



The Relationship Between Organizational Resources and Work Engagement: The Mediating Role of Service Climate as a Predictor of Performance and Loyalty in Shopping Malls of Pakistan

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Abstract

This article introduces the emerging concept of service climate that is characterized as a mediating role of employee performance and customer loyalty. Organizational resources and work engagement are independent variables that predict service climate as a mediating variable and further it predicts employee performance and customer loyalty. The results show that employees with high level of work engagement results in high employee performance. We did approach N=325 of service climate as mediator from 30 shopping malls (including local and branded) and filled questionnaire in organizational resources, work engagement and service climate perspective. There was collected data from customers when they were checked out to malls (about employee performance and customer loyalty N=1080). We used structural equation modeling analysis and the data showed a potentially alternate effect between service climate and customer loyalty. Finally, article discusses limitations and weaknesses including future directions

Keywords: Organizational resources, work engagement, service climate, performance, loyalty.

Introduction

All around the world, organizations endeavour to maintain their quality and also to increment competitive advantage by focusing on the quality and key elements of the service and products. In recent years dramatic advancement is seen in international competition and customer standards. Previous studies indicated that service quality conclusively have influenced the customer loyalty and sooner or later such organizations tend to gain higher profits as compared to others (Rust & Zahorik, 1993; Storbacka, Strandvik, & Grönroos, 1994). A service

climate main objective is to monitor service quality which in long run also leaves impact on the customers. Therefore, it emphasizes on efforts put by service employees and their ability to deliver the quality service, which helps organizations to earn positive experience and positive perception of a service quality by customers. The employee common approach and attitude towards the practices, programs, policies and their behaviors which are supported, expected and encouraged by the corporation in view of a customer service and its quality (Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Hence, service climate is cumulative and shared approach. Organization develops this phenomenon through practices which focus on service climate, the reaction of employees towards the practices of service quality, which is composed of the employee emotional and motivational acknowledgment. It is essential to develop proper understanding of the development service climate and convey it to employees in a healthy organizational setting. It is also assumed that positive service climate influences on the employee performance that result in a better customer relation. Finally, customer loyalty will increase towards organization, once they experience the positive employee performance.

The objective of this research paper is to check the mediating role of service climate among other variables which are organization resources and work engagement from employee point of view as well as its influence on employee performance and customer loyalty from customer point of view.

Literature review

1.1 Organizational Resources impact on Service Climate

In empirical studies regarding service climate predictors have primarily aimed organizational elements (Schneider et al., 1998) comparatively to psychological predictors. Generally, in the impression, facilities and other conditions builds up in the organization which help and put effort to solve the problems and hurdles which are acquiring at work (Burke, Rupinski, Dunlap, & Davison, 1996; Schoorman, 1988) As well as human resources policies (Schneider & Bowen, 1993) furthermore Author proposed, the basic concern that are necessary although not satisfactory source for service climate (Schneider et al., 1998). In simple words, generally service climate background also includes features which are subjective rather than only including human resources practices. Development of a climate depends on a factor that how engaged and motivated employees feel at their work. This study included variables both from human resource practices that are organizational resources and work engagement.

Organizational resources point out the element of an employee which is useful and operative for gaining and completing employee targets, could also help reduce the cost on employee demand, psychological costs and other costs which are associated with psychological cost and in the end could encourage personal growth, culture and improvement (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). The researcher mentioned in the employee characteristic theory that resources have a power to influence motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

Internal resources of the organization are another skill which helps organization more outcomes from inputs. A firm with outstanding resources has an enhanced chance of finding a suitable partner for any type of alliance it contemplates (Caruana, 1997) In the long run, organizational resource helps the organization to increase its profits. Similarly, organization can use its profits to obtain desirable technology capability, marketing capability and financial resources, which have good impact on internal resources (Burt, 2009).

1.2 Work Engagement impact on Service Climate

Author reported the definition of engagement “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person’s ‘preferred self’ in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional) and active, full performances”(Kahn, 1990). According to author, two demanding fundamentals of role engagement which are attention and absorption (Rothbard, 2001). In this research article, there was trying to understand the motivational aspect of engagement, presented as a “positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”(Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). By definition of vigor indicates upper level of energy and mental flexibility and the ability to face the difficulties at work. Dedication is described in the impression of the understanding, devotion, encouragement, dignity and daring at employee, absorption is buildup of completely focused, ecstatic and highly engaged employees in their work where work is more pleasant and when it starts to feel hard to detach themselves from work.

Present studies that supported this aspect, have determined model of three factors of work engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001; Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró, & Grau, 2000; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Martinez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002; Schaufeli, Salanova, et al., 2002) Anyhow, previous studies have shown the effect of work engagement and has positive influence on increasing employees’ rate of satisfaction, lower rate of absenteeism, less employee turnover, highly committed employees and high organizational performance (Salanova, Llorens, Cifre, Martínez, & Schaufeli, 2003; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002; Schaufeli, Salanova, et al., 2002). Less is known regarding the effects of engagement on service climate. Schneider and colleagues have proposed that an environment which comfort and welfare employees also encourage the element of service climate(Schneider & Bowen, 1993; Schneider et al., 1998). Anyhow there is lack of empirical evidence for this concept. It is logical to expect that when an employee will feel healthy, prosperity and courageous in the work environment, they will also develop positive perceptions regarding their work description and service climate. Studies which are conducted on psychosocial aspects of organization have indicated results that, when people work together in the same environment they commonly tend to share believes and experiences and later on that show the similar level of motivation and behavior towards work (George, 1990; González-Romá, Peiró, Subirats, & Mañas, 2000); sense cumulative feelings, share moods, or all group is affective by same issue(Barsade, 2002; Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Peiró, González-Romá, Ripoll, & Gracia, 2001).

Customer Experiences

2.1: Employee Performance

One of the main task of the employee is to have good interaction with their customers as well as the quality of service also depends on the ability. Then employees are able to provide quality interaction. Common perception of the employees and their engagement towards quality service they are providing, it is assumed that they will achieve better response with customer who will later receive good feedback regarding employee performance. Hence, there is very little empirical evidence on this effect. Generally, research has analyzed the relationship of these two variables – service climate and performance, by only using self-reports which were only filled by employees, there is no consideration and no involvement of the one who is receiving the service. This study contained element of the employee

performance by the opinion of the customer, it is suggested that if the service is good then employee performance would be good too as perception by customer.

2.2 Customer Loyalty:

Developing strong bond between employees and their customers is a strategy to maximize customer loyalty (Burke, Finkelstein, & Dusig, 1999). Behavioral establishment is customer loyalty (Hallowell, 1996). Previous research has suggested that outstanding performance positively influence customer loyalty and in the impression that better performance anticipate customer loyalty (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990; Kumar, 2002). Research has acknowledged one more predictor for customer loyalty which is service climate has shown positive impact on loyalty (Schneider, Ashworth, Higgs, & Carr, 1996). Reasonably, customer loyalty can be influenced by service climate. Therefore, service climate might operate on customer loyalty over the appraisal of employee performance (but there is no direct relation). Hence, there is no previous evidence which indicated this theory. In the current research study, we pursued a familiar belief in research of service quality that recommends a casual direction working from employee perspective towards customer experience (Burke et al., 1999). Anyhow, (Schneider et al., 1998) tested a different model, and study that customer perceptions also has impact on the employee's attitude comparatively employees are encouraged to do their task as they want to provide quality service to their customer and they also listen to customer's opinion to help them improve their service quality. Previous research has backed up the hypothesis that customers leave impact on the employees (RYAN, Schmit, & Johnson, 1996). Few researchers also mention cycle of success, which represent that successful cycle of customers can be beneficial in the long run. They mention this concept or relationships between employee and customer as mirrors, which means it has reciprocal effect (Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997). Likewise, studies suggested that there is reciprocal bond between service climate and customer perception regarding the service quality. They mentioned that more research need to be done on this area and especially there is a need of empirical evidence from customer experience. In this research study, we also include this aspect from customer experiences which is indicated as customer loyalty (Schneider et al., 1998).

Hypotheses

Hence from the literature review we concluded the following hypothesis:

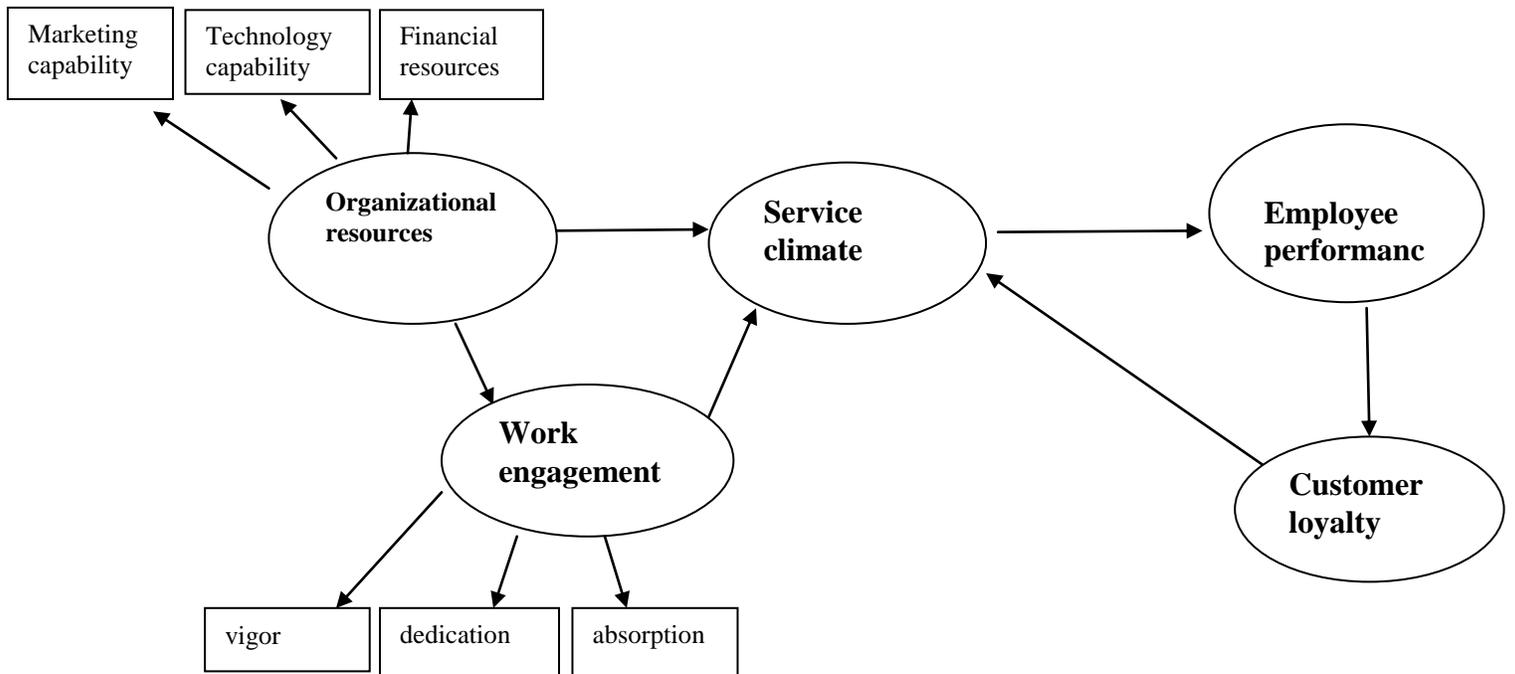
H1: Organizational resources and work engagement has the mediator -- service climate and in return, employee performance and customer loyalty on the other side.

H2: Work engagement act as a mediator in a relationship between organizational resources and service climate.

H3: Employee performance that is perceived by the customers, act as a mediator between service climate and customer loyalty.

H4: Service climate and customer loyalty has reciprocal influence on each other.

Framework



Methodology

Independent variables namely: organizational resources (marketing capability, technology capability and financial resources) and work engagement (vigor, dedication, absorption) were measured by 10 and 17 items respectively. 325 employees were participated in this research. There were employee sample of 84% men (273 male) and 16% of women (52 female) that showed an average age of 28 years. We gathered data from every level of employee shop-keeper to manager. The response rate was 89%. There were gathered customer sample of 1080. There were 45% men (486 male) and 55% women (594 female) invited to participate in this study. From all shopping malls, only those customers were participated which had visited there at-least 3 times. Questionnaires were designed for both employees and customers. The questionnaire took place of 15 minutes for employees and 10 minutes for customers. Items are developed in part by (BROWN & MITCHELL, 1988, 1991) and (Peters, O'Connor, & Eulberg, 1985) on employee performance. The results showed a scale composed of three categories of organizational resources (marketing capability, financial resources and technology capability). There were 10 items (3 items marketing capability, 3 items financial resources and 4 items technology capability) see table 1 below. We gathered information from employees about the level to which organizational marketing and financial resources had been important in promoting and facilitating employee performance and helped to diminish hurdles at job in the past. There were used 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All items are presented in the questionnaire below. All items are scaled .90, .84, and .89 respectively for marketing, technology and financial capability in Cronbach's alphas. There were assessed work engagement with (Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002). There were 17 items measured namely (vigor 6 items, dedication 5 items and absorption 6 items). There were used 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The results showed high scores on all items of engagement. All items are presented in the questionnaire below. All items are .76, .72 and .78 in Cronbach's alphas for vigor, dedication and absorption.

There were assessed service climate with a internal Cronbach's alpha= 0.85 in the 5-point Likert scale. In employee performance, the internal consistency Cronbach's alpha was 0.86. There was assessed Customer loyalty with 3 items during their exit time to shopping malls. An adaptation by (Martínez-Tur, Ramos, Peiró, & García-Buades, 2001) was used. The results indicated high scores of customer loyalty. There was 0.88 internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for customer loyalty (table 1 below).

Aggregated Measures

We used aggregated measure of variables in research and intraclass correlation coefficients 1 and 2. With ICC1 and ICC2, we used group interrater agreement (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984) and average deviation indexes ADI (Burke et al., 1999). In organizational study, the mediation intra-class correlation coefficient ICC (1) value of .12 is recommended by (James, 1982). The study showed in employee and customers variables, the average value of .23 in ICC 1 and that range from .11 in vigor to .39 in service climate. In studies, the vigor fell down below to .12 that was recommended. (Glick, 1985) recommended a cutoff of .60 for ICC(2). Across all variables in our study, the average ICC(2) value was .83, ranging from .62 in vigor to .95 in dedication. All variables met the criteria of .60. Also, rwg (James et al., 1984) estimates ranging from .68 to .94 (M =.79). In the last, the ADI coefficient (Burke et al., 1999) value was .22, ranging from .15 in vigor to .31 in performance. Finally, customer and employee performance were added in MANOVA. The multivariate outcome showed that units differed significantly on customer and performances, $F=3.56$, and $p < .001$. We found sufficient empirical support in our statistics to aggregate scores of our variables at our research.

The results showed mean values, standard deviations, final internal consistencies, and inter correlations of all items in scale. Work engagement (vigor, absorption and dedication) were positively interrelated (mean $r = .44$). In addition, positively relate to organizational resources (marketing capability, organizational resources and technology capability) mean $r = .31$. Work engagement scales were positively related to service climate (mean $r = .33$), the dedication scale being the most strongly correlated ($r = .54$). Organizational resources were also positively related to service climate. The more that marketing, financial resources, and technology are perceived as organizational resources for performance, the more service climate is perceived (mean $r = .27$). The inter-correlations between employee and customer variables, the service climate, organizational resources, and marketing capability were significantly related to loyalty (mean $r = .22$). While, service climate and vigor were significantly associated with performance (mean $r = .17$).

In confirmatory factor analysis, we used SEM methods that were implemented in AMOS (Arbuckle, 1997) There was tested firstly, correlated 3 factor model (for organizational resources). Secondly, there was tested again correlated three factor model (for work engagement). Lastly, there was tested correlated two factor model for customer experiences (employee performance and customer loyalty).

There was significant statistically the original model between the chi-square statistics associated with the revised model, $\Delta\chi^2 = 225.238$, $p < .001$. All the results included with those taken in the research by (Salanova et al., 2003), in that the collective engagement model appropriately meet the data better when this items from the vigor scale were clear away.

Table 1:

Means, SD, Internal consistencies , Inter -correlation (Aggregated measure : N=30 shopping malls)												
Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Marketing capability	3.77	0.78	.90	–								
Technology capability	3.75	0.70	0.84	0.58****	–							
Financial capability	4.03	0.75	0.89	0.60****	0.62****	–						
Vigor	5.28	0.50	0.76	0.22****	0.13*	0.24****	–					
Dedication	4.43	0.98	0.72	0.43****	0.32****	0.43****	0.31****	–				
Absorption	4.02	0.89	0.78	0.22****	0.11	0.24****	0.47****	0.48****	–			
Service climate	5.05	1.06	0.85	0.30****	0.21****	0.25****	0.20****	0.52****	0.22****	–		
Employee performance	5.31	0.62	0.86	.12	.09	.06	0.15**	0.08	0.07	0.15****	–	
Customer loyalty	4.68	0.50	0.88	0.15**	0.18****	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.06	0.27****	0.67****	–

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$, **** $p < .001$.

Table 2:

Fit of the Research Models (N=30 shopping malls)

Model	χ^2	df	p	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	IFI	ΔX^2	Df
M1	38.396	25	.04	.93	.88	.07	.89	.93	.95		
M2	35.970	23	.04	.93	.88	.07	.90	.95	.95	M1 _ M2 =2.42	2
M3	37.110	24	.05	.93	.88	.07	.88	.94	.95	M3 _ M2 =1.28	1
M4	29.819	22	.12	.94	.88	.06	.91	.97	.97	M1 _ M4 =8.57**	3
M5	30.622	22	.10	.94	.88	.06	.90	.95	.97	M1 _ M5 =7.77	3
										M5 _ M4 =0.80	0

Point:

GFI =goodness-of-fit index

AGFI =adjusted goodness-of-fit index

RMSEA =root-mean-square error of approximation

NFI =normed fit index

CFI =comparative fit index

IFI =incremental fit index

Conclusion

This study emphasized on predictors of service climate that are organizational resources and work engagement and at the impact of service climate on job performance and customer loyalty. We did conduct our study on two issues: employees and customers. The hypotheses were positively supported by the outcome and our results showed that the service climate mediates the relationship between organizational resources and engagement through employees on the one side and employee performance and customer loyalty through customer on the others side. We explored past research in this shopping malls field as a predictor of service climate. We tested both employee and customer data in our study, thus overcome problems that came from the common-variance method. However, the present study has some limitations and weaknesses. Our research model was cross-sectional and maybe the reciprocal relationships between employees and customers cannot be fully interpreted. However, this research can be do in other fields like universities, hospitals etc

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Appendix

Questionnaire:

We are studying the relationships between organizational resources and work engagement as predictors of service climate, which in turn predicts employee performance and customer loyalty in shopping malls of Pakistan. Please help us to fulfill this research by completing this questionnaire. Your secrecy and personal identity will be strictly retained. The results will be used for research purpose only.

1. Personal Information

(a) Gender ()M ()F (for customers)	Marital Status ()Single ()Married	More than 3 Visits.....(approx)
Name of Shopping Mall:		
Age: ()Below 25 ()26-30 ()31-35 () above35		
(b) Gender () M () F	Job Status.....	Work Experience.....
(for employees)		
Age: ()Below 25 ()26-30 ()31-35 () above35		

2. Please rate the following statements.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Resources/Financial capability (e) 					
1. does the financial system include budgetary controls to preclude incurring obligations in excess of total funds	1	2	3	4	5
2. Overall the expenses we spend are quite fair	1	2	3	4	5
3. Are you responsible for planning how the money in your organization is spent.	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OR/marketing capability (e) 					
1. Using pricing skills and systems to respond quickly to market changes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensuring that product/service development efforts are responsive to customer needs	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ability to effectively segment and target market	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OR/technology capability (e) 					
1. Technologies are easy-to-use and useful.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Technical guidebooks and material resources are available	1	2	3	4	5
3. Technology is available.	1	2	3	4	5
4. External technical services are provided.	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement /vigor (e) 					

1. At work, I feel full of energy	1	2	3	4	5
2. In my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can continue working for very long periods at a time	1	2	3	4	5
5. In my job, I am mentally very resilient.	1	2	3	4	5
6. At work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	1	2	3	4	5
• Engagement /dedication (e)					
1. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My job inspires me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am proud of the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I find my job challenging	1	2	3	4	5
• Engagement/absorption (e)					
1. Time flies when I'm working.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel happy when I am working intensely.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am immersed in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I get carried away when I'm working.	1	2	3	4	5
6. It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	1	2	3	4	5
• Service Climate (e)					
1. Employees in our organization have knowledge of the job and the skills to deliver superior quality work and service.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Employees receive recognition and rewards for the delivery of superior work and service.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The overall quality of service provided by our organization to customers is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Employees are provided with tools, technology, and other resources to support the delivery of quality work and service.	1	2	3	4	5
• Employee Performance (c)					

1. Employees understand specific needs of customers (empathy).	1	2	3	4	5
2. Employees are able to “put themselves in the customers’ place” (empathy).	1	2	3	4	5
3. Employees are able to “tune in” to each specific customer (empathy).	1	2	3	4	5
4. Employees “surprise” customers with their excellent service (excellent performance).	1	2	3	4	5
5. Employees do more than usual for customers (excellent performance).	1	2	3	4	5
6. Employees deliver an excellent service quality that is difficult to find in other organizations (excellent performance).	1	2	3	4	5
• Customer Loyalty (c)					
1. If possible, I will return to this hotel/restaurant in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I will recommend this hotel/restaurant to other people.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I will warn people about this poor hotel/restaurant.	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Items represent reporting by employees.					
(c) Items represent reporting by customers.					