

Determinants of Public Sector Job Performance: An Integrated Role of Islamic Work Ethics, Job Characteristics, and Public Service Motivation

Ahmad Khawar Shahzad and Rosli Mahmood

Putra Business School, UPM Malaysia

This exploratory study employed a self-reported questionnaire for data analysis, using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling technique to estimate regression coefficients. A quantitative research method was used to conduct this survey study. Research data were collected from civil servants. A stratified sample strategy was employed to select 275 respondents. A self-reported questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants. In this questionnaire, 7 items were adopted from [Yousef \(2000\)](#) to measure Islamic work ethics, 15 items from [Johari et al. \(2010\)](#) to measure job characteristics, 16 items from [Perry \(1996\)](#) to measure public service motivation, and 14 items from [Koopmans \(2014\)](#) to measure job performance. The findings of this study concluded a direct relationship between Islamic work ethics and job performance as a positive relationship with ennobling mediation of public service motivation. The study expounded a significant and positive relationship between job characteristics and job performance through direct correlation and via mediation of public service motivation. This study provided a basis and avenues for academicians, think tanks, and policymakers with an empirically tested performance model, entailing theoretical and practical implications.

Keywords. Islamic work ethics; job characteristics; job performance; public service motivation

Since medieval times, primeval empires of China, Greece, Egypt, and Rome practiced administrative models in their respective civil service structures. IWE highlights certain values in its pristine form, such as truthfulness, hard work, justice, integrity, and accountability, etc. In this context, more than 2.06 billion Muslims believe that work ethic is significant for human actions in daily life. Apart from Islamic civilization, Weberian scholarship introduced a modern bureaucratic

Ahmad Khawar Shahzad and Rosli Mahmood, Department of Management, Putra Business School, UPM Malaysia.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ahmad Khawar Shahzad, Department of Management, Putra Business School, UPM Malaysia. Email: pbs19104113@grad.putrabs.edu.my

model in the 1950s for industrialized countries. British colonialism wielded Weber's Steel Frame of Administration in the subcontinent. Since the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, the same colonial breed has exercised administrative and political roles. Multiple studies revealed that the civil service of Pakistan is intertwined with multiple challenges regarding its efficiency. Major issues pertaining to bureaucracy, like institutional deterioration, lack of accountability, political involvement, and corrupt practices, are interlinked with IWE and Job Characteristics (JC) that bind researchers to analyze its performance.

Employees play crucial roles in the public sector to interpret government policies and deliver government services. In Pakistan, effective public administration and job performance are main determinants of this public service. Employees interact with a larger institutional environment in which job performance (JP) is expected at various levels. Recent studies like [Bhutta et al. \(2024\)](#) explored a significant and positive association between motivation, organizational elements, and public sector employees' job performance. Within this context, motivation in public service is an important effort to achieve organizational goals. Empirical evidence highlights a positive relationship between Public Service Motivation (PSM) and job performance ([Badar et al., 2024](#); [Elahi et al., 2020](#)). This underlines that PSM among employees in public sectors is positively associated with their job performance. Likewise, IWE states embedded moral and cultural behaviors and their explanation in Pakistan. IWE provides an ethical basis to enhance employees' workplace behavior. A significant translation of IWE significantly correlates with employees' job performance ([Usman et al., 2024](#)). Within this context, there are simultaneous considerations of enhancing the JP of public sector employees through IWE, PSM, and job characteristics (JC). These constructs represent a potential mechanism to reflect structured organizational performance itself. Recent studies have examined this phenomenon separately; however, few studies investigate how IWE functions with PSM and to what extent JC influences JP while PSM plays a mediating role. This gap needs to be filled, as focusing exclusively on IWE as a disposition of JP may provide only partial findings. An integrative perspective of examining PSM as a mediator to examine the influential roles of IWE and JC on JP will contribute to this gap.

This article aimed to explore the public service sector impact of IWE and JC on civil services' Job Performance (JP) through a detailed analysis of recent studies and frameworks. It was significant to know how PSM mediated the association between IWE-JP and JC-JP

concerning public sector employees. Depending on Other Orientation Theory (OOT) to underpin IWE and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) for JC, this novel study established subtle assumptions about how IWE, JC, PSM, and JP interacted with each other and how they may provide actionable insights for public administrators to comprehend the effectiveness of bureaucracy.

Theoretical Framework

The edifice of current knowledge is built on prior knowledge, summarized in theories that are parsimonious explanations of bureaucratic working. A theory is employed to underpin the research framework, used as a basis for acceptance or rejection of hypotheses. This study is built on the following two theories:

Over time, SDT has gradually developed over the last four decades and attained the position of a universal micro theory that interrogates well-being, personality development, and human motivations with ongoing concerns about conditional elements that were determinants of frustration or promotion of human well-being (Nunes et al., 2024). SDT is a psychological framework that explores motivation behind human behavior that supports well-being. According to Cassia & Magno (2024), SDT is a motivational theory that differentiates intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels. Developed by Deci and Ryan in the 1985 SDT posits that innate psychological needs of individuals for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and their satisfaction, are crucial for intrinsic motivation. Autonomy encapsulates the desire to act according to one's values and choices freely. Competence means feeling effective in one's actions. Individuals seek opportunities to showcase their skills and achieve success in their endeavors. The relatedness phenomenon deals with social connection and positive relationships. According to Kupers et al. (2024), fulfilling the three psychological needs stated above is a prerequisite for intrinsic motivation to reshape human behavior. Further, Evans et al. (2024) declared attainment of these three needs essential for psychological integration, frustration removal, and growth. SDT emphasizes support for autonomy, competence, and relatedness and facilitation for intrinsic motivation, positive outcomes, and well-being. This has practical implications in education, workplace motivation, sports, and mental health. SDT also explored environmental factors responsible for undermining self-motivation, social functioning, and personal well-being.

Further, SDT is integrated with the notion of thriving at the workplace, providing a framework that connects SDT with the human growth model. This framework mainly focuses on satisfying three basic psychological needs. In summary, SDT emphasizes the importance of fostering a supportive environment for individuals' autonomy, competence, and relatedness to improve self-motivation and well-being. When these psychological needs are met, individuals are more likely to be committed to their work, leading to enhanced JP. Organizations that align their work culture with SDT often experience higher levels of JP. Therefore, based on the above theoretical discussion, the researcher believes that SDT is a comprehensive motivational theory to explain the associations of JC with JP in this study through hypotheses (H2 and H4).

Meglino and Korsgaard (2005) defined "Other Orientation" as the extent to which a person was likely to be altruistic. The OOT examines judgment processes (rational versus heuristic) and motivational orientations (self-versus other) to comprehend individual behavior. It mainly asserts that people with higher orientations are more influenced by social pressures than by self-interested procedures. With other orientations, humans are less influenced to participate in rational processes and more likely to depend on altruistic social norms and interests (Badar et al., 2024). Employees with other orientation naturally engage in mentoring and supporting their colleagues, which contributes to skill development and improved JP. Foundations underlying human tendency towards other orientations explain why people are willing to engage in heuristic processing. Contextual variables like priming and concentrating on tasks cause people to focus on others, which leads to state types of other orientation. According to research, those who are other-oriented are less likely to rely on conscious decisions and are more susceptible to social influence.

According to Ibrahim and Idris (2023), IWE is based on what Shariah enshrines to cultivate positive behaviors. The IWE is an orientation that views individuals' work as virtue. Pratikto et al. (2021) suggested IWE as an influencer of employees' behavior. Moreover, much recent research used OOT to determine the impact of IWE on different organizational outcomes (Pratikto et al., 2021). All the above-referred studies mentioned OOT as a better approach to exemplify the impact of IWE on performance. In short, all theories implicitly assume the argument of self-interest. For example, majority of studies used Equity Theory and Social Exchange Theory which explains give and take relationships. According to these theories, individuals are positively motivated towards organizational success once they earn monetary and non-monetary assistance (Qasim et al., 2020). Therefore,

OOT is unique among all theories in that it describes a tendency among individuals concerning the well-being of others. Therefore, the researcher believes that OOT is a comprehensive theory to explain associations of IWE and JP (H1).

Early research indicated that JC is a major factor affecting job satisfaction. The wellbeing of employees is predominantly influenced by the design of their jobs. Job Demands-Resources Model elucidates two categories of JC: job demands and job resources. In this framework, job demands encompass aspects such as workload and temporal pressures, while job resources incorporate psychological, physical, social, and organizational elements facilitating employees in (i) accomplishing work-related objectives, (ii) alleviating work-related demands, and (iii) fostering employee development (Putri & Zulkarnain, 2021). JC Theory posited three psychological conditions alongside five dimensions. A substantial body of researchers has affirmed the construct validity of the JC Model proposed by Hackman and Oldham (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) and utilized it for empirical investigations (Tcharmtchi et al., 2023).

Job performance constitutes a pivotal construct in organizational psychology, encompassing a spectrum of behaviors aligned with organizational objectives. Frederick Taylor in the 20th century posited that standardization processes could enhance worker productivity. According to Koopmans et al. (2014), this conceptualization is associated with three dimensions: (i) behavior bears a closer resemblance to definition than outcome; (ii) organizational objectives are significant; (iii) it is inherently multifaceted. JP signifies an individual's capability to execute responsibilities according to organizational standards. Performance denotes results of an individual's job function within an organization, whether conducted independently or collaboratively.

Evaluating employee productivity is instrumental for organizations striving to accomplish their objectives with effectiveness. Employee performance is predominantly influenced by the quality and volume of work. Performance is defined as attainment of objectives through dedication and alignment with organizational policies. Krijgsheld et al. (2022) elucidated employee performance in the context of organizational objectives, using the Balanced Scorecard Framework and relevant metrics. Performance management emphasizes human development and motivational strategies for effective management. Lee and Jo (2023) delineated three dimensions for evaluating employee performance: task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance. Task performance is characterized by an explicit job description (Wang et al., 2023). Contextual performance encompasses

activities that enhance organizational efficacy (Nkansah et al., 2024). Adaptive performance is concerned with identifying variables that can forecast an employee's future performance.

Public service motivation serves as a foundational motivational construct in public administration. Initial characterization of PSM by Perry and Hondeghem (2008) defined it as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations'. Contemporarily, PSM is acknowledged as an emblem of individuals' values concerning public service across private, public, organizational and non-organizational realms (Yu, 2023). As articulated by Perry and Wise (1990), PSM encapsulates an individual's inclination to respond to motivations predominantly rooted in public organizations. Distinct features of motivation within public institutions are: (i) formulation of public policies; (ii) commitment to civic duty; (iii) advocacy for social justice; (iv) demonstration of compassion; and (v) principle of self-sacrifice (Yu, 2023).

Islamic Work Ethics and Job Performance

Ethics is focused on investigating human behavior in particular situations. Islamic ethics emphasize honesty in all dealings. These principles motivate employees to foster trust. This trust enhances teamwork with improved JP. There has been an increasing interest in the relationship between the construct of IWE and JP in multi-dimensional variables (Widana & Ramadhani, 2024). A study by Buldan et al. (2021) found a direct effect of IWE on organizational performance within state-owned construction companies of Indonesia. This study also concluded an insignificant association between market conditions and organizational performance. Zaim et al. (2021) examined the impact of ethical leadership on team performance by analyzing data from Iraq and found a positive correlation between ethical leadership and team performance. Some researchers revealed the absence of a significant relationship between IWE and JP. The study by Aflah et al. (2021) concluded that there was a non-significant positive effect of IWE on employee performance. Elahi et al. (2020) concluded that the relationship was insignificant, with IWE moderated by HRM practices and Project Success. IWE prohibits employees from committing acts of injustice at work (Faliza et al., 2024). Abdelwahed et al. (2023) also discovered that spiritual values could improve an organization's performance. Antoni (2024) analyzed spiritual culture in the workplace and its impact on employees' motivation. Correspondingly, Suryani et al. (2023) maintain that Islamic leadership

favorably affects workers' JP. Similarly, [AL Smadi et al. \(2023\)](#) identified a favorable association between the performance of small and medium-sized firms and Islamic leadership. Thus, the relationship between IWE and JP is inconclusive and limits further examination. Therefore, the following testable hypothesis is developed:

H1: *There is a significant relationship between Islamic work ethics and job performance.*

Job Characteristics and Job Performance

Increasingly, many researchers have harmonized the relationship between JC and JP. By designing roles based on five core skills, organizations can create more engaging work environments. Engaged employees are more likely to be motivated to contribute to personal growth and organizational success. Tailoring JC to match individual differences can optimize JP. A number of studies discussed the relationship between JC and JP through dimensions of JC and its psychological states ([Sabra, 2020](#)). [Sabra \(2020\)](#) investigated the influence of JC on employees' performance in the context of 'Greater Amman Municipality' and found that task-identity significantly improves employees' performance. [Jiang and Wei \(2024\)](#) found autonomy and task identity as antecedents of thriving at work. Researchers found that employees motivated to develop clear strategies to perform their jobs can enjoy a greater level of autonomy, which enhances JP. Furthermore, [Gu et al. \(2022\)](#) found that, compared to the US, career advancement is typically sluggish, and performance evaluations are infrequent in China and Japan. Performance of the business or group will determine the award rather than individual endeavors ([Kibambila, 2024](#)). [Shang et al. \(2024\)](#) developed a conceptual analysis to identify variables influencing nurses' performance levels. JCM provides a more holistic view. It emphasizes restructuring jobs and considering individual differences to enhance performance ([Person, 2023](#)). However, the structure of the relationship between JC and JP is obscure. Hence, this ambiguity between JC and JP restricts further examination. Therefore, the following testable hypothesis is developed:

H2: *There is a positive relationship between job characteristics and job performance.*

Public Service Motivation as Mediator

[Mussagulova and Wal \(2021\)](#) conducted a systematic literature review and correlated the non-Westernized context of PSM scholarship

relating to the outcome variable; twenty-two studies employed PSM as a moderator and mediator. Within the public administration domain, there is an interest in exploring PSM's mediating role between HRM and various employee outcomes. For example, PSM has been observed as a partial mediator in the link between high-performance HRM and OCBs, between employees' perceptions of CSR and OCB. To serve the community, public interest serves as a guiding principle in their deductive moral reasoning. Thus, the relationship between IWE-JP and JC-JP is unclear in the presence of PSM and constricts further examination. Therefore, the following testable hypotheses are developed:

H3: *Public service motivation mediates the relationship between Islamic work ethics and job performance.*

H4: *Public service motivation mediates the relationship between job characteristics and job performance.*

Method

Research Design

The present study employed a cross-sectional research design using a quantitative research method. This is an appropriate research design to analyze the integrated influence of Islamic Work Ethics and Job Characteristics on Job Performance through mediation of Public Service Motivation in the public-sector context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from public sector employees in Pakistan. This study elucidates the relationship between IWE, JC, and JP, with PSM as the mediator. To what extent do the independent constructs IWE and JC influence public sector employees' JP?

Population and Sample

Since the federal officers of the civil service of Pakistan belong to 12 occupational groups, whereas provincial officers are associated with the provincial civil service. A stratified sample strategy was employed for the collection of data from approximately 3.811 million civil service population. Table 1 shows data from the Establishment Division for federal officers in basic scale 17–22, whose share becomes 4.63% against the actual working strength of 581,755, compared to the sanctioned strength of 663,234. In contrast, 2.856 million provincial employees work in four provinces (Pakistan Public Administration Research Center, 2023).

The details of sample demographics are shown in [Table 1](#) below:

Table 1: *General Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Demographics	Categories	<i>f</i>	%
Gender	Male	209	76.1
	Female	66	23.9
Marital Status	Single	26	9.3
	Married	245	89
	Divorced	4	1.4
Age (years)	25 and below	00	00
	26-35	50	18
	36-45	105	38.3
	46-55	92	33.5
	Above 55	28	10.1
Education Level	Graduation	24	8.7
	Master	160	58
	MPhil	75	27.3
	PhD	14	5.1
	Doctoral	2	0.8
Job Position (Rank)	BS-17	50	17.7
	BS-18	124	45.3
	BS-19	63	23.09
	BS-20	36	12.9
	BS-21	2	0.8
Experience	Less than 5 Year	41	14.9
	5-10 years	28	10.1
	11-15 years	60	21.5
	16-20 years	55	20
	21-25 years	49	18
Service cadre	More than 25 years	42	15.5
	Federal Service	102	37.4
	Provincial (Ex-PCS)	57	20.8
	Provincial (PSS)	38	13.8
	Provincial (PMS)	78	27.9

[Table 1](#) reveals that respondents are 76.1% male (209 respondents) and 23.9% female (66 respondents). The majority of them (58% or 160) possess Master's degrees, followed by MPhil (27.3% or 75 respondents). Regarding career progression, the majority of respondents work in mid- to upper-level government positions: 45.3% (124 respondents) at BS-18, 23.09% (63 respondents) at BS-19, and 17.7% (50 respondents) at BS-17. However, demography also encompassed BS-20 (12.9%) and BS-21 (0.8%) of top-level management representation. Federal Service employees account for 37.4% (102 respondents), while Provincial Service employees account for 27.9% (78 respondents), Ex-PCS account for 20.8% (57 respondents), and PSS

account for 13.8% (38 respondents). This geographic diversity suggests various administrative experiences and challenges across public sector organizations. The study employed a G*Power calculation, with a minimum sample size of 145 responses. The questionnaire was issued to 400 federal and provincial service officers. A total of 275 responses were gathered, with a response rate of 68.75%. Following initial screening, 13 responses were deleted due to outlier identification. Therefore, 262 replies were used for conducting data analysis.

Measures

A self-reported questionnaire was used to measure the participants' perspectives, perceptions, and experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Items of structured questionnaires were adapted from earlier strands of literature on IWE, JC, PSM, and JP. The questionnaire contained seven items for IWE, adapted from Yousef (2000). Fifteen items for JC were adapted from Johari et al. (2010). Sixteen items for PSM were adapted from Perry (1996), and fourteen Items for JP were adapted from Koopmans (2014), for a total of fifty-two items.

Procedure

The study used a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), to collect the data. The collected data was organized for statistical analysis of structure equation modelling (SEM) using AMOS software. PLS-SEM is an advanced technique for such estimation to test a tentative hypothetical model (Aslam & Li, 2025). It allows researchers to test the reliability of the instrument. Additionally, the bootstrapping technique was used to determine path coefficients and their level of significance.

Results

In this study, convergent and discriminant validity were examined using Smart-PLS. The author removed 11 items from JC, 03 items from IWE, 08 items from PSM, and 09 items from JP with lower factor loadings that are not strong enough to describe the relevant variables to produce a well-fitting model. Composite reliability (CR) was used to evaluate internal consistency and dependability because all constructs had CR values greater than .70. JC, IWE, PSM, and JP recommend that constructs explain more than half of the variance in observed variables, AVE values (≥ 0.50), to assess each component's convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2: *Assessment of Measurement Model*

Factors	Items	Factor Loading	R^2	α	AVE	CR
Job characteristics	JC5	0.7	n/a	.85	0.69	0.85
	JC13	0.86				
	JC14	0.88				
	JC15	0.84				
Islamic Work Ethics	IWE 1	0.82	n/a	.86	0.71	0.86
	IWE 2	0.86				
	IWE 3	0.83				
	IWE 4	0.82				
Public Service Motivation	PSM1	0.73	0.51	.90	0.59	0.90
	PSM3	0.81				
	PSM4	0.78				
	PSM10	0.75				
	PSM11	0.75				
	PSM12	0.81				
	PSM13	0.75				
	PSM14	0.73				
Job Performance	JP5	0.71	0.43	.84	0.62	0.85
	JP8	0.75				
	JP9	0.85				
	JP10	0.84				
	JP11	0.77				

A loading between 0.4 and 0.7 is acceptable; a value greater than 0.7 is considered high. A Cronbach's α greater than 0.7 is regarded as high and suitable. It is preferred to have a composite reliability of at least 0.7. AVE should be 0.5 or higher. 0.25 is considered poor, 0.50 (average), and 0.75 (substantial).

Measurement Model

According to results, JP's R-Square value is 0.436, which indicates that 56.4% of the variance may be explained by other factors, whereas 43.6% of the variance is explained or influenced by independent variables (JC and IWE). Similarly, independent variables JC and IWE account for 0.328 and 0.114 of the variance explained or influenced by PSM, whereas other factors account for 68.0% of the variance and 09.3.

Discriminant validity suggests that constructs are unconnected with uncommon characteristics. The study assessed discriminant validity using the HTMT ratio and determined that 95% of it was valid. Data are discriminant-validated since each result in [Table 4](#) is below the threshold value of 0.90 ([Franke & Sarstedt, 2019](#)).

Table 3: *Discriminant Validity (HTMT)*

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Islamic Work Ethics	-			
2. Job Characteristics	.31**	-		
3. Job Performance	.49**	.48**	-	
4. Public service Motivation	.70**	.30**	.57**	-

**
 $p < .01$

After evaluating the measurement model, multicollinearity was investigated using the VIF. According to [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#), [Table 4](#) indicates multicollinearity, which is not a problem because all of the VIF values are less than 3.3.

Table 4: *Collinearity Statistics VIF*

Pathways	VIF
IWE -> JP	2.236
IWE -> PSM	1.109
JC -> JP	1.176
JC -> PSM	1.109
PSM -> JP	2.078
PSM x JC-> JP	1.597
PSM x IWE-> JP	1.832

Testing of Hypotheses

Direct correlations between independent and dependent variables are displayed in [Table 5](#).

Table 5: *The Estimates of Structural Paths*

H	Paths	β	SE	t	p	Result
H1	IWE -> JP	0.377	0.045	8.42	.00	Supported
H2	JC -> JP	0.365	0.036	10.00	.00	Supported
H3	IWE -> PSM -> JP	0.093	0.036	2.53	.01	Supported
H4	JC -> PSM -> JP	0.680	0.036	18.83	.00	Supported

Direct correlations between IWE and JP were found to be significant, progressively validating the first hypothesis (H1) ($\beta = 0.37$, $p = .000$). Whereas JC and JP were also found to have a significant correlation in the study, thus validating the second

hypothesis (H2) ($\beta = 0.36$, $p = .000$). Also, this study explored the mediating effect of PSM on the relationship between IWE-JP and JC-JP. The cumulative effect in mediation for IWE $\rightarrow$ PSM $\rightarrow$ JP had a $\beta = 0.09$, $p = .01$, and $t = 2.53$, and the results supported hypothesis (H3). The combined effect in mediation for JC $\rightarrow$ PSM $\rightarrow$ JP with $\beta = 0.68$, $p .000$, $t = 18.83$ supported hypothesis (H4). Table 5 also shows a positive mediating influence of PSM on the IWE and JP relation. Hence, both hypotheses (H3 and H4) are supported.

Discussion

In this study, we examined the direct relationship between IWE- $\rightarrow$ JP and JC- $\rightarrow$ JP, as well as the perception of PSM among public employees, in the context of SDT and OOT. The interactive relationship between IWE, JC, JP, and PSM was investigated by utilizing a sample of federal and provincial officers of the Government of Pakistan. Statistically, the results revealed a highly significant correlation between JC and JP, and between IWE and JP, emphasizing a substantial connection between both IVs and the DV. Findings of the study expounded the positive effect of IWE on JP. IWE shows a significant positive relationship with JP (Supported H1). Employees were in favor of implementing IWE in the administrative structure for better performance. Being a majority Muslim population (97%), public servants preferred to adopt IWE, such as dedication to work is a virtue (IWE1), Good work benefits oneself and others (IWE2), Justice and generosity in the workplace are necessary conditions for society's welfare (IWE3), and one should work to the best of one's ability (IWE4). These findings highlight better outcomes of public-service organizations with adoption of IWE framework, which are consistent with previous research (Abdelwahed et al., 2023; Faliza et al., 2024; Idris, 2023). This study highlights that the main socio-political discourse of Muslim societies must rely on Islamic values.

Results of the current study found that JC significantly relates to employees' JP, which supports the second hypothesis (H2). Employees were found to favor implementing JC in Pakistan's administrative structure for better outcomes. This study found results regarding JC dimensions like my planning was optimal (JP5), I took on challenging work tasks when available (JP8), I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date (JP9), I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date (JP10), and I came up with creative solutions to new problems (JP11). Moreover, findings of this study provide robust support for a noteworthy association between JC and JP (H2 supported), consistent with recent studies.

This study uses SDT on the concept of psychological needs, social context, motivation, and human behavior. Accordingly, recent research used SDT to determine the impact of JC on JP, wherein psychological states of JC were denoted as meaningfulness of work, responsibility for outcomes, awareness of work outcomes, and well-being (Cassia & Magno, 2024; Meynhardt et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2024). Recent research is based on SDT, which suggests that public-sector organizations must align their policies and cultures with JC. Hence, SDT underpinned the construct of JC as an indicator of JP. Findings are aligned with the groundings of OOT, on the concept of well-being of others, justice, dedication, HR connectivity, and altruism. Hence, the current study, underpinned by OOT, exemplifies the impact of IWE on JP in line with previous research. Thus, OOT underpinned IWE as an orientation in Islamic perspectives.

Limitations and Recommendations

Like other research, this study also entails certain limitations regarding the generalizability of this innovative model, which leaves room for future research. First, this study has been conducted within diverse streams like telecom, the power sector, agriculture, and other SOEs of the civil service of Pakistan. This study examined civil servants (BPS-17 to BPS-21 employees), omitting primary and secondary level employees. Hence, broad-spectrum studies may be executed within the population of supporting staff (BPS-1 to BPS-16 employees). Second, the current study is confined to a limited sample size of 340 respondents, whereas an enhanced population size may yield diverse findings. Another possible limitation is that a five-point Likert Scale has been employed, which may be enhanced to a seven-point Likert Scale for further comprehension of respondents and curtailment of response bias. These findings may be extrapolated to other developing countries to focus on PSM in their work settings. To validate this research model, employee performance from private organizations may also be incorporated into future studies. To further comprehend the context of JC and IWE, further studies are required to determine variations between JC and its various dimensions stated earlier throughout public organizations. Similarly, the relationship between various dimensions of IWE and JP may also be considered for further studies.

Implications

Few potential implications of the study findings are human resource development, training programs that emphasize Islamic work

ethics can strengthen motivation and improve civil servant performance. Secondly, enriching job characteristics (autonomy, feedback, task significance) directly enhances performance and indirectly through public service motivation. Thirdly, civil service policies can integrate ethics and motivation into recruitment, training, and appraisal systems to boost efficiency. The study validates a performance model linking ethics, motivation, and job design, offering a framework for future organizational research.

Conclusion

This paper advanced current research through a novel mediation model by analyzing a conceptual framework encompassing IWE, JC, and PSM in public sector organizations of Pakistan. The relationship between IWE-JP and JC-JP was examined, which supported H1 and H2 by underpinning OOT and SDT, respectively. Further, the study concluded that PSM positively mediated the relationship between IWE-JP and JC-JP, supporting the mediation model (H3, H4). Highlighting the distinctive role of PSM as a mediator, this study depicted that employees experiencing both JC and IWE with PSM were more likely to perform better. A self-reported survey questionnaire was administered to federal and provincial officers. This study not only enriched existing literature but also advanced theory by identifying social learning mechanisms that connected IWE and JC to JP.

References

- Abdelwahed, N. A. A., Al Doghan, M. A., Bhatti, M. K., & Soomro, B. A. (2023). Job performance prognosis: Evaluating work engagement, workaholism, and self-efficacy. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11, e1996. <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i11.1996>
- Aflah, K. N., Suharnomo, S., Fuad, M. M., & Mursid, A. (2021). Islamic work ethics and employee performance: The role of Islamic motivation, affective commitment, and job satisfaction. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8, 997-1007. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no1.997>
- Al Smadi, A. N., Amaran, S., Abugabah, A., & Alqudah, N. (2023). An examination of the mediating effect of Islamic work ethic (IWE) on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance in Arab work environment. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 23, 59-77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14705958221120343>
- Antoni, S. (2024). Analysis the influence of Islamic work ethics and compensation suitability to fraud accountancy. *Expansion: Journal of Economics, Finance, Banking & Accounting*, 16(1), 1-15.

- Aslam, M. A., & Li, Z. (2025). A sustainable approach to boost resilience in fast-moving consumer goods: The critical role of suppliers and transportation capacity explored through PLS-SEM and NCA. *Sustainability*, 17, 2625. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17062625>
- Badar, K., Aboramadan, M., Alhabib, W., Dahleez, K. A., & Farao, C. (2024). Does employee relations climate mediate the effect of Islamic work ethics on organizational performance? Evidence from Qatar. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, 15(8), 1205-1221. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-07-2022-0164>
- Bhutta, E., Mahmood, K., & Rehman, C. A. (2024). Association between employee motivation and performance: A study of Pakistan's public sector. *Journal of Public Policy Practitioners*, 3(2), 112-132. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jppp.32.05>
- Buldan, H., Hamid, E. S., Sriyana, J., & Tohirin, A. (2021). The role of Islamic business ethics and market condition on organizational performance. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8, 781-790. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no1.781>
- Cassia, F., & Magno, F. (2024). The value of self-determination theory in marketing studies: Insights from the application of PLS-SEM and NCA to anti-food waste apps. *Journal of Business Research*, 172, 114454. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114454>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2271-7>
- Elahi, M., Ahmad, M. S., & Aamir, M. F. (2020). Human resource management practices and project success in hydel projects of Pakistan: Moderation of Islamic work ethics and country of origin. *Middle East Journal of Management*, 7, 425-451. <https://doi.org/10.1504/MEJM.2020.109680>
- Evans, P., Vansteenkiste, M., Parker, P., Kingsford-Smith, A., & Zhou, S. (2024). Cognitive load theory and its relationships with motivation: A self-determination theory perspective. *Educational Psychology Review*, 36, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-023-09841-2>
- Faliza, N., Setiawan, R., & Agustina, W. (2024). The effect of leadership effectiveness and Islamic work motivation on organization performance with Islamic work ethics as a moderating variable. *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal*, 6, 409-425.
- Franke, G., & Sarstedt, M. (2019). Heuristics versus statistics in discriminant validity testing: A comparison of four procedures. *Internet Research*, 29, 430-447. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-12-2017-0515>
- Gu, M., Li Tan, J. H., Amin, M., Mostafiz, M. I., & Yeoh, K. K. (2022). Revisiting the moderating role of culture between job characteristics and

- job satisfaction: A multilevel analysis of 33 countries. *Employee Relations*, 44, 70-93. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-03-2020-0099>
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1975). Development of the Job Diagnostic Survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60(2), 159-170. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0076546>
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., Gudergan, S. P., Fischer, A., Nitzl, C., & Menictas, C. (2019). Partial least squares structural equation modeling-based discrete choice modeling: An illustration in modeling retailer choice. *Business Research*, 12, 115-142.
- Ibrahim, M., & Idris, S. (2023). Islamic work ethics in modern organizations: The mediating role of organizational culture. *Indatu Journal of Management and Accounting*, 1(2), 43-50. <https://doi.org/10.60084/ijma.v1i2.93>
- Jiang, X., & Wei, Y. (2024). Linking servant leadership to followers' thriving at work: Self-determination theory perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1384110. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1384110>
- Johari, J., Che Mit, D. A., & Yahya, K. K. (2010). Construct validation of the job characteristics scale in the Malaysian public service setting. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 6, 372-384.
- Kibambila, V. K. (2024). Job characteristics and work engagement among secondary school teachers: The moderating role of co-worker support. *African Business Management Journal*, 2, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.58548/2024abmj21.0114>
- Koopmans, L., Coffeng, J. K., Bernaards, C. M., Boot, C. R., Hildebrandt, V. H., de Vet, H. C., & van der Beek, A. J. (2014). Responsiveness of the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire. *BMC Public Health*, 14, 513. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-14-513>
- Krijgsheld, M., Tummers, L. G., & Scheepers, F. E. (2022). Job performance in healthcare: A systematic review. *BMC Health Services Research*, 22, 149. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-021-07357-5>
- Kupers, E., de Boer, A., Bakker, A., de Jong, F., & Minnaert, A. (2024). Explaining teachers' behavioural intentions towards differentiated instruction for inclusion: Using the theory of planned behavior and the self-determination theory. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 39, 638-647. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2023.2263717>
- Lee, D. Y., & Jo, Y. (2023). The job demands-resources model and performance: The mediating role of employee engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1194018. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1194018>
- Meglino, B. M., & Korsgaard, A. (2005). Considering rational self-interest as a disposition: Organizational implications of other orientation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(6), 946-959. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.6.946>
- Meynhardt, T., Hermann, C., & Bardeli, J. (2024). Connecting value creation for society with work engagement: The relevance of an organization's

- public value as an extension of the job characteristics model. *Current Psychology*, 43, 23260-23277. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-05922-9>
- Mussagulova, A., & Van der Wal, Z. (2021). "All still quiet on the non-Western front?" Non-Western public service motivation scholarship: 2015-2020. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, 43, 23-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23276665.2020.1836977>
- Nkansah, D., Gyimah, R., Agyemfour-Agyemang Sarpong, D., & Annan, J. K. (2024). Nexus between employee engagement and job performance: A study of MSMEs in Ghana during COVID-19: The moderating roles of job demand and job resources. *Jindal Management Journal*, 13(1), 30-56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/22786821231188026>
- Nunes, P. M., Proença, T., & Carozzo-Todaro, M. E. (2024). A systematic review on well-being and ill-being in working contexts: Contributions of self-determination theory. *Personnel Review*, 53, 375-419. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-11-2021-0812>
- Pakistan Public Administration Research Centre. (2023). *Annual statistical bulletin of federal government employees for 2020–21*. Establishment Division, Government of Pakistan.
- Perry, J. L. (1996). Measuring public service motivation: An assessment of construct reliability and validity. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 6, 5-22. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a024303>
- Perry, J. L., & Hondeghem, A. (2008). Building theory and empirical evidence about public service motivation. *International Public Management Journal*, 11(1), 3-12.
- Perry, J. L., & Wise, L. R. (1990). The motivational bases of public service. *Public Administration Review*, 50, 367-373. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/976618>
- Person, R. J., Jr. (2023). *The relationship between job characteristics, job satisfaction, and turnover intent of Air Force cyberspace employees* [Doctoral dissertation, Wilmington University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Publication No. 30318096)
- Pratikto, H., Taufiq, A., Voak, A., Deuraseh, N., Nur, H., Dahlan, W., & Purnomo, A. (2021). *Halal development: Trends, opportunities and challenges*. CRC Press. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003189282>
- Putri, D. R., & Zulkarnain, A. A. A. (2021). The effect of job crafting on work engagement with perceived organizational support as moderator in Bank Sumut head office. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*, 2, 170-177.
- Qasim, M., Rizvi, T. H., & Irshad, M. (2020). Impact of ethical leadership on task performance and organizational citizenship behavior: Moderating role of Islamic work ethics. *Journal of Management Research*, 7(2), 166-193.

- Sabra, R. Y. H. (2020). Impact of job characteristics on job performance in Greater Amman Municipality. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 20, 1-10.
- Shang, Y., Pan, Y., & Richards, M. (2023). Facilitating or inhibiting? The role of enterprise social media use in job performance. *Information Technology & People*, 36, 2338-2360. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-04-2021-0268>
- Suryani, S., Sudrajat, B., Hendryadi, H., Saihu, M., Amalia, E., & Fathoni, M. A. (2023). Development of thriving at work and organizational citizenship behavior through Islamic work ethics and humble leadership. *Asian Journal of Business Ethics*, 12, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13520-022-00160-3>
- Tcharmtchi, M. H., Kumar, S., Rama, J., Rissmiller, B., Castro, D., & Thammasitboon, S. (2023). Job characteristics that enrich clinician-educators' career: A theory-informed exploratory survey. *Medical Education Online*, 28(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10872981.2022.2158528>
- Usman, A., Hanif, M. Z., & Aamish, A. U. (2024). Exploring the impact of Islamic work ethic on job performance of public sector employees: A moderated parallel mediation approach. *Indus Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(2), 565-584. <https://doi.org/10.59075/ijss.v2i2.407>
- Wang, J., Liu, S., Qu, X., He, X., Zhang, L., Guo, K., & Zhu, X. (2023). Nurses' colleague solidarity and job performance: Mediating effect of positive emotion and turnover intention. *Safety and Health at Work*, 14(3), 309-316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shaw.2023.06.001>
- Widana, G. O., & Ramadhani, I. P. (2024). The effect of Islamic work ethics on entrepreneurial intention and academic performance. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 12, e3246. <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v12i2.3246>
- Yousef, D. A. (2000). Organizational commitment as a mediator of the relationship between Islamic work ethic and attitudes toward organizational change. *Human Relations*, 53, 513-537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700534003>
- Yu, J. (2023). Agency autonomy, public service motivation, and organizational performance. *Public Management Review*, 25, 522-548. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2021.1980290>
- Zaim, H., Demir, A., & Budur, T. (2021). Ethical leadership, effectiveness and team performance: An Islamic perspective. *Middle East Journal of Management*, 8, 42-66. <https://doi.org/10.1504/MEJM.2021.111991>
- Zheng, A., Hoff, K. A., Hanna, A., Einarsdóttir, S., Rounds, J., & Briley, D. A. (2024). Job characteristics and personality change in young adulthood: A 12-year longitudinal study and replication. *Journal of Personality*, 92, 298-315.

Received 08 June 2026

Revision received 12 August 2026