

## **Self- Esteem Moderates the Impact of Procedural Justice over Organizational Commitment A Review of the Cellular Industry of Pakistan**

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The present study is aimed at investigating the level of self-esteem among employees of the cellular industry of Pakistan and its moderating impact over the relationship between procedural Justice and organizational commitment. Deductive approach has been used to carry out quantitative methodology for collection and evaluation of the data. Participants of the study were selected from Islamabad based four major cellular companies of Pakistan, i.e. Mobilink, Telenor, Ufone and Zong. Stratified random sampling method was used for the extraction of a sample of 340 employees out of these four companies. After collection of data, it was analyzed through the SPSS data analysis tool. Correlation among the variables was calculated and one sample t-test, one-way ANOVA and independent sample t-test were employed. The results of the study showed that there is a significant impact of employee's self-esteem over the relationship between procedural justice and organizational commitment, whereas an inverse relationship between the employees' stress and self-esteem is observed. At the end of the study, some of the limitations along with future recommendation of this study are provided to help the researchers in conducting future evaluations on the subject matter.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, Procedural Justice, Organizational Commitment, Cellular Industry, Pakistan.

As a social being, individuals constantly assess their relationships with others, especially with people, who have an explicit authority over them (Sekiguchi & Hayashi, 2012). One way of assessing the authorities is to evaluate how they observe justice while enacting the decision-making

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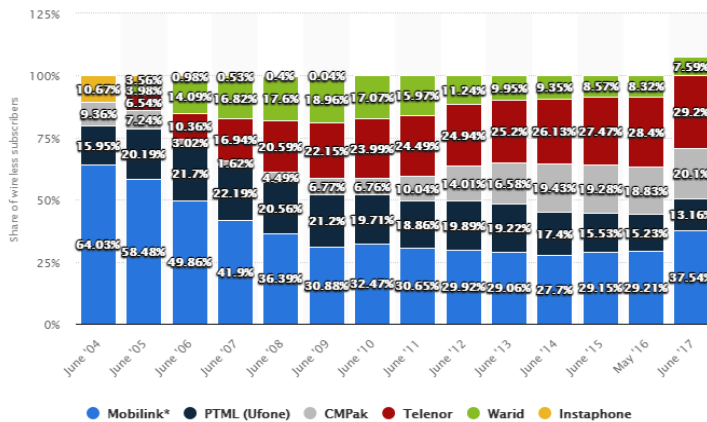
### Contribution of Authors

1. The study has identified the impact of PJ over OC in the employees of cellular industry of Pakistan.
2. The moderating role of self-esteem has been established in the relationship of PJ and OC.
3. The statistical analysis of the study has determined that employees of cellular industry seem to be more confident with low stress level and high esteem level.

procedures that could either have a direct or indirect impact over the corresponding members of an organization. Employees consider such information highly important because this propagates their value and position in an organization to the other stakeholders, which in turn make it more relevant to their self-esteem (Schroth & Pradhan Shah, 2000). To assess some important organizational outcomes, such as employee commitment and procedural justice, self-esteem can be considered as an important variable.

**Industry Overview**

Technological advancement has considerably reduced down the associated cost of data transmission, which in turn reported dramatic growth in the cellular industry across the globe. Similarly, in Pakistan, the cellular industry has witnessed a considerable level of growth during the recent years, which is attributed to the cost-effective strategies and extended profits through increased sales and use of latest technology. In 2004, Pakistan had about 5 million cellular subscribers, while this number jumped to 100 million in 2010 within a time period of 6 years only; moreover, in 2016 it climbed up to 133 million ("Ranking of Pakistan Mobile Companies and customer data", 2017). A number of companies are operating in Pakistan’s cellular industry that includes Moblink, Telenor, CM Pak and Ufone, etc. The comparative market share of these companies is provided as under:



Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/500851/mobile-market-share-pakistan-by-provider/>

**Problem Statement**

The drastic growth in the cellular industry of Pakistan caused a considerable level of increase in the number of cellular subscribers, which in turn raised the requirement for the establishing call center service divisions in each company in order to entertain and manage the queries of their customers. Although, it has improved the quality of customer relationship management, however, at the same time it caused an increase in the level of stress among employees of the call centers. This has increased the concerns of researchers to evaluate the factors that cause an increase in the level of stress among call center employees in the country. These factors include night duty shifts, inadequate fringe benefits, repetitive calls, abusive and slang language of the customers, overtime work, and competition to get noticed by the employers and customers etc. Thus, to cope with such pressure, employees usually encounter high stress. Consequently, it results in low self-esteem and negatively affects their commitment level towards the organizational success and growth.

### **Purpose of the study**

The paper is aimed at developing an understanding regarding the prevailing level of procedural justice and its impact on organizational commitment among employees of the cellular industry in Pakistan and how the level of employee's self-esteem moderates this relationship. It concentrates upon investigating the level of stress among employees in Pakistani cellular industry with respect to procedural justice and organizational commitment. Self-esteem is an important variable that establishes an interrelationship between perceived level of procedural justice and its corresponding impact on the employee's commitment level. Furthermore, positive relationship of employees with their management, especially those who do not transgress or abuse their power, leads to an enhanced level of self-esteem. Therefore, this paper focuses on to evaluate the moderating aspect of self-esteem to further define the level of perceived procedural justice and its corresponding implications on the level of employees commitment in the given industry.

### **Research Question**

The paper follows the following research question to examine the variables and their inter-relationships.

*"How self-esteem moderate perceptions of employees towards the level of procedural justice in the cellular industry of Pakistan and its corresponding impact over their level of job commitment?"*

### **Literature Review**

Most of the researchers have described self-esteem from the psychological perspective that defines it as an individual's personal emotional judgment regarding his or her value/worth. It is a self-evaluation of a person as well as the attitude one holds towards oneself. In other words, it is a feeling of satisfaction that a person holds regarding his/her capabilities (Sekiguchi & Hayashi, 2012). While Procedural Justice refer to the perceived level of fairness in procedures related to making policies for decision making and resource allocation in an organization or community, where a person resides. Procedural justice suggests that in organizations, decisions and procedures should be neutral, established on facts, and suitable for actions (Solum, 2004).

The term "Self-esteem" has been used in past studies to study the organizational justice perspective in organizations. These studies provided that employees feel highly committed towards their organizations, if they are treated fairly at workplace. This contention was specifically extracted from the self-verification theory, which suggests that the bond between procedural justice and employee's self-esteem significantly affects the underlying level of employee's commitment towards their organizations. The results demonstrated that eliminating self-esteem from the relationship relatively provides unending expectations (Wiesenfeld et al., 2007)

Similarly, the term "Organizational commitment" is a psychological attachment of any member to any organization regarding one's future decisions to stay with the organization. It is divided into three major types: Affective commitment, Continuance Commitment, and Normative commitment. Affective commitment is the emotional attachment that forces an individual to stay in the organization on a particular job with his/her same employer. Whereas, continuous commitment is an attachment of respect more than the cost involved in not to leave an organization. If the perceived respect and recognition is high, the employee would prefer to stay in the organization or vice versa. Normative commitment keep employees attached to the organization on the basis of ethical obligations or attachment (Allen & Mayer, 1990).

Past researchers have identified a conceptual link between social identity of organization with organizational commitment. This link has been found more skewed towards affective commitment in the case of emotional attachment of employees with their organizations. Every individual has a concern to judge his/her values and realize his/her place in a particular setting of an organization. Therefore, self-esteem is synonymous to the feeling of emotions of an individual in the form of accepting self-worth same as commitment (Buijs et al., 2019). The authors extended the importance of commitment with self-esteem in the military context, where soldiers in a survey conducted were found more motivated and satisfied, when they are provided them individual identity of acknowledgement and self-performance.

All the three variables are interdependent and have the ability to impact each other in both positive and negative manners. However, each of these variables is separately evaluated with reference to the past literature and research studies.

### **Self-Esteem as a Moderator**

Wiesenfeld, et al., (2007) has described self-esteem as moderator between procedural justice and organizational commitment level. According to self-verification theory, low self-esteem has the ability to enhance positive connection between organizational commitment and procedural justice. The authors have further provided that self-esteem has reduce the negative relationship between procedural justice and organizational commitment because at times employees are willing to form a salient relationship with their employer/organization.

Similarly, in another study found, it is found that high self-esteem has positive impact over procedural justice, turnover intentions and organizational commitment (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). On the other hand De Cremer et al., (2004) discussed that low self-esteem has low corresponding impact on procedural justice, however, it has a positive impact over one type of organizational commitment namely "affective commitment".

Koper et al., (1993) and Tyler (1999) found in their studies that people have different levels of self-esteem. Therefore, it is important to consider their attitudes towards themselves as well as their concerns with surrounding social evaluation. They have further explained that low self-esteem can develop negative attitudes among people. Thus, they are more likely to be affected by flaws in procedural justice that could automatically affect the degree of organizational commitment. On the other hand, the organizational commitment of people with high self-esteem would be less likely affected by procedural justice because such people have a greater concern with the outcomes of the procedural justice and not with its processes and procedures (Wojan, 2012).

Similarly, Hashmi and Naqvi, (2012) observed low job satisfaction and high job insecurity among employees owing to low self-esteem level. It is further established that the presence of low self-esteem leads to a negative correlation between job insecurity and satisfaction level of employees.

Another study conducted by Wang and Wang (2016) established strong contribution of self-esteem in personality development and a tool of creativity that is considered important as moderator in the study. Individuals who are highly creative are more concern about the goals of the organizations rather than the opinion of people or colleagues around. Therefore, most of the studies

have demonstrated positive role of self-esteem in organizational commitment and tends to address this worthy and capable factor with greater recognition.

### **Self-Esteem and Organizational Commitment**

Employees who have high effective and normative commitment would less likely to be affected by the procedural justice (Kaur & Bedi, 2017). Individuals that showed high organizational commitment preferred to stay with the organization, and they usually overlook the underlying flaws in procedural justice and work hard to contribute their best efforts for organizational success. Employees with high organizational commitment usually possess high self-esteem, however, in past, limited work is done on the investigation of the moderating impact of self-esteem (Vanhala, Heilmann & Salminen, 2016; Greenberg, 1990).

Sadoughi and Ebrahimi (2014) recognized positive relationship between employee's satisfaction and commitment with reference to their underlying levels of self-esteem. Therefore, it would be important for organizations to apply meaningful human resource policies to strengthen such measures that positively affect the employee's self-esteem. Similarly, Bowling, et al., (2010) and Owolabi (2012) labelled self-esteem as "OBSE" organizational base self-esteem. It is provided that this change notion has mostly the same positive interrelationship with OCB, OC and Job involvement. A few studies such as (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Kark, 2003; Lee, 2003; Kark, Shamir & Chen, 2003; Stark, 2000 & Vecchio, 2000) favors "OBSE".

Baumeister and Leary (1995) has seen OC as a function of self-esteem because whenever employees get recognized as highly committed to an organization, only then they could think about the organization in a positive manner and perceive themselves as a valuable asset for the organization. Therefore, employees would prefer to work hard and contribute their efforts to the success of their organizations.

### **Self-Esteem and Procedural Justice**

Wiesenfeld et al., (2007) described the self-verification theory as equally helpful measure to reduce the negative perception of employees towards procedures adopted by organization to promote OC. Likewise, Schroth and Pradhan Shah (2000) provided "attribution theory" to assess procedural justice with self-esteem. It has further provided that fair procedures of an organization would result in high self-esteem even though the outcomes are negative, while the unjust and unfair procedures of an organization can cause lower self-esteem among the employees. The results of the study by Schroth and Pradhan Shah (2000) further explained that the outcome expectancies could have implications on the level of self-esteem among employees, showing no evidence about the fact that actual results of the procedures could influence the level of self-esteem.

According to Wiesenfeld, et al., (2000), Procedural unfairness has lowered down the self-esteem of employees due to which they failed to contribute in work at their full potential. Compared to the low-level employees, low self-esteem in managers is more harmful for the execution of any project because such situation could directly affect the perceptions of their subordinates.

### **Conceptual Framework**

In order to develop hypothesis for testing the variables of this study, the concept of moderation has been used to establish self-esteem as moderator and stress as mediating variable

to determine relationship between procedural justice and organizational commitment. This concept is carried by Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, (2007) for testing the mediating or moderating effects, simultaneously. The graphical representation of this model is given as under:

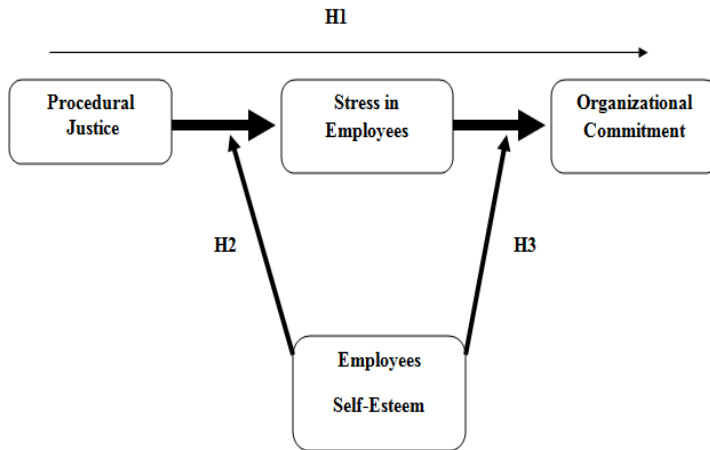


Figure – 1: Proposed Model to determine the interrelationship of PJ, OC via Stress as mediating variable moderated by self-esteem.

### Hypotheses

The following hypothesis has been developed on the basis of theoretical framework.

**H1:** The effect of procedural justice on organizational commitment among employees is mediated by the employee's stress level.

**H2:** The effect of procedural justice on employees' stress level is positively moderated by employees' self-esteem.

**H3:** The effect of employees' stress level on their organizational commitment is positively moderated by employees' self-esteem.

### Method

Study follows the deductive approach to be the most appropriate approach for identification of the relationship between the given variables. The researcher had adopted the theoretical model of Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, (2007) and developed the above-mentioned hypotheses to test the variables in the context of the given study.

### Research Design

To execute deductive approach the study follows quantitative research design to collect and analyze data. The pre-structured questionnaires of Usmani and Jamal (2013) adapted to measure the different dimensions of procedural justice. Similarly, the dimensions adapted to measure stress extracted from Madhavan, et al., (2017) and self-esteem has been measured as adapted scale based on the study of Gardner and Pierce, (2015).

### Sample and Procedure

For the convenience of the researcher, Islamabad based offices of four out of five major cellular companies, i.e., Telenor, Mobilink, Ufone, and Zongwerre selected. The population of this study was comprised upon all the employees working in the Islamabad based offices of these companies. However, a representative sample of 340 employees was drawn from all the four companies through stratified random sampling technique as provided in Table-1 below:

**Table 1**  
45% stratified random Sampling

	Telenor	Mobilink	Ufone	Zong	Total
Population	240 (30.82%)	313 (40.28%)	81 (10.5%)	143 (18.4%)	778 (100%)
Sample	105 (30.82%)	137 (40.28%)	36 (10.5%)	62 (18.4%)	340 (100%)

#### Data Collection Tools

Pre-structured questionnaires used to measure the underlying variables have various parts. The first part contains demographic information of the participants, whereas the second, third and fourth part of the questionnaire was developed to obtain responses from the participants regarding procedural justice, employee's stress/self-esteem and organizational commitment, respectively. Responses were quantified on the basis of a 5-point Likert Scale ranges from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree corresponding with 1=very low to 5=very high for the level of work stress/self-esteem.

#### Data Analysis and Discussion

The researcher has used the latest version of SPSS to analyze collected data to assess possible relationships between the variables under consideration. Frequencies, t-values, standard deviations, means, and correlations were calculated. Reliability is calculated through Cronbach's Alpha. Items having reliability, greater than 0.70 are considered as reliable (Table-4). Moreover, mean score of more than 3 has been taken to indicate high level of stress among employees and vice versa. For the purpose of variance and significance analysis, the researcher has employed independent sample t-test, one sample t-test and one-way ANOVA. Finally, the correlation was applied for evaluating the possible relationships between sub-scales and with total scale.

### Results

Results from the demographical information of the respondents is provided in Table – 2, which shows that 69% of the respondents are male and 31% represents the responses of female population. However, in a male-dominated society like Pakistan, it is still a good percentage, showing considerable presence of females in the industry. The highest number of employees, which is 62%, falls under the age 20 to 30 years. Similarly, 20% for the age bracket of 30-40 years and 14% for 40-50 years age bracket. However, only 4% respondents represents age group 50 years or above. Likewise, about 70% of the respondents were from the tactical level of their respective organizations, followed by 25% from operational level and only 5% from a strategic level. No respondent was found illiterate. The highest percentage was of the people having graduation as their highest level of qualification, i.e. 57%, followed by high school graduates with 30% and post graduates with the remaining 13%. This shows that mostly well-educated people are preferred to be hired in the cellular industry of Pakistan.

**Table 2**  
*Demographics of the Respondents*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Male	234	69	69	69
	Female	106	31	31	100
Age	20-30	211	62	62	62
	30-40	68	20	20	82
	40-50	47	14	14	96
	above 50	14	4	4	100
Education Level	Illiterate	0	0	0	0
	high school	194	57	57	42.3
	graduates	102	30	30	89.2
Occupation	postgraduates	44	13	13	100
	Operational Level	85	25	25	25
	Tactical Level	238	70	70	95
	Strategic Level	17	5	5	100

The inter variable correlation analysis is examined in terms of dependent and independent variables of the study given below.

**Table 3**  
*Correlation Matrix of Scales*

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	PJ	ES	ESE
Procedural Justice	3.060	1.249			
Employee's stress level	2.905	1.124	0.793**		
Employee's Self-Esteem	2.968	1.286	0.730**	0.673**	
Organizational Commitment	2.721	1.407	0.711**	0.665**	0.726

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 exhibits the level of stress among employees that has a significant impact over their corresponding self-esteem, which in turn affect the relationship between PJ in an organization and OC among employees ( $P < 0.01$ ). Hence results support all three hypothesis between the given variables of the study. This further exhibits that if employees have positive morale and self-esteem, they have fewer chances to demonstrate negative behavior.

The researcher has evaluated different procedural factors that are assessed as causative agents of stress among employees in cellular industry of Pakistan. Results from the sub-scale analysis are given as under:



**Table 4**

*Alpha values and one sample statistics for sub-scale and scales*

Scale / Sub-Scale	Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Df	t-value
Procedural Justice	0.980	3.060	1.249	340	46.950*
Employees Stress	0.887	2.905	1.124	340	45.891*
Employees Self Esteem	0.902	2.968	1.286	340	43.722*
Organizational Commitment	0.897	2.721	1.407	340	43.286*
<b>Sub-Scale Analysis</b>					
Role ambiguity	0.911	2.883	1.250	340	42.741*
Working Conditions	0.934	2.775	1.287	340	40.997*
Role Conflict	0.869	2.721	1.231	340	38.671*
Work Intensification	0.918	2.991	1.331	340	38.289*
Bullying and Harassment	0.927	2.873	1.451	340	34.987*

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that the level of stress is 2.905 in employees’ moves from lower to moderate level in the cellular industry of Pakistan. Results of the sub-scale analysis revealed that level of stress against the work intensification (2.991) is highest, whereas in case of role conflict (2.721) it is the lowest. Moreover, the level of stress in relation to role ambiguity and bullying and harassment is almost the same, while for working conditions has showed close results with the role conflict.

The researcher conducted Tukey’s significant difference test in one way ANOVA, which revealed a significant difference in the opinion of respondents from different companies with respect to the relationship between the level of stress and self-esteem. The results are given as under:

**Table 5**

*Tukey’s significant difference test in one way ANOVA*

Variables	Respondents (I)	Mean difference (I-J)	
		Respondents (J)	
		Telenor	Mobilink
Employees Stress	Telenor	1.887(*)	0.5607(*)
	Mobilink		-1.327(*)
Employees Self Esteem	Telenor	1.926(*)	0.624(*)
	Mobilink		-1.302(*)

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

The above table shows that employees of Telenor show a comparatively lower level of stress as compared to Mobilink. However, results from both the companies show a significant level of relationship between the level of stress and employees’ self-esteem in the organization.

The study evaluated that employees stress level has an inverse relationship with their corresponding self-esteem, whereas PJ perform inevitable role to shape the overall stress level

among employees. Findings of this study are supported by Schroth and Pradhan Shah (2000) Sekiguchi and Hayashi (2012) and Lee (2003). According to them there is a significant inverse correlation between the level of stress among employees and their self-esteem. Similarly, Konovsky (2000) found that PJ have a considerable level of influence over their internal state of mind and overall satisfaction associated with their jobs. Therefore, if employees perceive that the ongoing procedures of their organization and management are just and fair with them, they would feel more motivated towards their work and vice versa. The study also found that self-esteem influence the employee's perceptions and attitudes towards the procedures adopted at their job and how such procedures affect their corresponding level of commitment. Hashmi and Naqvi (2012) commented that if employees perceive that their organization has a just and fair system of operational procedures and guidelines that treat all the employees on same grounds, then employees will feel more committed and satisfied from their work. In another study conducted by Kaur and Bedi, (2017), the authors found strong relationship of OC with employee's satisfaction level in the prevailing justice system in their organizations. The authors further commented that an employee would not continue with such an organization, where his/herself-esteem is not respected or where he/she is working in a stressful environment. The authors found that self-esteem of employees and their stress level has an inverse relationship with their overall commitment towards the organization, which means that if an employee is under stress or suffering from low self-esteem, he/she will not be able to fulfill his/her commitment with the organization.

### **Conclusion**

The study has focused to answers two questions. First, to identify the impact of PJ over OC of the employees towards their respective organization in the said industry of the Pakistan. Second question is related to see the relationship of PJ over OC with moderating effect of self-esteem. Statistical analysis shows that low-moderate level of stress is observed among the employees of four major companies of the cellular industry of the country. The researcher concluded inverse relationship between the employees' stress level and their corresponding self-esteem and subsequently its impact on the relationship between PJ and OC. Employees having low stress level would be more confident and have high level of self-esteem that positively moderates the relationship between PJ and OC, whereas employees having high-stress level would be less confident and have low level of self-esteem, which negatively impact the relationship between PJ and OC. To support our findings, previous studies such as Zhang & Long (2013) Konovsky (2000) Li and Bagger (2011) explained positive moderating role of self-esteem towards the relationship of PJ and OC, when employees are exposed to less stressful work environment. Similarly, the researcher concluded that PJ has importance in managing negative stress level among employees because the majority of the causative factors of stress are related to the day to day policies and procedures of an organization.

### **Limitations and Future Recommendations**

The focus of the study was to determine moderating role of self-esteem in the corresponding relationship of PJ and OC. It is also observed that stress is a mediating variable that plays important role in the relationship of PJ and OC. However, it has an inverse relationship with the level of self-esteem among employees. Therefore, this study is quite different from past studies on the given topic because it investigates the mediating and moderating roles simultaneously. However, the current study contains the following limitations, which can be addressed by future researchers for more accurate findings.

- The present study was conducted over employees of the capital city of Pakistan, where employees are mostly getting good pay packages and other incentives. However, there are chances that the findings might not be the same if the study would have been conducted in other cities. It is recommended to conduct the study over a larger population to get more accurate findings in the future.
- Only explicit features or factors that affect the level of stress among employees are considered in the completion of this study. Many times, employees are usually found stressful due to their inherent perceptions or self-made feelings towards any phenomenon or object. However, the findings would be more accurate if future studies conduct the implicit association analysis along with the explicit tests over the proposed participants of the study.

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