

THE LAHORE JOURNAL OF BUSINESS

Lahore School of Economics

*Muhammad Ahmad and Mirza
Ashfaq Ahmed*

**A Study of Customer Orientation
and Customer Commitment in
the Food Sector of Pakistan**

*Talat Islam, Zeshan Ahmer and
Naeem Mushtaq*

**Retaining Talent: The Role of the
Personal and Contextual Factors**

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A Study of Customer Orientation and Customer Commitment in the Food Sector of Pakistan

Muhammad Ahmad* and Mirza Ashfaq Ahmed**

Abstract

This study examines the relationship of a firm's customer orientations, salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer intimacy with customer commitment. For the purpose of this study, the interpersonal relationship marketing model and the interpersonal attraction investment model are employed to propose the conceptual model. The conceptual model suggests that (1) firm's customer orientation positively influences the salesperson customer-oriented behavior; (2) salesperson customer-oriented behavior positively influences the customer intimacy; (3) customer-oriented behavior positively mediates between customer orientation and customer intimacy; and (4) customer intimacy acts a positive mediator between the salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer commitment. Through the course of this study, the proposed conceptual models were tested with the data collected from the firm and customer dyads. Moreover, the data is collected from the food sector of Pakistan. Furthermore, the Smart-PLS is used to test the standardized dyadic data sets. Results have provided substantial support for the proposed conceptual model. There is strong support for the salesperson customer-oriented behavior, and customer intimacy as mediator. Additionally, the results validate the interpersonal relationship marketing model and the Rusbult investment model as well. From a managerial perspective, this study can help organizational policy makers to understand the importance of salesperson behavior, and customer emotions for a long-term relationship with the targeted customer of the specific firm.

Keywords: Customer orientation, customer-oriented behavior, customer intimacy, commitment, dyadic data, interpersonal relationship

JEL Classification: L66, M31, O53.

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1. Introduction

Over past few years, the food sector of Pakistan has been passing through some radical changes. This change is evident in multiple ways e.g., growth, variety, taste and competition. The food sector serves a diversified set of customers in terms of gender, age, preferences, and income levels. Customers of the food sector are now much aware, they are taste divergent, prefer customized recipes, and are definitely more health conscious (Bihamta, Jayashree, Rezaei, Okumus, & Rahimi, 2017). Furthermore, customers play multiple roles during their food consumption experience. For example, as the co-producer, co-distributor, co-promoter, co-manufacturer, consumer as innovator, co-evaluator, co-designer, co-ideator, and finally as a co-tester (Tardivo, Thrassou, Viassone & Serravalle, 2017).

Moreover, there is mushroom growth in the amount of food providers, and also a shift in the spending patterns. For instance, the packaged food spending has increased from US \$ 2.50 in 2003-2004, to US \$ 7.50 in 2013-2014 (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015). The use of processed and pre-cooked food is not only popular in urban families, but is a phenomenon that is gaining popularity in rural families as well. There are a number of national and international players that are entering in the food sector. The concept of food web portals e.g., are also active in the food businesses and contribute towards the growth in customer traffic. With such numerous opportunities and challenges, firms of all scales (large, medium, and small) are striving hard to maintain close relationships with customers. In this regard, customer commitment is marked as a cornerstone of a firm's success to achieve long-term competitive advantage (Hsiao, Shen, & Chao, 2015).

This research is based on the interpersonal relationship marketing model (Palmatier, 2008) and the Rusbult (1980) investment model. In this study, it is proposed that customer commitment is a result of a firm's customer orientation, salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer intimacy. Customer orientation is the firm's philosophy and business strategy that it adopts in order to serve its customers. It refers to a set of beliefs that put the customer's interests first in order to develop a long-term profitable relationship (Deshpandé, Farley & Webster, 1993). Customer orientation is translated into salesperson customer-oriented behavior, which means that employees understand customers, have

adequate knowledge about customers, and demonstrate learning orientation (Bagozzi, Verbeke, van den Berg, Rietdijk, Dietvorst, & Worm, 2012). Customer intimacy is defined as “customer’s perception of close and valued relationship with seller, with high level of mutual understanding” (Brock & Zhou, 2012, p.371). Moreover, customer intimacy is marked as a component of warmth in the aspect of customer relationship (Bugel, Verhoef, & Buunk, 2011), and is gaining popularity in marketing literature (Balaji, Roy & Wei, 2016; Beetles & Harris, 2010; Bugel et al., 2011; DeJager, Cirakoglu, Nugter, & van Os, 2017; Gottman, 2007; Ponder, Holloway, & Hansen, 2016; Yim, Tse, & Chan, 2008). Finally, the interpersonal relationship marketing perspective is also getting popularity in the field of marketing research (Balaji et al., 2016; Hasan, Mortimer, Lings & Neale, 2017; Palmatier, Jarvis, Bechkoff, & Kardes, 2009).

Pertaining to this particular study, the research objectives are to examine the positive relationship between firm’s customer orientation, and salesperson customer-oriented behavior. This study also examines the positive relationship between salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer intimacy. Furthermore, this study aims to investigate the mediating role of customer-oriented behavior between customer orientation and customer intimacy. Finally, the objective of this research is also to evaluate the mediating role of customer intimacy between the salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer commitment.

It must be known that this study contributes to marketing literature in several ways. The first one being that in this study, customer orientation is studied with respect to large, medium, and small organizations; however, previous researches mainly focus on large and medium sized organizations (Herrero, Martín, & Collado, 2018). Secondly, the interpersonal relationship marketing model is extended by incorporating customer intimacy (Balaji et al., 2016; Bugel et al., 2011) and the Rusbult (1980) investment model. Thirdly, the dyadic survey methodology is used to test the proposed model. And lastly, this research provides external validity to the proposed model in a different context.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer Orientation

Customer orientation is defined as a “set of beliefs that puts the customer's interest first, but it does not exclude stakeholders such as owners, managers, and employees in order to develop a long-term profitable enterprise” (Deshpande et al., 1993, p.27). Customer value and customer service are ingrained believers in organizational memory. Organizational behavior, and its decision making are influenced by the aforementioned beliefs (Zablah, Franke, Brown, & Bartholomew, 2012). Customer orientation is marked as a key business strategy that helps understand its customers, source of competitive advantage, and supports the management to achieve their business objectives (Zhang & Yang, 2018). Moreover, deep rooted customer orientation among the employees leads to novel solution of customers’ queries, and better customer service (Babakus, Yavas, & Karatepe, 2017). Employees with customer orientation intentions have better learning, knowledge enhancement, and superior understanding of the customers’ requirements (Bagozzi et al., 2012). Furthermore, customer orientations which are referred to as cultural phenomenon, have five dimensions. These dimensions include the ability to pamper the customers, to deliver service, read the customer facet, maintain personal relationships, and keeping the customer informed. These abilities of employees help to achieve the customers’ commitment to any organization (Kanten, Kanten, & Baran, 2016). Furthermore, it is advocated that the organizational customer orientation strategy helps to describe the employees’ job attitude and behavior (Jeng, 2018) which ultimately affect the customers of the organization (Sousa & Coelho, 2011).

The application and advancement of customer orientation is overwhelmingly accepted in contemporary marketing research. Furthermore, it is advocated as a business strategy that is a source of competitive advantage. Additionally, it must be known that it is the prime priority of researchers since a number of years (Bharadwaj, Nevin, & Wallman, 2012; Papaioannou, Kriemadis, Kapetaniou, Yfantidou, & Kourtesopoulou, 2018). Contemporary research in customer orientation advocates several inferences. For instance, these key inferences include: i) customer orientation enhances front line employees’ creativity (Jeng, 2018); ii) customer orientation positively impacts the product development

(Zhang & Yang, 2018); and iii) customer orientation strategy in tourism and hospitality industry positively impacts the business performance (Papaioannou et al., 2018). Other examples may include observations such as customer orientation positively influences performance of hospitality microenterprises (Herrero et al., 2018), customer orientation improves the performance in buyer and seller relationship (Leckie, Widing & Whitwell, 2017) and finally, customer orientation moderates between work engagement and employee turnover intentions in hospitality sector (Babakus et al., 2017). Furthermore, dwelling into the examples, we may also consider that organization customer orientation positively influences the salesperson customer orientation (Varghese, Edward, & George, 2017). Thus, it can be inferred that customer orientation is an important facet of organizational agility (Kanten, Kanten, Keceli, & Zaimoglu, 2017).

From the above discussion, it can be conceptualized that customer orientation is an important business strategy which influences the behavior and motivation of employees (Zablah et al., 2012) and consequently, the customers' service and value (Sousa & Coelho, 2011). This focal point of this research is existence of interpersonal relationships, and how they play a part in the customer orientation and commitment towards a particular food brand. The interpersonal relationship marketing theory is concerned about understanding the customers' needs, emotions, and social genetic. The synergy of the aforementioned customers' measures results in a sustainable and long-term relationship with customers (Palmatier, 2008). A customer-oriented firm designs and executes such strategies that result in positive customer outcomes (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Moreover, interpersonal relationship marketing advocates that firms' efforts to maintain the relationship tend to create customer intimacy (Balajiet al., 2016; Hasan et al., 2017). Finally, it is also concluded that the customer orientation philosophy affects the salesperson customer-oriented behavior, and customer intimacy. Keeping these insights in mind, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Customer orientation is directly and positively related with the salesperson customer-oriented behavior.

Hypothesis 2: Customer orientation is directly and positively linked with the customer intimacy.

2.2 Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior

Salesperson customer-oriented behavior is a result of the organizational customer orientation philosophy, and marketing strategy (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Jeng, 2018; Kanten et al., 2017; Leckie, Widing & Whitwell, 2017; Periatt, LeMay & Chakrabarty, 2004; Saxe & Weitz, 1982; Varghese et al., 2017). Salesperson customer-oriented behavior leads to better customer services (Sousa & Coelho, 2011), helps maintain long-term relationship with customers (Kelley, 1992), and provides better service quality for customers (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Moreover, it leads to better customer satisfaction (Lussier & Hartmann, 2017), and bring internal marketing benefits e.g., job commitment, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (Donavan, Brown, & Mowen, 2004). There are a number of combinations of training and skills development programs to impart customer-oriented behavior in the salespersons of a particular organization (Hennig-Thurau & Thurau, 2003). Furthermore, organizations provide better rewards, empower (Ro & Chen, 2011), and improve employee engagement for better salesperson customer-oriented behavior (Babakus et al., 2017).

Studies show that there is a positive relationship between the employees' customer-oriented behavior and the customers related and relevant outcomes (Babakus et al., 2017; Bagozzi et al., 2012; Sousa & Coelho, 2011). Customer-oriented behavior helps to form personal relationships with customers (Kanten et al., 2016). Moreover, the interpersonal relationship marketing theory advocates that the sellers' efforts help to create emotional ties and commitments with the targeted customers (Hasan et al., 2017; Palmatier, 2008; Palmatier et al., 2009). Previous studies have established the relationship between an employee's customer-oriented behavior, and the customer commitment, satisfaction, and retention (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). Intimacy refers to "feelings of closeness, connectedness and bonding that exists in loving relationships" (Sternberg, 1986); whereas, customer intimacy is defined as a "customer's perception of close and valuable relationships with sellers, that is marked with a higher level of understanding" (Brock & Zhou, 2012).

According to Bugel et al. (2011), customer intimacy meant an affective internal state of customers. Customer intimacy is related to the closeness and connectedness of customers with the firm. It is also an essential part of interpersonal relationship (Laurenceau, Barrett, &

Pietromonaco, 1998). A firm's efforts to develop interpersonal relationships is one of the many ways to develop and maintain positive customer intimacy. One example of this may be the efforts made to nurture effective communication (Balaji et al., 2016). In this research, customer orientation philosophy and salesperson customer-oriented behavior are considered as important sources to create customer intimacy. Furthermore, salesperson customer-oriented behavior also affects the customers' commitment towards a particular firm. Relationship marketing theory states that committed customers show positive behavior when it comes to the organization that they favor, and likely to patronize other organizations (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Additionally, salesperson customer-oriented behavior mediates between customer orientation and customer intimacy. Keeping these insights in mind, the following hypotheses are presented.

Hypothesis 3a: Salesperson customer-oriented behavior is directly and positively related with the customer intimacy.

Hypothesis 3b: Salesperson customer-oriented behavior mediates the link between customer orientation and customer intimacy.

Hypothesis 3c: Salesperson customer-oriented behavior is directly and positively related with the customer commitment.

2.3 Customer Intimacy

The notion of intimacy is derived from the Latin word "intimatus", in early 17th century, which meant familiarity or keeping a close connection (Yim et al., 2008). Intimacy is a multifaceted phenomenon e.g., mutuality, caring, and interdependence are all characteristics that fall within the realm of intimacy (Ben-Ari & Lavee, 2007; Rokach & Philibert-Lignieres, 2015). The concept and subject of intimacy is gaining popularity in the literature for marketing and interpersonal relationship marketing (Gottman, 2007; Yim et al., , 2008; Beetles & Harris, 2010; Bugel et al., 2011; Balaji et al., 2016; Ponder et al., 2016; De Jager et al., 2017). Moreover, Bugel et al. (2011) noted that the majority of research conducted on customer relationships has completely ignored the research on element of sustainability in love and the intimacy in relationships.

Intimacy is often confused with positive terms such as passion and commitment. However, Yim et al. (2008) found intimacy as an empirically distinct construct. Intimacy may be constructed of multiple types (Schaefer & Olson, 1981), and can hold a number of components (Stern, 1997). The research confirmed the existence of emotions based intimacy between a seller's and buyer's relationship (Yim et al., 2008). According to Hansen (2003), customer-oriented behavior of the employees of an organization is an important antecedent of customer intimacy. Moreover, customer intimacy is found to be an important predictor of customer commitment in multiple services sectors (Balaji et al., 2016). Customer commitment is defined as a "customer's desire to maintain a valued relationship with a brand due to previous satisfactory interactions with it" (Hsiao et al., 2015; Jones, Fox, Taylor, & Fabrigar, 2010).

In relationship marketing literature, the concept of commitment has received special attention (Balaji et al., 2016). Commitment may be of different natures. These include affective, continuance or calculative and normative types of commitment (Jones et al., 2010). Moreover, the concept of commitment refers to both the attitudinal (Srivastava & Owens, 2010) and behavioral (Ashley & Leonard, 2009) meanings. In the relationship between these two parties, it is actually the willingness to make short term sacrifices, in order to comprehend and realize the long term benefits (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). Commitment portrays the motivation of customers to actually maintain a relationship. Furthermore, customers share positive feelings about the firm in question. Therefore, commitment is marked as an essential element for the creation, and continuance of a marketing relationship (Lacey, 2007). Moreover, the interpersonal relationship marketing theory implies that an emotional bond, for example, customer intimacy (Balaji et al., 2016), creates a cyclic effect of emotional debt that is paid in the form of customer commitment and long-term customer relationship (Palmatier, 2008). Keeping these insights in mind, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 4a: Customer intimacy is directly and positively associated with the customers' commitment.

Hypothesis 4b: Customer intimacy mediates the relationship between salesperson's customer-oriented behavior and customer commitment.

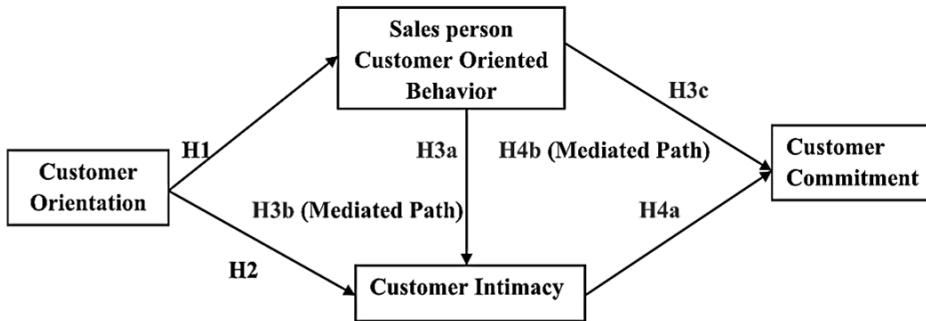
2.4 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model is based on the interpersonal relationship marketing model (Palmatier, 2008) and the Rusbult's (1980) investment model, in order to study the close relationships between buyers and sellers. The interpersonal relationship marketing model puts forth that the sellers' efforts such as the inclination towards customer orientation (Deshpande et al., 1993) and stimulate the customers' emotions. An example of this may be customer intimacy (Balaji et al., 2016), which creates an emotional debt, and results in the customers paying off the emotional debt in the form of showing his/her commitment towards the organization (Palmatier, 2008). This process creates a cycle, and a long-term seller and customer relationship. Moreover, customer relationship with an individual e.g., employee, is stronger as compared to the customers' relationship with the seller (Palmatier, 2008). The rationale behind this strong bond is that the customers feel intimate affection and love towards a particular brand or organization (Bugel et al., 2011). Moreover, when applying the Rusbult (1980) investment model i.e., reinforcement (i.e., sellers' efforts to maintain relationship with customers) from one party in the relationship (Perlman & Fehr, 1986) is a fundamental preamble in order to create an intimate relationship (Bugel et al., 2011). The literature is mostly skewed towards trust (Bugel et al., 2011) and ignores the customer intimacy aspect. Therefore, this particular research examines customer orientation, customer intimacy, and customer commitment.

In this conceptual model, the salesperson customer-oriented behavior mediates between the customer orientation and the customer intimacy; similarly, customer intimacy mediates between a salesperson's customer-oriented behavior, and a customer's commitment. Considering multiple mediators, researchers analyze the model that includes all the relevant mediators at the same time (shown in the Figure-1). For such a mediating model, it is essential to consider the multi-mediator model. The PLS-SEM technique allows us to analyze both single and multiple mediation models (i.e., parallel and serial mediation) (Carrión, Nitzl, & Roldán, 2017; Ghazali, Mutum, & Woon, 2019; Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016; Nitzl, Roldan, & Cepeda, 2016; Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010). Methodological researches in management sciences have suggested PLS-SEM for handling multilevel modeling. Moreover, it is used as a multilevel analysis tool in marketing research (Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Ryu, 2018; Hwang, Takane,

& Malhotra, 2007; Lussier & Hartmann, 2017; Richter, Cepeda-Carrión, Roldán, & Ringle, 2016).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



3. Research Methodology

The hypotheses are tested with the data collected from the food sector of Pakistan. The data set is dyadic in nature (Lussier & Hartmann, 2017). A self-administrated survey questionnaire was used for data collection from both the sellers and buyers. The scales used for data collection are adapted and have established the validity and reliability over time. The measures used were adapted from the following sources; the customer orientation was measured with nine (9) items (Deshpande et al., 1993), the salesperson customer-oriented behavior was measured with five (5) items (Periatt, LeMay, & Chakrabarty, 2004), customer intimacy was measured with three (3) items (Balaji et al., 2016), and the customer commitment is measured with three (3) items (Balaji et al., 2016). Items of each construct are given in Annexure-1.

The dyadic data set holds some special characteristics mainly: distinguishability and Non-independence. The Dyadic data may consist of the standard dyadic design, Social Relations Model (SRM) design, and one-with-many design (Kenny, Kashi, & Cook, 2006). The data set of this research follows the standardized dyadic patterns. This type of dyad means that there is equal representation of the relationship partners. The survey questionnaire was divided into two parts (A and B). Part-A is used to collect data from the sellers (customer orientation data is provided by sellers), and Part-B is used to collect data from the buyers (salesperson customer-oriented behavior, customer intimacy, and customer commitment data is provided

by the buyers). From the sellers' side, representatives of the sellers are requested data collection including chief executive officers (CEOs), managers, shift in-charge officers, customer service representatives, relationship managers and similar position holders in food restaurants and chains. Customers filled part-B (Buyers side) of the survey questionnaire.

3.1 Sample

Utmost care and systematic process was carried out in order to collect data from the seller and buyer dyads. The sample represents the food sector of Pakistan. Both conventional (local) food restaurants, and the outlets of fast food chains were approached to collect data. Different sampling techniques were used to collect data from the sellers' side and buyers' side. Certain sampling rules were set before the data collection exercise, and they were strictly followed and implemented in order to maintain the accuracy and sanctity of the data. This also helped to overcome the occurrence of any non-response bias. First, consistent with the objective of this research, the authors were interested to study the mature relationships between the sellers and buyers. Second, only those sellers' representatives (working for more than two years with the same organization) and buyers, who had been customers of the same organization for more than two years, were targeted. Furthermore, the customers must have visited the restaurant or outlet at least once in the last three months.

The sellers' data was collected from the seller's representatives in restaurants and fast food chains operating in Gujrat, Wazirabad, and Gujranwala. Multinational fast food chains for example KFC, McDonald's are considered to be large organizations; restaurants that have national presence, for instance Shehbaz Tikka, are classified as medium sized organizations, and local restaurants including Loaf and Leaf are classified into small organizations. From the buyers' side of the data that was collected, quota sampling with convenience was used. However, customers were supposed to fulfill the qualification criterion used to collect the data. In this report, a final sample data set consists of one hundred and twenty-one (121) standardized dyads. Among the sample 27 outlets (22.31%) were fast food outlets (both local and international chains); whereas, 94 outlets (77.69%) were famous local food restaurants and bakers.

3.2 Data Analysis and Common Method Variance

Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is used to test the hypotheses of the proposed conceptual model. SmartPLS version 3.2.1 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015) is the software package used for the required analysis. PLS-SEM is a variance based approach of SEM (Chou & Chen, 2018; Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012; Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014; Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, & Thiele, 2017). The rationale to use PLS-SEM include the fact that firstly, the data is non-normal, secondly, the sample size is small (Chin, 1998) and thirdly, the analysis is carried out regardless of the reflective-formative constructs (Hair et al., 2014) considerations. The PLS-SEM seeks to maximize the variance that is explained in the endogenous variables. It is useful for the complex model analysis, and is also used for prediction (Chou & Chen 2018; Hair et al., 2017; Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). PLS-SEM simultaneously also investigates the measurement and structural model. It provides both reliability and validity. The measurement model assesses the relationship between measures and constructs (Lohmoller, 1989). Whereas, the structural model explains the relationship among the constructs (Hair et al., 2014). The hierarchal latent structural model is analyzed with a procedure carried out originally by Lussier and Hartmann (2017). Furthermore, the PLS-SEM allows for the serial mediation analysis (Carrión et al., 2017; Ghazali, Mutum, &Woon, 2019; Hair et al., 2016; Nitzl et al., 2016; Zhao et al., 2010). Finally, the popularity of PLS-SEM in the top marketing journals (Ahearne, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, Mathieu, & Lam, 2010; Bolander, Satornino, Hughes, & Ferris, 2015; Hair et al., 2014) provides the foundations to use it as a dyadic data analysis tool.

The measures used in the structural model are reflective in nature. Reflective measures are linked to a variable through the loading technique. These loading variables are bivariate correlations between the measure and the variable. It is noteworthy that the reflective model specification need both reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2014). Consistent to the recommendations (Rungtusanatham, Miller, & Boyer, 2014) and hypotheses of this research; both the direct path and the indirect relationship paths (mediated path) are modeled. Moreover, the non-parametric bootstrapping of 5000 replications (Akter, Wamba, &Dewan,

2017) is carried out for the standard error, and to assess whether the values change or not (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2016).

The predictors such as the customer orientation and outcome, which may include the customer commitment, are assessed with the data from different sources. These sources can include the sellers and the customers. This method helps to overcome the common method variance (CMV), as this data set is based on the data collected from multiple sources (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Jeong-Yeon, & Podsakoff, 2003). CMV is the variance based attribute that may lead to a bias in the findings of the correlation research, by increasing or decreasing the strength of the relationship between the variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In order to avoid the confusion and complexity, a separate questionnaire was formulated to tap the sellers and the customers' responses

4. Results

4.1 Sample Characteristics

Table-1 depicts the demographic profile of the respondents. The data set is dyadic in nature; therefore, the sample composition is also twofold (characteristics of sellers and buyers), with respect to the buyer sample characteristics, that is the gender, age, occupation, income, and education of the respondents. With respect to the sellers, the characteristics in question are presented in terms of gender and education, as presented in Table-1. Among the buyers, there are 74 male and 47 female respondents. Most of the buyers represent the age group between 21-30 years, with 49 respondents in total. With respect to the occupation of most buyers, the respondents were students and job holders. The respondents' income level from the buyers' side is between fifty thousand to one hundred thousand rupees. Moreover, most of the buyers' respondents are graduates when it comes to education. From the sellers' perspective, the representation with respect to gender is 97 males and 24 females who participated, and filled the survey forms. Finally, as for the as the education level of the sellers' respondents is concerned, most of the respondents were graduates.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Seller			Buyer		
Gender			Gender		
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	97	80.16	Male	74	61.15
Female	24	19.83	Female	47	38.84
Education			Education		
Upto Intermediate	11	9.09	Upto Intermediate	37	30.58
Graduation	93	76.86	Graduation	60	49.59
Above Graduation	17	14.04	Above Graduation	24	19.83
Age (years)					
			Below 20	25	20.66
			21 – 30	49	40.49
			31 – 40	37	30.58
			Above 40	10	8.26
Occupation					
			Student	55	45.45
			Job Holder	47	38.84
			Businessman	12	9.91
			Oversees	7	5.79
Income Monthly (Rupees)					
			Below 50,000	35	28.93
			51,000-100,000	43	35.54
			100,001-200,000	21	17.35
			200,001-400,000	16	13.22
			Above 400,000	6	4.96

4.2 Measurement Model

Table-2 highlights the outer loads and VIF (variation inflation factor) values of the measures of each latent variable. These parameters are used to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model. The benchmark value for outer loads is above .70, and below 5 for VIF (Hair et al., 2014). VIF values below 5 mean there is non-existence of collinearity. The presence of collinearity in PLS-SEM creates estimation issues in the model (Hair et al., 2014). In this regard, all values match the benchmark criteria of the values except one in the outer load (customer orientation measure 3), and one VIF value (Intimacy measure 2). The smaller fraction (one or two values of measurement model) from the benchmark. Values may not create measurement problems in the analysis (Bihanta et al., 2017). The values indicate fitness of measures and the non-existence of collinearity in the PLS-SEM measurement model.

Table 2: Factor Loadings and Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs)

	Customer Orientation	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	Customer Intimacy	Customer Commitment	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
CO1	.792				2.873
CO2	.714				2.669
CO3	.604				1.920
CO4	.796				2.374
CO5	.779				2.335
CO6	.743				2.519
CO7	.722				2.137
CO8	.715				1.967
CO9	.703				1.993
SOB1		.887			3.131
SOB2		.852			2.979
SOB3		.745			2.175
SOB4		.771			1.839
SOB5		.727			1.743
INT1			.928		4.502
INT2			.959		5.966
INT3			.857		2.252
COMIT1				.876	2.234
COMIT2				.877	2.038
COMIT3				.843	1.718

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The results of the descriptive statistics are presented in Table-3. With respect to the descriptive statistics, the mean values and standard deviation (SD) values are given. According to the results, the mean values are above 3.50. This means that the responses recorded against each of the variables are towards the “agree” option. Moreover, the SD values are less than 1.

4.4 Reliability and Validity

Both the reliability and validity are recommended for the reflective measures (Hair et al., 2014). The composite reliability (CR) provides a more appropriate measurement of the internal consistency (Hair et al., 2014). Results of CR are presented in Table-3. Moreover, the convergent validity is accessed with AVE. the results provide support to the convergent validity, as the AVE values are above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, and Convergent Validity

Construct	Mean	SD	CR	AVE
Customer Orientation	3.92	.56	.912	.536
Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	3.96	.57	.898	.638
Customer Intimacy	3.80	.76	.939	.838
Customer Commitment	3.67	.69	.900	.749

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion are presented in Table 4. The HTMT ratio helps to determine the systematic discriminant validity assessment of a variable. It is an advanced statistical technique developed by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015). Moreover, it suggested that the HTMT ratio values should be below 0.85 (Chan & Lay, 2018; Franke & Sarstedt, 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). Results provide support for the discriminant validity. Furthermore, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion is the square root AVE of each variable. It applies that the squared correlation between the two variables should be greater than any of the two variables (Henseler et al., 2015). The Fornell-Larcker Criterion results are given in bold against the HTMT values in Table 4.

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) and Fornell and Larcker Criterion

Construct	Customer Orientation	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	Customer Intimacy	Customer Commitment
Customer Orientation	.732			
Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	.726	.799		
Customer Intimacy	.489	.728	.916	
Customer Commitment	.453	.794	.775	.866

4.5 Intra-Class Correlations

An interclass correlations (ICC) is the measure to estimate the inter-rater reliability of the data. It is a reflection of variation between 2 or more raters of the same subject. The One-Way Random-Effects model is applied to access ICC because there was a different set of raters randomly chosen from a larger population of possible raters (Koo & Li, 2006). Before applying bootstrapping to access the effect decomposition, the ICC is

applied; results of which are presented in Table-5, and support that there is a significant inter-rater reliability in the data.

Table 5: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F-test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Significance value
Single Measures	.371	.311	.442	12.798	120	2299	.000
Average Measures	.922	.900	.941	12.798	120	2299	.000

One-way random effects model where people effects are random.

4.6 Direct and Indirect Effects

Table 6 presents the effect of the decomposition of predictors, and the outcome variables. The output from the PLS-SEM provides simultaneous examination of the direct, indirect and total effects of the predictor, mediator and outcome variables. In Table-6, the results are presented with respect to the hypotheses proposed in the conceptual model (Figure 1). The detailed statistical analysis shows that customer orientation is found to be a significant predictor of salesperson customer-oriented behavior ($\beta = 0.648$, $p < 0.001$), and an insignificant direct predictor of customer intimacy ($\beta = 0.068$, $p > 0.05$). The insignificant effect of customer orientation on customer intimacy consequently caused to reject H2. Salesperson customer-oriented behavior significantly mediates ($\beta = 0.394$, $p < 0.001$) between customer orientation and customer intimacy. Results reveal that salesperson's customer-oriented behavior is a significant predictor of customer intimacy ($\beta = 0.608$, $p < 0.001$), and customer commitment ($\beta = 0.406$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, customer intimacy is found to be a significant predictor of customer commitment ($\beta = 0.417$, $p < 0.001$), and eventually customer intimacy significantly mediates between salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer commitment ($\beta = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$). The results highlight the acceptance of H1, H3a, H3b, H3c, H4a, and H4b.

Table 6: Effect Decomposition

Effect of	Effect on								
	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior			Customer Intimacy			Customer Commitment		
	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total
Customer Orientation	.648***		.648***	.068	.394***	.462***			
Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior				.608***		.608***	.406***	.253***	.660***
Customer Intimacy							.417***		.417***

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 7 highlights the hypotheses results. The model which proposed the relationships of the conceptual model are found to be supported. Overall, the results provide support to the proposed conceptual model. The specific examination depicts that customer orientation explains 42% of the variance in salesperson customer-oriented behavior. Moreover, customer intimacy is explained with 42.7% customer orientation and salesperson customer-oriented behavior; whereas, customer intimacy and salesperson customer-oriented behavior collectively explains 56% of the variance in customer commitment. The explained variance is assessed with the R^2 values. These R^2 values also depict how much the predictors explain the outcome variable.

Table 7: Hypotheses Results

	Hypothesized relationship	Results
H1	Customer Orientation → Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	Supported
H2	Customer Orientation → Customer Intimacy	Not Supported
H3a	Salesperson Customer-Oriented Behavior → Customer Intimacy	Supported
H3b	Customer Orientation → Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior → Customer Intimacy	Supported
H3c	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior → Customer Commitment	Supported
H4a	Customer Intimacy → Customer Commitment	Supported
H4b	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior → Customer Intimacy → Customer Commitment	Supported

5. Discussion

The objectives of this research is to understand the influence of customer orientation and salesperson customer-oriented behavior, on the customer intimacy and maintenance of customer commitment. Furthermore, this research is intended to analyze the mediation of salesperson customer-oriented behavior and customer intimacy. The results fulfill the objectives laid in this research.

This research focuses on the customer orientation strategy of the food sector, in order to create customer intimacy and customer commitment (Herrero et al., 2018). The results confirm that customer orientation business strategy, and customer-oriented behavior are important predictors of customer intimacy and customer commitment in the food sector of Pakistan (Bharadwaj, Nevin, & Wallman, 2012; Kanten et al., 2017; Papaioannou et al., 2018; Varghese et al., 2017). The firms' customer focused strategy is translated on to the employee (customer-oriented behavior), and consequently helps to create and nurture the intimate relationship with customers (Babakus et al., 2017; Bagozzi et al., 2012; Sousa & Coelho, 2011). This research extends and contributes to further understanding of interpersonal relationship marketing (Palmatier, 2008) by adding the customer orientation strategy as an important reinforcement (Rusbult, 1980) investment model (Perlman & Fehr, 1986). Moreover, this research contributes in the understanding of the limitations that pertain to research of intimacy (Bugel et al., 2011). This research collected data from both the concerned parties (sellers and buyers). This dyadic data set helps to avoid the Common Method Bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, the dyadic data is standardized in nature (equal number of sellers and buyers), which is consistent to the previous researches conducted (Lussier & Hartmann, 2017). Most of the dyadic research in relationship marketing theory and practice is conducted between business to business (B2B) perspectives (Lussier & Hartmann, 2017). However, this research makes a unique effort to apply the interpersonal relationship marketing model to sellers and buyers (B2C) dyads (Iacobucci & Ostrom, 1996).

The results of this study confirm that a firm's customer orientation business strategy is a key predictor that helps to create intimate customer relationships and customer commitment. It is also going to prove to be insightful towards building intimate relationships with customers, and

enhance the customers' commitment in the food sector, as the customer base in this sector is diverse with respect to gender, age, taste, choices and preferences. In this regard, customer orientation strategy plays a vital role because it advocates to give priority to the customers (Bihamta et al., 2017). The philosophical assumption confirms that the customer services and care starts from the top philosophy and strategy of the business (Deshpandé et al., 1993; Zablak et al., 2012; Zhang & Yang, 2018). It is from the top that it travels to the employees and then the employees serve the customers (Babakus et al., 2017).

Moreover, in order to enhance the customer commitment, the employees' customer-oriented behavior plays an important role in the positive total experience of the customers. It is necessary to develop knowledge, skills and abilities of the employees in the food sector to anticipate, actively listen, understand and effectively take care of the customers. Now a days, customers and sellers work together for value creation, specifically in food sector, where customers are co-producers, co-distributors, co-promoters, co-manufacturers, and consumers as innovators, co-evaluators, co-designers, co-ideators, and co-testers (Tardivo et al., 2017). Therefore, employees need to be proactive, talented and display a natural expertise to respond to the queries of their customers. Nowadays, a savvy and informed customer is a common phenomenon. So, for the creation of intimate relationships with customers, it is the need of the hour to work towards the training and development of employees from this very perspective. This would help to a have fully satisfied and delighted customer of a restaurant, and customer commitment can also be achieved by enhancing the service and customer food experience.

6. Conclusions

The interpersonal relationship marketing model of this research is based on the interpersonal relationship marketing model and Rusbult investment model. This research is conducted in the food sector of Pakistan, and results confirm the proposed model. Findings of this model are consistent with the previous research findings. Furthermore, this research is an effort to overcome the limitations of the interpersonal relationship marketing research on emotions such as customer intimacy. Additionally, this research extends the existing interpersonal relationship marketing model by adding a feature for interpersonal attraction –Rusbult

investment model perspective. Finally, there are number of managerial implications in the food sector and the generalization of this model can be extended by conducting research in other sectors as well.

7. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has multiple limitations. Firstly, the research focuses on the food sector only. It would be fruitful to test the viability of our framework in other sectors as well, for general theoretical predictions. Secondly, this research is carried out without differentiating the size of the firms considered in the food sector i.e. large, medium, and small. However, any research done in the future research may apply this conceptual model to a specific sized firm, such as large fast food chains. Moreover, this research follows a cross-sectional dyadic design for data collection. However, future research may use the longitudinal design, or the historical data of the food providing firms in order to analyze intimate and committed relationships. Future research may also consider the complexity of the job description (Jeng, 2018) and the customer orientation strategy in order to create intimate and committed customer relationships.

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*Annexure-1***Items of Constructs**

Number	Construct	Items	Reference
1	Customer Orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have routine and regular measures of customer service. 2. Our product and service development is based on good market and customer information. 3. We know our competitors well. 4. We have a good sense of how our customers value our products and services. 5. We are more customer focused than our competitors. 6. We compete primarily based on product and service differentiation. 7. The customer's interest should always come first, ahead of the owners. 8. Our products and services are the best in the business. 9. We believe our business exists primarily to serve customers. 	Deshpande, Farley, and Webster (1993)
2	Salesperson Customer-oriented Behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The sales representative tries to satisfy me instead of selling the product or service. 2. The sales representative necessarily tries to tell truth in describing a product or service to me. 3. The sales representative only convinces me to buy; when he/she think it is wise for me to buy. 4. The sales representative paint true picture of product or service to sound as good as possible. 5. The sales representative offer on the basis of what will satisfy me in the long run. 	Periatt, LeMay, and Chakrabarty (2004)
3	Intimacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You always enjoy your experience with your brand 2. You always have a warm and comfortable feeling when visiting to your brand You experience great happiness with visiting to your brand 	Balaji, Roy, and Wei (2016)
4	Commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am willing "to go the extra mile" to remain a customer of my brand 2. I feel loyal towards my brand 3. Even if my brand would be more difficult to reach, I would still keep buying from my brand 	Balaji, Roy, and Wei (2016)

Retaining Talent: The Role of the Personal and Contextual Factors

Talat Islam^{*}, Zeshan Ahmer^{} and Naeem Mushtaq^{***}**

Abstract

Earlier studies have focused on the attitudinal and behavioral aspects of employee turnover. However, this study empirically investigates the contextual (i.e. job complexity, developmental feedback and perceived organizational support) and personal (i.e. proactive personality and core self-evaluations) aspects in order to elucidate turnover intention among the private sector universities of Pakistan. The study used a questionnaire-based survey that was circulated amongst the faculty members of the private universities, and 758 responses were used for the final data analysis. Moreover, the structural equation modeling was applied and revealed that core self-evaluation, developmental feedback, job complexity and perceived organizational support are negatively associated with turnover intention. However, the element of proactive personality was found to have a non-significant association with turnover intention. This study has theoretical and practical implications for universities and recruitment departments.

Keywords: Developmental feedback, perceived organizational support, job complexity, proactive personality, core self-evaluations.

JEL Classification: M10, M12.

1. Introduction

The role of Human Resource Development (HRD) is essential to motivate, attract and retain talented employees (Wagstaff, del Carmen Triana, Kim, & Al-Riyami, 2015). Talented employees do not only lead organizations towards competitiveness in the long run, but these employees are also critical factor for the overall success of an organization (Islam & Tariq, 2018). Thus, retention of employees with the relevant skills

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and knowledge is essential for an organization. For decades, identifying the turnover intention has remained an inspiring catch-all in the eyes of researchers and policymakers, as it is considered as the strongest predictor of turnover (Islam, Khan, Ahmad, Ali, & Ahmed, 2014; Kim & Hyun, 2017; Park, 2019).

Literature has suggested some pivotal theories on turnover. For instance, the organizational equilibrium theory (OET) of turnover, (March & Simon, 1958), is considered to be the basis for most of the theories that have been developed on the concept of turnover. This theory focuses on maintaining a balance between the employees' input into an organization and the incentives given to them by the organization. Willingness to leave, and perceived ease of movement are the main predictors of this particular balance. In this context, when extending the OET, Mobley (1977) introduced the concept of job search behaviors (i.e. job satisfaction), and withdrawal cognition (i.e. turnover) in a model. In addition to this, the expectancy theory of motivation became the base for Porter and Steers's (1973) met expectation theory (MET) of turnover. The expectancy theory proposes that "work motivation is dependent upon the perceived association between performance and outcomes, and that the individuals modify their behavior based on their calculation of anticipated outcomes" (Chen & Fang, 2008, p. 155).

Ample literature has attempted to identify the predictors of turnover, but the identification of actual predictors of turnover is still a question mark. Researchers, therefore, have suggested studying the turnover intention, rather than the actual turnover (Islam, 2014; Islam et al., 2019). In addition to this, without understanding the causes of employees' turnover intention, retaining skilled employees would be merely an unrealized dream (Joo, Hahn, & Peterson, 2015). According to Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001), professional perceptions (i.e. organizational commitment etc.), demographical characteristics (i.e. work-related and personal) and organizational conditions (i.e. organizational culture and compensation etc.) are three of the major antecedents of turnover intention. However, the contextual and personal factors are less focused on aspects in this regard (Joo et al., 2015).

Previous studies considering the impact of personal factors on employees' turnover intention have focused on the Big Five personality

factors (Allen, Weeks, & Moffitt, 2005), except the work done by Barrick and Mount (1996). However, emerging personality factors have not frequently been examined (Joo et al., 2015). On the other hand, organizational level factors have not been focused on examining the individual's decision on turnover intention (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). Considering the importance of organizational and contextual factors as determinants of employees turnover intention, this study aims to focus on developmental feedback (DFB), job complexity (JC) and perceived organizational support (POS) (from contextual factors), and proactive personality (PP) and core self evaluation (CSE) (from personal factors), as the main predictors of employees' turnover intention.

This study tested the proposed hypotheses on the faculty members of private universities. The faculty members are required to publish research along with their teaching assignments, which demand extra efforts (Islam, 2019). Given this, the university's management (especially in case of private universities) forget to keep a focused approach towards the workload of their faculty (Ahmad & Islam, 2018). This not only creates stress, but also evokes their intentions to switch (i.e. turnover intention). Thus, these issues generate the need to study turnover intention among faculty members of intuitions where higher education is offered.

The findings of this study would contribute in several ways. Theoretically, the findings add to the existing limited literature on organizational expectancy theory, by incorporating unattended contextual and personal factors. Practically, this study will help university management, and higher education authorities in developing strategies to retain their faculty members. The next section of the study covers the theoretical support and hypotheses.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings and Hypotheses Development

Certain human behaviors are the result of one's perception and personality characteristics. This study assumes that both the aspects are important in order to investigate, and understand their turnover intention better. Therefore, the study considers PP and CSE as personality characteristics, and POS, JC, and DFB as contextual factors. Furthermore, this study is supported by various turnover theories (explained in the introduction), such as the organizational support theory (OST) and the social

exchange theory (SET). According to SET, "there exists some exchange relations among parties and when one party receives something of value it tries to reciprocate" (Blau, 1964, p. 81). While, the OST states that, "when employees in an organization feel that their organization care their values, they reciprocate it" (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986).

2.1 Proactive Personality (PP) and Turnover Intention (TI)

The "proactive personality" is an individual's ability to affect environmental changes and conquer constrictions by situational forces (Bateman & Crant, 1993). According to Crant, (2000, p. 436), proactive behavior means, "taking the initiative in improving current circumstances or creating new ones; it involves challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting to present conditions". Individuals with a proactive approach are in continuous search to identify the opportunities. When they get successful in identifying the desired opportunities, they try to manipulate the environment in their favor, in order to achieve the desired outcomes. On the other hand, individuals with less proactive personality let the things happen first and then try to adapt to the change (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Thus, proactive individuals are focused on long-term goals and remain flexible as they have organizational consequences to consider (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006).

Moreover, proactive individuals are more concerned about their career development and growth, as compared with less proactive individuals who have confidence in their abilities. Allen et al. (2005) noted that proactive personalities tended to be risk takers. In another study, Crant (2000) argued that proactive personalities are more likely to take the initiative and have a greater ability to find alternate ways, and because of this such personalities have more intentions to switch their job. Thus, this study hypothesizes a positive association between PP and TI in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: PP will be positively associated with TI.

2.2 Core Self-evaluations (CSE) and Turnover Intention (TI)

A personality trait that includes an individual's subconscious, their own control, their own ability and fundamental evaluations about

themselves is referred to as core self-evaluation (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003). CSEs comprises of four dispositional characteristics i.e. locus of control, self-efficacy, emotional stability and self-esteem (Judge, 1997). Thus, the characteristics of positive self-concept depend upon the higher CSEs (Judge *et al.*, 2003).

According to Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, and Tan (2012), initially CSEs were assumed to enhance an individual's job satisfaction, and many of the researchers identified a positive relationship between the same (Lyons, 2015; Wu & Griffin, 2012). As job satisfaction remained a strong predictor of TI for decades (Islam, 2014), therefore, examining how CSEs impact an individual's intention to leave the organization would be of worth. Individuals with low CSE have high concerns, with the negative aspects of the environment. Whereas, individuals with high level of CSEs have less concern with the negative aspects of their working conditions (Chang *et al.*, 2012). Based on the above arguments, this research hypothesizes a negative link between CSEs and TI in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: CSEs will be negatively associated to TI.

2.3 Job Complexity (JC) and Turnover Intention (TI)

Job design is a strong predictor of employees' performance, motivation, and attitudes. According to Hackman and Oldham (1980), the job characteristics model task identity, skill variety, task significance, feedback, and autonomy are the five basic dimensions of jobs. For more complex jobs, individuals don't only need to possess complex task-related skills (Chung-Yan, 2010). Therefore, job complexity should be considered as a positive aspect of the work.

This notion is supported by the meta-analysis of Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007), as they demonstrated a positive impact of job complexity on various job outcomes (i.e. employees' organizational commitment, internal motivation for work, job performance, job involvement, and job satisfaction). In addition, JC negatively predicts employees' intention to leave (Grebner *et al.*, 2003). According to Man and Lam (2003), individuals need to find new methods and approaches to accomplish challenging tasks, and such activities might adhere individuals

to be with the current organization. The following hypothesis postulates a positive relationship between JC and TI.

Hypothesis 3: JC will be positively associated to TI.

2.4 Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Turnover Intention (TI)

According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), POS is the employees' perceptions of being cared for by their organization. The concept is based on the theory of organizational support that is laid on the foundations of the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), and reciprocity norms (Gouldner, 1960). This theory states that, when employees perceive that their organization considers their socio-emotional well-being as its basic premise, they reciprocate with a high level of loyalty, commitment, job satisfaction, and less intention of leaving the organization (Islam, Ahmad, Ali, Ahmed, & Bowra, 2013; Islam, Ahmed, & Ahmad, 2015; Joo et al., 2015). Conversely, employees when feeling that their organization is not treating them well, tend to find and explore other job opportunities. In a recent meta-analysis, Ahmad and Allen (2015) confirmed a negative relationship between POS and TI. Thus, this study hypothesizes that a negative link exists between POS and TI, in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: POS will be negatively associated to TI.

2.5 Development Feedback (DFB) and Turnover Intention (TI)

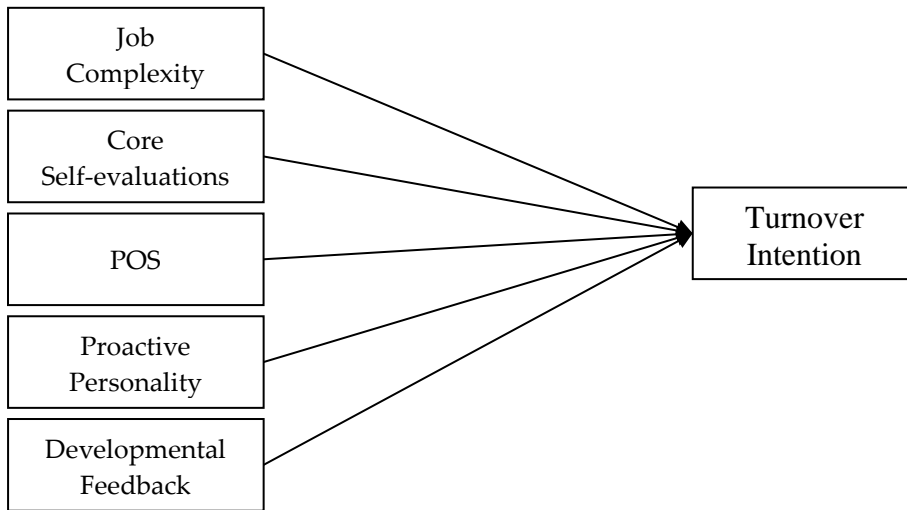
According to Zhou (2003), a supervisor's useful and helpful information to its subordinates for their development and learning on the job is referred to as developmental feedback. In developmental feedback, supervisors provide a direct report of their supervisees, which contains their job performance related information without any pressure. Hence, it is a future-oriented approach. The developmental feedback approach is opposite to the traditional performance feedback approach, where information is provided at the completion of a specific task. Therefore, such kind of information not only enhances an individual's intrinsic motivation, but also leads to a development of their interest in the given tasks (Zhou, 2003).

Supervisors' developmental feedback tends to motivate newcomers to work with devotion and passion (Li, Harris, Boswell, & Xie, 2011). In

addition, this approach provides employees' with the learning facilities for grooming and development (Islam, 2019; Joo & Park, 2010). When employees feel that they are given learning and grooming opportunities, they tend to stay with their organization. Thus, this study proposes a negative relationship between DFB and TI in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: DFB will be negatively associated to TI.

Figure 1: Theoretical Model



3. Methods

The faculty members of the private sector universities of Pakistan were the participants of this study. The main reason to consider the private universities was due to more workload and demand of extra work on their part, without caring for their faculty member. It was assumed that this may develop turnover intention (Islam, 2019). According to HEC, 74 private universities with 10,104 faculty members are operating in the country (www.hec.gov.pk). The study used a multi-stage sampling technique. At the first stage 21 universities with 4721 faculty members, located in the capital cities of the provinces, were randomly selected. In the second stage, using convenience sampling, a total of 1100 questionnaires were distributed, of which 758 were received (after excluding 65 as incomplete and outliers). The study distributed 1100 questionnaires, considering the low response rate of the studies conducted on faculty members (Ahmad &

Islam, 2018). The majority of the participants of this study were male (78.10%), in their thirties (36.50%) with the current work experience of 2-5 years (28.80%), and an overall job experience of 6-10 years (30.60%).

3.1 Measures

A questionnaire comprised of six measures was distributed amongst the respondents. They were requested to record their responses on "a 5-Point Likert scale ranging from 1-Strongly disagree to 5-Strongly agree".

3.1.1 Proactive Personality (PP)

A shortened version of Bateman and Crant (1993) was used to measure the proactive personality aspect. This version comprises of a 10-item scale (Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999). This study adapted the same scale, and noted 0.81 as its level for internal reliability. A sample item included "I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life".

3.1.2 CSEs

Judge et al. (2003) developed a 12-item scale in order to examine CSEs based on self-efficacy, self-esteem, emotional stability and locus of control. Using the same scale, this study found the scale reliable with a value of 0.79. A sample item included "I determine what will happen in my life".

3.1.3 POS

Eisenberger et al. (1986) introduced a scale to measure employees' perception of organizational support, and its shortened six-item scale was used by Ahmed, Khairuzzaman Wan Ismail, Mohamad Amin, and Islam (2014). After using this shortened scale, this study noted its internal reliability as 0.85. A sample item included "my organization appreciates my contribution".

3.1.4 Job Complexity

Hackman and Oldham (1980) developed a scale to measure job characteristics including autonomy, task significance, task identity, feedback, and skill variety. Of which Joo et al. (2015) used a six-item scale containing autonomy and task significance, which are more relevant to job complexity.

This study also used the six items scale and found the scale reliable at the level of 0.83. A sample item included "This job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work".

3.1.5 DFB

A three-item scale was used to measure the developmental feedback which was originally developed by Zhou (2003). Using the same scale, an internal consistency of 0.78 was observed. A sample item included "My supervisor provides me with useful information on how to improve my job performance".

3.1.6 TI

For the purpose of this study, Mobley, Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth's (1978) three-item scale of TI was used. This scale showed that the internal reliability came out to be at a value of 0.87. A sample statement is "I frequently think of leaving this organization".

4. Results

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied in this study. According to Byrne (2010), SEM should be used in two-stages, as it reduces the interactional effects of structure models. First, the study fulfills the basic assumptions of SEM, and data was examined regarding outliers, missing values, and correlation (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The correlation was applied to identify the significant association between demographical characteristics and observed variables, where all the demographical variables were found to have a non-significant association with the observed variables (see Table 1). Therefore, the demographical variables were not treated as control variables in testing hypotheses (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

The values of the Table 1 show that CSE, DFB, POS and JC have a negative correlation with turnover intention (i.e. $r = -0.21, -0.24, -0.28$ & -0.27 respectively), whereas a non-significant association is examined between proactive personality and turnover intention. In this regard, the other variables were found to have a positive and significant association with each other. Moreover, the internal reliability of all the variables was above 0.70.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	--									
2. Gender	.29*	--								
3. Current_exp.	.55**	.42**	--							
4. Total_exp.	.49**	.51**	.26**	--						
5. CSE	.020	.001	-.046	.028	(.79)					
6. PP	.004	.009	.026	.031	.42**	(.81)				
7. POS	.006	.021	-.036	.007	.14*	.25**	(.85)			
8. DFB	.015	.050	.049	.068	.31**	.29**	.39**	(.78)		
9. JC	.090	.071	.067	.056	.37**	.41**	.33**	.40**	(.83)	
10. TI	.004	.099	.045	.076	-.21**	.14	-.28**	-.24**	-.27**	(.87)

Note: "CSE = core self-evaluations, PP = proactive personality, POS = perceived organizational support, DFB = developmental feedback, JC= job complexity, TI= turnover intention, ** P < .001, * P < .05, () = Internal reliability, N=359".

4.1 Assessment of Uni-dimensionality

First, the study examined the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in order to examine the uni-dimensionality of the items. The main reason to apply CFA was that the study had used adapted scales (Byrne, 2010). The study used the following indices for the goodness-of-fit of Byrne (2010) as shown in Table 2. The researcher had to make some modifications as per the instructions of Hair *et al.* (2010). After modifications of the values were found as: $\chi^2=437.753$, $df=153$, $\chi^2/df= 2.86$, CFI=0.962, GFA= 0.946, AGFA= 0.929, NFI= 0.931, RMSEA= 0.045.

Table 2: Goodness-of-Fit Indices

Model Fit	Full Name	Standard Value
χ^2/df	"Chi-Square"	≤ 3
CFI	"Comparative Fit Index"	≥ 0.90
GFI	"Goodness of Fit Index"	≥ 0.90
AGFI	"Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index"	≥ 0.90
NFI	"Normed Fit Index"	≥ 0.90
RMSEA	"Root Mean Square Error of Approximation"	≤ 0.08

The study also examined the values of loading for each item used in this study (see Table 3). Following the criteria given by Hair *et al.* (2010), the study noted that loading values were above 0.50 for all the observed variables of the study. In addition, the "convergent and discriminant validity were examined through the values of composite reliability (CR)

and average variance extracted (AVE)". The values in Table 3 also show that the values of AVE were well above 0.50, and the values of CR were well above 0.60 (Byrne, 2010), hence, the data has both the validities.

Table 3: Loading, Reliability and Validity

Variable	Loading	CR	AVE	α	Variable	Loading	CR	AVE	α
PP1	0.69				CSE1	0.76			
PP2	0.78				CSE2	0.85			
PP3	0.76				CSE4	0.82			
PP4	0.88				CSE5	0.80			
PP5	0.83	0.63	0.6	0.81	CSE6	0.76			
PP6	0.75				CSE7	0.79	0.69	0.61	0.79
PP7	0.68				CSE8	0.91			
PP8	0.79				CSE9	0.82			
PP9	0.75				CSE10	0.84			
PP10	0.82				CSE11	0.86			
JC1	0.88				CSE12	0.77			
JC2	0.91				POS1	0.81			
JC3	0.86	0.72	0.66	0.83	POS2	0.72			
JC4	0.74				POS3	0.64	0.61	0.56	0.85
JC5	0.78				POS4	0.87			
JC6	0.69				POS5	0.67			
DFB1	0.88				POS6	0.74			
DFB2	0.89	0.79	0.75	0.78	TI1	0.86			
DFB3	0.83				TI2	0.84	0.71	0.69	0.87
					TI3	0.79			

Note: "CSE= core self-evaluations, PP= proactive personality, POS= perceived organizational support, DFB= developmental feedback, JC= job complexity, TI= turnover intention".

5. Findings and Discussion

In order to test the hypotheses, we deployed the second-stage of SEM (Byrne, 2010). This study examined structural coefficients for the hypotheses testing, and the results showed the statistical significance of all the regression coefficients (i.e. $t < 1.98$). Moreover, the theoretical model of the study was found to have a good fit "(i.e. $\chi^2=543.213$, $df=218$, $\chi^2/df=2.49$, CFI=0.932, GFA=0.945, AGFA=0.908, NFI=0.918, RMSEA=0.039)" as compared with the cut-off values of the fit indices (see Table 2).

This empirical investigation aimed to examine the contextual and personal aspect's impact on employees' intention of turnover. Where PP

and CSEs were considered from personal factors, and POS, JC and DFB were considered from contextual factors. The study found that both personal and contextual factors significantly, and negatively associated with TI, except proactive personality.

On the other side, a few of the previous studies have noted that certain demographical characteristics (e.g. tenure and age) have a significant association with the turnover intention (Lee & Cho, 2013). However, in this study, all the demographical variables were noted to have a non-significant association with observed variables.

The study noted a negative and significant association between CSEs and TI ($\beta=-0.24^{**}$). This result is in line with the meta-analysis of Chang et al. (2012). Therefore, the study concluded that individuals with high CSEs are less concerned with their working conditions and tend to stay with their organization. While the study found a non-significant association between PP and TI ($\beta=0.14$), this study assumed that individuals who possess a proactive personality are risk takers and don't hesitate to take the initiative (Allen et al., 2005; Crant, 2000). However, in a recent study, Joo et al. (2015) noted a non-significant relationship between the same variables, in the context of South Korea.

Table 4: Summary of the Results

Relationships	β	p	Results
PP→TI	0.14	0.06	H1 is rejected
CSEs→TI	-0.24	0.00	H2 is supported
JC→TI	-0.27	0.00	H3 is supported
POS→TI	-0.28	0.00	H4 is supported
DFB→TI	-0.24	0.00	H5 is supported

Note: "CSE= core self-evaluations, PP= proactive personality, POS= perceived organizational support, DFB= developmental feedback, JC= job complexity, TI= turnover intention, N=359".

Considering the contextual factors, this study assumed a negative association between POS and TI. This study found that individuals prefer to stay in those organizations where they feel that their organization cares for their values, and will help them at the time of need ($\beta=-0.28^{**}$). These results are further supported by OST of Eisenberger et al. (1986), and SET of Blau (1964). In addition, JC was found to have a negative relationship

with TI ($\beta=-0.27^{**}$). This result is supported by Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model, which states that when knowledgeable individuals consider their job more challenging, they tend to stay with the organization in order to prove their abilities and skills. However, while examining the alternate model, the study found a non-significant association between the same variables. Though the alternate model is rejected in this study due to the values of the goodness-of-fit indices, the model further needs to be examined in other geographical areas and less knowledgeable workers. Finally, the study found a negative association between developmental feedback and turnover intention ($\beta=-0.24^{**}$). Individuals in an organization need motivation and helpful feedback for their grooming and development, and when they receive useful information from their supervisors they not only complete their tasks diligently but also prefer to stay with the organization (Li et al., 2011).

The study has theoretical contributions as well. It integrates the contextual (POS, JC, and DFB) and personal (PP and CSEs) aspects in order to explain employees' intention to leave the organization. Despite being in debate for more than six decades, researchers have only focused on the attitudinal and behavioral predictors of turnover intention (i.e. satisfaction, commitment, citizenship behavior, stress etc.) e.g. (Morf, Arnold, & Staffebach, 2014; Schoemmel & Jønsson, 2014). Nevertheless, both personal and contextual aspects have not been examined.

6. Implications

This is the first study of its kind to examine the association between PP and TI in Pakistani universities. Pakistani culture is marked by high power distance, collectivism, long-term orientation and uncertainty avoidance; distinguishing it from the Western counterparts, this culture that has largely been discussed in published literature. In the Pakistani society, people are mostly supportive, helpful, harmonious and polite. It is, therefore, understood that proactive behaviors are discouraged here (Hakim & Aziz, 1998). The cultures where proactive behaviors are discouraged, an employee may be less likely to interact with his/her supervisors/head of department (Joo, Yang, & McLean, 2014). In addition to this, empirically investigating the impact of proactive personalities in different cultures, can contribute towards the understanding of the HRD at the international level.

Earlier studies on turnover intention have suggested implications for the HR managers as they have to hire new employees in case of high turnover (Ahmad & Allen, 2015). The procedure of recruitment and selection costs an organization ten times higher than retaining an employee. Moreover, the newly employed employee needs the training in order to understand the work ethics and getting best out of these newly recruited individuals. Therefore, this study has implications for both the HR departments, and the HRD professionals, and suggests that leadership practices (i.e. developmental feedback) and organizational cultural aspects (i.e. perceived organizational support) leads an employee towards better performance. Moreover, job complexity may be a greater source of retaining employees. This is so because such practices may lead to increased perceptions of job enrichment and de-jobbing, that result in a positive perception about the organization and job, resulting in positive job outcomes and reduced negative consequences like stress (Hargrove, Becker, & Hargrove, 2015). Moreover, regular training and development programs should be arranged for the faculty members so as to enhance their abilities to give timely feedback to their subordinates.

Although this study found a small effect of core self-evaluations in predicting an employee's turnover intention, this variable should have been considered by a selection board at the time of recruitment and selection. The reason for this is that this particular variable is a part of ones' self-image, and it leads to positive attitudes and behaviors (e.g. reduced turnover intention). Thus, the selection considering core self-evaluations not only reduces the employee's intention of leaving the organization (Wagstaff et al., 2015) but also saves further training and hiring costs.

7. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite having the above stated implications, this study is not free from its limitations. Firstly, the data in the current study was collected at a single point in time (i.e. cross-sectional), which restricted the researcher to develop causal relations. Secondly, the respondents of the present study were highly knowledgeable, so the results could be knowledge biased. Thirdly, the majority of the respondents in this study were male faculty members. In addition to this, this study was conducted in the situation of economic conjecture, where people did not have the opportunities to find alternate jobs, and had to stick with their current challenging jobs.

Examining the alternate model, the study found a non-significant association between JC and TI, which further needs to be generalized. Furthermore, how social support impacts an individual's withdrawal behavior should also have been examined, as this is supported by the theory of conservation of resources (Hobfoll, 1989). As of now, this study aimed to focus on less investigated antecedents (i.e. personal and contextual) of turnover intention as retaining talented faculty members has become a great challenge for the Pakistani private sector universities. The study found core self-evaluations, job complexity, developmental feedback and perceived organizational support as successful predictors of turnover intention. While the results regarding proactive personality and turnover intention further need to be generalized. This study also suggests that private universities should focus more on employees' supervision/head of the department, personal, job and contextual aspects in order to retain their faculty members.

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Perceived Humor and Purchase Intention: Mediating Role of Attitude towards the Advertisement and Brand

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Abstract

In order to investigate the purchase intention of the customers, and its relationship with perceived humor, this research analyses different types of humor that have been used in advertising campaigns. In this regard, multi-mediation analysis has been applied keeping in mind the perspective of humor in advertising; moreover, attitudes towards the advertisement, and attitudes towards the brand are used as sequential mediators. In addition, self-monitoring and message arguments have also been included as moderators in order to estimate the interaction effect in the proposed model. The data has been gathered from 617 respondents after showing them relevant advertisements. After checking the normality of the data, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis was applied using AMOS. Also, Simple Linear Regression was used to test simple relationships; however, complex models have also been tested by using the hierarchal regression (to test moderation), and the bootstrapping (to test mediation) methods. A good fit between the data and the tested model was observed. As predicted, the purchase intentions were positively related to perceived humor, and evidence of full mediation effect was found. However, for the moderation of self-monitoring and message arguments, the findings were distinctive. In reality, this research can be used by mature brands which mostly require the use of persuasive advertising. As the results of different types of humor, collectively, are significant, it can be inferred that companies must use a mix method approach in terms of types of humor they might resort to in their advertisement campaigns. Findings are particularly noteworthy for national and multinational media agencies in Pakistan, as well in the other parts of the world.

Keywords: Perceived humor, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand, message arguments, self-monitoring, purchase intention.

JEL Classification: D12, L82, M31, M37.

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1. Introduction

Hilarity/humor is a very extensively used tool in promotional activities (Elpers, Mukherje & Hoyer, 2004; Weinberger & Spots, 1989). This is evident from the fact that approximately 30% of the billions of dollars, spent on promotion on the nationwide medium each year, are concentrated on humorous advertisements (Kellaris & Cline, 2007). Partly due to the popularity of utilizing amusing promotional efforts, researchers have started concentrating on the impact of humorous commercials as well as on the effectiveness of advertisements (Chung & Zhao, 2003). Previous researches have shown that humor has a positive influence on the different approaches used for the product that is being advertised. These include various aspects such as call for advertisements (Cline & Kellaris, 1999), attention towards the advertisements, and understanding of the advertisements (Norris & Colman, 1996; Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell & Parsons, 1995). These approaches also include the advertisement persuasiveness (Geuens & Pelsmacker, 2002; Unger, 1995) and advertisement fondness (Cline & Kellaris, 1999; Cline, Altsech & Kellaris, 2003; Eisend, 2011).

The thought behind utilizing humor in an advertisement is that, funniness can impact the viewers, and modify their musings and convictions toward the product or service that is being advertised. This belief that humor can enhance promotion usefulness, has directed an exceptional attractiveness towards incorporating humor in the mass advertising. It has been assessed that the utilization of hilarity in advertisements has gone up to 50% (Weinberger, Gulas & Weinberger, 2015). Then again, the act of utilizing the comic side, as a persuading machine, is partly supported by the results of hilarity studies. Convincing confirmations exist to support the application of hilarity incorporated in advertisements. However, the literature is still prone to be questionable when it comes to the function of hilarity in the development of constructive reactions from viewers (Duhachek, 2005; Potter, LaTour, Braun-LaTour & Reichert, 2006; Weinberger & Campbell, 1991). The effectiveness of humor in advertising has been studied extensively in the context of China and USA (Zhang & Neelankavil, 1997). Moreover, various aspects of humor have also been studied individually in Pakistan as well (Hameed, Siddiqui & Husain, 2015; Hameed, Zainab & Shamim, 2018), but there is no

substantial work available that combines all the different types of humor together (Ivanov, Eisend, & Bayon, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between humor in television advertisement, and the product's potential customers' purchase intentions. When there is an interaction of the moderating variable, then what will be the effect of humor in television advertisements on the purchase intention, is a question that this study will also aim to answer. In this regard, self-monitoring as moderator is used in measuring whether a person is high or low in self-monitoring, and message arguments another moderator is used in advertisements. For this purpose, the items were summed up for each argument, in order to form an overall argument strength scale. The way humor in advertisements leads to certain attitudes of the potential consumers towards the advertisement (Mediating Variable measured as Favorable/Unfavorable), the following attitude they have towards the brand (mediating variable measured as favorable/unfavorable), and ultimately the purchase intention of the person who is exposed to the advertisement are that variables that are considered in this particular study.

2. Literature Review

The rate at which hilarity shows up in advertisements, and the attention being paid by the different groups of people, is not always practical, as indicated by the experimental dimension of the results. It is believed that the crust of hilarity makes the communication more troublesome, especially when the physical and the emotional relations are inspected (Yoon & Tinkham, 2013). In many serious studies that are based on hilarity in advertisements, it has been observed that the nature of the products, the target population's factors, the communication aims, the nature of the message and the position of the message, all impact the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions of customers in the markets (Voss, 2009). When considering different perspectives as a whole, understanding humor on the basis of the existing literature just serves deficient answers for the researches based on the hilarity factor. Moreover, it is exceptionally hard to precisely characterize and classify what hilarity is, or what it is not.

A study by Tamburro, Gordon, D'Apollito and Howard (2004) has also showed that the individual understanding of hilarity is not always made-up of one factor; in fact, it is made up of many different factors. Whenever any of the advertisers use hilarity in advertising, it also shows that they are operating on four or five different factors, which are mentioned above in the list: that is to say, the capacity to identify lives irrationally, the recognition of one's self as hilarious, appreciation of hilarious people, and lastly, hilarious situations. In fact, the advertising hilarity refers to the capacity of the audiences to respond positively, especially when one or others of these advertisements are presented in a very good manner. In this regard, attention refers to the level to which the potential customers are always focused on the stimulus within their sensory field (Swani, Weinberger & Gulas, 2013).

Hilarity is naturally appealing, which draws in a large portion of the customers, since it is a vital component of our framework of cultural values. In most circumstances, it has been found that there exists a positive connection between hilarity and drawing in the customers' attention. This is suggested that in advertisements of different types, based on a wide range of products. Hilarity has been used in presentations of sales, in learning settings, in meetings of preparation, and in ceremonial dinner speeches. The commonly known capability of hilarity is to properly attract attention of customers so that it can safely be transitioned towards the product. Even though this might also hinder the advertisement efficiency, hilarity appears to be more capable in attracting the attention to the advertised products and services.

Stern (1996) brought up this particular aspect, and other multicultural changes that influence the quality of what is hilarious, in fact, it might just be in the impression of a person. Business understandings have developed various safeguards to guarantee that this sort of material does not divert one's understanding; experts recommend that for advertisements, insight ought to be utilized, rather than lead to the diversion in advertisements, which causes perplexity, and changes the message of a product or service.

Eisend (2011) stated that the theory of laughter given by Henri Bergson suggests that comedy has four different types. These are verbal, physical, romantic and satiric. Bergson's theory suggested the two varieties by recognizing the different humor types, one of which was first produced

in comedy drama, mostly in theatre, and now, more recently, the other one is incorporated in E-promotions. The first category includes both physical and verbal comedy, which mostly consumes the customary differences between the two types of humor.

Simons and Carey (2006) also suggested that the differences between the comics are fundamental for the electronic media and oral comics are used for radio channels. In the television sector, physical comedy is practiced more often. In fact, television has become the only medium of physical comedy. The second variety of humor uses the normal acute taxonomy in order to develop a field that is connected by romantic humor on one side, and satiric humor on the other side. This system comprises of the theories which help to differentiate between two types of viewer responses; that is laughter with the comic character, or laugh at the comic character – that is to say, "laugh with" versus "laugh at" comedy.

According to Schlosser (2005), humor cannot be displayed in physical terms unless an act is stressed upon or in other words exaggerated. Any procedure of events and act is considered to be comical when it provides us with an exaggerated impression of existence, and a separate impression of automated arrangement in a sole mixture. In this design, the physical comic develops when the act that is being performed shows the stubbornness of the character. The performative feature, that is the stiff performance of the actor, underlines the character's humor for viewers, and eventually shows the cheerfulness of the comic character.

With regards to vocal entertainment where speaking highlights the voiced stimulation, the essential segment is the use of language. Determination of the words, and the arrangement of sentences is structured around the particular dialect that is to be used. This puts stress on the gaps in the middle of the words, and shifts from medium to medium. In this case, it is the dialect itself that creates amusement in the particular situation that is portrayed in the advertisement. In this particular type, the sources of comedic possession (amusing verbiage) include gags, dryness and dual entendres. Frequently meant as, theater of mind, because of its electronic publicity, as well as its existence in the prose that is present in radio commercials (Robert, Chen & Yang, 2008).

Humor shifts from feelings of affection and friendliness to the satiric criticism of madness and hilarity, and this proves to be a counteractive strategy to encourage a positive connection with a target audience. The comedian can relate to a person in an instant perfection, and then this perfection becomes a cause of hilarity in that instance (Passyn & Sujana, 2006).

Nabi, Moyer-Guse' and Byrne (2007) explained that dreamy humor seeks out to convince the target audience, by stimulating the viewers' commitment towards the content by satisfying them with a good role play typeset. Similarly, the same happens when satiric humor attempts to convince the target audience by controlling the viewers' unresponsiveness.

McGraw and Warren (2010) showed that in order to conclude that there are distinctive types of humor which are utilized as a part of advertisements, the advertisements rely on the medium through which they communicated. They revealed that other than the medium, the advertisements additionally rely upon the producer who decides which sort of humor needs to be incorporated into the communication, according to the requirements of the brand. These authors gave another example in which they say, that when a channel utilizes distinctive sorts of humor, it is then ready to seize more attention from its viewers. Since lots of researches have been churned out over numerous years, yet, a specific type of humor has not been established, which can be accepted all around, on the grounds that distinctive groups of people have a diverse taste of humor that gets in through their societies. Then again, the present research has recognized that in ads, distinctive arrangements of amusement are effectively utilized. After reviewing the literature, it has been concluded that humor can be divided into classes that are hypothetical, tentatively based, technique oriented or practical practitioner leaning based (Hameed, Siddiqui & Husain, 2015; Ivanov, Eisend & Bayon, 2019).

The effects of all types of humor have been used together by combining the responses from three types of humor (i.e., Arousal Safety, Disparagement, and Incongruity Resolution). The resulting variable is the actual purchase intention, which is predicted through perceived humor (containing all types of humor). Moreover, in order to gain an even better understanding, a detailed analysis of several intervening variables has also

been done, and the following hypotheses have been proposed, which will be later revealed in the course of this study;

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.5 Humor and Purchase Intention

Television commercials that bring a smile on one's face are considered to be the best type of commercials (Woltman, Josephine, Mukherjee & Hoyer, 2004). Substantial research has already been conducted on the same topic (Duncan & Nelson, 1985; Gelb & Zinkhan, 1986; Madden & Weinberger, 1982) and the results prove that humorous ads influence the audience comparatively more than other executions styles of advertising (Duncan, 1979; Speck, 1987).

The natural belief of marketers is that the humor in advertising tends to be influential (Madden & Weinberger, 1984). The methodological experiments delve instantly with the humorous appeal application in ads (Markiewicz, 1974), changing their focus towards their usefulness (Hameed, Siddiqui & Husain, 2016).

It has been observed in previous studies that discrepancies exist in the methodology, and deficiencies were found in the conceptual frame work which was adopted to study this particular topic (Duncan, 1979; Sternthal & Craig, 1973). Nowadays, the consumers have exposure to clutter in advertising. This clutter is creative, novel and bombarded on the consumer's mind (Dahl, Frankenberger & Manchanda, 2003), so as to take hold of their attention and keep the product, at the top of their minds. In this regard, the following hypothesis has been formulated to examine the positive relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 1: Perceived humor has a positive relationship with purchase intention.

2.1.2 Moderating Role of Self-Monitoring

Personalities that are high self-monitoring, have a variety of response designs in view of the various circumstances that they exist in (Hameed, Siddiqui & Husain, 2015). People embrace and adopt the conduct from their environment and respond in like manner. Along these lines, Lammers et al. (1983) conceptualized that humor advertising impacts

those purchasers more who have high self-monitoring, as compared to those individuals who are low in self-monitoring. High self-monitored personalities receive, and acknowledge humor as a social way of life. They also gain from positive scenarios and social circumstances. Moreover, research shows that high self-monitoring men respond positively to humorous advertisements more as compared to low self-monitoring men. On the other hand, this reaction pattern is opposite when it comes to female target audiences. Theory tells us that this variation is due to the way in which humorous advertisements are executed and presented. Lammers et al. (1983) theorized that high self-monitoring ladies may have been battling with the generalization that women are effortlessly influenced by men. Regardless, this may be one of the reasons at the back end of this complex nature of humor research.

Hypothesis 2: Self-monitoring moderates the positive relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention, such that a person high in self-monitoring is more inclined towards purchase intention.

2.1.3 Mediating Role of Attitude towards the Advertisement

The strength of humor advertising is highly dependent upon the comprehensibility of the ad (Cline & Kellaris, 1999; Woltman et al., 2004). The sample of most of the prior researches on humor in advertising consisted of students mainly, and it was natural that students' reaction towards ATA was stronger, and highly appreciable when it comes to humor in advertising. A generally acknowledged clarification for the impact of funniness on behaviors depends on the possibility of the idea of affective mechanisms, for example, bringing out a positive influence that is associated with the brand (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989).

Such influence and speculation can be clarified by classical conditioning. That is to say that, positive responses towards the fun boost the unconditioned response, that is universal, onto the conditioned stimulus for the ads of the brands (Passyn & Sujana, 2006). Researchers have this farsightedness on the role of disposition of ads, and have investigated a lot of reactions that pertain to TVCs, which may be classified as favorable or unfavorable responses (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Various analyses have testified the measure of such reactions as the determinants of stimulus (Edell & Bruke, 1987; Holbrook & Batra, 1987).

Hypothesis 3: Perceived humor (containing all types of humor) has a positive relationship with attitude towards the advertisement.

Hypothesis 4: Attitude towards the advertisement has a positive relationship with the purchase intention.

Hypothesis 5: Attitude towards the advertisement mediates the positive relationship between perceived humor (containing all types of humor) and purchase intention.

2.1.4 Mediating Role of Attitude towards the Brand

The combination of various researches is accessible in the analysis of Attitude towards Advertising (ATA), Attitude towards Brands (ATB) and consumer purchase intentions. Here, the main focus of researchers is inclined towards the study of the effect of advertising attitude towards the actual act of purchasing, as the prognosticator of the consumer behavior. Meanwhile, the purchase intentions and attitude towards brands are connected with each other, so the moderating variable should apply to both of the independent variables in a similar fashion (Eisend, 2011).

In this regard, the argument is more skewed towards the viability of humor advertising. As far as its liking, in contrast with its effectiveness, in concerned, the impact of humor on customer attitude, influence on ATA and ATB may differ (Woltman et al., 2004). The outcomes are different between the variables of promotion, and the brand related review & acknowledgment effects. Exuberance in advertisements prompts a positive impact, which eventually effects the response pattern and purchase intent. Hilarity in advertising, likewise, improves the attitude towards advertisements and attitude towards brands. Both effects can be considered quite significant, like it has been indicated in the arrangements by Cohen (1977).

It is a proven fact that the attitude towards ads, and brand belief are the successors of ATB. This relationship is crucial to our comprehension of how humor functions in advertising. It has been observed and experimented by Gelb and Pickett (1983) that ATA and ATB both may get influenced by the humor in advertising. Thus, ATA can impact ATB

through the proposed affect-transfer process (MacKenzie & Lutz 1989; Stuart, Shimp & Engle, 1987).

In this way, the impact of comedic action in advertisements on ATB can be intervened by ATA. That is, the impact of humor on ATB may become immaterial if the impact of humor on ATA is expelled. This interceding part of ATA, as a variable, that mediates between advertising substance and ATB has been recorded in quite a few reviews (Batra & Ray, 1985; Shimp, 2000).

A review by Muehling, Lacznia, and Stoltman (1991) revealed that there was support for the logical valuation exchange, which is hypothesized by Lutz (1985). At the point, the role of relevant components is generally high, however, the association with the promotion message is low. Moreover, commercial discernment is the predominant constraint driving ATA, and in fact, ATA is the prevailing variable molding the ATB. This assertion strengthens our proposed connection between funniness, ATA, and ATB. Hence, on the basis of above the discussion, the following hypothesis is postulated.

Hypothesis 6: Perceived humor has a positive relationship with attitude towards the brand.

Hypothesis 7: Attitude towards the advertisement has a positive relationship with attitude towards the brand.

Hypothesis 8: Attitude towards the brand has a positive relationship with the purchase intention.

Hypothesis 9: Attitude towards the advertisement mediates the attitude towards the brand, and collectively they mediate the positive relationship between perceived humor and the purchase intention.

2.1.5 Moderating Role of Message Arguments

Company may deviate from the central message of the advertisement in order to make advertisement interesting. It is evident that the subjects in a test concentrate really prepared, what was intended to be a fringe signal, as an issue-applicable contention (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981).

The appeal of a model's hair may really fill in as a demonstration of the nature of a cleanser, on the grounds that the hair specifically identifies with the nature of the item. Contentions are data contained in correspondence that is tangible to a man's subjective assurance of the genuine benefits of an endorsed position of a product (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

As the needs may be, with the end goal for cleverness to fill in as an issue-significant message contention, it ought to give data that is fundamental to the benefits of the state of mind protest. At the end of the day, the item or administration that amusement offers in a notice ought to have the nature of being funny. In such a case, amusement fills in as a declaration to the nature of the publicized item. Cases of such items incorporate entertainers, clever network shows, amusing motion pictures, comic books, toon characters, and other aspects that carry the nature of this specific type of intelligence.

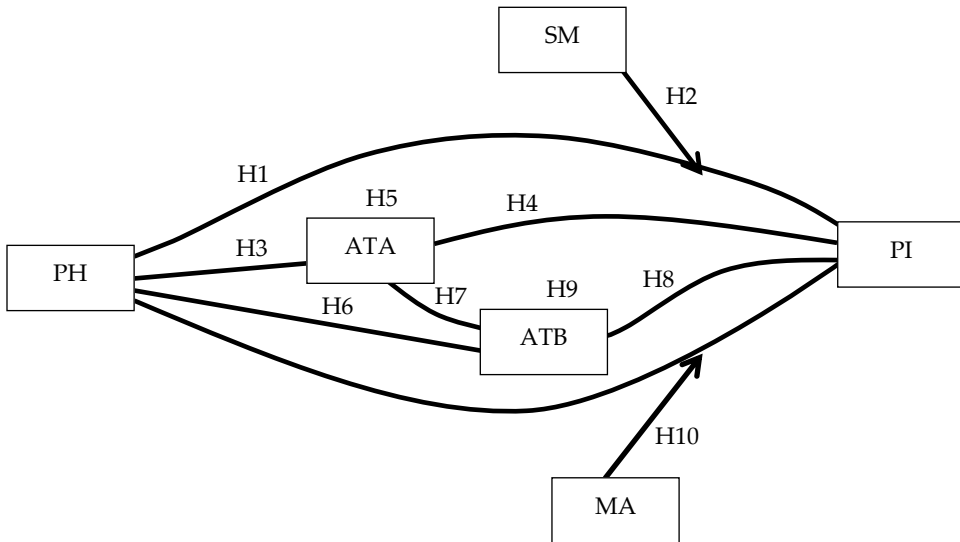
Subsequently, when issue-important amusement is handled midway, as a rule under high contribution, the nature of the contention, reflected by the level of diversion, is basic to the contribution of the change in demeanor. The more entertaining and applicable the humor, the more probable it is to bring about a changes in the attitude towards the message given by the hilarious idea. Weaker and less pertinent amusement, yet again, will ignite counterarguments discouraging to the advertisement, and negative to the arrangement of the inspirational attitude. This line of argument is, obviously, propositioned on the beneficiary's inspiration and capacity to prepare the message.

Products or services that have an attention grabbing aspect to themselves, which can be related to amusement, are lesser connected to it. This is in comparison to those products or services which have a much stronger connection with the factor of amusement, yet, these have little to do with the comical side. In this study, we have concentrated on the part of funniness, as a fringe gadget, that has discovered its most persistent use in publicizing. Due to this the following hypothesis has been developed.

Hypothesis 10: Message arguments moderate the positive relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention, such that stronger message arguments persuade the target to make stronger purchase intention.

Hypothesized Model

Figure 1: Hypothesized Model



Predictor Perceived Humor (PH) has three sub constructs namely, arousal safety (A-S), disparagement (D-P) and incongruity resolution (I-R). Attitude towards advertising (ATA) and attitude towards brand (ATB) has been used as mediating variables. Whereas, self-monitoring (SM) and message arguments (MA) are acting as moderators. Purchase intention (PI) is playing the role of dependent variable as shown in Figure 1.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Method of Data Collection

A self-administered questionnaire had been utilized to gather data from the targeted representatives of the population. The questionnaire was given to respondents in a setting where the environment could be controlled, keeping in mind the end goal to get to know their observation about particular advertisements. Six distinct advertisements were precisely chosen, ensuring that there was a part of hilarity in them. At that point, it was ensured that the chosen advertisements had a part that contained humor by demonstrating it to three diverse members of the departments of a college in various settings. Selected advertisements were

promoting convenience and shopping products, and advertisements for specialty and unsought products have not been used. Convenience and shopping products advertisements have been used because of their very nature and characteristics (e.g., price, frequency of purchase and availability). The questionnaire was created keeping in mind various factors (dependent, independent, moderating and mediating). Effectively created and distributed scales were also utilized after a couple of minor changes in sizes of estimations were made. Moreover, already developed and published scales were also used, after a few minor modifications in scales of measurements were made. Once the selection of advertisements was complete, the questions for the involved variables were developed. The major step, however, was the selection of the sample. The respondents were students of a university (Iqra University) located in Karachi (biggest city of Pakistan).

3.2 Sampling Technique and Sample size

The sample selection was, in fact, the most difficult part of the study. This was due to the fact that the nature of the study required that only that population could be selected who would give their responses after reading and observing. The advertisements used for this research were based upon the Urdu language. Close ended questions were used and the language that the questionnaire was conducted in was English. The advertisements were shown to the respondents and later one questionnaire was distributed to gauge their responses. Students of the graduate and under graduate level were targeted during their classes. Many different sections were targeted so that there would be a mix of all categories and levels of students. The non-probability based sampling technique was used to select the required elements. The questionnaire was distributed amongst 1000 individuals, and in total 617 (with response rate 61.7%) valid responses were obtained and used further for the purpose of this study.

3.3 Instrument of Data Collection

Considering the deductive approach using quantitative methods, a self-administered close ended questionnaire based on scale of the Rensis Likert (also known as Likert scale), and the Semantic differential scaling was used to gather the required data. The moderating variable - self-monitoring - was based on the Likert scale, and the questions of all other

variables were based on semantic differential scaling. All of the questions were based on the 7-point scale in order to avoid confusion, where 1 being Strongly Disagree, and 7 stands for Strongly Agree.

In order to measure Perceived humor, the scale has been adopted from the study of Zhang (1996) with $\alpha = .91$. This scale was adopted because this has been used by many of the leading researchers (e.g., Cline & Kellaris, 1999; Flaherty, Weinberger, & Gulas, 2004). Some of the researchers use other types of scales but those scales were only related to one particular aspect of advertisements, like entertainment. Self-monitoring has been measured by using the scale modified by Lennox & Wolfe, (1984). Purchase intention can be measured in number of ways; some of the constructs were available in the context of this study; the most famous one was about the purchase intention in online webs. That, although, was not much related to purchase in physical aspect after watching the advertisement. An established scale created by Zhang (1996) has been used with $\alpha = .89$. Different scales have been used to measure the attitudes towards the brand, but the commonly used one, in this research, has been with $\alpha = 0.84$ (Batra & Ray, 1985). Attitude towards the advertisement items were calculated to indicate the Attitude towards the advertisement score with $\alpha = .87$. Advertisements are designed after considering many aspects, and the most important aspect out of them is the arguments used in the particular advertisements. In some cases, after watching the advertisement people are unable to understand the product that the advertisement is promoting. Therefore, the selection of the words and the arguments is important. They are also measured in this research by using a scale of 6-items with $\alpha = .85$, measured on scale of 7 ranging from -3 to $+3$, 0 being the central point (Neutral) (Andrews & Shimp, 1990).

3.4 Data Analysis

Various preliminary tests were applied to clean the data. Initially, the missing values were calculated and replaced by the mean. Secondly, aberrant values were calculated through the box plot. The third step was to check the normality of the data by applying the test of normality, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. Then the CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) was applied by using SEM in AMOS 18. Then, after having completed the initial clean-up of the data hypotheses, these findings were tested using the SPSS. Simple Linear Regression was used to

test the simple relationships; however, complex models were tested by using using the hierarchal regression (to test moderation), and bootstrapping (to test mediation).

Table 1-A: Demographic Information

	Particulars	Respondents	Frequency %
Gender	Male	333	54
	Female	284	46
Age	Less than 20	99	16
	21 - 30	253	41
	31 - 40	130	21
	41 - 50	80	13
	Above 50	55	9
Education	Intermediate	99	16
	Bachelors	265	43
	Masters	228	37
	PhDs	25	4
Total		617	100

3.5 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of all the constructs was measured through the Cronbach Alpha. The results of which are provided below.

Table 1-B: Reliability Analysis

No.	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
1	SM	0.679
2	MA	0.840
3	PH	0.815
4	PI	0.778
5	ATB	0.826
6	ATA	0.833

All the constructs had reliability values above the minimum threshold value of 0.7, except Self-Monitoring which had a value of 0.679 (Table 1-B).

4. Results

4.1 Data Screening

Initial data screening was performed, which included the missing value analysis, detection of aberrant values, and assessing the normality of data. There was a maximum of 08 missing values, which is not a huge percentage keeping in view the sample size of 617 respondents. So the missing values were also computed. No aberrant values were detected and the data met the assumption of quasi normality.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The correlation of all the variables is presented in the table below.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients

		SM	MA	PH	PI	ATB	ATA
SM		1					
MA	Pearson Correlation	.152**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000					
PH	Pearson Correlation	.126**	.318**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.000				
PI	Pearson Correlation	0.066	.606**	.386**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.102	0.000	0.000			
ATB	Pearson Correlation	.132**	.611**	.342**	.608**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000		
ATA	Pearson Correlation	.156**	.732**	.487**	.573**	.708**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Std. Error of Mean		0.03012	0.04102	0.04191	0.04666	0.04622	0.04291
Variance		0.56	1.038	1.084	1.344	1.318	1.136

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

The detailed review of the above table revealed that all the studied variables have significant correlation with each other except SM, which exhibited an insignificant relationship with purchase intention (Table 2). Table 3 shows that the minimum and maximum values lie within the given range (i.e., between 1 and 7). The mean and standard deviation values are also presented in order to get a further insight in to the data.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SM	617	2.2	7	5.4102	0.74828
MA	617	1	7	5.0387	1.0188
PH	617	1	7	5.59	1.04115
PI	617	1	7	5.331	1.1591
ATB	617	1	7	5.3353	1.14811
ATA	617	1.14	7	5.1604	1.06593
Valid N (list wise)	617				

4.2.1 Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The coefficient is .386, which shows that there is a moderate relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.149, which shows that 14.9% of model is being explained by the independent variable, and the remaining by unknown variables (Model I; Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the regression fits the data (i.e., predicts the purchase intention) (Model I; Table 5). The sig value is .000 which is less than .05, which shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected and the research hypothesis perceived humor has a positive impact on the purchase intention has been accepted (Model I; Table 6).

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	Relation	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
I	PH ---> PI	.386 ^a	0.149	0.147	1.07037
II	PH ---> ATA	.487 ^a	0.237	0.236	0.93187
III	PH ---> ATB	.342 ^a	0.117	0.116	1.07977
IV	ATA ---> PI	.573 ^a	0.328	0.327	0.95093
V	ATA ---> ATB	.708 ^a	0.501	0.5	0.81189
VI	ATB ---> PI	.608 ^a	0.369	0.368	0.92138

Hypothesis 3: The coefficient is .487, which shows that there is a moderate relationship between perceived humor and attitude towards the Advertisement. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.237, which shows that 23.7% of the model is being explained by the independent variable and the remaining by unknown variables (Model II; Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the regression fits

the data (i.e., predicts the attitude towards the advertisement) (Model II; Table 5). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected and the research hypothesis perceived humor leads to favorable attitude towards the advertisement has been accepted (Model II; Table 6).

Table 5: Results of ANOVA

Model	Relation		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I	PH ---> PI	Regression	123.008	1	123.008	107.366	.000 ^b
		Residual	704.598	615	1.146		
		Total	827.605	616			
II	PH ---> ATA	Regression	165.845	1	165.845	190.98	.000 ^b
		Residual	534.06	615	0.868		
		Total	699.905	616			
III	PH ---> ATB	Regression	94.959	1	94.959	81.448	.000 ^b
		Residual	717.025	615	1.166		
		Total	811.985	616			
IV	ATA ---> PI	Regression	271.481	1	271.481	300.221	.000 ^b
		Residual	556.125	615	0.904		
		Total	827.605	616			
V	ATA ---> ATB	Regression	406.603	1	406.603	616.853	.000 ^b
		Residual	405.382	615	0.659		
		Total	811.985	616			
VI	ATB ---> PI	Regression	305.501	1	305.501	359.858	.000 ^b
		Residual	522.104	615	0.849		
		Total	827.605	616			

Hypothesis 6: The coefficient (R) is .342 which shows that there is a weak relationship between perceived humor and attitude towards the brand. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.117, which shows that 11.7% of model is being explained by the independent variable, and the remaining by unknown variables (Model III; Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05. This shows that the regression fits the data (i.e., predicts the attitude towards the brand) (Model III; Table 5). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected and the research hypothesis perceived humor leads to a favorable attitude towards the brand has been accepted (Model III; Table 6).

Table 6: Coefficients Values

Model	Relation		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
			B	Std. Error	Beta		
I	PH ---> PI	(Constant)	2.932	0.236		12.448	0.000
		PH	0.429	0.041	0.386	10.362	0.000
II	PH ---> ATA	(Constant)	2.375	0.205		11.58	0.000
		PH	0.498	0.036	0.487	13.82	0.000
III	PH ---> ATB	(Constant)	3.227	0.238		13.584	0.000
		PH	0.377	0.042	0.342	9.025	0.000
IV	ATA ---> PI	(Constant)	2.117	0.189		11.178	0.000
		ATA	0.623	0.036	0.573	17.327	0.000
V	ATA ---> ATB	(Constant)	1.402	0.162		8.671	0.000
		ATA	0.762	0.031	0.708	24.837	0.000
VI	ATB ---> PI	(Constant)	2.058	0.176		11.665	0.000
		ATB	0.613	0.032	0.608	18.97	0.000

Hypothesis 4: The coefficient (R) is .573 which shows that there is a strong relationship between attitude towards the advertisement, and the purchase intention. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.328, which shows that 32.8% of model is being explained by the independent variable, and the remaining by unknown variables (Model IV; Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the regression fits the data (i.e., predicts the purchase intention) (Model IV; Table 5). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected. Keeping these revelations in mind, the research hypothesis attitude towards the advertisement has a positive impact on the purchase intention, which has been accepted (Model IV; Table 6).

Hypothesis 5: The value of beta is 0.2735 which shows that with one unit change in attitude towards the advertisement, purchase intention will likely to increase by 27.35 percent. The confidence interval of bootstrapping has both the positive values; lower value being 0.2015 and the upper value 0.3545, which clearly shows that zero does not lie in the confidence interval, so we can say that it is a purely mediated model and the attitude towards the advertisement mediates the positive relationship between perceived humor and the purchase intention (Table 7).

Table 7: Indirect Effect of Perceived Humor on Purchase Intention

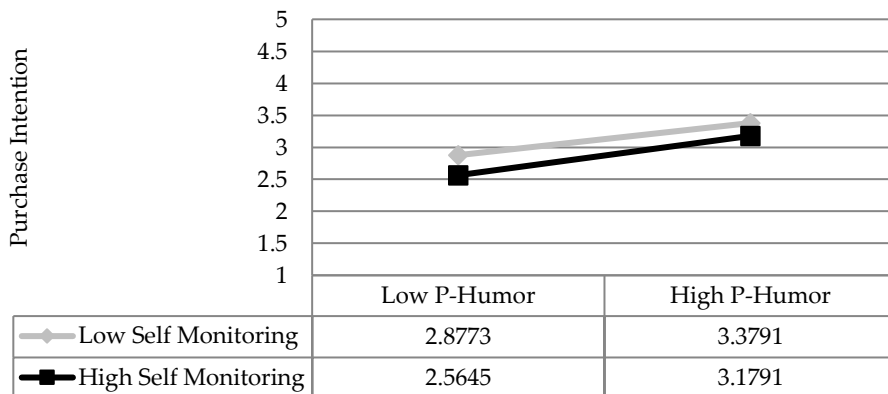
	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
ATA	0.2735	0.0389	0.2015	0.3545

Partially standardized indirect effect of X on Y

Hypothesis 2: Since the significant value of interaction effect is 0.5675, so self-monitoring does not act as a moderator between perceived humor and the purchase intention, instead it can be used as a focal predictor (Table 8). Self-Monitoring strengthens the positive relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention (Figure 2).

Table 8: Moderation Effects

	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.6101	1.4686	2.4582	0.0142	0.7260	6.4942
SM	-0.1282	0.2783	-0.4608	0.6451	-0.6747	0.4183
PH	0.2791	0.2614	1.0679	0.2860	-0.2342	0.7924
Int_1	0.0282	0.0492	0.5720	0.5675	-0.0685	0.1248
Interactions:						
Int_1 PH X MA						

Figure 2: Moderation Effects

Hypothesis 7: The coefficient (R) is .708, which shows that there is a strong relationship between attitude towards the advertisement, and the attitude towards the brand. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.501, which shows that 50.1% of the model is being explained by the independent variable, and the remaining by unknown variables (Model V;

Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the regression fits the data (i.e., predicts the attitude towards the brand) (Model V; Table 5). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05 which shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected, and the research hypothesis that signifies the favorable attitude towards the advertisement leads to a favorable attitude towards the brand, has in fact been accepted (Model V; Table 6).

Hypothesis 8: The coefficient is 0.608, which shows that there is a strong relationship between attitude towards the brand, and the purchase intention. The coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.369, which shows that 36.9% of the model is being explained by the independent variable, and the remaining by unknown variables (Model VI; Table 4). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the regression fits the data (i.e., predicts the purchase intention) (Model VI; Table 5). The sig value is .000, which is less than .05, which shows that the null hypothesis has been rejected, and the research hypothesis that signifies that the attitude towards the brand has a positive impact on purchase intention, has been accepted (Model VI; Table 6).

Hypothesis 9: The value of beta is 0.156, which shows that with one unit change in the attitude towards the brand, following the route of attitude towards the advertisement, the purchase intention will likely to increase by 15.6 percent. The confidence interval of bootstrapping has both the positive values, lower value being 0.1006, and the upper value 0.2249, which clearly shows that the zero doesn't lie in the confidence interval. As a result, we can say that it is a purely mediated model, and the attitude towards the advertisement mediates the attitude towards the brand. Collectively they develop positive relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention (Table 9).

Table 9: Indirect Effect(s) of X on Y

	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Total:	0.272	0.0405	0.1952	0.3571
Ind1 :	0.1175	0.0382	0.0523	0.201
Ind2 :	0.156	0.0313	0.1006	0.2249
Ind3 :	-0.0015	0.0168	-0.0371	0.0294
Indirect Effect Key				
Ind1 : PH	->	ATA	->	PI
Ind2 : PH	->	ATA	->	ATB -> PI
Ind3 : PH	->	ATB	->	PI

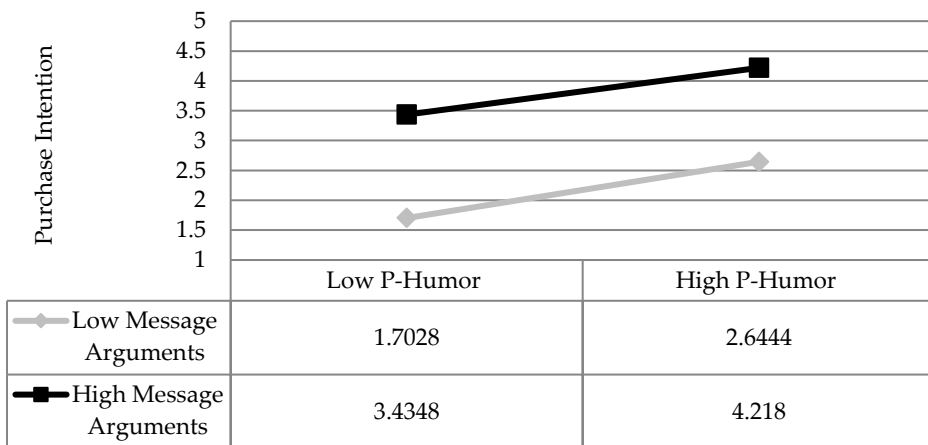
Hypothesis 10: The significant value is 0.1418, which is greater than 0.05. This shows that the message argument does not act as a moderator in between the relationship of perceived humor and the purchase intention (Table 10). The message arguments dampen the positive relationship between the perceived humor and the purchase intention (Figure 3).

Table 10: Moderation Effects

	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	-0.115	0.739	-0.156	0.877	-1.565	1.335
MA	0.8264	0.151	5.4736	0.0000	0.5299	1.123
PH	0.4312	0.136	3.1754	0.002	0.1645	0.698
Int_1	-0.04	0.027	-1.471	0.142	-0.093	0.013

Interactions:
int_1 PH X MA

Figure 3: Moderation Effects



5. Discussion

The independent variable (Perceived Humor) has been tested against the dependent variable (Purchase Intention). The examination of the assembled information demonstrated effectively that if there is Perceived Humor in the advertisement, then the targeted individuals are convinced towards the purchase of particular product. The purchase intention is a measure of the positive attitude of a person towards the product or service, and at last aims to lead towards impulsive purchasing. This implies that there is a direct relationship between humor and the purchase intention.

Self-monitoring has been utilized as a moderating variable, with an end goal that self-monitoring must be between humor and the purchase intention. For this purpose, self-monitoring, a psychographic variable of identity, has been used. At the point when self-monitoring is high in the individual, and the advertisement is humorous, then a person is more inclined towards the purchase of this specific item.

The attitude towards the advertisement has been used as the mediating variable. Now, in this way, the purchase intention will be more as the attitude towards the advertisement is positive favorable. These findings are in line with the findings of Zhang and Zinkhan (2006), as the attitude towards the advertisement will be favorable, then the person will be going ahead with the purchase, which is expressed as the purchase intention of the person.

The ninth hypothesis used the multi-mediation mediation model, where the attitude towards the brand, and the purchase intention has been mediated by the attitude towards the advertisement. When humor is in the advertisement, then the individual develops a positive attitude towards the advertisement. This which leads to a positive attitude towards the brand, as the attitude towards the advertisement, and the attitude towards the brand are profoundly related. The attitude towards the advertisement leads to the development of a person's attitude towards the brand. Favorable attitude towards the brand would have no use if it doesn't have a link with the purchase intention. Hence, the attitude towards the brand has been tested in relation to the purchase intention and it has been demonstrated successfully that it is a fully multi-mediated model. The findings are consistent with the existing studies (Weinberger, Swani & Gulas, 2017).

The last hypothesis pertains to Perceived Humor that is related with the purchase intention, and moderated by the message arguments. It states that the arguments used in the advertisements to persuade the purchaser also play a vital role in their purchase intention. The convincing arguments can influence the response of the person. Unlike what is revealed in the existing studies (e.g., Zhang, 1996), the outcomes demonstrate that there is no significant link between the message argument and the purchase intention.

6. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Research is a never ending process; and it is evident that the research cycle keeps on evolving in any case. Hence, none of the research can be written down as the final word in a particular field. Obviously the findings of this research can be used further as basis for further researches in this particular area of study, and even the vision and scope can be broadened. For the purpose of this research specifically, the focus was primarily on self-monitoring as a moderating variable since the need for cognition has been extensively used in research, and in some cases self-monitoring has also been used. This research can be extended towards the use of the third psychographic variable i.e., political ideology. Political ideology has never been used before in any of the research related to humor. People with high a political ideology can be considered as individuals with a high sense of critical thinking, and taking out meanings, and be able to relate interrelated sequence of activities. It can be tested that the people who have high sense of political ideology will give a response towards purchase intention when exposed to a humorous advertisement.

This research was based on video advertisements, so research was strictly focused on the medium of television. Moreover, those Medias where people can watch video of the advertisement and also are able to hear the voice of it were mainly consulted for this purpose. This research can be extended by redirecting the center of focus to print advertisements, especially those given in newspapers. The advertisements which are displayed on sign boards and bill boards are also needed to be pondered upon. In order to make print advertisements more effective, they need to be researched on the basis of their different types, and also by incorporating the moderating and mediating variables. Findings will provide media agencies with an insight into the audiences' emotional consequences when exposed to humor in advertisements. These findings are particularly salient for national and multinational media agencies in Pakistan, as well as those in the other parts of the world.

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Dissection of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to Predict Job Satisfaction: Empirical Evidence from the Telecommunication Industry of Pakistan

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Abstract

Herzberg's motivation theory is one of the most widely studied motivation theories. This theory is also known as the two-factor or dual-factor theory. The premise of Frederick Herzberg's theory is that the concept of motivation is divided into two aspects: hygiene and motivators. There is no denying of the fact that the theory of Herzberg of employee motivation is very pertinent in explaining the work behaviors of organizational employees. Nevertheless, this theory attracts substantial criticism from its critics who strongly contended that there is no need to revive the original theory as it lacks substantial influence in explaining employee motivation. Taking this notion forward, this study aims to test the fundamental factors that are of six hygiene factors (extrinsic factors), and five motivators (intrinsic factors) that affect the job satisfaction of front line employees (FLEs). In doing so, this study moves beyond the dichotomy of these two factors and examine the pertinence of underlying factors that can directly influence the employee job satisfaction. The FLEs are the faces that represent organizations, as they directly interact with the customers at their business units. The study analyzes the data by applying a structured equation model on a survey sample of 284 employees, constituting of business managers and executives in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas in telecommunication industry of Pakistan. This research reveals positive and direct relationship of five of the underlying factors (money, relationship with peers, relationship with supervisors, work itself and recognition) with job satisfaction.

Keywords: Herzberg's theory, job satisfaction, telecommunication, front line employees

JEL Classification: M12, J53, K23, K31.

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1. Introduction

A positive attitude of employees is essential for an organization's success (Khan, Abbas, & Zaki, 2017), as they are the most valuable resource for any firm. They can build or destroy its corporate and business standing by affecting its overall profitability (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Organizations in the service sector heavily rely on their frontline employees' (FLE) services in order to maintain successful communication in terms of two-way information flow. Likewise, FLEs through service encounters are also a major source of transferring substantial external information to firms (Santos-Vijande, López-Sánchez, & Rudd, 2016).

Frontline service employees are the most crucial employees as they are the representatives of service sector firms. The FLEs must follow standardized operating procedures at the service encounters in order to convey high service quality that is always reliable (Maria Stock, 2017). Therefore, they play an important role in customer satisfaction (Jauhari, Singh, & Kumar, 2017). In this regard, customers can only be loyal to organizations if they are completely satisfied with the services that are offered and promised to them. Such level of adequate service can only be possible through a team of satisfied workers who are committed to the organization (Sarfraz & Mahmood, 2017). FLEs need to interact effectively with their customers (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014) and this interaction is contingent on their level of job satisfaction and motivation towards their work (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). A satisfactory customer-employee relationship does not only retain customers, but also maintains a positive relationship between a customer and the organization as a whole (Premkumar & Rajan, 2017).

Job satisfaction (dissatisfaction) refers to the balance of positive (negative) feelings that a worker has towards his/her work (Aziri & Brikend, 2011), which further develops a positive relationship between motivation and job satisfaction (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). Motivation is the driving force that an organization uses to encourage employees towards its success (Akhtar, Hussain, Ali, & Salman, 2014). Consequently, keeping employees motivated is extremely important for any organization. Motivation caters to two perspectives: (i) general commitment towards an endeavor; and (ii) specific needs of a person. The former refers to 'general work satisfaction or commitment', while the latter means 'specific satisfied

needs' one acquires through his job in an organization (Pareek, 1974). Intrinsic motivation (motivators) refers to an inherent interest towards a job, whereas the extrinsic motivation (hygiene) refers to doing a job for its outcome (Cinar, Bektas, & Aslan, 2011).

Even though Pakistan's telecommunication sector showed outstanding pace of growth, it has been identified that there is a gap in studying what motivates this sector's employees to increase their level of job satisfaction (Razzaq, et. Al, 2017). In order to take this discussion forward, the relevance of the double factor theory of motivation is examined in the context of the banking sector of Pakistan (Fareed & Jan, 2016). For instance, Naseem (2018) tested the effects of job stress, happiness and life satisfaction on job satisfaction among employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. Similarly, researchers have also analyzed the relationship of the incentive system and employee performance in telecom sector of Pakistan (Khan, Abbas, & Zaki, 2017). Furthermore, the other studies have discussed the link between non-standard working hour and employee turnover (Muhammad, 2017) to assess the impact of motivation. Herzberg's theory is one of the most commonly tested and applied theories in the current milieu.

In 1957, Herzberg explained the link between motivation and job satisfaction for the profession of engineers. Later, he bifurcated motivation into two constructs in order to measure the level of job satisfaction of employees in different firms (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Various studies have both supported as well as criticized Herzberg's approach to measure motivation by a different set of factors for the motivators and hygiene constructs. However, countless areas are untapped due to modernization, continuously changing business practices, gender diversity and evolving business and organizational cultures. This has led to changes in the motivating factors in many organizations, and has shifted the focus on studying different motivational theories as well. In this backdrop, this study focuses on studying Herzberg's motivation theory, and its prime purpose is to determine the relevance of underlying factors that can directly impact the job satisfaction of the FLEs in the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. His theory has been criticized for showing varying results depending on the nature of the task and specifications of the country of the sample. Few researchers also challenged the importance of dividing motivation into hygiene and

motivators. Therefore, the study first dissects these two factors to identify the most relevant factors by going beyond of the two-factor categorization.

2. Research Rationale

There is no denying of the fact that the theory of Herzberg of employee motivation is very pertinent in explaining the work behaviors organizational employees. Nevertheless, this theory attracts substantial criticism from its critics (Deci & Ryan, 2001; Steers, Mowday & Shapiro, 2004). It is strongly contended that there is no need to revive the original theory as it lacks substantial influence in explaining employee motivation (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005; Achie & Kurah, 2016). In the similar vein, Onen and Maicibi (2004) have differed with Maidani (1991). They argued that one of the hygiene factor was originally a motivator in the study and this misclassification was caused due to the differences in the sample and organizational culture of employees. Smerek and Peterson (2007) found that only work itself (one factor) showed a significant impact on job satisfaction which highlights the need of studying these underlying factors as separate constructs to better understand what actually motivates the employees.

With respect to the reliability of the constructs, Manisera et al (2005) showed insignificant difference between the second order constructs of hygiene and motivation. Likewise, Yusoff et. al (2013) proposed to combine both of these factors into one factor after comparing the inconsistencies in the findings of the two-factor theory from various countries and industries. For instance, the tasks assigned to employees and the geographical regions play a crucial role in studying the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction (Islam and Saha, 2016). In the wake of this critique, this study aims to move beyond the dichotomy of two factor theory and examines the actual tenants of this theory for a better understanding of employee job satisfaction. Nonetheless, Herzberg's two-factor theory has pushed ahead in relevance and continues to be one of the most important theories of motivation being studied as a determinant of job satisfaction.

3. Literature Review

In 1959, Herzberg et al. suggested the two-dimensional paradigm of factors that affect motivation in employees, and from here on they developed the two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1966). This theory was

elaborated by stating that a job's content, nature, and the tasks it entails were crucial to motivate employees to do their respective jobs (Ruiz-Palomino, Saez-Martínez, & Martínez-Canas, 2013). A dynamic approach, as postulated by an idealistic philosophical lens, argues that a man has two needs, one to avoid pain and another to grow psychologically (Rao, 1972). Despite the perennial claims that Herzberg's theory is being exhausted due to over application, recent research in the field of positive psychology has been found to show consistency with the core ideas of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (Sachau, 2007). Indeed, Herzberg's work speaks volumes, but it is not put forth without its critics evaluating the possible weaknesses of the theory.

The significance of motivation is crucial in all firms to enhance employee performance, which is the key to an organization's growth. Therefore, multiple motivation practices have been adopted to meet the requirement of the workforce and its work environment (Ogbogu, 2017). Among the various theories, Herzberg's theory of motivation is the most popular theory in studying job satisfaction (Dion, 2006). Moreover, Herzberg's theory is applicable even after fifty years of examining employee behavior (Hoseyni et al., 2014), and is famously known as the, "motivation-hygiene theory". According to the tenants of this theory, motivating factors increase job satisfaction and hygiene factors decrease job dissatisfaction (Band, Shah, & Sriram, 2016).

The traditional Herzberg approach represented both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction on the same continuum, but at opposite ends. Later on, satisfaction and dissatisfaction were separated into different sets of categories, each accompanied by distinct set factors. Hygiene factors decreased dissatisfaction, whereas it was the motivators that increased satisfaction. Hence, the updated two-factor theory that claimed satisfaction and dissatisfaction to be determined by different set of factors was reinforced (Brenner, Carmack, & Weinstein, 1971). It must be noted that Herzberg's theory of motivation derived inspiration from Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Dartey-Baah & Amoako, 2011). Hygiene factors, fulfilled "the need to avoid unpleasantness" while the motivation factors met "the need of the individual for self-growth and self-actualization" (Alshmemri, Maude, & Phillip, 2017).

3.1 *Hygiene and Motivators*

The presence of hygiene factor does not cause satisfaction on its own but nonetheless, its absence would cause dissatisfaction. Conducive “working conditions” is one of the main characteristics in the workplace that helps to avoid dissatisfaction in firms. Herzberg et al. (1959) proposed that hygiene factors were important in creating job satisfaction and Maidani (1991) corroborated that if these extrinsic variables are mishandled by an organization, it can create dissatisfaction among the employees.

The factors such as nature of work, recognition, advancement, growth and sense of achievement that one derives from work, and future opportunities impact the motivation of employees. For example, work itself includes a variety of characteristics of the job in hand, from how one participates in the work activities, to the control one has over assigned tasks. This leads to the sense of achievement one derives from the assigned task by the level of importance an employee assigns to it. If the firms provide all of these intrinsic factors to its employees, it will motivate employees towards their job (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015).

Few studies have historically refuted the findings of Herzberg et al. (1959) due to differences in the demographics of the samples of the types of industries, and their organisational cultures. Win (2006) tested the relevance of Herzberg theory in the nursing sector of Mayamar and Taiwan, showing a direct relationship between the intrinsic factors and job satisfaction for both countries. However, the extrinsic factors were found to be significant determinants only in Taiwan. Later on, Park and Rainey (2007) proposed that sometimes the extrinsic factors also tend to act as the intrinsic factors, which might positively impact job satisfaction as well. Tan & Waheed (2011) have given precedence to the hygiene factors over the motivators. Herzberg’s methodology has been criticized, thus bringing in some skepticism about the approach as well (Ondrack, 1974).

3.2 *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction is of great importance in the area of management, which has been studied prior to Herzberg’s theory (Behling, Labovitz, & Kosmo, 1968). It is affected by motivators and hygiene factors among the employees of both the public and private sector organizations (Hur, 2017).

Whilst Herzberg's model stands first among the motivational theories, some studies extend their models further by bringing employee's emotional wellbeing into the equation (Noble, 2008). For understanding purposes, it is noted that job satisfaction refers to the degree to which people like their jobs (Muhammad, 2017).

A study on a high school teacher's group in Turkey suggested that both hygiene factors and motivation factors contribute to changes in job satisfaction (Atalic & Canturk, 2016). The theory was validated even in a different cultural setting like Taiwan (Chu & Kuo, 2015). Job dissatisfaction leads salespersons from both genders to leave their jobs, but their causes may vary (McNeilly & Goldsmith, 1991). Similarly, the satisfaction of a salesperson is a function of their supervisor's consideration, participation, feedback and interaction (Teas & Horrell, 2015). Even though, "age, sex, education, occupation and income" were all important variables in the earlier studies, but it became evident in the studies conducted later on that there are other variables that explained the effect of motivation on job more effectively (Izvercian, Potra, & Ivascu, 2016).

In developed nations, and in research-based developing nations, females reported a difference in job satisfaction levels. In the United States, women reported higher levels of satisfaction than their male counterparts (Wharton, 1993). A study based on Filipino workers revealed that there is a definitive gender disparity, as the male managers reported that they were trusted with more responsibilities than their female colleagues (Hechanova, Alampay, & Franco, 2006). The assignment of varying responsibilities is one of the core motivational factors which contribute to an increase in job satisfaction. It becomes evident that female workers are the victims of gender discriminations, thus in certain parts of the world they would report lower levels of satisfaction. A study conducted on the university graduates from Wisconsin showed that the female graduate population was quite dissatisfied due to the income disparity among genders (Hodson, 1983).

Despite the critiques, recent studies have highlighted that the stated factors emphasized by Herzberg's theory were essential in understanding job satisfaction. A study conducted on Ghanaian workers within the service industry found that multiple factors were of great importance to the workers themselves. Job security, their working conditions,

relationship with subordinates and supervisors were all prerequisites for understanding whether or not they felt satisfied with their jobs (Sarwar & Abugre, 2013). Although Herzberg's hygiene factors do play a role in the worker's satisfaction, employees would be more satisfied had they received more recognition for the work they did (Sarwar & Abugre, 2013).

Despite the importance given to hygiene factors, it is concluded that motivational factors increase job satisfaction, and their absence leads to dissatisfaction among employees. But nonetheless, the hygiene factors should not be ignored (Pestonjee & Basu, 1972). Furthermore, much of Herzberg's factors have been emphasized as determinants of job satisfaction thus providing further support for the two-factor theory of motivation (Joshi & Sharma, 1997). Studies have also revealed that much of the listed satisfiers and motivators were in line with the two-factor theory.

A study done on Malaysian retail workers found that salespeople put a higher emphasis on hygiene factors (working conditions, money and company policy). When surveyed, however, motivational factors recognition in particular still proved important (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Several studies show that workers of the service industry have indicated a great importance for hygiene factors in studying job satisfaction. However, this does not mean that motivational factors are to be ignored. The combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors should be studied as it broadens the scope of understanding (Yusoff, Kian, & Idris, 2013) of job satisfaction.

Service employees are the backbone of the product that service industries provide (Hechanova, Alampay, & Franco, 2006), thus the need to invest time in employee programmes would increase job satisfaction. To improve the job satisfaction of service workers, employers mostly focus on motivational factors. A study done on 954 Filipino service workers found that there was a positive relationship between job empowerment and job satisfaction (Hechanova, Alampay, & Franco, 2006). Much of the lower paid service workers were far more inclined to be satisfied with their jobs if their immediate concerns were being catered to. Whereas the managerial staff tended to have more focus on the long-term prospects (Brown & McIntosh, 2003). Similarly, in the service sector, employee satisfaction relies on making jobs more meaningful. Generally, service sector jobs that directly deal with the public are seen as emotionally exhausting (Wharton, 1993).

3.3 Hypotheses

As per the foregoing review of the literature the following subsections presents the hypotheses of this study.

3.3.1 Working Conditions

Herzberg (1966) defined working conditions as the whole surrounding at work, which comprises of an employee's comfort in terms of physical and psychological aspects. It also consists of all the tools and machineries provided at work to ease the job that would fully protect an employee at a workplace. Working conditions have a positive relationship with job satisfaction, as a conducive environment keeps an employee motivated (Hayes, Bonner & Douglas, 2015). Furthermore, working conditions also consist of the physical environment, which can include infrastructure and amenities; the mental environment, such as attitude and behavior of colleagues; and the social environment (Jain & Kaur, 2014). Therefore, a Ribeiro, Assunção and de Araújo (2014) study showed that the highly satisfied physicians were the ones who had the support of their team, whereas, physicians working under stressful conditions were not satisfied with their jobs. Employees' working conditions consist of the terms and conditions of their employment (Al-Hamdan, Manojlovich, & Tanima, 2017). Therefore, a healthy and comfortable work environment will motivate them and create job satisfaction (Robbins. 2001). Providing employees with a better working environment such as proper lighting, cleanliness and temperature allows them to work more efficiently and comfortably, therefore, increasing employee satisfaction (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011; Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to examine the direct link between working condition and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1: Working Condition has a direct and positive relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.2 Company Policy

According to Herzberg (1966) 'company policy' is defined as the systems and functions used for accomplishing tasks as per organizational set standards. According to Ahmed et al. (2010), research shows that

employees feel more motivated when they are aware of organizational policies. In a similar study that was conducted about the faculty of various universities by Islam and Ali (2013), teachers were satisfied with their jobs because all the policies applicable on every faculty member were the same, and all the teachers were aware of it. Another study by Winer and Schiff (1980), and Lucas and Gresham (1985) stated in their findings that company policy was very crucial in motivating an employee, and ultimately achieving job satisfaction. Company policies that take care of their employees have shown reciprocity in terms of higher motivation and job satisfaction for more than sixty years (Gouldner, 1960). Therefore, human resources have to consider employee motivation when creating company policies to positively influence an employee's job satisfaction (Memon, Panhwar, & Rohra, 2010). Chiang and Birtch (2011) stated that company policies that considered its employees' working environment, provided organizational support, and offered non-financial rewards, effectively increased the job satisfaction of its work force. Wong and Heng (2009) found that the implementation of company policy and procedures is essential for maintaining employee job satisfaction. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to examine the link between company policy and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Company policy has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.3 Relationship with Supervisors

Herzberg (1966) defines the relationship with supervisors as the relationship the employee has with his/her boss, supervisor, or manager. However, Griffin et al. (2001) stated that the support of the supervisor may not be of the utmost importance in some organizations, but it does have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Employees often seek better career opportunities if their relationship with their supervisors is good. They are more likely to approach their supervisors for any work advice once an in-depth communication between the supervisor and the subordinate has been established (Chen & Tjosvold, 2006). This cordial relationship motivates the subordinates to produce better results, and execute the tasks as per the job requirements, in return increasing the job satisfaction of the employees (Cheung, Wu, Chan, & Wong, 2009). Other than this, mentorship between subordinate and a supervisor also

positively affects job satisfaction. A healthy and motivating relationship of employees working in the public sector showed a positive impact on job satisfaction, when the supervisors were given autonomy in building healthy relationships with the junior employees (Kuvaas, 2009). Social relationships at a work place are essential for an employee's satisfaction, especially when the relation is with the supervisor (Jiang, Lin, & Lin, 2011). However, "unethical treatment of employees" by managers at any level can lead to job dissatisfaction among employees, especially in the service sector organizations such as hotels (Wong & Li, 2015). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to investigate the direct link between relationship with supervisor and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship with supervisors has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.4 Relationship with Peers

Herzberg (1966) defines 'relationship with peers' as the relationship with colleagues at work for both genders. Khojasteh (1993) studied Herzberg's motivation theory applied on the managers of private and public sector organizations. She concluded that having a good interpersonal relationship with colleagues motivated the public sector managers more than the private sector managers. This was primarily because there was a difference in maintaining relationships with the colleagues in both the sectors. In a study conducted by Volkwein and Parmley (2000) on the administrative staff of higher education commission, found a positive impact on the job satisfaction level of the employees due to cordial teamwork among the peers at work. Similarly, receiving co-workers' appreciation was directly related to job satisfaction of the FLEs of different hotels (Alam, 2015). Understanding the relationship amongst the Japanese physicians also showed a positively significant impact on the job satisfaction levels of their colleagues (Wada et al., 2009). Another study by Islam and Ali (2013) applied Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory on the teachers in the private universities of Peshawar, and found that the relations among the co-workers was highly significant in achieving job satisfaction. This is only possible with teamwork and an effective support system. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to ascertain the link between relationship with peers and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Relationship with peers has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.5 Money

Herzberg (1966) defined 'money' as the amount of payment and remuneration employees receive for their work. According to a study by Johnson (1986), providing justifiable rewards to the employees keeps them motivated, and in return, their job satisfaction increases. Eccles (1991) supported this notion as he found that employees were consistent in the service behavior set by the organization when they were aware of the potential rewards they would possibly get in return. Robbins (2001) termed money as a scorecard, which employees use to assess their significance at a company, in comparison with other companies. When an employee knows that the salary they are receiving is sufficient, and better than what is being offered by other companies, he/she may exhibit commitment to that organization and as a result, their job satisfaction increases. Kovach (1987) stated that remuneration or salary is considered to be amongst the most important hygiene factor for younger, perhaps less experienced employees as their earnings are the lowest. Hence, a good pay is highly demanded by the employee (Linz & Semykina, 2012). Moreover, Tang (2007) stated in the ideology of 'love for money', that employees are driven by high salaries, and are motivated once they are given a raise. This increases their job satisfaction.

In a survey by Yunus, Kevin and Dean (1990), employees assessed the different job characteristics and then ranked them in terms of those characteristics which hold the most importance to the employees. The findings showed that compensation was ranked as the highest motivator for job satisfaction, and an increase in salary was ranked as the highest motivator. Therefore, salary is the most important variable affecting job satisfaction (Wang & Liesveld, 2015). Initially, Herzberg (1957) did not consider salary as an important determinant of motivation. However, he thoroughly studied the importance of salary on job satisfaction later (Herzberg, 1966). Many studies also supported him and found a significant relationship between pay and job satisfaction (Islam, Zaki, & Ismail, 2008; Stringer, Didham, & Theivananthampillai, 2011). Herzberg's hygiene factor such as 'pay/salary' as an extrinsic factor, showed minor but significant impact on the job satisfaction level of employees (Sachau, 2007). However,

among the various factors of motivation, salary and relationship with and between colleagues were considered the most important factors ensuring job satisfaction in employees (David, Gidwani, Birthare, & Singh, 2015; Islam & Saha, 2016). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis can be presented to investigate between salary and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Salary has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.6 Work Security

Herzberg (1966) defined 'work security' as a phenomenon which includes all the dimensions of a job that protect the employees physically, mentally and personally, while retaining their jobs over the long term. Employees who had the security of retention over longer period showed higher job satisfaction in the private sector (Khojasteh, 1993). Moreover, aged employees were seen to be more motivated and satisfied with their jobs when offered job security as compared to higher monetary gains (Kovach, 1987). Moreover, Sledge, Miles and Coppage (2008) concluded in their study, based on the hotel industry, that the uncertainty of losing one's job was a factor that was hampering employee motivation; therefore, work security has a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Hence, confidence regarding employment can increase job satisfaction in all employees when they have work security (Theodossiou & Vasileiou, 2007). Job security in terms of pre-defined contractual renewals to safeguard the employees from the risk of being unemployed has implications on the satisfaction levels of employees throughout the hierarchy (Danish & Usman, 2010; Saraswathi, 2011). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to determine the link between work security and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: Work security has a direct and positive relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.7 Work Itself

Herzberg (1966) defined the concept of 'work itself' as the tasks, activities and responsibilities required to execute a job. Ahmed et al. (2010) showed a positive impact of work itself on job satisfaction for the administrative employees of the University of Punjab. Islam and Ali (2013)

placed the variable of work itself as the most important motivator for the teachers of private universities of Peshawar. Moreover, Norizan's (2012) study suggested that offering adequately challenging tasks of the assigned work, and providing employees with the opportunity to use and enhance their skills lead to a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction. Another study by Delaney and Royal (2017) showed a positive relationship between work itself and job satisfaction, especially when employees find their work to be interesting and challenging. Furthermore, a study by Sledge et al. (2008) showed that the hotel industry employees in Brazil were contented with their jobs when their tasks and responsibilities were of their interest. This finding shows that the feature of work itself is a factor that significantly influences the motivation level of employees (Smerek & Peterson, 2007). Substantial support in this regard, in multiple studies towards the importance of work itself has emerged as a dominant determinant of job satisfaction (Hossain & Hossain, 2012; Omolo, 2015; Tyilana, 2005). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented,

Hypothesis 7: Work itself has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.8 Recognition

'Recognition' is defined by Herzberg (1966) as public recognition by others, perhaps in the form of awards or evidence of a job well done. Employees who received recognition for their work by their supervisors showed higher satisfaction in those employees (Shore & Shore, 1995). Similar findings were found in a study by Buchanan (1974), stating that employees who were recognized for their contribution in the success of organizations were more motivated towards their work, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction. Hinkin and Schriesheim (2004) also concluded that there happens to be a positive relationship between employee recognition and job satisfaction, which signifies that an organization recognizes that a particular employee is satisfied with the job, when he/she display an increase in productivity. Managers in private and public sectors showed increased levels of job satisfaction when the press for their work recognized and perhaps appreciated them (Khojasteh, 1993).

According to Lester's (2013) study, people possess a basic need of appreciation or recognition. Similarly, in another study by Desai (2015), employees who received recognition for their work were more likely to be

satisfied with their job. This brings to the belief that there is a significant relation between recognition and job satisfaction because financial benefits without any recognition lessen an employee's level of motivation (Ali & Ahmed, 2009; Shah et al. 2012). Frontline employees established that non-financial rewards such as recognition were considered as contributing factors toward job satisfaction, as employees expect more than just financial rewards (Bustamam, Teng, & Abdullah, 2014). Based on the above discussion, the positive and direct link between recognition and job satisfaction is presented in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 8: Recognition has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.9 Advancement

Herzberg (1966) defined advancement as an employee's prospect to develop within an organization for continuous career advancements. Lester's (2013) study suggests that growth is defined in both personal and professional aspects. Another study by Fareed and Jan (2016) stated that advancement include better opportunities to undergo professional training, learning new skills and gaining new knowledge. Similarly, in a study conducted by Olsen et al. (1995), to measure job satisfaction in the higher education sector, a positive relationship was revealed between career advancements and job satisfaction. Promotional and growth opportunities, or career advancements play a critical role for the positive relationship between job satisfaction and advancement (Ellickson & Logsdon, 2001). Ellickson and Logsdon (2002) also identified career path advancements in a workplace as an important determinant of job satisfaction (Ting, 1997). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to examine the direct link between advancement and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 9: Advancement has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.10 Achievement

Herzberg (1966) defined 'achievement' as success in achieving goals and objectives, which can be individualistic or in groups. Lambrou, Kontodimopoulos and Niakas (2010) conducted a study on a particular

team of medical staff that showed that achievement was the most important factor in motivating employees, ultimately leading towards job satisfaction. The objectives such as self-efficacy and successfully attaining organizational goals increased the level of job satisfaction among the health professionals. The feeling of achievement or accomplishment significantly affects the level of job satisfaction among employees (Knight & Westbrook, 1999). In a study by Sledge et al. (2008) that was conducted in Brazil, when assessing the job satisfaction of hotel industry, results revealed that most of the employees expressed a positive desire to achieve more objectives and goals, this showed a direct relationship with job satisfaction. Based on the above discussion, a direct and positive link between achievement and job satisfaction is proposed in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 10: Achievement has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

3.3.11 Growth

Herzberg (1966) defines growth as an employee's preference for progress, and the initiatives he makes for substantial personal growth. Due to strict patterns of hierarchy in the public organizations, keeping employees motivated can be a great challenge. Organizations should be able to meet their employees' expectations of career growth in order to keep them satisfied with their jobs (Rainey, 1989). According to Ramlall (2004) the managers should provide growth opportunities to their employees, if they aim to improve their job satisfaction. This would be useful because according to his studies, employees value growth as the most important motivator than others. Another study based in Taiwan by Chen, Chang and Yeh (2004) revealed that career development programs have a positive influence on the job satisfaction of employees. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is presented to examine the direct and positive link between growth and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 11: Growth has a positive and direct relationship with job satisfaction.

4. Data and Methodology

For the purpose of this study, the stratified random sampling technique (Naderi, 2012) was applied to collect the responses from front line

employees working at various locations of the telecommunication business centers in Pakistan. The respondents included business center managers, senior executives and junior executives for the purpose of measuring job satisfaction of these front line employees only. A questionnaire was developed using Google forms, which was then emailed to the front line employees working at the business centers. The Email was sent to the all business unit employees located in all the metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas of different cities of Pakistan for capturing a realistic representation of the study population. From 370 possible responses, 284 responses were evaluated for statistical analysis. Only those questionnaires were considered for the study that were completely filled in by the respondents.

4.1 Instruments

To examine the variables of this research, the study used 30 items for measuring the independent variables (Tan & Waheed, 2011) and four items to measure job satisfaction of the front line employees (Klassen, Usher, & Bong, 2010; Stephanou, Gkavras, & Doulkeridou, 2013) as shown in Table 1. The employees then evaluated their level of motivation and job satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

Table 1: Constructs and Measures

Variables	Items	Studies
Job Satisfaction	4	Klassen, Usher, & Bong, (2010) Stephanou, Gkavras, & Doulkeridou (2013)
Achievement	3	Tan & Waheed (2011)
Advancement	2	Akter, Wali, Kamal, Mukul, & Mahmuda, (2017)
Work itself	3	Dikmen, Yildirim, Yildirim, & Ozbash, (2017)
Recognition	3	
Growth	3	
Company Policy	3	
Relationship	3	
Work Security	3	
Relationship with supervisor	3	
Money	2	
Working conditions	2	

4.2 Data Analysis

The Structural equation modelling (SEM) is run using Amos 18 for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and the path analysis (Lam, Zhang,

& Baumb, 2001). CFA, (i) tests items for their factor loadings (ii), constructs for their reliability and validity, and (iii) model fits. The benchmark of the model fit for the study reports chi-square divided by the degrees of freedom (CMIN/df) < 0.5, goodness of fit index (GFI) > 0.9 comparative fit index (CFI) > 0.9, incremental fit index > 0.9 (IFI), normed fit index (NFI) > 0.9, non-normed fit index (TLI) > 0.9 and root mean square error of approximation (RAMSEA) < 0.8 (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008).

Factor loadings below 0.5 do not accurately assess the construct, therefore, they are not included in the structural regression analysis as stated by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006), and Wu, Yeh and Hsiao (2011). The Composite reliability (CR) of the constructs are considered reliable, affirming that the items with a cutoff of 0.7 and above are related to their own construct (Straub, Boudreau, & Gefen, 2004). The construct validity is tested by (i) convergent validity: constructs with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.5 or above (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989) and (ii) the discriminant validity (DV): examines that the constructs are different from each other, only if the square root of AVE is higher than the correlations of the inter-constructs (Hair et. al, 2010).

5. Measurement Model and Results

Pearson's correlation and variance inflation factor (VIF) values are shown in Table 2a and Table 2b. The correlation coefficients of all the constructs are significant at a p-value of 0.01. The VIF values of the constructs are below a value of 3.5, showing no concerns of multicollinearity in between the constructs of the study (Guajrati, 2009).

Table 2a: Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Ach	Adv	Wits	Rec	Gro	Pol	Peer	Sup	Mon	WCn	WSc	J
Achievement (Ach)	1											
Advancement (Adv)	.595**	1										
Work Itself (WIts)	.650**	.627**	1									
Recognition (Rec)	.638**	.565**	.669**	1								
Growth (Gro)	.696**	.638**	.745**	.684**	1							
Company Policy (Pol)	.634**	.594**	.644**	.638**	.672**	1						
Relationship with Peers (Peer)	.461**	.398**	.425**	.500**	.488**	.524**	1					
Relationship with Supervisors (Sup)	.470**	.446**	.492**	.696**	.540**	.547**	.535**	1				
Money (Mon)	.240**	.309**	.269**	.264**	.306**	.299**	.263**	.306**	1			
Working Conditions (WCn)	.565**	.464**	.575**	.557**	.594**	.647**	.561**	.593**	.475**	1		
Work Security (WSc)	.464**	.404**	.473**	.496**	.519**	.574**	.528**	.498**	.455**	.595**	1	
Job Satisfaction (J)	.680**	.558**	.680**	.709**	.700**	.728**	.595**	.667**	.511**	.767**	.637**	1

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

Table 2b: Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs)

Variables	Collinearity Statistics
	VIF
Achievement	2.446
Advancement	2.064
Work Itself	2.847
Growth	3.205
Company Policy	2.678
Relationship with Peers	1.770
Relationship with Supervisors	2.334
Money	1.433
Working Conditions	2.620
Work Security	1.990
Recognition	3.065

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

5.1 *Descriptive Statistics*

The data contains 284 observations as the final observations. Work itself, has a value of 4.25 on average, and has a standard deviation of 0.88. Moreover, recognition has a mean value of 4.21, with 1.00 points deviation from this central value. The relationship with peers has a mean value of 4.33 and shows a 0.73 standard deviation. The relationship with supervisors is another variable controlled for in this study with a mean value of 4.16, which deviates from its mean by 0.96 points. Money has a mean of 3.62, and a standard deviation of 1.05 points. The dependent variable, job satisfaction is equal to 4.01 on average, and with a standard deviation of 0.80. All these variables have the minimum value of 1, and maximum value of 5. The maximum variance is in money and work itself as they both have the greatest mean value. Out of 284 respondents, 84 percent were males, 16 percent were females. In the category of employment, 71 percent respondents were outsourced and 29 percent were permanent. As per the location of the FLEs, 57 percent respondents were from a metro type city, and 43 percent were from a non-metropolitan city. From the hierarchy of these employees 15 percent workers were Business Center Managers, 9 percent were Senior Executives and 76 percent were Executives.

5.2 *Structural Equational Modelling*

The CFA results excluded the factor of 'advancement', a motivator due to a very low loading of 0.34. Factor loadings for all other variables range from 0.62 to 0.93, except for one item which was the 'relationship with the peers' showing a 0.54. Composite reliability (CR) and convergent validity (CV) holds for all the constructs, as the CR ranges from 0.75 to 0.90, and the AVE from 0.56 to 0.75 (see Table 3). The variable 'work security' is omitted from further analysis as its CR and AVE values, 0.60 and 0.43, do not conform with the construct's reliability and validity. Table 3 below reports, the CR, AVE and DV of the constructs, and factor loadings of each item.

Table 3: Results of Measurement Model

Variables	Items	Loadings	AVE	Composite Reliability	Discriminant Validity
Job Satisfaction	Js1	0.71	0.57	0.87	0.75
	Js2	0.74			
	Js3	0.74			
	Js4	0.77			
Achievement	Ach1	0.85	0.67	0.80	0.82
	Ach2	0.77			
Growth	Grw1	0.81	0.74	0.90	0.86
	Grw2	0.87			
	Grw3	0.89			
Work itself	Wrk1	0.84	0.63	0.83	0.79
	Wrk2	0.69			
	Wrk3	0.84			
Company Policy	Cop1	0.82	0.57	0.80	0.76
	Cop2	0.81			
	Cop3	0.62			
Relationship with the peers	Pee1	0.94	0.74	0.85	0.86
	Pee2	0.78			
	Pee3	0.55			
Work Conditions	Con1	0.79	0.61	0.76	0.78
	Con2	0.77			
Money	Mon1	0.81	0.64	0.78	0.80
	Mon2	0.79			
Recognition	Rec1	0.74	0.69	0.87	0.83
	Rec2	0.86			
	Rec3	0.88			
Relationship with the supervisor	Sup1	0.89	0.75	0.90	0.87
	Sup2	0.85			
	Sup3	0.87			

The model fit indexes reported in Table 4 show that the data fits the model very well as CMIN/d.f., GFI, CFI, NFI, IFI and TFI fall within the range mentioned by Zarei, Zainalipour, Mohammadi and Zare (2013). In the Table 4 below, the value for RMSEA is 0.06 which exceeds the acceptable range in few researches but McDonald and Ho (2002) and Hooper et al. (2008) mentioned a fit between 0.05 and 0.08 as good model fit.

Table 4: Goodness-of-Fit Statistics (CFA)

Index	Model Fit Value
Standalone Indexes	
CMIN/DF	2.00
RMSEA	0.06
Goodness of Fit	
GFI	0.90
Incremental Indexes	
NFI	0.91
IFI	0.95
TLI	0.94
CFI	0.94

Only six variables were included for conducting the structural analysis. The squared correlations of (i) job satisfaction, (ii) recognition, (iii) work itself, (iv) relationship with the peers, (v) relationship with the supervisors, and (vi) money were reported to be less than the AVE of each variable which support the benchmark for discriminant validity. Table 5 shows the model fit of structural analysis.

Table 5: Goodness-of-Fit Statistics

Index	Model Fit Value
Standalone Indexes	
CMIN/DF	2.03
RMSEA	0.06
Goodness of Fit	
GFI	0.91
Incremental Indexes	
NFI	0.92
IFI	0.95
TLI	0.94
CFI	0.95

All the above-mentioned five independent variables showed a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction, among which three (H₃: relationship with supervisors, H₄: relationship with peers and H₅: money) were hygiene factors, and two (H₇: work itself and H₈: recognition) were motivational factors. Table 6 shows the results of the structural analysis results where, money significantly impacts dependent variable. Hence, a one-unit increase causes a 0.16 units increase in job satisfaction.

The coefficient for relationship with peers was 0.34, which implies a positive relationship with job satisfaction. The relationship with the supervisor is seen to have a significant link with job satisfaction. A one-unit increase leads to a 0.08 increase in the satisfaction level, *ceteris paribus*. Since, the p-value for this regressor is less than the level of significance that I have chosen ($p=0.05$), I may reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternate, that the relationship with the supervisor does have an effect on job satisfaction. A one-unit increase in work itself is associated with a 0.31 units increase in job satisfaction, *ceteris paribus*. Similarly, a unit increase in recognition at work would cause the attained satisfaction to increase by 0.14 units.

Table 6: Results of Structural Model (Structural Coefficients)

Independent Variables	Estimate	Significance
Work itself	0.312	***
Recognition	0.142	***
Money	0.16	***
Relationship with Peers	0.341	***
Relationship with Supervisors	0.083	0.013

6. Discussion

The telecommunication services in Pakistan originated back in 1947. However, major changes took place in 1962 when the telegraph and telephone (T&T) services were split into specialized units by the formation of autonomous T & T and postal departments (Hanif, Hafeez, & Riaz, 2010). Now, the telecom industry is an amalgamation of all the companies that provide phone services, internet and entertainment services, to domestic and commercial users in Pakistan (Bhatti, 2009). To sustain long-term growth, firms are not only focusing on customer acquisition through marketing activities, but are now investing heavily in maintaining customer relationship departments in order to retain existing and attract new customers, especially in highly saturated businesses like telecommunication.

This study examines the impact of Herzberg's Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) on job satisfaction, which validates a few variables of hygiene and motivation factors in studying job satisfaction. Each variable of the motivator and hygiene factors has been dissected to study its impact on the job satisfaction of FLE employees of telecommunication companies in Pakistan. The listed results of the structure analysis in Table 6 show a

strong positive relationship with job satisfaction, except for the final listed variable, relationship with supervisors that has a significant but slightly low impact on job satisfaction of the FLEs. The work itself feature was estimated to have a positive relation in the sample with job satisfaction showing the employees are satisfied with their particular occupations. This is common among workers holding managerial positions and employees in the service sector. A study on restaurant managers in Hong Kong confirms similar findings (Lam, Baum, & Pine, 2001). Therefore, the job an employee is doing has a significant impact on the satisfaction s(he) derives from the work (Hofmans, Gieter, & Pepermans, 2013).

The job satisfaction levels of FLEs directly change with the recognition s(he) acquires for the work. Al-Moaelly (2006) proposed that the absence of the recognition creates dissatisfaction among employees. Some firms found that presence of this factor increased job satisfaction, and its lack decreased job satisfaction (Green, 2000). The employees who received an adequate level of recognition found their work to be more challenging and empowering, and as a result, showed an increased level of job satisfaction.

Williams (2004) considered the relationship of employees with their supervisor to be extremely important. The study found that “employees leave bosses, not jobs”, because they prefer supervisors who show trust, understanding and fairness towards them (Mahmoud, 2008). Alternatively, there is a positive impact of relationship with the peers on employee satisfaction if employees are respected by the co-workers. Employees stated that “friendly co-workers” made them feel good about themselves, and thus saw it as an important factor in deriving job satisfaction (Linz & Semykina, 2012). One study based on recognition and job satisfaction conducted in Pakistan found that the employees anticipate appreciation more from co-workers than from their immediate supervisory authority such as their boss (Danish & Usman, 2010).

Hence, the relationship with the peers is an important determinant of motivation for job satisfaction that is derived more when the fellow co-workers admire their work. Recognition is not only defined in terms of non-financial rewards, but with a changing organizational culture, it can be interpreted as the presence of programs offered by the firms to narrow the structural gaps between the employees (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014).

Thus, there is a growing emphasis on building relationships with peers. Hence, employees are motivated and satisfied when there is a stronger and positive relationship with the peers, as compared to their relationship with supervisors in the telecommunication industry for FLEs.

Employees who attach more importance to money are satisfied with their job when they receive a salary increment. Initially, Herzberg (1957) did not include salary as a motivator, but later on researchers found that among the human capital related aspects, salary is the most important variable affecting job satisfaction (Wang & Liesveld, 2015). Dyer and Theriault (1976) found that the factor of salary cannot be ignored while testing the determinants of job satisfaction, as money is what they get in return for their effort. Interestingly, the significant estimate of money lies in the middle of the four other significant determinants of job satisfaction as shown in Table 6. Money shows a stronger relationship with job satisfaction in comparison to recognition and building cordial relations with the supervisors. However, it is not as highly ranked in comparison to the other two determinants (work itself and relationship with peers) of motivation. Though, a good pay is desired (Linz & Semykina, 2012); studies have also found that money can only satisfy a worker for a short period of time, but cannot change the employee satisfaction in the long term (Teck-Hong & Waheed, 2011). Hence, Table 6 shows that money indeed has a link with the job satisfaction. Nonetheless, work itself and the relationship with peers have a stronger impact on the level of satisfaction for the FLEs of the telecommunication industry.

As per these three extrinsic hygiene factors for FLEs, job satisfaction is increased when they receive support from their supervisors at a sufficient level, when their co-workers are helpful and they are fairly compensated for their work. Managers of the frontline employees have reported that a healthier relationship with the co-worker derives a higher level of job satisfaction. Whilst the relationship with supervisors is given less importance than the relationship with peers, still it cannot be completely disregarded, as there is an internal connection between the two variables. Co-workers assist in creating a bond between employees and their organizations (Bufquin, DiPietro, Orlowski, & Partlow, 2017).

Table 6 exhibits all the variables that had a significant effect on employee's job satisfaction of FLEs. A few other variables were found to

have a positive relationship as per Herzberg et al. (1959) findings, but did not show any significant relationship with the job satisfaction of the FLEs of the telecommunication sector. The responses corroborated that job achievement, working environment, career growth and company policy have no relationship with the employee's job satisfaction.

Past studies have found a positive link between the working conditions and one's level of job satisfaction (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). This study particularly focuses on the factors that affect the satisfaction of the FLEs operating in business centers that strictly follow the rules and policies for sustaining the working conditions. Therefore, the environment in which these FLEs work in the telecommunication sector meets the benchmarks of workplace across the nation.

Alternatively, telecommunication companies continue to have favorable policies for their front line employees that maintain their job satisfaction (Khushk, 2019). As employees are satisfied with the agenda set by the organization, therefore respondents do not perceive company policies or the work environment as significant determinants of job satisfaction. Furthermore, as the relationship with peers is of more importance, it seems that for the FLEs, a comfortable social setting is more important than the physical attributes (policies and working conditions).

The prospect of achievement and growth were the other two variables disregarded by the respondents. Though, promotions may be desired to decrease job dissatisfaction; there seems to be a negative association between prospects of a promotion and job satisfaction (Linz & Semykina, 2012). The reasoning for this can be attributed to the limited variation the nature or type of work offers for the employees at the business centers. The front line managers do not have many prospects of career progression beyond whatever they have already achieved. All 284 respondents of the study, listed their current job designation as either Executives, Senior Executives or Business Centre Managers, and out of them 33 percent have been working in the industry for five years or more. They have already achieved the highest level of designation; no promotion can be expected as there is only one business manager in each center. Thus, the respondents see no value in focusing their satisfaction on job achievements or prospects of career growth. However, this is why they are more concerned with money and a possible raise as it is the only mode of

improvement that seems feasible in the near future. Regardless of any industry or work type, the pay is an extrinsic part of the motivation theory that leads to an employee's satisfaction (Ruiz-Palomino, Saez-Martínez, & Martínez-Canas, 2013).

7. Conclusions and Implications

The data collected in this study would benefit the employers of the firms operating in the service industry in understanding which determinants of relevant factors that contribute towards the higher levels of job satisfaction in evolving economies. More importantly, this study takes the debate beyond the dichotomy of hygiene and motivation factors and examines the relevance of those factors that can directly influence the job satisfaction of employees. This study makes it clear that the social aspect attached to the idea a workplace has a great deal of impact on how an employee is satisfied with his work, especially concerning their relationship with peers. The people that surround an employee at work have an enormous impact on the satisfaction they derive from their job. For instance, an accommodating workplace leads to higher levels of satisfaction. Thus, managers can particularly focus on making their workplaces more accommodating for a healthier and friendly environment.

Similarly, the findings prove that work itself, is of utmost importance for job satisfaction. Hence, managers should ensure that the work that their front line employees do is meaningful for them. This can be achieved by attributing more challenging and versatile responsibilities to the employee. Moreover, managers should consider employing different approaches for both genders to address issues related to job satisfaction.

Whilst, it may seem from the data that supervisors (managers) seem to have a very limited effect on the levels of job satisfaction of the employees, it is an indicator of how employers seem to underplay their role in the employees work life. They should not simply provide employees with salaries, but should develop a better relationship with their workers. It would act as a form of positive reinforcement and can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction.

8. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The sample was collected only from telecommunication employees, and more specifically frontline employees (FLEs), which implies that the results cannot be generalized for the entire population of the telecom sector employees. This study has extracted its sample of respondents from the telecommunication sector of mobile phone services only. Therefore, the sample is unevenly distributed between both genders; the male to female ratio is 5:1.

Furthermore, most of the past studies are based on diverse data examining multiple foreign firms, but the current study is based exclusively on the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. Herzberg's motivational theory can be based on time lagged and longitudinal studies which is a limitation of this study. Lastly, there are enormous cultural differences between Pakistan and other countries, not only in the workplace, but also in the industries. Thus, causing more limitation in the crystalizing of the findings with foreign findings as certain characteristics maybe more or less significant in certain parts of the world only.

Among motivators, such as achievement and growth; and hygiene factors, such as company policies and working conditions, discriminant validity was a factor that was missing. This could be due to the items applied to measure these variables. Therefore, a different scale may resolve the construct validity issue.

Lastly, this research can be extended in terms of its theoretical frame-work by adding more mediating variables or other dependent variables, such as job performance, gender, organization commitment and/or employee turnover.

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Brand Loyalty versus Brand Switching: Revisiting the Concept from Young Consumers' Perspective

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Abstract

Over the years, the usage of smartphones has burgeoned worldwide. However, it is noteworthy that with this multiplied usage and popularity of smartphones, most of the consumers demonstrate erratic behavior in the selection of their preferred brand. Therefore, in order to understand this phenomenon further, this study was conducted in Pakistan to examine the brand switching behavior of young consumers in the smartphone industry. For the purpose of this study, a theoretical framework marks out the relationships between social influence, sales promotion, variety seeking and brand switching. The methodology adopted for this study comprised of a quantitative research design, following a positivistic research paradigm. A sample of 500 young smartphone users from the population of major cities of Pakistan was approached using purposive-sampling method, from which 482 responses were acknowledged. The data was collected via the survey method, following close ended questionnaires. The data was then analyzed by applying the structural equation modeling technique. The research findings filled in the research gaps by revealing a positive relationship between social influences, variety seeking and sales promotion on brand switching. However, brand loyalty was found to have a significant unfavorable impact on these relationships. Brand loyalty weakens the relationship of social influence, variety seeking and sales promotion with brand switching. Hence, the presence of brand loyalty restricts consumers from switching their smartphone brand due to the influence of the above mentioned factors.

Keywords: Brand loyalty, brand switching, young consumers, smartphone

JEL Classification: M30, M31, N3, O33, L60.

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1. Introduction

The development and advancement of smartphones has increased with the passage of time. This is mainly due to the changes in the elements which pertain to the buyers' needs and inclinations (Ahad & Anshari, 2017). Among these advances, smartphones have been one of the best household devices amongst any technological innovation in the current times (Das & Khan, 2016). Moreover, smartphones are also turning into a crucial part of individual correspondence and communication across the globe. In today's smartphone market, product managers are constantly struggling to locate the most innovative and latest competitive edge, and strive to differentiate themselves for buyers so as to choose their preferred brand, instead of that of the other competitors (Narayan, Rao, & Saunders, 2011).

In this regard, studies by both, Lambert and Laurent (2010), and, Sasmita and Suki (2015) argue that mostly young customers are found to be involved in brand switching, while more experienced purchasers do the opposite. Gronhoj (2007) and Norazah (2013) both explained that once adolescents reach the age of 16, they are perceived as youngsters, till they hit the age bracket of 30. After that they are considered completely grown up, that is, in other words, mature adults. It is at this point that they have entered in the segment of middle-aged individuals. In the same manner, young individuals are very much influenced with the advanced technology due to its numerous advantages. Hence, they are usually emotional in choosing, and utilizing technological products and services like smartphones and social media networks (Ali & Lodhi, 2017; Jin, Yoon, & Ji, 2013). From another perspective, some authors (Ali, 2017; Ameen & Gorman, 2009) revealed, in different time spans, that generally, in the world, and particularly in Pakistan, all the communities are constantly learning about their surroundings and are more aware than they have ever been. Consequently, the youth is well aware of various brands, their functions, differences and the properties that they have to offer in their smartphones.

To conclude the analysis, Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) portrayed in their study that the buyer's behavior is mostly dependent on some influencing factors i.e. brand loyalty, variety and promotion etc. These factors determine the direction of behavior in terms of the decision

to either to stay or to shift from the brand. Hebblethwaite, Parsons, and Spence (2017) reported that a particular phenomenon can be widely seen, usually in the Smartphone industry, where many factors compel consumers to shift to other brands.

The profit share of existing smartphone providers is decreasing day by day, and new competitors are succeeding because young, smartphone users do not show loyalty to a particular brand (Msaed, Al-Kwif, & Ahmed, 2017). Due to the unpredictable changes in the preference of consumers, revenue and demand of particular Smartphone brands is not able to reach and predict stability. The factors responsible for this erratic and unpredictable behavior need to be analyzed deeply (Baxendale, Macdonald, & Wilson, 2015; Miller, Chandler, & Mouttapa, 2015; Taute & Sierra, 2014). Therefore, the concept of brand loyalty needs to be revisited from another perspective in this industry (Hebblethwaite et al., 2017; Yeh, Wang, & Yieh, 2016).

In this regard, the following two research questions have been put forth that this study intends to answer.

- 1) What is the relationship between social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking and brand switching in the smartphone industry?
- 2) Does brand loyalty moderate the relationship between social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking, and brand switching in the smartphone industry?

Research shows that only a few studies are conducted with a particular focus on brand switching, when it comes to the usage of smartphones amongst the youth (Sasmita & Suki, 2015; Kumar & Menon, 2017). Similarly, Msaed et al. (2017), along with Al-Kwif and Ahmed (2015), reported in their findings that research studies based on the brand switching of smartphones are not adequate enough, especially in the context of South Asia, particularly in India and Pakistan. Moreover, studies conducted in other Asian countries are not sufficient to cover this gap either, as the context, culture and commercial framework of the Sub-continent (India and Pakistan) is entirely different from its neighboring countries i.e. China, Iran and Afghanistan. Similarly, investigation by Al-Kwif (2016) elaborates that various studies are done in the past, in order

to unearth the latest trends in the telecommunication sector of the sub-continent. But smartphones are ignored throughout this era, particularly in terms of the brand switching of high technology products, i.e., smartphones for instance.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

Chadha and Kapoor (2009) have defined brand loyalty as one of the major dimensions of brand equity, which is the overall worth of the brand. Consumers tend to be loyal, as the customer satisfaction is considered to be the finest predictor of brand loyalty.

Sharma, Kapse, and Sonwalkar (2016) elaborated on brand loyalty as a powerful resistance to switching behavior. Therefore, a vast majority of the organizations consider it as a source of upper hand. It builds income, boosts goodwill, minimizes customer acquisition expenses and brings down the expenses of serving repeat buyers (Nguyen, Barrett, & Miller, 2011; Villanti et al., 2012).

On the contrary, brand switching is a state in which an individual shifts from purchasing one brand of a product, to buying a different brand, and is usually not satisfied with a single brand. Consumers usually shift between various brands as they seek to reach a desired level of satisfaction (Solomon, 2006). As far as brand switching in youngsters is concerned, findings of Sahay and Sharma (2010) point towards the fact that youngsters usually do not develop strong relationships with any particular brand. Furthermore, Sasmita and Suki (2015) argued that young customers switch brands frequently, while more experienced purchasers tend to show consistency in this regard.

2.1 Social Influence

Social groups usually illuminate and make individuals aware of particular products and brands. They encourage people to go into certain states of mind, and influence people to acknowledge dispositions and behaviors that are reliable with the standards of the society (Narayan et al., 2011).

McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig (2002) found in their study that most of the consumers are dependent on other relatives or social circle

peers in order to aid them in selecting which brand to acquire, and which to switch. They appreciate the opinions of their loved ones, and mostly help their social group individuals in selecting high priced products or services i.e. property, smartphones, travelling related products, apparels, cosmetics and others.

Probing further into the literature, the investigations of Suki (2013) and Prasad & Kumar (2016) in India have revealed that social group suggestions have been reported as a critical constraint in the shopping malls while making purchase decisions. These suggestions tend to affect mentalities, inclinations, reasons to buy a product and basic leadership. The studies concluded that it is important for the smartphone brands to understand, and value these social influences, because a strong social influence resists customers from sustaining the loyalty towards the same brand, and assist in choosing the new brand.

Harris, Gordon, MacKintosh, and Hastings (2015) explained that one's social circle can influence individuals to switch from an existing brand to another brand that they are consuming. Social individuals can affect consumers in such a manner that peers and colleagues can motivate and encourage consumers to adopt another brand by justifying its outperforming features and functions. In the same way, Khalek (2014) discovered that there exists a strong positive relationship between social influence and brand switching. As per this discussion, the following hypothesis was proposed to examine the link between social influences and brand switching.

Hypothesis 1: Social influences positively relate to brand switching.

2.2 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a type of promotion in marketing. Sales promotions comprise of different incentives mainly price concessions, premiums and coupons, which are mostly applicable in the short term. It is a good idea to boost short term sales for a certain time period. In this regard, the purpose of sales promotion is to shift products, albeit inexpensively consumers from an existing brand to a new brand, which is offering the same level of (Heerde, Gupta, & Wittink, 2003; Kotler, 2015).

Additionally, Buil, Chernatony, and Martínez (2013) explained the different ways in which sales promotional campaigns for smartphones are usually conducted. These campaigns usually include price concessions, premiums, rebates, discount coupons, trade shows, contests and lucky draws that are organized by smartphone brand owners in order to shift consumers from other brands to their respective brands. Similarly, exchange offers in which an old device is exchanged with a fraction of a cost, and free shipping are also effective tools for promoting sales of electronic devices.

To wind up the argument, Nagar (2009) discussed in his study that sales promotion has a strong relationship with brand switching as both factors can enhance each other. On the premise of the above contentions, one might conclude;

Hypothesis 2: Sales promotion is positively related to brand switching.

2.3 Variety Seeking

Ratner and Kahn (2002) recognized the act of variety seeking as a phenomenon of 'need for uniqueness'. It is identified by choices that have not been picked by others. Purchasers who have the need to achieve a high level of uniqueness are more attracted and prone to switching items as compared to low-uniqueness customers. Consequently, these customers are more challenging to convince to display brand loyalty. Basically, variety seeking customers "seek change for the sake of change."

Similarly, Esch, Langner, Schmitt, and Geus (2006) portrayed in their study that there is a specific relationship between switching behavior and variety seeking for a product or service. It can be defined as an internal wish or aspiration to get a new brand, which can be due to many reasons i.e. services, aesthetics, features or even the inner desire for a new brand. Sometimes, innovation can compel consumers to resort to variety seeking behavior against the current brand that they are utilizing.

An investigation directed by Jensen and Hansen (2006) unearths that variety-seeking customers do not stay loyal. Such consumers are always looking for an opportunity to try different brands. Unintentionally, such behavior affects the loyalty ranking of customers, and puts brand managers

in a complicated situation of offering and managing loyalty programs. As a result, the effect of variety seeking and customer satisfaction on loyalty constantly needs to be reestablished. Variety seeking, especially its true form, may be an important factor that could assist in explaining and predicting brand switching in customers. However, it is not the only factor that could assist in this regard (Kotler, 2015).

Lastly, Sloot and Verhoef (2008) suggested a constructive relationship between brand switching and variety seeking in a manner that both factors boost each other. They explored that variety seeking can explain brand switching widely. Another suggestion directed by Solomon (2006) leads to similar findings. He proposed that brand switching might be easily observed if the overall level of sales promotion is increased for the general consumers. All the above mentioned facts lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Variety seeking is positively related to brand switching.

2.4 Moderating Effect of Brand Loyalty

Sometimes brand loyalty can play the role of a moderating variable, as most of the time it used to reduce or increase the impact of some other latent and manifesting factors in a particular framework (Keller, Apéria, & Georgson, 2008; Kim, Lee, Bu, & Lee, 2009). A study conducted by Dooley and Fryxell (1999) reveals that brand loyalty is mostly perceived as a moderating factor in order to increase the influence of independent variables in consumer behavior examinations.

Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrmann (2005) conducted a study in Europe in order to assess the relationship of brand loyalty and social influence. Interestingly, findings demonstrated that brand loyalty has an inverse relationship with social influence. Similarly, Jensen and Hansen (2006) elaborated that suggestions from one's social circle are often ignored if the consumer possesses a certain level of brand loyalty for a particular product.

A number of researchers explored that sales promotion is a reasonable factor to diminish brand loyalty, and directs the consumers to shift to other brands (Buil et al., 2013; Westberg & Pope, 2014). Similarly,

Papatla (2003), as well Algesheimer et al. (2005) observed the inverse impact of brand loyalty on sales promotion. The rationalization of the argument is that internationally well-known brands rarely go for sales promotion.

According to Kotler (2015), the element of brand loyalty resists the consumer from switching to another brand from an existing brand. However, loyalty can be changed with sales promotion by offering various kinds of rebates, coupons, samples, sweepstakes and bonuses. Most of the companies entice the consumers of competitors by weakening their brand loyalty. Brand loyalty deteriorates when companies start offering lucrative promotional deals. A study by Junaedy and Dharmmesta (2002) also confirms the findings of Kotler (2015).

In the same manner, the impact of brand loyalty on variety seeking also exhibits that both variables have a contrary relationship (Belch, Belch, Kerr, & Powell, 2014). That is to say that variety seeking has the ability to cannibalize brand loyalty. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) argues that in the presence of strong brand affiliation, the need for uniqueness vanishes because consumers are already satisfied, and even sometimes delighted with their current brand choice. Following hypotheses are derived from the above discussion.

Hypothesis 4: Brand loyalty weakens the relationship between social influence and brand switching.

Hypothesis 5: Brand loyalty weakens the relationship between sales promotion and brand switching.

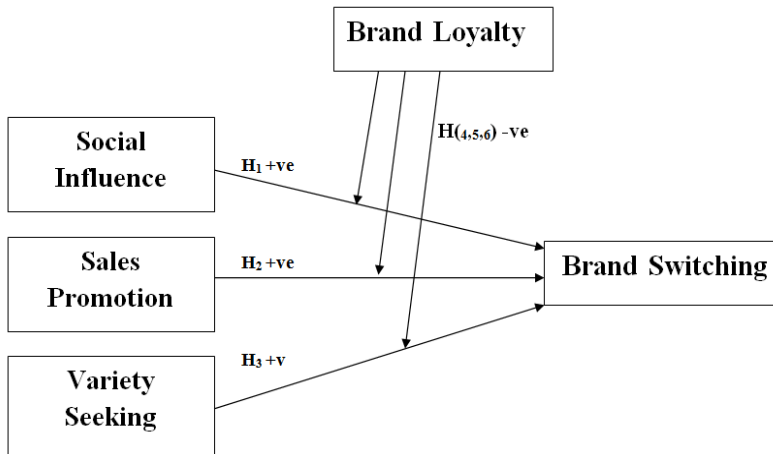
Hypothesis 6: Brand loyalty weakens the relationship between variety seeking and brand switching.

3. Conceptual Model

The conceptual model in Figure 1 exhibits that social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking have a positive relationship with brand switching. While brand loyalty has a negative relationship with brand switching, and an inverse impact on the relationship of the aforementioned factors with brand switching. It is imperative to state that the selected variables were found to be the most appropriate for this model, under the explicit context. Most of the previous studies (Kotler & Keller,

2016; Solomon, 2006) suggested that these variables i.e. social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking are the most influential variables causing brand switching in youngsters.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



4. Methodology

Quantitative research records and computes of customers' behavior, opinions and attitude in the form of numerical information (Gulati, 2009). The intention of this investigation was to conduct a survey; therefore, a quantitative research strategy was adopted following the positivism research paradigm.

This study has been adopted the cross sectional research design. As a result, this examination was constrained to a particular time frame, as one-time information was required (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) from young consumers. The data was collected in a non-contrived setting. Furthermore, the youngsters were approached in order to gather data in their natural environment. The research methodology was designed to assess the relationship of various factors with brand switching, while keeping brand loyalty as a moderating variable.

4.1 Sample and Data Collection

A purposive sampling technique was adopted in order to carry out this study. Purposive sampling is fundamentally used when choosing a

specific group of people from the entire populace, as it should be used when one wants to contact a specific subset of the population (Saunders et al., 2012). A total of 500 young university students from all over Pakistan were approached via email, social media and personal means to fill in the designed questionnaires. Out of these 500 questionnaires, a total of 482 responses were acknowledged as shown in Table-1. The assumption and justification for targeting university students was that most of them belong to a socio-economic segment that can afford the smartphone.

Table 1: Demographics of Sample

	Values	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	274	56.8
	Female	208	43.2
Age (years)	>18	83	17.2
	18-21	216	44.8
	22-25	152	31.5
	26-29	31	6.4
Education	Matric/Below	17	3.5
	Intermediate	79	16.4
	Bachelors	225	46.6
	Masters/Above	161	33.4
Status	Student	263	54.5
	Employed	89	18.4
	Unemployed	103	21.3
	Other	27	5.6
Monthly Family Income (Rupees)	>25000	68	14.1
	25000-40000	111	23
	41000-55000	161	33.4
	56000-70000	83	17.2
	71000-85000	35	7.2
	85000+	24	5

The data was collected through the survey method. A simple 5-point Likert scale structured questionnaire was adapted in order to gather information from young smartphone users. The respondents belonged to major cities of Pakistan including Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Multan, Bahawalpur, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Dera Ghazi Khan, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Peshawar, Mardan, Dera Ismail Khan, Jafarabad and Quetta. The data was collected over a span of two months approximately. The months of December 2017 and January 2018 were devoted for the data compilation. The age range of the respondents was 16-30 years old, as

suggested by many authors (Gronhoj, 2007; Sahay & Sharma, 2010; Sasmita & Suki, 2015). Most commonly, university students were approached through online and personal sources.

The rationale for targeting university students was straightforward. This study was conducted particularly in the context of the smartphone industry of Pakistan. As a result, only those students were approached who were active smartphone users. It was observed that the data could not be collected from all general consumers. Therefore, a list of those 500 students, who used smartphones, was prepared. Then, these students were requested to fill in the questionnaires. These students were, in most instances, approached personally. Instances where a personal approach was not possible, respondents were contacted through email and social media platforms.

The decision to select the sample size of 500 is also justified in this regard. Comrey and Lee (1992) gave a comprehensive size of the sample measure sufficiency: 50 – poor, 100 – fair, 200 – good, 300 – great, and lastly 500 – excellent. Thus, in order to follow this rule of thumb, a sample size of 500 students was chosen. Furthermore, a total of five constructs were adapted from relevant studies and doctoral dissertations. The questionnaire comprised of two major sections. One for demographic information of the respondents, and the other consisted of the 5 point Likert scale close-ended questions related to the variables of the study. There were a total of 5 variables used in the study. Social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking as independent variables, while brand switching was used as a dependent variable. Brand loyalty was considered to be a moderating variable.

5. Data Analysis and Findings

In this research, the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) 3.2 has been applied in order to inspect and deduce the gathered statistics, as recommended by Hair et al. (2017) and Wong (2013). The Smart-PLS software is the most suitable and effective tool for analyzing quantitative data, as Ali (2017), Wong (2013) and many others have used and recommended it.

5.1 Measurement Model

A total of 5 constructs were tested to deduce whether they are valid in terms of the convergent validity and discriminant validity, and if they are reliable in terms of the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha. Out of 48 items of constructs, only 31 were kept, and the other 17 were dropped due to having a factor loading value of less than the 0.7 benchmark (Hair et al., 2017). All the kept items of the given five constructs had a factor loading value more than a 0.7 benchmark, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were more than the threshold of 0.5 (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013) as exhibited in Table-2.

Table 2: Convergent Validity

Variables	Items	Factor Loadings	AVE
Brand Loyalty	Q1	0.773	0.587
	Q2	0.744	
	Q3	0.801	
	Q4	0.714	
	Q6	0.882	
Brand Switching	Q7	0.749	0.558
	Q9	0.848	
	Q12	0.717	
	Q13	0.745	
Sales Promotion	Q14	0.799	0.572
	Q15	0.856	
	Q16	0.740	
	Q18	0.835	
	Q19	0.752	
	Q21	0.724	
Social Influence	Q23	0.743	0.844
	Q26	0.774	
	Q27	0.762	
	Q28	0.806	
	Q30	0.742	
Variety Seeking	Q31	0.785	0.913
	Q32	0.836	
	Q35	0.725	
	Q36	0.761	
	Q38	0.707	
	Q39	0.762	
	Q40	0.720	
	Q41	0.817	
Q43	0.837		
	Q44	0.795	
	Q46	0.855	

All the variables have the average shared value (ASV) of less than their AVE, portraying that all the constructs are distinctive from each other and discriminant validity exists (Hair et al. 2013) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Discriminant Validity

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	ASV	Brand Loyalty	Brand Switching	Sales Promotion	Social Influence	Variety Seeking
Brand Loyalty	0.387	0.019	0.097	1				
Brand Switching	0.444	0.016	0.090	0.392**	1			
Sales Promotion	0.305	0.016	0.064	0.284*	0.236*	1		
Social Influence	0.364	0.028	0.093	0.314**	0.233*	0.281**	1	
Variety Seeking	0.337	0.025	0.085	0.240*	0.298*	0.225*	0.379**	1

Note: * Values are significant at p-level < 0.05

** Values are significant at p-level < 0.01

Table 4 exhibits that all the constructs were accurately reliable, and could be used for further analysis. The values were more than 0.7 of the benchmark value (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011) for reliability via Cronbach's alpha method and composite reliability.

Table 4: Construct Reliability via Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Construct	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Loyalty	0.861	0.807
Brand Switching	0.852	0.762
Sales Promotion	0.844	0.758
Social Influence	0.868	0.781
Variety Seeking	0.913	0.822

5.2 Model Fit Indices

Table 5 portrays the indicators for model fitness. The df should be between the range of 2 and 5, and all the index indicators must follow a threshold of greater than 0.7. Moreover, the RMSEA is supposed to be less than 0.10 (Henseler et al., 2013; Lohmoller, 2013; Ullman & Bentler, 2003). All

the criteria in this regard were met. The model seems to be fit as per the standards suggested by expert researchers mentioned above.

Table 5: Model Fit Indicators

DF	TLI	AGFI	RFI	NFI	IFI	CFI	RMFSA
3.93	7.01	7.43	7.49	7.20	7.63	7.11	0.09

5.3 Hypotheses Testing and Moderation Analysis

Moderation testing was executed to determine the relationship of the latent variables, moderation effect and hypotheses testing. Model 1, 2 and 3 (Table 6) were used to test the moderating effect of brand loyalty on the relationships between sales promotion, social influence and variety seeking, and brand switching (dependent variable). Model 1 tested the main effect of these three variables on brand switching. The results were found to be positive and significant. Moderator variable brand loyalty was introduced in Model 2, which tested its direct impact on brand switching. The findings reported a significant negative impact on brand switching.

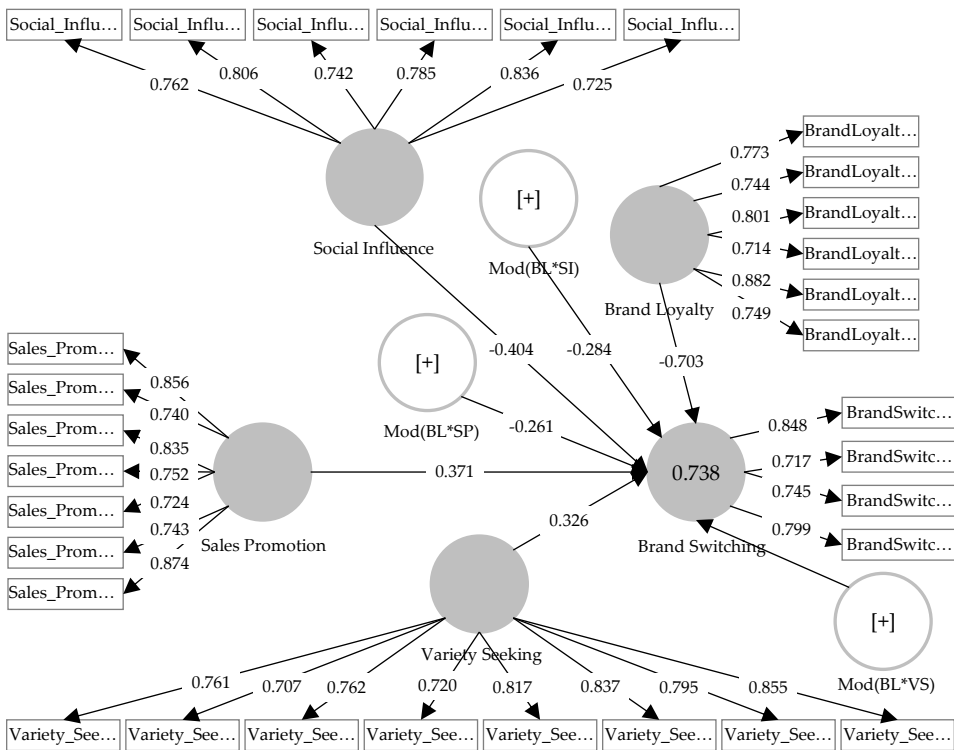
Table 6: Results of Regression and Moderation Analyses

Relationship	Main Effect (Model 1)	Moderator Direct Effect (Model 2)	Moderating Effect (Model 3)
	Latent coefficient (Beta Value)		
Sales Promotion → Brand Switching	0.429**	0.409**	0.371**
Social Influence → Brand Switching	0.424**	0.380**	0.404**
Variety Seeking → Brand Switching	0.401**	0.361**	0.326*
Brand Loyalty → Brand Switching (Moderator → Dependent)	--	-0.787**	-0.703**
Brand Loyalty × Sales Promotion → Brand Switching	--	--	-0.261**
Brand Loyalty × Social Influence → Brand Switching	--	--	-0.284**
Brand Loyalty × Variety Seeking → Brand Switching	--	--	-0.228*

Model 3 includes the three following interaction terms (sales promotion × brand Loyalty; social influence × brand loyalty; and variety Seeking × brand Loyalty). The model provided expected results. For moderating effect between the relationship of sales promotion and brand switching, the coefficient was negative and significant ($b = -0.261, p < 0.01$).

Similarly, the moderating effect on social influence and brand switching was also negative and significant ($b = -0.284, p < 0.01$). The moderating impact on the relationship of variety seeking, and brand switching was also negative and significant ($b = -0.228, p < 0.05$). Thus, the findings supported all the hypotheses that were proposed. Brand loyalty weakens the impact of all three independent factors on brand switching. H1, H2 and H3 propose the relationship of independent variables with brand switching. High intensity of variables sales promotion, social influence and variety seeking lead to greater brand switching. The results of the analysis yielded positive and significant standardized coefficients ($b_{\text{sales promotion}} = 0.429, p < 0.01$; $b_{\text{social influence}} = 0.424, p < 0.01$; $b_{\text{variety seeking}} = 0.401, p < 0.01$) and provide full support to the aforementioned hypotheses. Similarly, H4, H5 and H6 were also supported by findings, reflected that brand loyalty deteriorates the relationship of independent variables with brand switching. These results can be corroborated from the pictorial representation of the SmartPLS model as presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: SmartPLS Model



6. Discussion

The empirical examination of this study revealed that independent factors (i.e., social influence, sales promotion, and variety seeking) positively linked with brand switching. The relative importance of the top three determinants was close, however, social influence was found to be the most dominant factor. As expected, brand loyalty was found to have an indirect effect on all other variables. The results further exhibited that brand loyalty moderated the effect of all three determinants on brand switching. These findings require discussion. Social influence is the deliberate or unintentional change in behavior, due to the people around (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Once teenagers cross the age of adolescence, their dependency begins shifting from their parents to their social circle (Sahay & Sharma, 2010). Peer influence can also be observed extensively in Pakistan. The young population are very much attached to their friends, cousins and classmates. In Pakistan, it is a tendency of our society to make decisions collectively. Therefore, the youth practice a certain level of influence on each other's acquisition and consumption related choices. Thus, the impact of brand loyalty developing campaigns is suppressed eventually.

In Pakistan, in most instances, extensive advertising and endorsement is not effective. Merely social approval is enough for a particular brand to have a desirable demand. Another dominant factor in this regard is social media. In order to conform to the choice of consumers, a brand has to be viral on social media. Interestingly, social media is considered to be the most influential medium of all times. In a very limited duration, it has replaced the other social factors in the Pakistani society. For youth, social media is the most decisive factor for their brand selection, retaining, and switching.

In this regard, brand managers of smartphone developers have to be smart now. They should aim towards targeting social media as a primary means of branding. The only viable option to overcome brand switching is to drive social media forums as a medium to reach, lure and capture target customers. As discussed earlier, social media is the most influential factor of this era. Therefore, the desired brand loyalty cannot be attained without conquering social media platforms. Sales promotion is an essential component of the promotion mix, and it is meant to increase short

term sales (Buil et al., 2013). It is therefore not surprising that most of the marketers utilize it to attract the competitor's loyal consumers. On a similar note, youngsters are always in search of promotional deals and therefore, they are an easy prey of cheap promotional deals. The products offered in sales promotions are mostly inexpensive and it is a neck breaking point for local and private brands.

In emerging economies like Pakistan, the trend of sales promotion is seeking abundant attention. On the other hand, the concept of brand loyalty is vanishing nowadays. Customers prefer shifting to the smartphone brands which have lucrative promotional offers. The ultimate upshot is the dominance of brand switching over brand loyalty. Thus, brand loyalty can be broken down with sales promotions, that too effortlessly in Pakistan.

On the contrary, brand switching can be controlled by developing sustainable brand loyalty programs. In order to make loyalty programs a success, marketers should go for other promotional programs like, digital advertising, mobile marketing and public relations. According to Keller et al. (2008) the unique and favorable brand associations can also assist to a great extent by breaking the spell of sales promotion among youngsters. Researchers defined variety seeking as a situation where consumers are satisfied with the existing product, but they search for other products with similar functionality. Most authors have termed it as 'need for uniqueness' (Junaedy & Dharmmesta, 2002). Variety seeking is one of the considerable factors that create competition in the industry. Previously, it has been discussed that youngsters are very enthusiastic regarding their purchase and consumption choices in Pakistan.

Gronhoj (2007) explained that youngsters are mostly in search of unique and different products. Moreover, they want to look distinctive in their social circle. The same can be observed in the Pakistani culture as well as the youth are very savvy here. They are in touch with the global trends through the internet and television. In a society like Pakistan, it is not difficult to predict that youngsters would not remain loyal to a particular brand, especially when a plethora of national and international brands are present at their disposal. Their need for uniqueness compels them to shift between numerous brands. In this way, the concept of brand loyalty becomes blurred.

However, smartphone developers can revitalize brand loyalty by offering different products with multiple features. Ahad and Anshari (2017) argue that the youth is the largest buyer of Smartphone industry worldwide. Therefore, the key target of Pakistani marketers should be youngsters. By building favorable and unique brand images, marketers can achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction as customer satisfaction is the ladder to brand loyalty. Once a large number of delighted customers are taken on board, it would be effortless for managers to dodge variety seeking even in cut throat competition. With the passage of time, delighted customers would turn into loyal consumers.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

This research work has been executed in Pakistan to find out about the impact of various factors i.e. social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking on brand switching with a moderating effect of brand loyalty. The examination was conducted in context of the smartphone industry, following a quantitative research design. Most of the respondents that were approached in this study were young consumers (16–30 years old), because it is assumed that they might have had a high acceptance of smartphones (Sasmita & Suki, 2015). For this study, 500 respondents were contacted, out of which, a total of 482 responses were administered for data analysis. The results depict that various factors are responsible for influencing youngsters to switch between various brands of smartphones. However, brand loyalty creates resistance in doing so. Furthermore, the findings appear to support the findings of the prior studies conducted. For example, following researchers have also (Belch et al., 2014; Jensen & Hansen, 2006; Jung & Yoon, 2012; Westberg & Pope, 2014) elaborated that social influence, sales promotion and variety seeking have a direct positive relation with brand switching, and these factors enhance brand switching behavior.

These findings of this investigation can be used by the smartphone industry, and the related innovative and technological industry sectors. This is so because this study provides relevant information about the various factors that are likely to influence the intention of buyers to remain with or switch their smartphone brand. Interestingly, most of the institutions have a keen focus on boosting the skills and knowledge of their internal customers (employees) so that they can compete in international

markets (Ali & Muhammad, 2018). Therefore, this survey can assist organizations focusing on their employees for customer retention.

Furthermore, the managers of the smartphone organizations can utilize this information in the future to keep potential clients from switching. From the perspective of smartphone companies that are attempting to get the consideration of new customers, this research can assist them in creating methodologies, strategies and to implement tactics in order to overcome brand switching, retaining potential customers and expanding the market share.

7.1 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research depends on the information concerning a single item industry (Smartphone) in just one country (Pakistan), which exhibits its restrictions. The findings and conclusions may not precisely apply to different products, industries and across the national boundaries of Pakistan. It is encouraged that future researchers should examine other moderators and mediators than just the brand loyalty, with a goal to explore the phenomenon from other perspectives as well.

Furthermore, it should likewise be considered here that the respondents' have answered with respect to their state of mind, perceptions, opinions and attitudes toward the brand switching experience. Therefore, it is difficult to assume that the outcomes are comprehensive and absolute, until and unless they are observed in a longitudinal research. It also infers that respondents should be approached for the long term, as well as to monitor their behavior. In this manner, their behavior regarding brand switching and brand loyalty might yield much more valuable results.

Last, the data was collected from university students only. It is suggested to investigate populations other than students so as to generalize the findings. To obtain more in depth information about consumers' brand retaining and switching behavior, this group could be studied in greater detail on the bases of other products, with more influencing factors.

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