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[Building Trust: Investigating the Nexus between Organizational Justice, Commitment, and Citizenship Behavior]

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ABSTRACT

The concept of organizational justice has been accepted around the world to examine the perception of justice in the workplace. This study aims to examine the relationship between organizational justice, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour of telecommunication employees in Pakistan with the mediating role of organizational trust. In Pakistan, employees of telecom companies often change jobs due to the competitive environment. Therefore, increasing the level of employee commitment through a strong and fair environment and level of trust is a very important concern for a firm. A sample of 312 telecom employees from different telecom companies in Pakistan was selected using a convenience sampling technique. A survey questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. AMOS and SPSS were used for the analysis. The results revealed that organizational justice had a significant positive influence on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. Furthermore, the results also revealed that organizational trust positively mediates the connection between organizational justice, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviour. This study addresses the concern that the organization must create an atmosphere of trust to increase commitment between employees and OCB.

Keywords: Organizational Justice, Organizational Trust, Organizational Commitment, Organizational citizenship behaviour

Introduction

Organizations nowadays are transforming due to the highly competitive business environment. They are engaged in finding solutions for their long-term survival and recognize the need to breathe new life into their strategies. Employees play a significant role in achieving these goals. To gain employee commitment towards organizations, management gives attention to organizational justice (OJ). Employees' perception of fairness in the organization increases when employees feel that they are rewarded fairly for their contributions (Labrague et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2014). OJ has been investigated over the decades (Cole et al., 2010) and is still the main point of investigation for many researchers (Zhang et al., 2024; Vásquez-Trespalcios et al., 2023). OJ has been developed as a distributive, procedural, and interactional construct (Park et al., 2023). Consequently, OJ research often focuses on employees' perceptions of fairness and organizational procedures, processes, and practices (Suliman, 2013). Many Researchers propose that OJ has a positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and organizational commitment (OC) (Hermawan et al., 2024; Veseli & Çetin, 2024). OCB is gaining more importance as it contributes to the effective and efficient

functioning of an organization (Veseli & Çetin, 2024). Service-oriented organizations need to promote OCB as it has serious implications for the service provided (Mesfin, 2022). OCB is categorized into five dimensions: Altruism, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, Conscientiousness and Civic Virtue (Organ, 1988). The supportive culture of an organization develops different types of cooperative behaviours among employees, and OCB is one among the other behaviours (Islam et al., 2024). Lim and Loosemore (2017) found that employees' OCB are significantly influenced by interpersonal justice. Hameed et al. (2019) investigated how perceived OJ and perceived organizational support predicted OCB.

Human resource managers must build employee commitment as it leads to better effectiveness and organizational success. Employee commitment is a psychological state that explains the relationship of an employee with their organization, such as performing desirable behaviour and turnover intention, like helping others and making extra efforts to perform (Lin & Liu, 2019). Luo et al. (2017) investigated the relationship between OC and OJ as positive. Organizational trust (OT) is also an important concern; when employees trust their organization, they are more committed to it. Trust is a factor in which the employee is satisfied with his official and does not consider him a threat (Reynolds, 2015). The presence of OT is positively related to all the five dimensions of OCB (Singh & Srivastava, 2016). The decisions made by supervisors and management and the behaviours and actions they display directly influence OT (Lambert et al., 2022).

Additionally, trust plays an important role in helping businesses remain efficient; it can ensure the existence of the company, create a strong relationship with employees, and lead them toward OC. Existing literature shows that OT is positively associated with all types of OC (Alomran et al., 2024). Therefore, the current study aims to examine the perceptions of employees regarding OJ, OT, OC and OCB in the telecom industry (See Fig. 1).

Thus, the objectives of the current study can be summarized in the following way:

1. To study the influence of OJ on OC.
2. To study the impact of OJ on Organizational Citizenship Behavior.
3. To study the mediating effect of OT between OJ and OC.
4. To study the mediating effect of OT between OJ and OCB.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

This study focuses on the psychological model of Organizational Justice Theory. Organizational behaviour is about the fairness of work-related inputs in relation to the outcomes they get (Perreault, 2008). Concepts of OJ fit the working environment as many procedures are applied and many decisions are made about the distribution of outcomes (Perreault, 2008; Colquitt & Shaw, 2013). Organizational justice theory refers to how employees perceive justice in the

workplace and how that perception can influence their actions and organizational success.

Organizational Justice and Citizenship Behavior

Jimmieson et al. (2010) defined OCB as “an employee behaviour that is discretionary and not formally rewarded, but which supports the social and psychological functioning and effectiveness of an organization” (p. 454). Although much research has been done on OCBs, what contributes to the inclination to engage in discretionary actions beyond customary obligations has not been comprehensively identified (Harvey et al., 2018).

It has also been argued that OJ (an employee's perception of fair treatment in the workplace) could be one of the initiators of OCB (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Ince & Gul (2011) emphasized that employees’ positive perception of justice is the key factor that stimulates citizenship behaviour in the organization. Tahseen and Akhtar (2016) exhibited a positive relationship between OJ and citizenship behaviour in their studies. A study conducted by Odika (2018) also confirmed the positive significant relationship between OJ and citizenship behaviour. Therefore, we postulate that:

H1: OJ has a significant positive effect on OCB

Organizational Justice and Trust

The higher the level of employee trust in an organization, the fairer the employee's perceptions of processes and procedures will be (Jeong & Kim, 2022). Cheung (2013) highlighted that information sharing (interactional justice) in the organization creates trust among employees. Another study found that OJ in the procedures/ policies is a leading feature in supporting OT (Graso et al., 2014). Tahseen & Akhtar (2016) investigated that OJ is a predictor of OT. Komodromos & Harkiolakis (2019) stated that if there is no justice in the workplace, there is no chance of trust. Moreover, Wong et al. (2012) established the relationship between perceived trust, OJ, and OCB and concluded that procedural and distributive justice have a significant positive effect on OT. It has also been concluded that OJ leads to an increase in the trust level of the employees in an organization (Jaiswal & Raychaudhuri, 2021). Sarwary et al. (2023) suggested that procedural fairness in the workplace is a significant predictor of OT. Thus, it is stated that:

H2: OJ has a significant positive effect on OT

Organizational Trust and Citizenship Behavior

The relationship between OT in an organization and OCB has been examined in a number of studies (Nuryanto & Pratiwi, 2024; Farooqui & Channa, 2024). The success of an organization depends on employees who trust it, who have self-confidence within the organization, who voluntarily remain with it, and who offer to go the extra mile for their organization. There are different considerations, but

OT constitutes the basic foundation (Özlük & Baykal, 2020).

Lester and Brower (2003) establish that perceptions of subordinates' trust in leaders improve their performance and OCB. One study established that the OCB of employees was influenced by their trust in the organizations as well as in their manager (Wong et al., 2006). Tyler and Blader (2003) found that trust significantly influences employee behaviours related to additional roles. Thus, it is established that:

H3: OT has a significant positive effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Organizational Justice and Commitment

The commitment of employees has been the subject of investigation, with OJ based on distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1990). Mekled et al. (2023) argued that the greater the level of OJ, the greater the employees' feelings that they are valued, which consequently increases OC.

Many researchers have confirmed a strong and positive relationship between OJ and OC (Puspita & Claudia, 2024; Islami et al., 2024). According to Ohana & Stinglhamber (2019), employees who are more willing to reciprocate and return a sense of obligation believe that they are treated fairly, so they are more involved in organizational activities and more committed to their organization (Bernerth & Walker, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H4: OJ has a positive significant effect on OC
Mediation of Organizational Trust

OJ refers to perceptions of fairness of outcomes or processes in the workplace and is considered a predictor of OT (Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005). OT has also been found to be the leading antecedent to OC (Tekingündüz et al., 2017). Arif et al. (2020) argued that OJ at the workplace had a stronger effect on OT, OC and employee performance. OT and OC are considered the most significant factors for organizational achievements. The most imperative factor in developing OC is the trust that workforces have in their organizations (Bastug et al., 2016).

In extant literature, the findings established that OT mediates the relationship between all three dimensions of OJ (distributive, interpersonal and informational justice) and OC (Malla & Malla, 2023; Alazmi & Alenezi, 2023). Furthermore, a study by Ertürk, A. (2007) established that trust in the managers mediates the relationship between OJ and OCB. If an organization is fair in dealing with its employees, employees will perform extra-role behaviour in the presence of trust in management (Ertürk, 2007). Building upon the above-mentioned grounds, the subsequent hypotheses were formulated:

H5: OT has a significant effect on OC.

H6: OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and OC.

H7: OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

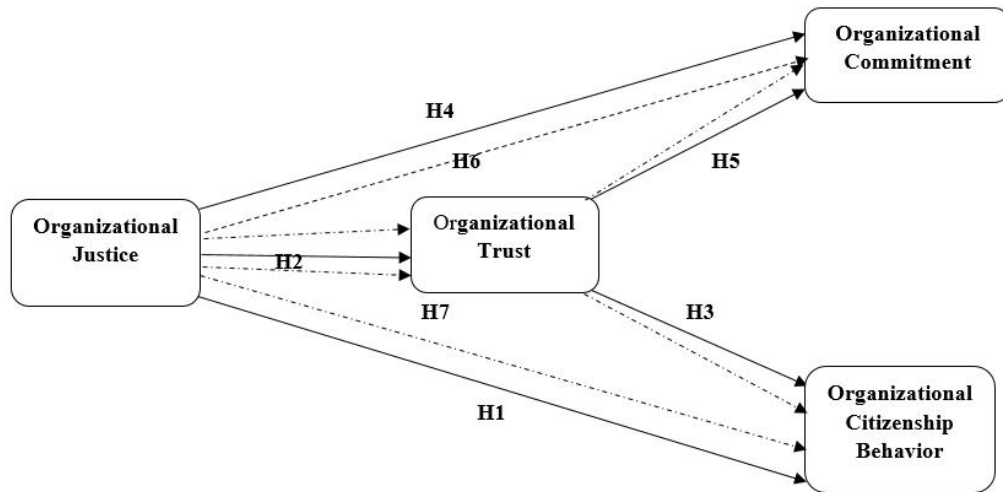


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

The data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed through SPSS and AMOS to conclude. For this study, quantitative research and the deductive approach are chosen. The nature of the data collected is cross-sectional, that is, at one point in time (Shaughnessy et al., 2006). A convenience sampling technique is used to collect information from the respondents. For this study, 350 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the employees of different telecom companies in Pakistan.

Measurement

The questionnaire was adopted to reach empirical objectives. All variables are measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Organizational Justice: The instrument of data collection has been adopted (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

Organizational Trust: The data collection instrument has been adapted from Robinson (1996), which shows its validity.

Organizational Commitment: The organizational commitment questionnaire items were adapted from (Mayer et al., 1993).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior: To measure OCB, questionnaire items are adapted from Podsakoff et al. (1990), which is based on Organ's (1988) five-dimensional classification.

Analysis Strategy

SPSS and AMOS were used to analyze the quantitative data. The reliability test was used to ensure the instrument's consistency and reproducibility (Sekaran, 2010). Both EFA and CFA models were employed for the current study. The

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researchers have tried their best level to consider all ethical guidelines. Throughout this research process, the researchers did their best to put aside their biased thoughts and include objective, factual information. The data collected will be used for research purposes only, and the anonymity of the respondents will be fully guaranteed.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were in raw form and had to be converted into meaningful form in order to make it compatible with SPSS and AMOS. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 312 produced valid responses. SPSS has been used to perform descriptive statistics for the research and reliability of the data. While AMOS has been deployed for CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) and SEM (Structural Equation Model). The validity of data and mediation results were obtained by checking the direct and indirect effects through SEM in AMOS.

Reliability Analysis

The first step of the analysis is to check the reliability of the survey instrument. George & Mallery (2003) provided a rule of thumb to assess the value of the reliability coefficient. A value closer to 1 shows greater reliability of the data and vice versa. The reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha=0.964) showed excellent reliability of the instrument.

Demographics of the Respondents

The first section of the instrument comprised the demographics of the respondents. The data was gathered from 64.4% males and 35.6% females. The age of respondents is 54.2% from a group of 20-30 years, 43.3% from 31-40 years, 2.2% from 41-50 and only 0.3% from above 50 age group, implying that the majority of the respondents belong to the age of 20-30 years group. The education percentage of respondents is 85.6% for Bachelors, 13.8% for Masters and 0.6% for PhD. The job level of respondents is as follows: 13.1% are from the upper level, 71.2% respondents are from the middle level, 14.1% are from the low level and only 1.6% are non-managerial employees. The experience of the respondents with 0-2 years of experience is 15.4%, 41.7% of respondents have 3-5 years, 26.9% have 6-8 years, and 16% of respondents have more than 8 years of experience.

Descriptive Analysis and Correlations

The mean and standard deviation (SD) for all the variables of this study were computed. The analysis shows that the mean estimates of OJ were $M= 3.7510$ and $SD = 0.78388$; correspondingly, the mean estimation and standard deviation of OT were $M= 3.8017$ and $SD=0.85714$; for OC, $M=3.5873$ and $SD= 0.75151$, and for OCB $M=3.2434$ and $SD=0.72990$. The result shows that OT has the highest mean and SD among all the variables.

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Procedure

SEM is basically a flexible and powerful tool from which the researcher finds solutions to observed or latent variables in a casual theoretical model. SEM is used in the current study as it is a more trustworthy statistical technique for analyzing data with minimal chances of error.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (See table 1) was employed to test the model (Hair et al., 2020; Henseler et al., 2017), and the measurement model was performed preceding the structural equation model (Gull et al., 2024; Hair et al., 2020).

Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

		Variable	
Variable Construct	Factor Loading	Construct	Factor Loading
OT1	0.848	OC7	0.743
OT2	0.809	OC8	0.802
OT3	0.888	OC9	0.804
OT4	0.821	OC10	0.794
OT5	0.893	OC12	0.747
OT6	0.845	OC13	0.787
OT7	0.81	OC14	0.818
OCB3	0.77	OJ4	0.576
OCB4	0.799	OJ7	0.553
OCB6	0.853	OJ10	0.733
OCB8	0.869	OJ11	0.851
OCB9	0.815	OJ13	0.839
OCB10	0.841	OJ14	0.791
OCB11	0.684	OJ15	0.85
OCB12	0.822	OJ16	0.87
OCB13	0.762	OJ17	0.84
OCB14	0.804	OJ18	0.822
OC2	0.839	OJ19	0.787
OC3	0.789	OJ20	0.784
OC4	0.768		
OC5	0.789		
OC6	0.807		

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The table 2 shows that Cronbach's alpha value ranges from 0.899 to 0.945, which is higher than 0.7. All the values of average variance extraction (AVE) ranges between 0.610 to 0.715; thus meets the bottom requirement of 0.5. The composite reliability (CR), ranges from 0.946 to 0.956; thus each item fulfil the bottom meets of 0.6. The value of MSV is required to be less than AVE; it measures the extent to which a variable can be explained in terms of another variable (Gull et al., 2024).

Table 2: Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	Alpha
OC	0.956	0.628	0.503	0.941
OJ	0.949	0.610	0.598	0.899
OT	0.946	0.715	0.598	0.945
OCB	0.948	0.646	0.449	0.909

Goodness of Fit

In this study, all the variables of concern were multidimensional constructs that were based on a priori dimensions. This strategy was also recommended and utilized in the previous literature, especially where the objective was to diminish the complexity of the models. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) of this study yielded a good fit which examined the relationship among OJ, OC and OCB while mediating through OT represented by the following fit statistics (Chi-Square value = 3497.201; df= 813, GFI=0.990, AGFI=0.900, CFI=0.993, TLI=0.960 and RMESA=0.79). In the table, the value p represents the probability level, showing the significance indicates the normality of the measurement model of the present study.

Table 3: Model Fit Summary

Measures	Recommended Criteria	Model Fit
P	<0.05	0.01
GFI	>0.9	0.990
AGFI	>0.9	0.900
TLI	>0.9	0.960
CFI	>0.9	0.993
RMSEA	<0.08	0.079

All the values depicted in table 3 are in the satisfactory range designate that the model has an adequate model fit. The value of Chi-square is 2.979, which is less the satisfactory value of 3. This value aids to estimate the model by diminishing the effect of sample size on the model fit. The value of GFI is 0.990, which is more than the recommended value of 0.9. The value of AGFI, which aids to adjust the GFI on the basis of degrees of freedom, is under the value of GFI (0.900). The value of TLI should be larger than 0.9, and for this study model, it is 0.960. TLI also amends the model on the degrees of freedom (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). CFI is

grounded on the assumption that all the constructs are uncorrelated, it compares the sample co-variance matrix with the null model ((Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The CFI is 0.993, beyond the satisfactory value of 0.9. RMSEA specifies the fit of the model; the value of RMSEA is under the cut-off value of 0.08 for the model, which is 0.079, which designates model fitness.

Structural Model

Gull et al. (2024) and Hair et al. (2020) portray the structural model as a link between the variables that represent the path analysis within these variables. In this study, the proposed model measures the impact of OJ on OC and citizenship behaviour, with the mediating effect of OT.

Table 4: Results of the Structural Model

Relationships				Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
H2	OT	<--	OJ	.844	.038	22.349	***
H4	OC	<--	OJ	.421	.055	7.623	***
H1	OCB	<--	OJ	.223	.063	3.555	***
H5	OC	<--	OT	.351	.051	6.840	***
H3	OCB	<--	OT	.432	.058	7.418	***

The values in the above table 4 support the hypothesis. Therefore, hypotheses H1 (OJ → OCB), H2 (OJ → OT), and H3 (OT → OCB) support the argument that employees show good behaviour towards their organizations. If justice exists in their organizations, trust plays an important role. H4 (OJ → OC) and H5 (OT → OC) support the argument that employees were more committed to their organizations if they trusted that justice existed within their organization.

Mediation Analysis

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), three stages of mediation are full, partial and no mediation. The statistical significance test for mediation is executed through the bootstrapping technique with a sample size of 5000 (Gull et al., 2024). For the existing study, this sample size is used for computing the direct and indirect effects of OJ, OT, OC and OCB (See table 5), all relationships were significant, which means mediation exists.

Table 5: Direct and Indirect Effects

	Standardized effect	Unstandardized effects
OJ-->OT	0.785***	0.844***
OJ-->OCB	0.235***	0.223***
OJ-->OC	0.436***	0.421***
OT-->OCB	0.491***	0.432***
OT-->OC	0.391***	0.351***
Indirect Effects		
OJ-->OT-->OCB	0.385	0.365
OJ-->OT-->OC	0.307	0.296

Note: *p < 0.05 , **p < 0.01 ,***p < 0.001

This study constructed a bootstrapping procedure to test mediation to test the H6 and H7 hypotheses. According to Preacher & Hayes (2008), bootstrapping has shown to be a good method for testing significance in models since it does not make any assumption about the normality of the distribution of the variables tested. The results obtained after testing the hypothesis through the bootstrapping method measure the indirect effects of constructs on each other. Preacher & Hayes (2008) suggested the presence of mediation variables through bootstrapping with bias-corrected confidence estimates that confirm OT as a mediator. The table 6 given below shows the significant values of the Standardized indirect effect that express the occurrence of partial mediation between variables of the current study. According to Baron & Kenny (1986), guidelines support partial mediation. Thus, OT is partially mediated between OJ, OC, and OCB using SEM, and the paths proposed in the model results are statistically significant (See table 7).

Table 6: Standardized indirect values of Two-Tailed Significance

	Standardized Indirect Effect
OJ-->OT-->OCB	0.000
OJ-->OT-->OC	0.001

Table 7: Hypothesis Status

Hypothesis	Status
H1: OJ has a significant positive impact on OCB.	Accepted
H2: OJ has a positive significant effect on trust.	Accepted
H3: OT has a significant positive effect on OCB.	Accepted
H4: OJ has a positive significant effect on OC.	Accepted
H5: OT has a significant effect on OC.	Accepted
H6: OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and	Accepted

commitment.

H7: OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and OCB. Accepted

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between OJ, OCB and OC of telecommunication employees in Pakistan, as well as the mediating effect of OT. The findings of this study highlighted that the SEM results supported the hypotheses. Based on the hypothesis-positive relationship between OJ, OC, OCB and the mediating role of OT, we empirically tested and found that the results of the current study supported the seven hypotheses described in the previous section. The results have shown that OJ had a significant positive effect on OCB accepted in H1. Ince & Gul, (2011) also emphasized that employees' positive justice perceptions are the key factor that stimulates citizenship behaviour in the organization. Tahseen and Akhtar's (2016) study indicated the positive relationship between OJ and citizenship behaviour. Odika (2018) also confirmed that the significant positive relationship between OJ and OCB aligns with the findings of the current study.

Furthermore, H2 was also accepted, indicating that OJ has a significant positive effect on trust. Tahseen & Akhtar (2016) investigated that OJ is a positive predictor of OT. Wong et al. (2012) analyzed the relationship between perceived trust, OJ, and OCB and also concluded that procedural and distributive justice had a significant positive effect on trust in an organization. Komodromos & Harkiolakis (2019) stated that if there is no justice in the workplace, there is no possibility of trust. All these results support our hypothesis H2. H3 also accepted that OT has a significant positive effect on OCB. Komodromos et al. (2019) found that employee perceptions regarding increasing trust in action give direction to their citizenship behaviour in a business organization.

OJ has a positive significant effect on OC, which was also accepted in H4. The findings of the fourth hypothesis on the statistical analysis revealed that a direct link exists between OJ and OC. According to Ohana & Stinglhamber (2019), the employees who are more willing to reciprocate and give back a sense of obligation believe that they are treated fairly. Therefore, they are more involved in organizational activities and more committed to the organization (Bernerth & Walker, 2020). H5, that is OT has a significant effect on OC, was also accepted. The fifth hypothesis also showed that a direct and significant relationship exists between organization and commitment. OT has been found to be the leading predictor in measuring OC (Tekingündüz et al., 2017). In the workplace, trust is an important factor and essential to organizational performance and competitiveness in the global economy. Arif et al. (2020) examined that justice at the workplace had a stronger influence on OT, OC, and employee performance. H6 addresses that OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and

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commitment. Tahseen & Akhtar (2016) investigated that OJ is a predictor of OT in an organization. The findings of the current study are consistent with the studies of Malla & Malla (2023) and Alazmi & Alenezi (2023). The final hypothesis, H7 implies that OT significantly mediates the relationship between OJ and OCB and is also accepted. The outcomes revealed that there exists a partial mediation between OJ and OCB, which aligns with Ertürk's (2007) study.

Limitations and Future Directions

Future researchers could explore how leadership (Gull et al., 2024; Farasat et al., 2024; Hassan et al., 2023), Social Media Marketing activities (Shabbir et al., 2023), adaptive culture (Gull et al., 2023) and workplace spirituality and employee well-being (Hassan et al., 2023) can cultivate OC and citizenship behaviours in organizations and institutions. Furthermore, examining the impact of demographic variables, such as age, gender, and experience, might expose how these variables influence perceptions of trust and, consequently, OC and citizenship behaviours. Furthermore, it would be suggested to conduct longitudinal and qualitative studies (Naqvi et al., 2024; Hassan et al., 2023; Shahid et al., 2024) to assess how OJ and trust can impact OC and citizenship behaviours over time.

Finally, a systematic literature review (Gull et al., 2022) regarding OC and citizenship behaviours could reveal exclusive challenges and policies relevant to diverse academic and organizational environments, enhancing the managerial and practical implications of the findings. Several contextual aspects, such as culture and industry, bound the generalizability of the current study's findings; thus, future researchers would contribute to a more detailed understanding of how these constructs vary across industries or geographical boundaries in different settings.

Conclusion

The basic aim of this research is to examine the influence of OJ on OC and OCB with the mediating effect of OT. The results show that there is a significant positive relationship between all the indicated variables. Furthermore, in Pakistan, there is a need to improve this behaviour in the telecommunication sector. As the descriptive statistics revealed, the young generation is more interested in working in this sector and has a passion for working hard. Therefore, if top-level management considers those strategies that help gain employee trust and support a fair environment, it will enhance employee commitment and improve their OCB. This study empirically revealed that OJ is an important antecedent of OC and OCB. Furthermore, these results indicate that OT is a mediator. Therefore, organizations should focus on enhancing a fair environment for their employees to enhance their commitment and OCB at work by establishing trust in them.

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