

## **The Effect of Psychological Ownership on Relationship of Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction**

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### **Abstract**

*Psychological Empowerment is an emerging concept for modern organizational settings. By empowering their employees organizations can create the feelings of psychological ownership in employees and that feeling enhances the job satisfaction of employees. The purpose of this study is to test empirically the mediating role of psychological ownership in the relationship of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. The cross-sectional study and the respective data were collected with a questionnaire-based survey. Data was collected from 151 employees of public sector organizations through self-administered questionnaire with a response rate of 60%. Correlation is used to ascertain the relationship among variables. The results show that psychological ownership partially mediates the relationship of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Psychological empowerment creates feeling of possession in employees which is the core of psychological ownership, which intern creates job satisfaction and other positive outcomes for the organization and employees as well.*

**Keywords:** Psychological Empowerment, Psychological Ownership, Job Satisfaction

## **Introduction**

Contemporary organizations tend to operate in effervescent circumstances that craft new challenges for them. One of the biggest challenges is to confront the covenant with workforce diversity effectively. The present situation has raised the need for employees who possess the capability to take risks, be innovative and deal with market dynamics (Spreitzer, 1995). The issue of empowering employees has gained much attention in recent times. Unlike closely related management practices have been studied formerly that include participative management, job enrichment, motivation which helps in the development of clear understanding of different perspective of empowerment (Pelit, Ozturk & Arslanturk, 2011). Empowered employees can become the source of novel thoughts, they can accomplish work in better fashion and actively contribute in decision making, and this sensation makes them productive and motivated (Kemp & Dwyer, 2001). Empowerment is a process whereby an organization, through its management, provides power to employees (Sagie & Koslowsky 2000). Psychological empowerment have been studied and implemented by different organizations for the achievement of better employee performance, productivity and job satisfaction (Sashkin, 1984). Psychological empowerment is thought to enlighten the emotional state of people in their work settings, employees who remain empowered can perform better jobs and stand highly motivated and committed to their organization (Ayob & Zainal, 2011). Mainstream of the research has focused on the individual job and individual experience of empowerment and associating this with different individual outcomes like job satisfaction (Carless, 2004). This research manuscript will highlight

the significance of psychological ownership in the construct of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction and guide the managers in the creation of empowered environment. Whereas psychological ownership is the name of feeling which shows the condition of thoughts of employees to have an ownership of any object and enhances the feelings of people to possess the work (Furby, 1978). The basic purpose of this research is to test the model of psychological empowerment where psychological ownership plays the role of mediation between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction of employees.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Psychological Empowerment***

Psychological empowerment is defined as a set of motivational perspectives formed by a job setting and showing an employee's spirited direction to his or her work position (Spreitzer, 1995). Spreitzer (1995) defines psychological empowerment in terms of four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. Meaning cognition refers to a sense of purpose. According to Thomas & Velthouse (1990) it is the uniformity between employee and its organization values and beliefs. Impact cognition refers to the extent to which an employee can affect the work result and through these outcomes create the difference in organization. Competence cognition refers to self-efficacy or employees capacity to perform differently by using different skills (Spreitzer, 1995). Self-determination cognition refers to autonomy or freedom in commencement and persistence of work behaviors and processes (Spreitzer, 1995). According to Spreitzer et al., (1997) an employee

need to experience all these dimensions otherwise the psychological empowerment is not completed.

### ***Psychological ownership***

Psychological ownership is the name of feeling which shows the condition of thoughts of employees to have an ownership of any object and enhances the feelings of people to own the work (Furby, 1978). Psychological ownership is that thought of employees that shows that he has some belongingness to that thing (Furby, 1978; Pierce et al., 1991). ) ownership is the feeling of belongingness that shows some connection towards some targets (Dittmar, 1992). Target' refers to the thing of connection to the person or group. This entity of connection can be small as like the equipment of technicians and like an organization that are large enough in which the person experiences close association or thought the sense of possession. Psychological ownership in the organization signifies possession towards the company and feels that it's their mutual obligation towards the achievement of the company (Liu, Wang, Hui & Lee 2012). A sense of control is the fundamental of psychological ownership, research literature connect the feeling of possession with feeling of ownership, the literature shows three dimensions of feeling of possession (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Attitudes refer to the feeling of employees that they have something in their possession and this feeling of psychological ownership leads to positive attitudes. Self-concept refers to feeling of employees when they thought about something in their possession this feeling of psychological ownership enhances their self-concept. Sense of responsibility refers to feeling of psychological ownership that brings a change in employees and makes the employee more responsible (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

### ***Job satisfaction***

Job satisfaction is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state” that is “a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from a job and what one perceives it is offering” (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is a pleasurable or optimistic expressive condition that comes when one’s job is appraised (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is the regular attitude of employees and conditions when employees feel satisfactory with their current employment (Robbins & Coulter, 1996).

### ***Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction***

There are two areas of empowerment one that employee empower its subordinate is structural empowerment and second that employees thoughts after the supervisor empower him (Lee & Koh 2001). Psychological Empowerment is the motivational and intrinsic state of individual. (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). It is the key assumption that empowered employees can work in a more productive way and by using their knowledge they are able to design their work itself can bring more satisfaction (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Empowerment closely established the relationship between employees and supervisors that helps in mutual goal setting (Inderadevi, 2012). Empowerment helps employees to show their full potential and capabilities for the achievement of goals and also take responsibility and accountability this will results more job satisfaction (Inderadevi, 2012). Empowerment not only used to enhances effective decision making but also to develop the sense of responsibility among workers and the desired outcome of taking this responsibility is the job satisfaction of employees (Patah, Radzi, Abdullah, Adzmy, Zain &

Derani, 2009). When structural empowerment changes it shows significant effect on changes in psychological empowerment and the level of satisfaction among employees from their jobs (Laschinger, 2004). Liden, Wayne & Sparrowe (2000) finds a strong relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction. Many studies explain empowerment in the context of intrinsic task motivation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, Conger & Kanungo, 1998) as of personal environment fit. From service organization concept higher the empowering of employees, higher will be the profits (Brymer, 1991 Sternberg, 1992). Seibert (2004) made a survey with the conclusion that positive relationship is observed between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Tulli, & Rowlinson (2009) analyzed relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Study was conducted to find out that if empowerment and job satisfaction has any relation or not. Results conducted direct and positive relation among them. So, it is indicated that by increasing Psychological empowerment Job satisfaction also increases and Vice versa. The literature shows that the dimensions of psychological Empowerment are also linked with job satisfaction. Data collected from employees of many organizations, the authors studied three-way interactions among the dimensions (Wang & Lee 2009). From the survey of American Restaurant Results indicated positive and Significance relationship between Psychological empowerment Job satisfaction (Gazzoli, 2011) and the same results from American Hospitality workers (Lee, 2011). Psychological empowerment has found positively related with job satisfaction (Carless, 2004; Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004; Liden, Lucasd & Sparrowe, 2004; Spreitzer, 1997).

## **H1: The psychological empowerment will be positively related to job satisfaction**

### ***Psychological Empowerment and Psychological Ownership:***

Empowerment not only used to enhances effective decision making and control over job but also develop the sense of responsibility and this responsibility is the resultant factor that employee starts owning the job (Ford & Fottler, 1995). The development of the approach of empowerment improves the human resource practices and increases the participation of employees in their task performance and decision making (Dvir et al., 2002). This encouragement positively influences the work related behaviors, attitudes and feelings of employees (Piccolo & Calqitt, 2006) that they are very important for their organizations and their organizations are important for them (Ghafoor et al., 2011). The feeling of ownership will form as a result of empowerment that boosts the employees to perform the tasks not only by using its own style but also take decisions for the furtherance of its organization. This will also intensifies the sense of responsibility of employees as employees starts owning the decisions it take for its organization (Ghafoor et al., 2011). In today's rapid environment employees need to make quick decisions in different situations and due to lack of psychological empowerment and lack of belongingness with their work role, tasks they become unable to make good decisions and in turn the feeling of psychological ownership will not create (Ghafoor et al., 2011). The concept of psychological empowerment enhances the feeling of psychological ownership, which is the name of feeling of possession of some object (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). When employees develop the feeling of

possession then they will be more motivated and starts caring more of that thing that is in its possession (Avey et al., 2009).

## **H2: The psychological empowerment will be positively related to psychological ownership**

### ***Psychological Ownership and Job Satisfaction***

The Job characteristics model that is presented by (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) states that different psychological state of employees effects the job satisfaction. Ownership is the Psychological state or is the feeling of possession towards a variety of objects, material and immaterial in nature (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992). Psychological ownership for an employee plays a significant role for the organizational development. In the literature various relationships have been discussed by the scholars with the Psychological ownership. The effect of Psychological ownership on the intention to turnover, OCB, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment has mostly studied in the previous researches. Employees' psychological ownership toward organizations has a positive effect on expected rights and in response to it employees shows different types of behaviors associated with such rights and responsibilities". (Pierce, Kostova & Dirks, 2001). The sense of possession can enhance the feeling in employees that this thing belongs to me and it motivates and enhances positive behaviors (Avey, Luthans, Norman & Avolio 2009). When the employees have high sense of ownership in them they will be highly motivated (Pierce, Rubenfeld & Morgan, 1991) and highly motivated employees will be satisfied one (Huselid, 1995). Psychological ownership can create psychological contract between organization and employees and this motivates them to invest more in the organization in the form of their efforts and



become more committed and satisfied (Tsui, Pearce & Porter, 1997). According to the study of Van Dyne & Pierce (2004) there exists a positive relationship between psychological ownership and job satisfaction in the organizations.

**H3: The psychological ownership will be positively related to job satisfaction**

***Mediating role of Psychological Ownership in Relationship of Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction***

When employee psychologically experience empowerment having access to information, authority to make decisions, access to resources, authority to adopt their own working style, bring change and innovation will strongly enhances the feeling that this organization belong to me which in turn bring job satisfaction of employee (Wallach & Meuller, 2006). Psychological empowerment gives the ownership right which includes the right of information, decision making, evaluation, financial value, and control and that creates significant influence on employee job satisfaction (Pierce et al., 1991). The psychological empowerment brings feelings of ownership and this creates a psychological contract between employees and organizations that management empower the workers and in turn employees shows more interest towards organizational activities and participate in the day to day activities of organization by considering the firm as its own that could result in satisfaction of employees.(Avey et al., 2009). Psychological empowerment is considered as a source of good performance; empowered employees when feel ownership in their work are more satisfied with their work and therefore exhibit more interest in organization (Luthans, Norman, Avolio & Avey, 2008).

#### **H4: The psychological ownership mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction**

##### **Methodology**

##### **Procedure and Sample**

Data was collected by using convenience sampling technique from public sector organizations of two cities that is Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The total numbers of organizations were ten, Which includes Higher Education Commission, International Islamic University Islamabad, Arid agriculture university Rawalpindi, Ministry of education, Ministry of foreign affairs, Quaid-e-Azam paper projects, Benazir income support program, AJPR, Federal Land Commission, Fatima Jinnah university. The respondents include both faculty and administrative staff members. A questionnaire about their awareness of psychological empowerment, psychological ownership and job satisfaction were being filled by the respondents. For the confidentiality it was clearly mentioned that their responses were kept confidential and the resulting data will be evaluated on general basis. A total of 250 set were dropped in different organizations. Among the set 99 were dropped out due to unfilled and improper questionnaires and finally 151 cases were selected. Data was analyzed through correlation and linear regression.

##### **Demographics of the study:**

The respondents of this study include 56.3% male and 43.7% female. 25.3% have completed their bachelor's, 71.5% have master's, and 3.3% have M. Phil degree. 61.6 respondents are from 25-30 age range, 11.35 from 31-35, 10.6% from 36-40, 2.0% from 41-45, 13.9% from 46-50, .7% from 51-55. 7.9% respondents are having experience of 1-2 years 32.5%, from 3-4 years 6.6%, from 5-6 years

23.8%, from 7-8 years 5.3%, from 9-10years 23.8 %, 10% respondents have more than 10years of experience.

**Measures**

**Psychological empowerment:**

Psychological empowerment (DV) was measured by 7item scale with 5 dimensions (1=strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree) developed by Spreitzer (2005).

**Job satisfaction:**

Job satisfaction (IV) was measured with 4 item scale (1=strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree) developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979).

**Psychological ownership:**

Psychological ownership (Mediator) was measured by 6 item scale with the 5 dimensions (1=strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree) developed by Van Dyne & Pierce (2004).

**Results**

**Table 1: Correlations**

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3
1.Psychological Empowerment	3.93	0.43	(.84) 0.36		
2.Job Satisfaction	3.88	0.68	.58(**)	0.55	
3.Psychological Ownership	3.51	0.81	.36(**)	.59(**)	0.81

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).N=151. Item 1 of the scale of psychological empowerment has been excluded. Cronbach's Alfa is mentioned in parenthesis.

The table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation and correlations of psychological empowerment, psychological ownership and job satisfaction. At the significance level of 0.01, r =.578 shows that psychological empowerment is highly associated with job satisfaction

of employees,  $r = .362$  shows that psychological empowerment is highly associated with psychological ownership,  $r = .597$  show that psychological ownership is highly associated with Job satisfaction of employees.

**Table 2: Job satisfaction**

	<b>B</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Δ R2</b>
<b>Step 1:</b>			
<b>Control variables</b>			
Age	.186	0.230	0.230
Experience	-.175		
Education	-.103		
<b>Step 2:</b>			
Psychological Empowerment	0.825**	0.483	0.253**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, dependent variable=job satisfaction

Table 2 shows that there exist a direct and strong relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. After evaluating the result, it has been interpreted that demographic variables age, work experience and Education has impact on job satisfaction but these variables have been controlled. After controlling these variables the results shows that psychological empowerment has a significantly positive relationship ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\beta = .825$ ) with job satisfaction. Moreover, psychological empowerment explains 25.3% variations in job satisfaction. On the basis of the result we will accept the H1.

**Table 3: Psychological Ownership**

	<b>B</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Δ R2</b>
<b>Step 1:</b>			
<b>Control variables</b>			
Age	-.071**		0.006
<b>Step 2:</b>			
Psychological Empowerment	0.723**	0.148	0.142**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, dependent variable=psychological ownership

Table 3 shows that there exist a direct and strong relationship between psychological empowerment and psychological ownership. After evaluating the result, it has been interpreted that demographic variables age has impact on psychological ownership but these variables have been controlled. After controlling these variables the results shows that psychological empowerment has a significantly positive relationship ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\beta = .723$ ) with psychological ownership. Moreover, psychological empowerment explains 14.2% variations in psychological ownership. On the basis of the result we will accept the H2.

**Table 4: Job satisfaction**

	<b>B</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Δ R2</b>
<b>Step 1:</b>			
Control variables			
Age	.222		0.230
Experience	-.165		
Education	-.186		
<b>Step 2:</b>			
Psychological Ownership	0.501**	0.567	0.337**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, dependent variable=job satisfaction

Table 4 shows that there exist a direct and strong relationship between psychological ownership and job satisfaction. After evaluating the result, it has been interpreted that demographic variables age, experience and education has an impact on job satisfaction but these variables have been controlled. After controlling these variables the results shows that psychological ownership has a significantly positive relationship ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\beta = .501$ ) with job satisfaction. Moreover, psychological ownership explains 33.7% variations in job satisfaction. On the basis of the result we will accept the H3.

**Table 5: Job Satisfaction**

	<b>B</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Δ R2</b>
<b>Step 1:</b>			
Control variables			
Age	0.177		0.230
Experience	-0.145		
Education	-0.210		
<b>Step 2:</b>			
Psychological Ownership	0.396**	0.567	0.337**
<b>Step 3:</b>			
Psychological Empowerment	0.557**	0.667	0.101**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, dependent variable=job satisfaction

Table 5 presents the relationship of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction with the mediating role of psychological ownership. After analyzing the data it has been interpreted that demographic variables age, experience and education has an impact on job satisfaction but these variables have been controlled. After controlling these variables the results shows that psychological ownership has partially mediate the relationship at the significant level ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\beta = .396$ ) as value of psychological empowerment is  $\beta = .557$  reduces from the value of direct relationship that is  $\beta = .825$  . Moreover, psychological ownership explains 33.7% variations in job satisfaction. On the basis of the result we will accept the H4.

### **Demographics of study**

After evaluating the result, it has been interpreted that demographic variables age has impact on psychological ownership but these variables have been controlled. After controlling these variables the results shows that psychological empowerment has a significantly positive relationship with psychological ownership.

## **Discussions**

Results obtained from the collected data shows that psychological ownership partially mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment & job satisfaction. Employees of public sector organizations when empowered by their higher authorities develop the sense of ownership and perform their job with high affiliation. In this way they are able to do their routine work by going out of the way. Empowered employees are expected to perform beyond their formally prescribed roles (Cole, 1995; Randolph, 1995) Results also demonstrate, as predicted, that psychological empowerment was related to psychological ownership (Hypothesis 1). Results show that psychological ownership partially mediates the relation between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2). As in public sector organizations people shows low motivation and lack of interest towards work but through empowerment management can create motivation and interest of employees. Employees of Psychological Climate including leadership styles, opportunities for professional development and interpersonal relationships effect the employee perception of empowerment which in turn effect job satisfaction (Carless, 2004). Employee's trust has been found to be a significant psychological condition that relates positively to the to the employees ownership (Chan, Taylor & Markham, 2008). When the individuals having a sense of empowerment their expectations of personal self-efficacy increase which in turn develop a sense of perception or attitude despite of having desired performance results from the organization (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). From the literature it has been found that psychological empowerment creates intrinsic motivation within the employees to perform well (Fook et.al., 2011)

and the employee who has high intrinsic motivation is more satisfied from his/her job (Karatepe & Tekinkus, 2006). Psychological empowerment creates feeling of possession in employees which is the core of psychological ownership, which in turn creates job satisfaction and other positive outcomes for the organization and employees as well. In public sector organization it is helpful to motivate employees through employee empowerment. In Pakistan employees are mostly less motivated and they are not prone to perform their jobs in an effective way in order to fulfill their duties, so it's necessary for them that organizations must create the environment of participation and team working through empowering and motivating them.

The results of extant study indicate that relationship between dependent, independent as well as mediating variable has positive and significant impact on employee performance outcome. This research confirms that employee empowerment and job satisfaction are indirectly leads to each other. Findings of this study can be for both private as well as public sector employees.

This study prevail an important role to overcome the problems of employee empowerment in Public and Private Sector and provide a fair idea that employee satisfaction is directly related to the psychological ownership as well as empowerment.

### **Limitations of the study**

The construct of psychological ownership, empowerment and job satisfaction, is difficult to measure as compare to other variables. The reason of intricacy is that it deals with tacit and internal feelings of any employee which sometimes become difficult to identify even for the respondents. The extant research tried its level best to craft the



framework of psychological ownership and to draw the relationship with other two variables. Nevertheless, some subjectivity could be the probable phenomenon that is difficult to minimize. Like other studies, this study also has various limitations:

Firstly, the generalizability of the findings is restricted because a convenience sample was used for the study. Secondly, the findings cannot be generalized in all organizations as it was conducted in public sector organizations only so other sectors can also be studied. Also, the study was conducted in a Pakistan; it cannot be generalized to its international counterparts. Thirdly, all information generated for the study was on the basis of participants' self-reports. Therefore, an element of bias may affect the results. Also, some respondents might have completed the instrument to get it done, whereas others might have shown more interest.

### **Recommendations for future research**

We have drawn a theoretical recommendation to increase psychological ownership in organizations. There is no rule for the possibility of building onto the same context for the study to check the validity of these variables faith a same situation. That can be varied according to the environment context. The current literature will help to improve the process of empowering employees in Pakistani organizations. Since employee empowerment as an important factor that enhances employee job satisfaction, it is recommended that further studies should be carried out at the different level with a different sample size than this study, more demographics factors must be added in the study and should be expanded purely private or public sector throughout the country. On the behalf of current results research suggestions are put forth for

future research. Future research should use a larger sample with equal representation of race and gender. Current research can again implement in a future to check the similarities and differences among results. Duplication of the current research could be performed to identify similarities and differences with the present findings. Future research could incorporate a qualitative approach in addition to a quantitative focus. A qualitative approach (for example, interviews) might and longitudinal study

### **Theoretical and Managerial Implications**

Psychological empowerment creates feeling of possession in employees which is the core of psychological ownership, which intern creates job satisfaction and other positive outcomes for the organization and employees as well. In public sector organization it is helpful to motivate employees through employee empowerment. Managers can increase the loyalty and commitment of employees through proper communication as there would be considered a most important and valued persons for the organization. (Concentrate on psychologically empowered tools as motivation, appraise them, reward when necessary, as well as moral support, on regular and irregular basis communication is an important part for employees as well as their peers. Interviews can be used to assess what employees' views are on management's capability to tackle these Problems (Iqbal, 2010). Leadership (top management and senior managers) can provide the safety and security that of and commit themselves to modeling the required behavior together with the values needs to be institutionalized (Iqbal, 2010). Lastly, it is also vital to promote good communication with employees and create a secure rapport, encourage employees or increase empowerment to enhance

psychological ownership and listen carefully what they say (Fox & Dale, 2008). Study shows psychological ownership and empowerment has a great impact on satisfaction as manager should take serious notice to enhance the commitment as well as for required result to meet the goals of organization. As most of the people say, that person is a good manager who understands the psyche of the employees.

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