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Motivational Antecedents in Call Center Industry

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ABSTRACT

To make the employees perform their task in the most efficient manner has always been tough for the management. To achieve this goal, management is required to have proper understanding of various factors that encourage motivation in employees. Since the last decade, there is rapid increase in a trend of call center industry in Pakistan. Nowadays, numerous foreigner businesses have outsourced their customer services and tele sales in developing countries like Pakistan. This study is intended to highlight all those factors that play an important role for encouraging motivation level of employees in Call Center Industry of Lahore. This research discusses the effect of Autonomy, Justice, Rewards and Recognition and Training on Employees motivation in the selected industry. To conduct the study, primary data is collected, and statistical tests are applied to measure the relationship between our supposed dependent and independent variables.

INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, Pakistan has been majorly relying on its service sector (Asif, Asad, Bhutta, & Khan, 2021). The service sector of Pakistan has a very dominant contribution in the economy of Pakistan (Amir & Asad, 2018; Ta'Amnha, Magableh, Asad, & Al-Qudah, 2023). A call center is a part of service industry where the companies come into communication with their clients through telecommunication medium (Allam Z., Asad, Ali, & Ali, 2021; Ullah, et al., 2021). Generally, call centers are engaged in the activities that fall in the categories of customer services, order

booking, tele sales, audio text conversion or surveys etc (Zahra, Majeed, Mahmood, & Asad, 2012). The industry not only provides employment opportunities but also contributes to bringing foreign exchange in the country (Almansour, Asad, & Shahzad, 2016; Shaker, Asad, & Zulfiqar, 2018; Sulaiman, Asad, Shabbir, & Ismail, 2023).

In Pakistan, the Call Center industry can be classified in two major categories that are international and local call centers (Fadhel, Aljalalma, Almuhanadi, Asad, & Sheikh, 2022). The international call centers are those call centers where the clients of the business are the foreigners,

and the company provides services to the customers of their businesses (Khan S., Asad, Fatima, Anjum, & Akhtar, 2020; Sulaiman, Asad, Ismail, & Shabbir, 2023). Whereas local call centers only provide services to the local business (Victor, ul Haq, Sankar, Akram, & Asad, 2021; Sattar, Alarifi, & Asad, 2021). With the enhancement in concept of outsourcing the function of the business, foreign companies avails the opportunity of cheap labor in developing country by using the services of call center where employees can speak and understand English enough to meet the needs of the company (Khushi, din, & Sulaiman, 2020; Satar, Alarifi, Alkhoraif, & Asad, 2023).

Managers of organizations have always been very concerned for improving the motivation level of their employees as motivation is considered as the major deciding factor of the performance of the workers (Ullah, et al., 2021; Qalati, Ostic, Sulaiman, Gopang, & Khan, 2022). In fact, the motivation of the employees evaluates the possible success or failure of any business (Hammami , Ahmed , Johny, & Sulaiman, 2021; Qalati, Qureshi, Ostic, & Sulaiman, 2022). To compete in the competitive market, managers of organizations face challenges in getting their work done with best possible motivation level of their employees (Bilal & Sulaiman, 2021; Riphah, Ali, Danish, & Sulaiman, 2022). Understanding the factors that can positively influence the motivation level of

employees can be very helpful for the management (Sulaiman & Asad, 2023; Salem, Alanadoly, & Sulaiman, 2023). There are numerous studies conducted evaluating the impact of motivation on the work performance of the employees.

During the last 10 years Pakistan's economy has begun to rely more on Service Sector than on any other sector (Khan, Haider, & Asad, 2010; Tariq A., Badir, Tariq, & Bhutta, 2017; Tariq, Badir, & Chonglertham, 2019). In Pakistan call center industry has been growing since the last decade. There are numerous businesses that are moving towards globalization and outsourcing various function of their business in developing countries to avail opportunity of cheap labor (Xie, S. A., L., Sulaiman, & Qureshi, 2023). Mostly, foreign businesses outsource their customer services and tele sales from such developing countries.

Managers of organizations are concerned with the need to discover and implementing employee motivation because employee motivation is the one of the conclusive factors in the work performance of employees (Allam Z., Asad, Ali, & Malik, 2022). There has always been a struggle for the management to get the work done in the desired manner because of low motivation level of employees (Alkhuzai & Asad, 2018; Zuhaib , Wenyan, Sulaiman, Siddiqui, & Qalati, 2022).

To improve the motivation level of employees, the managers are required to focus on various

factors that can prove to be helpful in this regard (Asad, Aledeinat, Majali, Almajali, & Shrafat, 2024). Many of the employees quit their job because they are not provided with all those facilities that can be helpful in provoking their sense of motivation toward their work (Khan A., Asad, Khan, Asif, & Aftab, 2021; Majali, Alkaraki, Asad, Aladwan, & Aledeinat, 2022; Tariq, Ehsan, Badir, Memon, & Sumbal, 2022). The purpose of this study is to examine various antecedents to establish their effect on employee's motivation in call center industry of Lahore.

METHODS

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to contemplate and analyze the factors that affect employee's motivation in Call Center industry of Lahore, Pakistan. This research will lead to the enhancement in understanding for managers regarding the employee's motivation. Managers could rely on The purpose of this study is to contemplate and analyze the factors that affect employee's motivation in Call Center industry of Lahore, Pakistan. This research will lead to the enhancement in understanding for managers regarding the employee's motivation (Haq, Asad, Natarajan, Sankar, & Asif, 2021). Managers could rely on the antecedents of motivation to improve the overall work performance of employees and hence compete in

the competitive market (Israr, Asad, Altaf, & Victor, 2021).

Motivation

(Brandt, 1990) describe motivation as one of the reasons why employees prefer to act in a certain manner while being in professional settings. It is also defined as the reason what inspire employees to keep working. Kreitner (1995) explained motivation as a psychological term that defines individual's direction, behavior, and destination. McClelland (1971) suggested that the need of an individual defines motivational potencies, and this need can influence behavior.

Little (1991) proposed that autonomy has a significant influence on the decision-making capabilities of an employee (Farrukh & Asad, 2017). Hackman, J.R and Oldham,G.R, (1976) considered autonomy as the major factor that provokes motivation and productivity of an individual (Asad, et al., 2021). Ryan and Deci (2000) argued that autonomy fulfills the unsatisfied need of an employee which eventually results in increased motivation and satisfactions (Asad, Asif, Khan, Allam, & Satar, 2022).

Kashif, et al. (2020) focused on the effect of incentives and rewards on both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of an employee (Bashir & Asad, 2018; Fatima & Asad, 2018). Bishop (1987) argued that reward and incentives are the most

important factors that keeps the employee motivated and improve their self-esteem (Asif, Asad, Kashif, & Haq, 2021). Oosthuizen (2001) concluded that reward and recognition has a positive influence on employees motivation and organizational efficiencies (Asif, Asad, Bhutta, & Khan, 2021).

Greenberg (1990) concluded that justice is in direct relation with the attitude and behavior of an employee in professional settings. Lind and Tyler (1988) suggested that distributive justice has a significant influence on the personal outcomes of an employee including job satisfaction and motivation level (Damer, Al-Znaimat, Asad, & Almansour, 2021). Murphy and Tyler (2008) argued that procedural justice provokes the positive emotion for the work which enhances employee's motivation (Khalil, Asad, & Khan, 2018).

Kraiger and Ford (2007) concluded employee training and development program to be a strong tool for increasing individuals' motivation and performance (Asad, Majali, Aledeinat, & Almajali, 2023). Chen and Klimoski (2007) argued that there is a direct relation between work motivation of an employee and training opportunities provided by the organization (Chethiyar, Asad, Kamaluddin, Ali, & Sulaiman, 2019; Asad, Asif, Sulaiman, Satar, & Alarifi, 2023). Dysvik and Kuvaas (2008) suggest that the presence of training programs improves the psychological states of employees which lead to sincerity and remarkable motivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Lahore, call centers are in those areas where there is required infrastructure and eligible workforce in available. To conduct the study six out of nine dominant call centers were selected to represent the sample from the population.

Employees (respondents) are chosen based on random sampling techniques. The numbers of respondents chosen from each call center are proportionate to the number of employees in each organization. Questionnaires are used as a research instrument to derive the required data from the respondents. Questionnaires are designed on the scale of 1 to 5. The scale can further define as follows: 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree.

The questionnaire inclevel, the total of 30 questions in which 5 questions are used to measure the perceived autonomy, 5 questions for rewards and recognition, 9 questions for measuring perceived justice, 5 questions for perceived training and development and finally for measuring motivation level the total of 6 questions are used. To check the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted with the sample size of 20 respondents. The result of Cronbach test relies in the accepted region of 0.7 to 0.85 Cronbach's alpha.

The data is collected from a total of 150 respondents. The data is analyzed by using SPSS

software. The result derived by applying linear regression on the variables is as follows:

Figure 1. variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Training & Development, Reward Incentives, Autonomy, Justice	.	Enter
a. Dependent Variable: Motivation			
b. All requested variables entered.			

This table shows that the data is run by considering motivation as dependent variable and other variables as independent variables.

Figure 2. Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	861.627	4	215.407	29.038	.000 ^b
	Residual	1075.633	145	7.418		
	Total	1937.260	149			
a. Dependent Variable: Motivation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Training & Development, Reward Incentives, Autonomy, Justice						

The results from the above table show that regression is a good fit as indicated by the F value and value of significance.

Figure 3. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.542	1.754		3.159	.002
	Autonomy	.244	.081	.212	3.002	.003
	Reward Incentives	.019	.073	.019	.257	.797
	Justice	.210	.049	.330	4.292	.000
	Training & Development	.321	.067	.324	4.810	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Motivation						

The above model shows that all the variables are significant except for Rewards and incentives as their value exceeds 0.005. It means that except for rewards and incentives all the variables have a significant impact on dependent variables i.e. motivation. Hence, we will accept H1, H3, H4 but reject H2 as findings of reward and Incentives doesn't show significant impact on motivation.

The adjusted model by considering the values of above derive coefficients can be presented as follows:

$$\text{Mot} = 5.542 + 0.244 \text{ Aut} + 0.210 \text{ Just} + 0.321 \text{ T\&D}$$

As Rewards and Incentive doesn't have significant impact therefore it is excluded from the adjusted model.

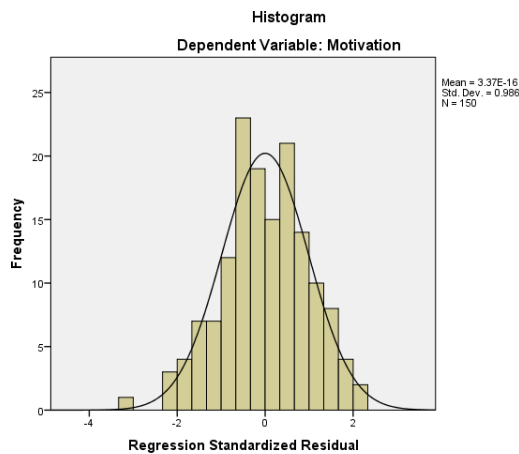
This regression model can be further defined as follows.

There is positive relation between perceived Autonomy and motivation. Furthermore, one unit change in calculated Autonomy will cause 0.244-unit increase in Motivation level of employee.

Similarly, one unit change in Justice will cause 0.210-unit positive change in motivation level. There is also a positive relationship between Training & Development and Motivation. Therefore, one unit change in training and development will cause a 0.321-unit change motivation level of employees.

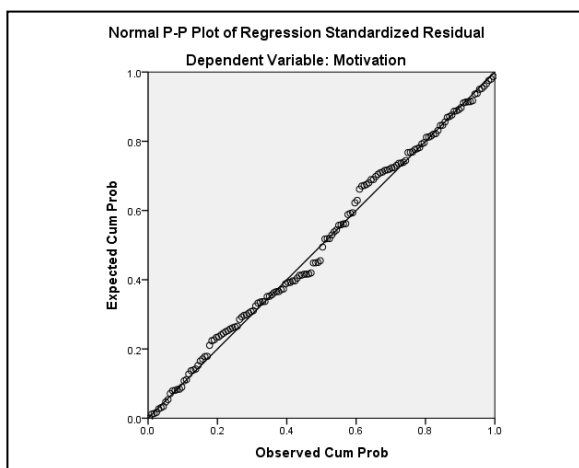
Following is a graphical presentation of Histogram to check the normality distribution. The adjusted model by considering the values of above derive coefficients can be presented as follows:

Figure 4. *Graphical*



Normal P-P plot is used to check the normal probability of the variable. The graphical presentation of the graph is as follows.

Figure 4. *Regression Standardized Residual*



CONCLUSION

The result of our findings indicates that all the antecedents considered for the study except for reward and incentives are in positive relation with motivation level of employees. The regression applied on the date shows the good model fit. The results show the significant impact of Autonomy, Justice, and Training & Development on the motivation of the employees. As the significant independent variables are in positive relation, so by improving the factors the motivation can enhanced in call center employees. Furthermore, the interpretation of Regression model can be used to evaluate which independent variable is making more impact to motivation level than the others.

Hence, to improve the motivation level of employees, the manager of the company should focus on all the factors discussed in the study. Since motivation is considered important for employee performance the findings can help the managers in enhancing the work performance of their call center employees.

Considering my finding, I suggest that managers of call centers should focus on providing working environment that entails Autonomy, Justice and proper training and development as these factors can be helpful in enhancing the motivation level of their employees and thus improve overall performance.

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