

Antecedents of Task performance and Employee Turnover: What is Mediating Role of Cognitive Trust?

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to explore the mediating function of cognitive trust (CT) on leadership and remuneration and employee task performance and employee turnover intention. This research selected bank employees as sample and received their responses in form of survey and SmartPLS 3.0 was utilized to analyze the collected data. The outcomes of this study found that there was a significant role of mediation of cognitive trust between leadership and task performance and the relationship was positive. In addition, there was negative relationship between leadership and employee turnover intention with the mediation of cognitive trust. In addition, remuneration has and task performance has significant positive relationship with the mediation of cognitive trust and significant negative relationship between remuneration and employee turnover intention with the mediation role of cognitive trust. The significant moderating role of organizational culture is found between cognitive trust and employee task performance. Positive work-related performances of employees can be achieved by managers through giving importance to leadership, remuneration and cognitive trust. This study utilized SmartPLS 3.0 for analysis due to its precise and unique measures such as measurement model that do not considers co-variances as reliable. Furthermore, in the giving setting none of study tested the mediating role of cognitive trust with the current study proposed model.

Keywords: Cognitive trust, Task Performance, Employee Turnover, Leadership, remuneration

INTRODUCTION

Banking sector is contributing significantly in the economy of Pakistan like many other countries. Banking sector in Pakistan remained stable and helped the country's economy during world financial crisis. And at that time the banking sector was considered under high pressure around the globe (Humphrey, 2016). Highly demanding and complex jobs are provided to the employees by the banking sector being a service sector. There is a significance of banking industry in customer services and employees of the banks play key role in the growth and reputation of banks. Every transaction of banking sector has significance for its own progress as well as for the financial strength of the country. A wide range of services is offered by the banking sector in Pakistan

due to which it has high growth as compared to other sectors. According to Shujahat *et al.* (2017) however, there are different factors which contribute in the competitiveness of the banking sectors including commitment, loyalty and employees' task performance. Because banking sector offers services that are related to human interaction and knowledge intensive which is the real logic behind it.

Moreover, if managers do not satisfy their employees then employees are not ready to make the customers happy while providing services to them (Safavi & Karatepe, 2018). And high turnover of employees is observed at the same time in banking sector which results losing current and potential customers which is a great loss for the sustainability of the organizations. Employees' poor task performance and turnover happens when managers do not give value to the employees and use them like machines to get the market advantage. There are certain other issues of employees such as long working hours, work overload and managers' poor relations with the employees which become the reason of employees' poor task performance and high turnover in banking sector. In addition, employees of banks feel that they have long working hours and heavy workload for their job completion as compared to other sectors and these tremendous challenges come in front of them when they interact with employees working in different sectors' organizations. It is also asserted by Hailu (2018) that banking sector employees have grievances against their managers which result high employees' turnover. Moreover, it is emphasized that lack of trust in leadership and poor leadership create problems for banking sector's employees resulting leaving jobs and poor task performance. The organizational success is based on level of turnover and task performance of the employees collectively. Poor task performance and employee turnover have been researched already but the cognitive trust's indirect effect has been ignored in the banking sector of Pakistan.

Moreover, after graduating business students consider banking jobs very attractive but after joining, they face challenges including help from their managers and lack of trust resulting turnover intentions and low performance. The growth and effectiveness of organizations is fueled by competent and trust worthy leadership. Employees could be convinced for extra efforts by the transformational leaders of the organizations to increase the performance of the employees (Rua, Manuel & Costa Araújo, 2016). Employees' cognitive trust could be enhanced by leadership because their demonstrating behaviors which are not engender employees' respect and trust for leader and make employees more arrogant of their leadership.

This research study is an effort to look into the bridge between employees' task performance, leadership and employees' turnover intention. In addition, this study examines the mediating role of cognitive trust. The perceived values and beliefs of subordinates are possible to change by leadership that increases the organizational growth and benefits (Wang, Demerouti & Le Blanc, 2017). Leadership is the name of process where employees' needs such as self-esteem, safety and self-actualization are fulfilled by leaders and such things enhance the moral values of employees at the same time. This research study is conducted on the belief that leadership help their employees in an efficient manner which in result is believed to stimulate the trust of their employees and the social exchange theory delineated this reciprocation.

Logically, it can be concluded that employees' remuneration impacts their trust that further influences the employee outcomes accordingly (task performance and staff turnover intention (ET)). Zhu and Akhtar (2014a, b) supported the analysis of mediation function of cognitive trust between the work outcomes (task performance, turnover intention) and leadership and remuneration. Other mediators are recommended for examining the relationship between leadership and remuneration and task performance

and turnover intention on the basis of different contexts and cultures by Gillet and Vandenberghe (2014) for better generalization. Conversely, for examining the linkage between employee turnover intention and leadership and remuneration, many recommendations were made based on social exchange related mediators as a result, leaving room to explore cognitive trust as a mediator.

The mediation moderating and moderation mediation can be distinguished by the clear definition of moderation and mediation. The simple mediation happens when this mediation brings the two variables closer. For example, two variables b and d independent and dependent respectively are come closer due to a mediator variable of c and their relationship strength increases when a variable moderate between them. Therefore, it can be said that there is a greater difference between mediation and moderation.

How leaders support and encourage employees to increase their performance and employee retention which is a psychological process is the focus of this study. In addition, the mediation role of cognitive trust as constructs of this study. For the best outcomes of organizations and individuals, trust and leadership are equally significant. It is further indicated by Bass (1985) that social exchange process is used by leadership instead of using material or economic exchange. They encourage their employees and give importance to their needs to strengthen their performance resulting supports in decreasing the ratio of employees' turnover. It comprises the respect and concerns for the employees and provokes trust in employees for their leaders or managers due to which their priority changes from their personal goals achievement to organizational goals achievement and enhances employee retention and performance.

This study contributes while utilizing Smart PLS 3.0 to analyze data for examining the mediation of cognitive trust between leadership and remuneration and task performance and turnover intention, which are contradictory with proposition and hence highly captivating. This is known for the context aware and context based theorizing empirical studies. On the other hand, before moving towards the other parts of the study, this paper uses simple mediation; neither it uses mediated moderation nor the moderated mediation. There is distinction between above two that can be clarified by placing the mediation and moderation as suggested by different researchers (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Hayes; Preacher and Hayes, 2004; 2008). Moderation occurs when the strength of relationship of one variable is dependent on another variable and this strength between two variables is measured by the multiplication or interaction of a moderating variable with that of interaction term or independent variable. On the other hand, the bridging role of another variable important to establish the relationship between two variables, and mediation is happening, that is in between the two variables.

This is the section 1 and the remaining paper is consisted of following sections. Section 2. literature review, which explains the theoretical aspect of the study to develop hypothesis. Section 3, methodology, demonstrates the way of conducting research. Section 4, findings, discusses the hypothesis testing. Last section 5, discusses findings and concludes.

Literature Review

Leadership and Cognitive trust

The relationship between leadership and cognitive trust is extensively examined. Cognitive trust is considered significant part of leadership which sways employee outcome. Furthermore, Leadership induces cognitive trust. Though, in these researches the dimensions of trust were not given special attention. In this context, this research discusses how leadership influences employees' cognitive trusts. The followers' future convincing vision is brought by emotional appeals of inspirational motivation

characteristics of leaders. The well accepted behaviors by the society are expressed and idealized by transformational leaders which play as a key role for the followers to obtain organizational goals and vision. Leaders facilitate their followers by utilizing intellectual inspiration to resolve their issues with innovative thoughts (Hussain et al., 2018). Leaders understand the needs of their followers by noticing, listening and taking their feedbacks individually and by offering individualized significance. They encourage and motivate their employees by their behaviors to boost their performance and wield extra efforts (Braun et al., 2013). Cognitive trust is one of the tools used by leaders to support and encourage their employee to excel their task performance and turnover intention.

Human relationship is established through trust. The collaborative environment is flourished which provides the sense of security and attachment (Hubbard & Matthews, 2017). Trust plays key role to formulate strong relationship between employee and managers. The social exchange relation between employee and managers is measured through the trust of employee on managers. Employee better performance is dependent on the close relationship between trust and leadership that may result an organization overall success. Employees perception can be changed through the sacrifices of leaders' individual opportunities over their employee. Employees' retention and performance is the result of their trust on their leaders. In addition, cognitive trust refers the level of confidence of the employee towards their leaders' trustworthiness and dependability. Moreover, cognitive trust refers to leaders' reliability and integrity. On the other hand, Zhu and Akhtar (2014a, b) asserted that two psychological processes including affect and cognitive are produced through trust. According to Wang, Qiu, Kim & Benbasat (2016) described that a long-term emotional bond is established through affect-based trust and this is known as open ended relationship. Moreover, leaders through cognitive realm stir up their employees for multiple intentions. Someone's reputations namely, competency, track record, reliability and integrity are derived from observation and this is the result of cognitive based trust in form of confidence. Transformational leaders establish cognitive based trust through written dialogues and communication. They also require ideas from their employees to build their confidence. Employees contribute their struggle to materialize the organization vision when they have absolute perception of their leaders' vision.

Remuneration and Cognitive Trust

Remuneration and compensation play a key role in building the employees' trust towards the organization in form of performance (Shafiq, Zia-ur-Rehman & Rashid, 2013). As the employees' remuneration is increased by the top management, they feel happy and they become loyal to their job and their employer and vice versa (Baledi & Saed, 2017). A research study further added that the employee's loyalty which is shown in the form of performance and low turnover intention is based on compensation which is paid to employees they feel comfort (Tzafir, 2005). Moreover, as the level of compensation or remuneration increases it forces the employees to stick with the organization and not to leave the organization because it is the surety that organization takes care of you and it is loyal with you to compensate you for your wishes and demands (Whitener, 1997). Therefore, it is concluded that remuneration strengthen the trust of employees positively which ultimately affects the employee's performance and lower their turnover intention.

Cognitive Trust and Task performance

Leaders encourage their employees' performance through their vision, norms and charisma. Employees' satisfaction and task performance is increased by transformational leaders through their supportive environment. The dimensions of

leadership allow the leaders to play a role to convey vision to their employees, hence augmenting their trust to make deal with innovation and adaption. Leaders allocate significant tasks to their employees by confronting their employees' communicating confidence regarding potential objectives and loft standards (Carter *et al.* 2013). Leaders are capable to recognize their employees' needs about their guidance, support, change and creativity to excel their task performance. According to Dust et al. (2014), employees take the guidance of their leaders to understand the solution for required challenges which directly or indirectly affect their task performance.

Multiple studies tested the relationship between leadership and task performance (Aryee *et al.*, 2012; Hussain et al., 2018). Current study explored the cognitive trust as mediator to check the relationship between leadership and task performance. In addition, trust is used as mediator between employees and transformational leaders (Braun *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, it is asserted by a researcher that the relationship between employees and managers can be strengthening through trust. It was also found that socio emotions associate with trust which directly influences the task performance of employees.

Furthermore, it is indicated by a research that instead of employee's sociability, cognitive ability of employees, determine their task performance. Additionally, the sense of security is developed by cognitive trust, resulting employees comfort ability with leaders to hold task related issues.

Employees exert more efforts when leaders motivate them and encourage them through their vision and capabilities. Employees try to achieve their job-related goals efficiently and effectively according to the requirement of their managers or leaders who are transformational in their nature. They feel safety due to cognitive trust and they feel comfort talking to their leaders while doing their tasks (Chen *et al.*, 2014). And when they complete their jobs very well, they have are praised by their managers sometime in form of monetary benefits sometimes non-monetary forms due to which level of trust for their organizations enhances.

Cognitive trust and employee turnover intention.

Employee's turnover purely depends upon the relationship between employees and managers. The weak relation and absence of trust between employees and managers force employees to quit from the organization. The chance that employee will leave the organization is the turnover intention and it creates circumstances for real turnover (Park and Shaw, 2013). Employees' turnover intention is considered the final stage of employees' decision to leave for better alternative. In banking sector, employees' turnover is very costly, due to prolonged recruitment, selection and training process of new employees where banks spend a lot of their financial resources. Employees' turnover is examined at extensive level by various studies (Hughes *et al.*, 2010; Hussain et al., 2018). It is viewed as a manifestation of employees while leaving their jobs before completing their contracts specified period. It is explained by Choi et al. (2012) that turnover is divided into two namely involuntary and voluntary turnover. In addition, profitability and efficiency can be negatively affected by high turnover rate of an organization, the inexperience employees are selected and experience employees leave then organizations also face. Employees' turnover refers how long they reside in the firm or proportion of firm losses and gains of employees. There are number of factors affecting employees' turnover including better alternatives for expansion, better financial package, harmful work environment, lack of trust on management and heavy workload but still there is no agreement which tends to turnover. Therefore, it is recommended by Zhu and Akhtar (2014a, b) to investigate the cognitive trust as mediator. Moreover, Chiang and Wang 2012 asserted that followers' trust is influenced

by the behaviors of their leadership. It has also been observed by Zhu and Akhtar (2014a, b) that different psychological processes such as cognitive trust.

Organizational Culture

Human performance is derived through the positive and continuous learning culture of the organization (Gilley & Maycunich, 2000). The individual employees' systematic thinking and expertise are the part of organizational culture which in fact builds the trust the employees and at end it increases the motivation of employees towards their performance and decrement in their turnover intention (Moilanen, 2005). Many studies found that organizational values and culture saturate the performance of employees due to their unlimited trust on the organization (MacTavish and Kolb, 2008; Kenny, 2006). Organizational culture influences the trust as well as the performance of the employees. In addition, organizational culture encourages the organizational commitment in form of performance and turnover intention (Liao, 2006; Nonaka, von Krogh, & Voelpel, 2006). Furthermore, the organizational culture such as supportive and strategic leaders makes it more powerful and strong which facilitates the employees' engagement towards their performance (Som, King, Kolb, 2009). Following hypotheses are developed based on forgoing discussion.

H1. Leadership has positive significant impact on cognitive trust in banking sector.

H2. Remuneration has positive significant impact on cognitive trust in banking sector.

H3. Cognitive trust mediates the relationship significantly between leadership and task performance in banking sector.

H4. Cognitive trust mediates the relationship significantly between leadership and employee turnover intention in banking sector.

H5. Cognitive trust mediates the relationship significantly between Remuneration and employee task performance in banking sector.

H6. Cognitive trust mediates the relationship significantly between remuneration and employee turnover intention in banking sector.

H7. Organizational culture moderates the relationship between cognitive trust and employee task performance in banking sector.

Research Methodology

This research is quantitative in nature (Raof et al., 2021; Abdulmuhsin et al., 2021; Hameed et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2020; Nuseir et al., 2020; Asada et al., 2020; Junoh et al., 2019; Basheer et al., 2019a; Muneer et al., 2019; Basheer et al., 2019b; Basheer et al., 2018)). The population of this research is banking sector of employees. A convenient sampling technique is used to select the sample from the population. A sample of total 384 male and female full-time bank employees working on diverse managerial positions were selected from banks of Pakistan including both public and private banks and weighted them according to their representation. Different items scales were used to measure the variables which were adapted from the past studies. A five-point Likert scale was used. To analyze the data collected, Smart PLS 3.0 is used. The mediating variable is used in the model to avoid discriminant validity. All those items containing outer loading less than 7.0 and whose erasure was recovering the measurement model were subjected to deletion (Kianto *et al.*, 2016).

Results

This section describes the outcomes with reference to the mediating roles of cognitive trust on the relationship between leadership, remuneration and employee performance and turnover intention. Therefore, this section is categorized in two parts namely, research models and measurement models. The measurement model is the first part that describes the discriminant validity, convergent validity, composite reliability, indicators loadings and items reliability. However, research models are the second part

to test the mediating role of cognitive trust and employee performance and turnover intention.

Measurement models

According to wong (2013), reflective measurement model calculated by SmartPLS 3.0, which include loadings of indicators and reliabilities, discriminant validity and convergent validity. Convergent validity was measured using average variance extracted (AVE), competitive reliability (CR) and loadings through measurement model assessment. As shown in table 1, factor loading exceeded from its recommended value of 0.70 for all items. Likewise, the values of CR also surpassed the recommended value of 0.70 (as mentioned in table 2). All the values of AVE of all constructs under study go beyond the recommended values of 0.50 (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016).

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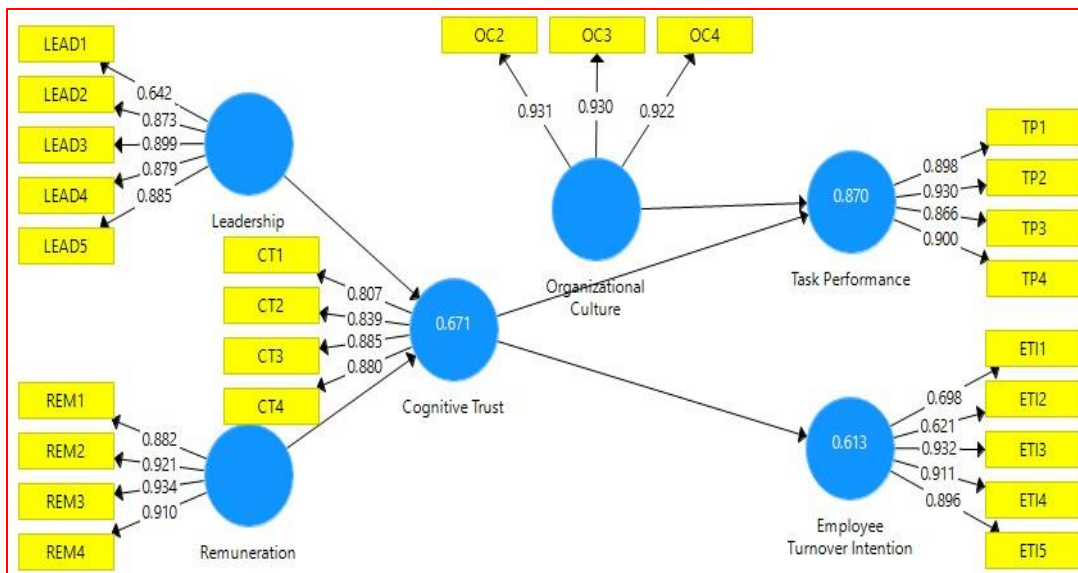


Figure 2. Measurement Model Assessment

Table 1. Factor Loading

	Cognitive Trust	Employee Turnover Intention	Leadership	Organizational Culture	Remuneration	Task Performance
CT1	0.807					
CT2	0.839					
CT3	0.885					
CT4	0.88					
ETI1		0.698				

ETI2		0.621				
ETI3		0.932				
ETI4		0.911				
ETI5		0.896				
LEA D1			0.642			
LEA D2			0.873			
LEA D3			0.899			
LEA D4			0.879			
LEA D5			0.885			
OC2				0.931		
OC3				0.93		
OC4				0.922		
REM 1					0.882	
REM 2					0.921	

REM 3					0.934	
REM 4					0.91	
TP1						0.898
TP2						0.93
TP3						0.866
TP4						0.9

Discriminant validity refers to the level to which a construct is different from other constructs (J. Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). To measure discriminant validity, one method was preferred for this study: As there are two methods Fornell & Larcker Criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and heterotraitmonotrait ratio (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). This study used HTMT ratio over Fornell and Larcker criteria. HTMT ratio in a given model for two latent variables should not exceed the threshold value of 0.9 and the parallel confidence interval up should not exceed than threshold value of 1 as shown in table 3.

Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Cognitive Trust	0.876	0.878	0.915	0.729
Employee Turnover Intention	0.88	0.929	0.91	0.675
Leadership	0.893	0.905	0.923	0.708
Organizational Culture	0.919	0.92	0.949	0.861
Remuneration	0.932	0.933	0.952	0.832
Task Performance	0.921	0.922	0.944	0.808

Table 3. HTMT

	Cognitive Trust	Employee Turnover Intention	Leadership	Organizational Culture	Remuneration	Task Performance
Cognitive Trust						
Employee Turnover Intention	0.849					
Leadership	0.818	0.856				
Organizational Culture	0.508	0.854	0.433			
Remuneration	0.811	0.765	0.886	0.422		
Task Performance	0.518	0.872	0.451	0.712	0.429	

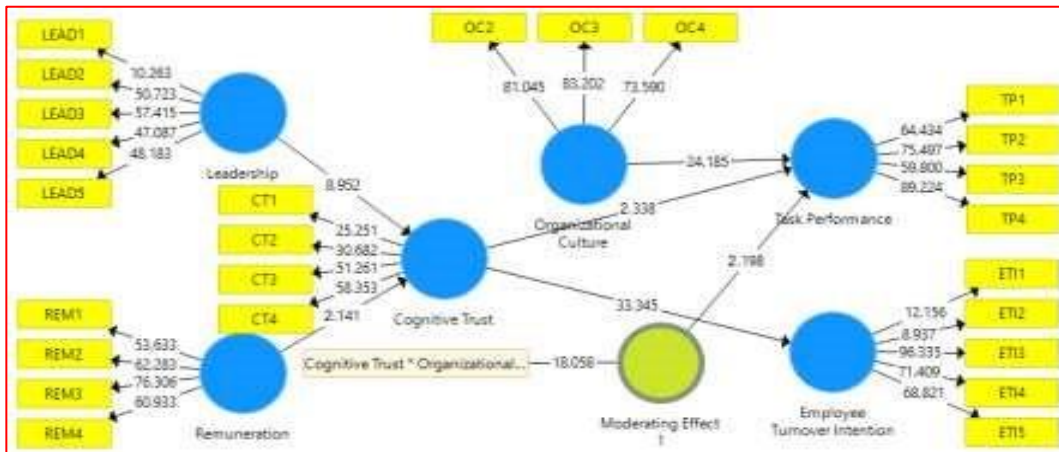


Figure 3. Structural Model Assessment
Table 4. Direct Effect Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Cognitive Trust -> Employee Turnover Intention	-0.783	-0.787	0.023	33.345	0
Cognitive Trust -> Task Performance	0.054	0.057	0.023	2.338	0.03
Leadership -> Cognitive Trust	0.807	0.799	0.09	8.952	0
Moderating Effect 1 -> Task Performance	0.009	0.01	0.009	2.198	0.037
Organizational Culture -> Task Performance	0.904	0.902	0.037	24.185	0
Remuneration -> Cognitive Trust	0.014	0.023	0.006	2.141	0.038

For the assessment of measurement model, the structural model is utilized in this research. Path coefficients including p-value and t-value are used to measure the significance of the model. The bootstrapping technique in PLS 3 is used to test all hypothesis of this study (Sarstedt, Henseler, & Christian, 2011). As shown above in table 4, cognitive trust has significant impact on the employee task performance ($t=2.338$, $p=0.03$) and employee turnover intention ($t= 33.34$, $p=.000$). Moreover, leadership ($t=8.95$, $p=0.000$) and remuneration ($t=2.141$, $p=0.03$) also has significant impact on the cognitive trust. Furthermore, it was also found that organizational culture has significant impact on the employee task performance ($t=24.18$, $p=0.000$).

Therefore, all hypotheses of this study were supported empirically (As mentioned in table 4).

Discussion

The mediation role of cognitive trust between the relationship of leadership and remuneration and employee task performance and turnover intention were proposed in this study. After evaluating the outcomes of this study, all the hypothesis having the mediation and moderation function are accepted. And these results are supported by the past study of Zhu *et al.*, 2013 where trust played mediation role between leadership and task performance and turnover intention. As for as banking sector is concerned, transformational leaders like managers change the organization and their subordinates because they take practical actions which summon CT. In addition, outcomes show positive mediation of cognitive trust between leadership and employee task performance. It was similar to what was hypothesized. It was also similar to the findings of existing studies where the relationship between leadership and employee task performance was mediated by trust (Tremblay, 2010). Therefore, this proposition was accepted due to positive relationship between all variables. Finally the negative mediation of cognitive trust was found between leadership and employee turnover intention. It was also similar to the hypothesis developed from literature and similar from findings of past studies (Fr and Good, 2013; Goodwin *et al.*, 2011 and Zhu *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, these hypotheses also accepted due to positive relationship between cognitive trust and employee task performance and negative relationship between cognitive trust and turnover intention. Secondly, there might be the chances of mediating moderating variables that may change relationship of two variables negative to positive and vice versa. Such variables may be tested and explored in future research as well. For example, in organizational justice followers' perception is one of the variables to explain the mechanism of causality that might be modifying the hypothesized relationship amid cognitive trust and employee outcomes form negative to positive and positive to negative, it is consistent that cognitive trust might be interrelating with that of negative perception of organizational justice change the suggested relationship of the banks. Subjective studies demonstrate that the policies of banks about sales commission are similar for all bank branches regardless of the non-industrial and industrial areas. Therefore, those employees which are serving in industrial zones are getting more sales commission than those working in non-industrial zones and like this, the organizational justice negative perception, and all variables causality mechanism can easily tested and explained.

Contribution

This study is contributing in different ways. Firstly, it checked the cognitive trust mediating role on the association amid leadership and employee task performance and turnover intention. Such combination never been tested before. Secondly, this study analyzed its collected data utilized very updated analysis tool SmartPLS 3. And to the best of author's knowledge, none of the research reviewed so far as done in this study. It also resolves the limitation of analysis of all past studies. Fourthly, this study is intriguing the inverse relationship against the hypothesized one between dependent variables and mediating variables. Therefore, this is a cycle of variables that might be continued. Research limitations and future recommendations There are certain limitations of this study which are as follows. Two dependent variables is the first limitation of this study. Other than these two such as extra role behavior and innovative behavior should be address in the future research. Secondly, the causality directions are not determine with hundred percent while conducting cross sectional which is used by this study. The longitudinal design studies could be focused by future studies. This study is conducted in Pakistan' context: baking sector. Therefore, other sectors can be considered also in future research. Moreover, this study may help to explore whether present research outcomes can be

reproduced in the peculiar culture. This study has some future recommendations which are as follows. The potential contextual factors including organizational, micro and macro such as team work, employee personality and leaders' tenure which may support to strengthen the mediating effect of trust between leadership and employee performance. The mediating effect of cognitive trust between different leadership styles leadership and different employees' outcomes can be further explored in future research.

Conclusion

According to the knowledge of author, many studies has been conducted on trust as mediating roles but none of the study used this unique model used in this study. This concluded based on the findings that first, leadership has influence on employee task performance and employee turnover intention with the mediating role of cognitive trust. Leadership become significant constructs of employee task performance and employee turnover intention through cognitive trust path. And such commitment as a result can enhance employee outcome which in turn increase the firm performance. There is positive and negative mediation of cognitive trust between employee task performance and employee turnover intention due to the negative relationship between the dimensions of ET and trust. It recommends some moderating, mediating, mediated moderation and moderated mediation constructs like leaders' own experience, employees' salary, competitive position, quitting culture in organization, organizational justice and individual knowledge.

Cumulating all such points, number of appealing implications for literature exists. First of all, the qualitative studies in future can explore the management discipline related theories and should form new context contingent theories to describe the management phenomena. The context contingent and context aware quantitative and empirical studies should be carried under the roof of prevalent theories.

Secondly, future studies should focus on the discussion and contextual results while collecting demographic data for subsequent use in quantitative data analysis and should remain away from considering direct and mediation relationships only. Finally, those results of current study which are against the literature require systematic literature within related field of HRM and knowledge management (Sergeeva and Andreeva, 2016).

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