance criterion, scores nearer 1 were thought to be more trustworthy. However, reliability levels between 0.5 and 0.6 were considered acceptable in some situations (Kerlinger et al., [2000](#)).

Table 2
Reliability Coefficient

Serial No.	Construct	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items	Items	Alpha if item is Deleted
1	Employee Performance	0.788	6	EP1	0.709
2	Task/Job Autonomy	0.785	6	TA1	0.707
3	Task Significances	0.783	6	TS1	0.706

All of the constructs' alpha values are displayed in the Table 2. The majority of the reliability coefficients are clearly above 0.7, indicating the constructs' reliability. However, the Task Significance construct (0.706) has the lowest value of reliability.

Descriptive Statistics

After gathering the data, it was then examined by using tests of descriptive statistics in the SPSS program. The goal of descriptive statistics is to provide an overview of the data set. The data gathered from the sample target population of the public organizations is summarized using the descriptive test. This analysis was too done on all of the 310 respondents.

Table 3
Respondent Profile

Demography	Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	143	46.4
	Female	164	53.2
Age	18-25	54	17.5%
	26-33	123	39.9%
	34-41	67	21.8%
	41 and above	63	20.5%
Income	20k-30k	69	22.4
	30k-40k	115	37.3
	40k-50k	62	20.1
Qualification	Above 50	62	20.1
	Bachelors	212	68.8%
	Masters and above	94	30.5%

Descriptive Analysis

To characterize the main attributes of the data set, a descriptive analysis is carried out. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the mean and standard deviation are essentially used to describe the descriptive analysis in order to get a broad idea of how respondents answered the questionnaire.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	1	3	1.54	.506
Age of Head	1	5	2.46	1.015
Income	1	4	2.38	1.044
Qualification	1	5	1.33	.529
Employee Performance	1	5	3.44	0.551
Task Autonomy	1	5	3.50	0.561
Job Autonomy	1	5	3.61	0.608

The results of descriptive analysis show that all of the variables' means fall between 1.54 and 3.61. All of these values are higher than the norm and fall within a bearable range. Whereas, the standard deviation scores fall within the allowed range, which is between 0.506 and 0.608 on the scale. Therefore, it is evident that each of the variables has a suitable and appropriate degree of implementation.

Regression

Table 5

Model Summary

<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Std. Error	Change Statistics				
				<i>R</i> ² Change	<i>F</i> Change	<i>df</i> 1	<i>df</i> 2	<i>p</i>
.241	.058	.039	.540	.058	3.081	6	301	.006

The multiple correlation coefficient or *R* has a value of 0.241, which indicates how strongly and in which direction the independent and dependent variables are related. The percentage of variance is shown by the value of *R* Square and the *R*² is 0.058 in this model.

Table 6**ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	5.403	6	.900	3.081	.000 ^b
Residual	87.964	301	.292		
Total	93.367	307			

The predictors' significance is displayed in the above ANOVA table. Task autonomy and task significance together have a highly significant impact on employee performance, as seen by the extremely small significance value (p -value=0.000).

Table 7*Coefficients*

Model	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	2.313	.282		8.213	.000
TS	.064	.052	.070	1.232	.009
TA	.182	.056	.185	3.267	.001

The direction and degree of the connections between the independent and dependent variables are displayed in the coefficients Table 7. They show the expected change in the dependent variable for each unit change in the predictor variables where all other things are being held constant. Statistical significance of the coefficients is indicated by the significance levels (Sig.) assigned to each coefficient (e.g., 0.000, 0.009, 0.001). They are in this instance since they are below the accepted significance level of 0.05.

Hypothesis Results

H1: The study's hypothesis is that employee performance is significantly impacted by the task significance (B=0.064, t =1.232, Sig²=0.009).

H2: Task autonomy and employee performance have a significant link, hence proved according to the results (B= 0.182, t = 3.267, Sig²= 0.001).

Conclusion

This thesis research has illuminated the crucial role of task autonomy and task significance in shaping the employee performance in Pakistan. The

results revealed that by providing individuals with task autonomy and allowing them to adapt their approach towards their responsibilities eventually enhances their sense of control over tasks and subsequently boosts their performance. The first hypothesis of research study was approved and shows that task autonomy have significant affects on employee performance and second hypothesis also fulfil the second objective of the research study, shows that there is a significant association between task significant affects the employee performance

Notably, a significant number of employees would willingly trade a substantial raise for increased control over their work methods. This underscores the direct impact of task autonomy on employee performance, and also shows the importance in performance improvement initiatives. underscoring its importance in performance improvement initiatives. The research evaluated that task significance pertains to the job's contribution to the organization's overall endeavors or the larger world. Jobs that are rich in task significance, lead to actions with enduring impacts often receiving valuable recognition from others thus, affirming their contributions. In summary, the findings of this research underscore the importance of policy makers and stakeholders in Pakistan in addressing these independent variables in order to enhance employee performance. As, prioritizing improvements in task autonomy and task significance can lead to tangible enhancements in employee performance, ultimately contributing to the nation's progress and advancement.

Recommendations

Fostering transparency within the workforce stands out as a top strategy to enhance the performance. When employees comprehend their responsibilities, they tend to be more efficient and productive. Furthermore, transparency cultivates trust between employers and staff. Employers must embrace openness by sharing the company's goals and objectives, enabling employees to grasp their roles within the organization's bigger picture.

The companies should establish explicit and measurable expectations and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for their teams. They should define success clearly and indicate how it will be gauged. Also, communicate how the efforts of their employees align with these expectations, empowering them to strive for excellence. Moreover, when onboarding new hires ensure

they comprehend their contribution to overall objectives and how their performance will be assessed.

Eliminate micromanagement to improve the employee performance. Hovering over employees and doubting their decisions generate a climate of apprehension and distrust. Instead, grant autonomy and trust them to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

Employers must elevate employees' morale and consequently enhance their performance through recognition and rewards. Express gratitude via methods such as well-deserved appraisals, promotions, periodic verbal praise, thank you notes, organizing awards during special occasions like annual events, or presenting modest gifts as tokens of appreciation.

Furthermore, encourage workplace diversity to stimulate creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities. Fostering diversity helps employees feel included and esteemed, leading to heightened motivation and engagement. Moreover, a diverse team expands the company's reach to a broader customer base.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data associated with this study will be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

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