Empowering Leadership and Counterproductive Work Behavior: Mediating Role of Person-Organization Fit and Moderation effect of Overall Organizational Justice

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

This study examines the factors that influence Counter Productive work behavior (CWB) among college and university workforce in South Punjab, Pakistan. The study focused on the importance of empowering leadership in shaping employee behavior and highlighted the significance of PO fit in relation to individual behavior and the potential negative effects of inappropriate recruitment or placement practices. It emphasizes the mediating role of person-organization (PO) fit and the moderating role of overall organizational justice in determining the relationship between empowering leadership and CWB. Using Smart-PLS, data from 308 academic employees were analyzed. Empowering leadership had a substantial impact on CWB and PO fit, with PO fit having a negative effect on CWB. The mediation role of PO fit and a moderation role of organizational justice were observed. Further studies ought to examine the most crucial aspects of PO compatibility and organizational justice as they relate to CWB.

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1. Introduction

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) refers to voluntary employee actions that breach organizational norms and have the potential to damage both the organization and the individual (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Previous research has highlighted factors contributing to CWB, such as conflicts, anxiety, dissatisfaction, stressors, and bullying (Chen & Wang, 2019; De Clercq et al., 2021; Kundi & Badar, 2021). Inappropriate leadership styles can have negative effects on CWB, such as decreased motivation and higher departure intentions (Ariani, 2013; Protsiuk, 2019; Tian et al., 2021).
Empowering leadership, which involves distributing power, autonomy, and motivation among followers, has been shown to improve performance and reduce deviant behavior (Fachrunnisa et al., 2019; Lee & Ding, 2020; Kim & Beehr, 2018; HA, 2020). This study has intentions to explore the predictive capacity of empowering leadership on CWB, considering the mediating influence of PO fit and the moderating impact of overall organizational justice.

Recent research has indicated the importance of PO fit in workplace environments, job satisfaction, and performance (Werbel & DeMarie, 2005; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; Farooqui & Nagendra, 2014). It has been shown that PO fit negatively affects CWB and positively influences organizational commitment (Nikkah-Farkhani et al., 2017; Sharkawi et al., 2013).

Moderating variables, such as psychological capital and overall organizational justice, have been suggested to reduce negative emotions and CWB (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2014; Khattak & Rizvi, 2021). This study incorporates the mediation role of PO fit amongst empowering leadership and CWB and examines the moderating role of overall organizational justice in reducing CWB.

2. Problem Statement

The secondary education industry in Pakistan faces underperformance due to various factors, including insufficient government support, reduced funding, political interference, nepotism, and corruption (Khosa, 2018; Tasawar & Shahibudin, 2019; Wazir, 2017). No Pakistani tertiary institutions have ranked among top universities, and numerous studies have emphasized detrimental employee behavior in the higher education sector. Causes of such behavior include irregular appointments, top management behavior, and organizational injustice (Elahi, 2018).

With high unemployment rates in Pakistan, many individuals pursue teaching careers as alternatives to industry or professional sectors. Previous studies have investigated destructive leadership styles and their relationship to CWB (Brender-Ilan & Sheaffer, 2019; Krasikova, Green, & LeBreton, 2013), but the connection between empowering leadership and CWB has not been explored. This research aims to fill a void in the literature by examining the hypothesized relationship between empowered leadership and CWB. It also seeks to identify the mediating role of PO fit between empowering leadership and CWB, while examining link between PO fit and CWB, moderated by overall organizational justice (De Clercq et al., 2021; Javed & Ishak, 2019; Bibi, Karim, & ud Din, 2013).

3. Literature Review

Due to its influence on economic conditions, social factors, and psychological ramifications, CWB has attracted the attention of research academics (Bodankin & Tziner, 2009; Ho, 2012; Levy & Tziner, 2011). CWB is contradictory to organizational interests and is defined as dysfunctional because it violates organizational norms, damaging the organization, employees, productivity, profitability, and procedures (Aubé, Rousseau, Mama, & Morin, 2009). According to the research, CWB users generally suffer from diminished self-worth, a lack of faith in the profession, and physical as well as psychological issues, which can lead to increased stress and resignation intentions. Therefore, it is generally agreed that such actions have psychological causes.

3.1 Empowering Leadership and Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB)

The literature discusses various approaches to leadership such as servant leadership, authentic leadership, and transformative leadership. These styles have drawn significant attention
from research scholars. The role of leadership has occurred as a distinct construct in the literature. This section of the study describes various leadership styles that have occurred previously, leading to empowering leadership behaviour to predict employee behaviour. Transformational leadership boosts performance and productivity, while visionary leadership develops, maintains, appeals to, and attracts followers. Transformational leadership affects the workplace through morals. Ethical leadership creates ethical awareness among participants towards strategic and corporate goals, and servant leadership develops and empowers individuals to achieve organizational goals (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Leaders' behaviour affects organizational life, and abusive leadership and supervision negatively affect individuals and the company. Research suggests that supervisors' management styles affect organizational and interpersonal unproductive work behaviour. According to social exchange theory, leaders' actions affect workers and the workplace. While there was a substantial link found between ethical leadership and CWB however, a correlation involving OCB and ethical leadership was unable to be established (Khokhar & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2017).

Situational leadership emphasizes mentoring and delegating, and historical development suggests empowering leadership is like supportive leadership. Employee empowerment is akin to sharing power, but researchers propose conceptualizing it with a motivating component. Empowering leadership has two main components: management practices based on socio-structure and empowerment. Literature suggests that empowering leadership entails setting an example, making decisions, providing coaching, and addressing individual issues. Empowering leadership also improves work meaning, predicts decision making, inspires confidence in performance, and grants independence within bureaucratic restrictions (Cheong, Yammarino, Dionne, Spain, & Tsai, 2019).

E.L helps leaders share and use power by teaching employee’s self-control. According to self-management, situational, leader-member interaction, and participatory management theories, empowering leadership involves power sharing. Power sharing allows workers to self-direct, which improves subordinate performance. The more self-directed, the more satisfied employees are. Early research employed power sharing and practical value to leverage leaders’ behavioural concerns to support conventional work and mostly focused on modern study. Previous research studied how empowering leadership affected functional and dysfunctional resistance, performance, and employee happiness. Empowering leadership significantly predicted happiness and was inversely connected to dysfunctional resistance, indicating that it positively impacts employee satisfaction and performance (Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2010).

Social exchange theory examines human exchange relationships to explain CWB. Participants repeat similar actions that have been rewarded before and implement specific behaviors. The SET is socially based on reciprocity and trust in goodwill. According to the idea, social relationships are evaluated based on reciprocal trust to explain workplace behaviors, such as responses to overall organizational justice perception (Colquitt et al., 2013). Earlier research examined the correlation between ethical climate and CWB, revealing a significant relationship. However, the findings recommended that the occupational level played a moderating role. The study also discovered that a lack of fairness in resource allocation has a substantial impact on the organization’s ethical atmosphere, which affects CWB. (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2014).

Employees’ dysfunctional work conduct violates organizational norms and harms companies and workers. Negative conduct impacts organizational objectives, employee well-being, procedural difficulties, productivity, and profitability (Javed & Ishak, 2019; Spector & Fox, 2005). Past research
has shown that personality characteristics and talents, job experience, stresses, harsh and abusive supervision predict counterproductive work conduct, which harms organizations and people. 

**H1:** Empowering Leadership influences the CWB amongst personnel of the higher education division in South Punjab, Pakistan.

### 3.2 Person-Organization Fit and Counterproductive Work Behavior

PO fit is an essential factor in shaping employees' behaviour in the workplace. Researchers have found that PO fit has a big outcome on many areas of organisational life, such as job happiness, organisational dedication, work success, and creative work behaviour (Afsar, 2016; Joo, Park, & Lee, 2020; Karabay, 2020; Ugwu & Onyishi, 2020). Higher PO fit has been associated with reduced CWB and increased commitment, with organizational commitment found to indirectly exert a lower impact between organization-fit and CWB (Nikkah-Farkhani et al., 2017).

CWB and PO fit have been studied in several different ways. (Sharkawi et al. 2013) examined a negative correlation relating PO fit and CWB, implying that higher levels of PO fit reduce the likelihood of engaging in CWB. Al Halbusi et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of employees' PO fit in influencing organizational processes and promoting ethical behaviour. Mi et al. (2020) reported that the different kinds of PO fit have different levels of influence on employee behaviour, with value fit having the most significant impact.

The current study incorporates PO fit to predict the CWB in the secondary education of South Punjab, Pakistan. The study assumes that PO fit reduces the negative behaviours and emotions among employees. The subsequent hypothesis is proposed after reviewing the relevant literature:

**H2:** PO fit influences the CWB among staff of Higher Education Sector of South Punjab, Pakistan.

### 3.3 Empowering Leadership and Person-Organization Fit

Leadership has been a prime concern for researchers due to its significant impact on the workplace and employees' behaviours. It has been discovered that empowering leadership is positively associated with leader-member exchange, leaders' effectiveness, and affective commitment (Hassan et al., 2013), satisfaction, and performance among employees (Vecchio et al., 2010). PO fit, on the other hand, has been found to influence job satisfaction, performance (Farooqui & Nagendra, 2014), personal growth initiative (Joo et al., 2020), innovative behaviour (Afsar, 2016), and has been negatively related to CWB (Sharkawi et al., 2013).

Prior research has investigated the relationship between empowering leadership, person-job and person-group compatibility, and work engagement (Cai et al., 2018). Under empowered leadership, person-job and person-group fit were positively associated with work engagement. The relationship was found to be stronger with proactive personalities compared to low proactive personalities.

This is, as far as we are aware, the first theoretical examination of the relationship between empowering leadership and PO fit. Following a review of the relevant literature, this hypothesis is proposed:

**H3:** Empowering leadership impacts the PO fit between workers of the higher education sector of South Punjab, Pakistan.
3.4 Mediating role of Person-Organization fit

The function of PO fitness as a mediator is studied. Previous research has demonstrated that the ethical climate of a workplace mediates the relationship between ethical employee behavior and ethical leadership. The research found that ethical leaders greatly affect ethical behavior because leaders are vital to an ethical atmosphere. Ethical leaders may change the environment by using ethical standards to create a culture that encourages ethical conduct. Previous studies have related ethical atmosphere to leader morale, regulations, orientation, and independent judgement. Thus, the ethical atmosphere was investigated as a mediator between employee conduct and ethical leadership. The result reported significant relationship and found mediation role of ethical climate within ethical leadership and employee ethical behavior (Al Halbusi et al., 2020). The study applied person-environment theory and proposed that there is a positive correlation among empowering leadership and PJ fit. The study claims that empowering leadership enhances the employee need-supply fit but found insignificant. The empowering leadership focuses on development of individual's development and focus on resource acquisition to accomplish the job. Consistent with the social exchange theory, the rule of reciprocity states that employees should return to the organization what they receive from it in terms of resources and assistance. The skills, talents, and knowledge of employees contribute to their job satisfaction and empowerment, and this improves their PJ fit and impacts their work behavior favorably. This study examined the mediating function of PG fit and PJ fit in the connection between empowering leadership and work engagement. The conclusions suggested, task-related fit may serve as a possible mediator between work engagement and empowering leadership. This study enhances our understanding of how person-environment compatibility influences the bond with regard to empowering leadership and employee engagement (Cai et al., 2018).

Employee commitment was observed to play a mediating function between authoritarian leadership style and CWB (Luqman et al., 2020). One more study investigated the mediation role of view of justice between the bond of Machiavellianism and CWB. According to the outcomes of the study, Machiavellianism is a strong predictor of CWB, and the impression of justice has a negative impact on CWB. The study discovered that justice perception influences Machiavellianism leadership and CWB (Younus et al., 2020). The research study reported PO fit positively significantly related to psychological ownership. Value and demand abilities fit were found to negatively affect turnover intent in another study, with ownership moderating the link between the two (Chung, Sharma, & Sherae, 2015). The study revealed that the relationship between psychological ownership and creative workplace behavior is mediated by PO fit (Karabay, 2020). Similarly, the current study hypothesizes that PO fit mediates the relationship between empowering leadership and CWB. The following mediating hypothesis is deduced as a result:

**H4:** PO fit mediates the relationship between EL and CWB between employees of Higher Education Sector of South Punjab, Pakistan

3.5 Moderation Role of Overall Organizational Justice

Based on the perceptions and experiences of employees, the concept of overall organizational fairness has garnered significant attention in the work environment because it has both favorable and unfavorable consequences. Overall organizational justice is vast phenomenon that impact the organizations in various aspects (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002). The overall organizational justice has been illustrated in previous studies that how employees perceive the procedures are fair at workplace as it is linked with the perception of an individual, so therefore it is crucial for organizational workplace as it predicts number of outcomes. The research studies has depicted that overall organizational justice influence the CWB and mediates the relationship between
Machiavellianism and CWB (Younus et al., 2020). In this investigation, the organizational structure was found to have a positive and significant impact on procedural justice, informational justice, and distributive justice. (Holtz & Harold, 2013). Although overall organizational justice has been shown to have a negative correlation with CWB, its moderating influence has been neglected in previous studies. Examining how a sense of organizational justice influences the link between PO fit and CWB is the focus of the present research. To put the moderation to the test, we have develop the subsequent hypothesis:

**H5:** Overall Organizational Justice moderates the Relationship amongst PO fit and CWB throughout employees of Higher Education Sector of South Punjab, Pakistan

4. **The Research Framework**

![Fig 1: The proposed Framework](image)

5. **Research Methodology**

This quantitative study aims to inspect the hypothesized relationships within the theoretical framework. There are three direct relationships are investigated, one mediating relationship and one moderating hypothesis. The direct relationship includes empowering leadership predicts CWB, empowering leadership predicts PO fit, the PO fit influences the CWB. The mediating thesis determines the mediating role of PO fit between empowering leadership and CWB. The moderation effect of justice in organizations is also studied.

The definition of research design is often described as the systematic planning of a study to enable valid conclusions to be drawn (Reis & Judd, 2000p.17). Research designs can be categorized as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed depending on the nature of the data gathered (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Researchers can investigate an anomaly objectively, without being influenced by it or affecting their findings, according to the positivist paradigm, which assumes that objective reality, exists independently of human experience. (Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil, 2002).

Data from employees working in public higher education institutions located in South Punjab, Pakistan was collected using a questionnaire. The data was collected using adopted measurement scales and assessed on a 7-point Likert scale. In the current study, the unit of analysis was individuals who held positions such as lecturer, assistant professor, professor, and head of departments in public higher education institutes. To assure impartial responses, a basic random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample was taken from the major cities of
South Punjab including D.G Khan, Rahim Yar khan, Bahawalpur, Multan and Khanewal from public sector higher education institutes by utilizing the “Krejcie and Morgan”, 1970 table for suitable sample size of it. The 350 suggested sample size was targeted for data collection, but 50% extra questionnaires were distributed to gain appropriate response rate as suggested by Salkind (1997), so 520 questionnaires were distributed, and 308 complete useable responses were received for data analysis.

5.1 Instrument
The measurement scales for each construct were adopted from prior research studies used for the education service sector. The five-point scale used to quantify CWB came from a study of (Jung & Yoon, 2012). The 12-items measurement scale for empowering leadership was used from the research of (Byun, Lee, Karau, & Dai, 2020). The 03-items measurement scale for person-organization fit was taken from the research work of (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). The 06-items measurement scale for overall organizational justice was adopted from the research of (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). The measurement of all items in this study was done using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from “1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with intermediate values of 2 (disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (neither agree nor disagree), 5 (somewhat agree), and 6 (agree)”.

5.2 Analysis and Interpretation
The data acquired in this portion of the study was analyzed using the Smart-PLS. The data is analyzed for construct reliability and validity in the first phase. The second phase investigates the correlation between constructs of the framework. The measurement model assessment is utilized through PLS-algorithm method to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. The structural equation modelling is utilized for hypothesized relationship testing through bootstrapping method. The table 1 below presents the respondent’s profile.

5.3 Respondent’s Profile

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Respondent Demographics (N = 308)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in current organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 5 years</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure with current Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 provides the values for Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and AVE, while Figure 2 shows the measurement model assessment produced by PLS.

**Table 2: Factor loading, Cronbach alpha, composite reliability and AVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha values</th>
<th>Composite Reliability</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person-organization fit (POF)</td>
<td>POF 1</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POF 2</td>
<td>0.960</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POF 3</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall organizational Justice (OJ)</td>
<td>OJ 1</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OJ 2</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OJ 3</td>
<td>0.892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OJ 4</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OJ 5</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OJ 6</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Measurement Model Assessment

This section evaluates the reliability and validity of the constructs in the measurement model by using Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). These measures are commonly used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the constructs in the model, as well as their convergent and discriminant validity. In order to ensure acceptable construct reliability, the values for Cronbach alpha should be above 0.70, composite reliability should be above 0.70, and AVE should be above 0.50 (Hair Jr & Lukas, 2014).

Table 2 provides the values for Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and AVE, while Figure 2 shows the measurement model assessment produced by PLS.
Empowering Leadership (EL) | EL 1 | 0.685 | 0.917 | 0.928 | 0.521
| EL 2 | 0.711 | | | |
| EL 3 | 0.705 | | | |
| EL 4 | 0.762 | | | |
| EL 5 | 0.759 | | | |
| EL 6 | 0.748 | | | |
| EL 7 | 0.709 | | | |
| EL 8 | 0.637 | | | |
| EL 9 | 0.621 | | | |
| EL 10 | 0.739 | | | |
| EL 11 | 0.780 | | | |
| EL 12 | 0.782 | | | |

Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) | CWB 1 | 0.245 | 0.792 | 0.959 | 0.559
| CWB 2 | 0.841 | | | |
| CWB 3 | 0.900 | | | |
| CWB 4 | 0.826 | | | |
| CWB 5 | 0.734 | | | |

Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof)

The above table shows that all constructs fulfill the criteria for Cronbach alpha, composite reliability and AVE. All the values for Cronbach alpha and composite reliability found to be higher than cutoff point 0.70, so therefore it is statistically accepted. The values for AVE found to be higher than 0.50 so that all constructs meet the criteria for reliability.

5.5 Discriminant Validity
This section determines the construct validity, the discriminant validity is determined by the measures given by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). To establish discriminant validity, the square of AVE should be greater than the correlation values of the other variables. The table 3 below demonstrates the results for discriminant validity.

Table 3: Discriminant validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>CWB</th>
<th>OJ</th>
<th>POF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWB</td>
<td>0.480</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OJ</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POF</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>0.941</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof)

The above table shows that discriminant validity meets the criteria suggested by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), the square root of AVE found to be higher than correlation values of other constructs. So therefore, it meets the discriminant validity.
5.6 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

This section of the research aims to examine the hypothesized relations in the conceptual framework. Three direct, one mediating, and one moderating hypotheses were tested based on the predefined criteria (Hair Jr & Lukas, 2014). The relationship is assessed based on β value, t-value and p-value. The t-value must remain higher than 1.96 with 95% confidence interval and p-value should not be greater than 0.05 for the significance level.

The table 4 below presents the results of the hypothesis and figure 3 presents the SEM model extracted from PLS platform.

**Table 4: Direct Hypotheses Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Path Coefficients</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>EL→CWB</td>
<td>-0.225</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>2.630</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>POF→CWB</td>
<td>-0.288</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>3.715</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>EL→POF</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>7.992</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof)

5.7 Direct Hypothesis Testing

- The H1 is assessed on the base of ($\beta = -0.225$; t-value = 3.630; p-value = 0.009) and found that it fulfills the criteria for significance, hence H1 is supported and statistically significant.
- The H2 is assessed on the base of ($\beta = -0.288$; t-value = 3.715; p-value = 0.000) and found that it fulfills the criteria for significance, hence H2 is supported and statistically significant.
• The H3 is assessed on the base of \((\beta = 0.458; t\text{-value} = 7.992; p\text{-value} = 0.000)\) and found that it fulfills the criteria for significance, hence H3 is supported and statistically significant.

5.8 Mediating Effect

This section of the study examines the mediation role of person-organization fit between the relationship of empowering leadership and CWB.

Table 5: Mediation Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Path Coefficients</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>EL(\rightarrow)POF(\rightarrow)CWB</td>
<td>-0.132</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>3.004</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof)

The H4 is assessed on the base of \((\beta = -0.132; t\text{-value} = 3.004; p\text{-value} = 0.003)\) and found that it fulfills the criteria for significance, hence H4 is supported and statistically significant.

The H5 is assessed on the base of \((\beta = -0.103; t\text{-value} = 1.777; p\text{-value} = 0.076)\) and found that it fulfills the criteria for significance, hence H5 is supported and remained significant with 10% error margin with t-value cutoff point as 1.68 to be significant as suggested by (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016).

Table 6: Moderation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Path Coefficients</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>POF*OJ(\rightarrow)CWB</td>
<td>-0.103</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>1.777</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof); significant @ 10% error margin.

Figure 3: Structural Equation Model: Note: Empowering leadership (EL), counterproductive work behavior (cwb), overall organizational justice (oj), person-organization fit (pof)
6. Discussion on Results

This study's results indicate a good model fit, as all direct, mediating, and moderating hypotheses were found to be significant. The H1 looked at the connection between empowered leadership and CWB. The findings of the study indicated that empowering leadership had a negative impact on the CWB, which translates to the fact that empowerment lessens the intensity of negative emotions. The findings of the study are consistent with the theoretical assumptions that social exchange theory posits the reciprocal relationship, and as a result, empowering leadership enables employees to make decisions in the workplace, which in turn lessens the intensity of negative emotions. The outcomes of the research are in line with those of other studies (Holtz & Harold, 2013) that depicted that appropriate leadership style reduces the negative behavioral outcomes. When testing Hypothesis 2, we discovered a negative correlation between PO fit and CWB, that appropriate and fit person for the specific job will not indulge in CWB or other negative emotions due to established association with organization. Findings from this study agree with those from the studies of (Nikkah-Farkhani et al., 2017). The H3 observed to be statistically significant as empowering leadership influence the PO fit. That shows that effective and appropriate leadership style enable employees to develop engagement and enhance the performance as depicted in prior research study of Cai et al. (2018). Consistent with the findings of Vecchio et al. (2010), this study confirms that empowered leadership has an effect on worker happiness and productivity. Moreover, the H4 investigated the mediation role of PO fit between the relationship of empowering leadership and CWB, that shows that empowering leadership and PO fit reduces the negative emotions and found to be negatively related to CWB, so PO fit mediates the relationship between empowering leadership and CWB negatively that both reduces the negative emotions and CWB. The results of this investigation are consistent with those of study by Sharkawi and colleagues in 2013, which similarly discovered a negative correlation between PO fit and CWB. The H5 incorporated the moderation role of overall organizational justice to mitigate the negative behavior CWB of employees. The study assumed that overall organizational justice reduces the negative emotions. Overall organizational justice was shown to considerably attenuate the link between PO fit and CWB. PO fit negatively impact the CWB, and overall organizational justice also reduce the negative behavioral outcomes (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2014). Thus, PO fit and overall organizational justice reduces the CWB.

7. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical implications of empowering leadership on CWB can be viewed from different angles of leadership and organizational behavior theories. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, by fostering strong leader-member exchange (LMX) connections, empowered leaders may decrease the prevalence of CWB (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Empowering leadership also promotes a sense of organizational identification, in which employees feel a strong connection and attachment to the organization. This sense of identification, which is fostered by PO fit, can result in a reduction of CWB since workers are more inclined to behave in the best interests of the organization when they feel a greater sense of fit with the organization. (Ashforth et al., 2008). Empowering leaders may increase PO fit by allowing workers to match their values and ambitions with those of the organization, which minimizes CWB since employees feel more congruent and committed to the organization. (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

This work has significant implications for practice. Empowering leadership's practical implications for reducing CWB through the mediating effect of PO fit include several strategies that leaders can adopt to create a better alignment between employees and the organization. By implementing these strategies, leaders can effectively reduce the likelihood of CWB among their
employees. Empowering leaders should clearly communicate the organization's values and culture to employees, helping them understand and align with the company's mission and goals. This alignment can lead to a better P-O fit, reducing the likelihood of CWB. Secondly, empowering leaders should focus on employees' growth and development, providing opportunities for skill-building and advancement. By helping employees grow within the organization, leaders can strengthen P-O fit and decrease the chances of CWB. Thirdly creating an open and transparent environment where employees can express their ideas, concerns, and feedback can enhance P-O fit. Workers who believe their ideas are being considered and their efforts are appreciated are more invested in the company as a whole and more inclined to act in a constructive manner.

8. Limitations and Future Research Avenue

Several caveats may be present in the investigation of the link between empowering leadership and CWB, as mediated by PO fit and moderated by overall organizational justice. Cross-sectional analysis was used for this investigation; it cannot establish causality between the variables. Longitudinal studies would provide stronger evidence for causal relationships among the variables. Cultural factors can influence leadership styles and employee behavior. The study's findings may not be universally applicable if it does not account for cultural variations in the perception and practice of empowering leadership so future researchers can conduct the same research in different cultures. The future research can also be taken by assessing the level of overall organizational justice on gender base and person-organization fit in detailed perspective of dimensions. The research takes into account one potential mediating variable and one potential moderating variable that might influence the connection between empowered leadership and CWB. Future researchers should explore additional factors, such as job satisfaction, psychological safety, or work engagement.

References


