



## Retaining Empowered Employees: Role of Strategic Performance Management and Perceived Organizational Support

Iram Batool

*National University of Modern Languages*

Hina Jaffery<sup>§</sup>

*The University of Lahore*

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*Strategic performance management and perceived organizational support are two essential elements of business organizations' success across the globe. Therefore, the current study aims to test the outcomes of these two variables through the mediating role of empowering role identity in the relationship between strategic performance management, perceived organizational support, and employee retention. The data for the analysis is collected from 292 telecom employees working in Lahore, Pakistan. Multi-stage sampling, with simple random sampling at the first stage and a convenient sampling technique in the second stage, is used to collect data. Different data analysis techniques like correlation and regression analysis are used to test the hypotheses of the study. Moreover, the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. According to regression analysis, strategic performance management and perceived organizational support brought positive employee retention increments. Results showed strategic performance management got a significant increment in empowering role identity variations, which have higher contributions to employee retention. The results showed the mediation impact of empowering role identity among strategic performance management and perceived organizational support and employee retention.*

**Keywords:** *Strategic performance management, perceived organizational support, employee retention, empowering role identity*

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In an era of a rapidly changing business environment (Yuliansyah et al., 2018), various organizations operate with high efficiency to become market leaders in the products and services they offer. In such a scenario, organizations are giving critical importance to strategically aligning their performance management systems with the capabilities of their most important asset, that is, their human resource. As it is an important asset, its' development is part of the strategic goals of almost every business organization (Tzabbar et

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<sup>§</sup> *Corresponding author: Hina Jaffery, Lahore Business School, The University of Lahore  
Email: hina.jf@gmail.com*

al., 2017). To achieve these goals, specific strategic performance management practices are adopted to establish an effective and efficient work climate to enhance performance and facilitate employee retention (Frye et al., 2020; Mbugua et al., 2014).

Strategic performance management mainly refers to the practices of information sharing, performance appraisal, and compensation. It involves expanding a consistent, aligned set of practices, programs, and policies to make possible the success of the organization's strategic objective (Mello, 2005). These help in sustaining competitive advantage and employee retention for all organizations. Employee retention refers to an organization's capability to keep the human resource they should attain their organizational and planned objectives (Arthur, 2001). Alternately, any organization that fails to maintain its financial performance fails to conserve its human resource, thus leading to further collapse in the organizational performance (Degbey et al., 2020).

Employees believe their organizations personify as someone who have intention, whether benevolent or malevolent, toward them (Cote et al., 2020). Organizations and employees interact with each other, and they need to achieve a balance in which an employee feels that he is considered worthy while the organization feels that the employee is an important asset to them (Wang et al., 2020). This belief is a preamble to employee perception regarding organizational support. Perceived organizational support is the employee's perception that his organization grants value to the involvement of the workforce, concerns about their welfare, and is concerned about actions that affect the workers (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Zagenczyk et al., 2020). This perception inculcates an inner obligation in employees to reciprocate the organization by helping it achieve its goals (Caesen et al., 2019).

A high level of perceived organizational support fosters a sense of unity between employees, which helps create a shared identity among organizational members. As an employee is the center of all business organizations, it is necessary to empower him for achieving long-term success (Caesen et al., 2019). However, an employee also needs to know the limits to which he may use his power; therefore, his role identity should be clarified, and empowerment should be given accordingly. Role identity is shaped by the goals, morals, attitudes, norms, and communication styles prevalent within an organization (Zhang et al., 2020). It increases the output, expresses self-assurance in an employee's capability, and provides a viable atmosphere for better performance (Zhang & Sims, 2005). The development of employees is a necessary part of human evolution which has always been a topic of interest for researchers. On the other hand, practitioners all over the globe are consistently looking for effective ways to retain employees so that they may achieve excellence. Reducing turnover is cost-effective for organizations as they invest in the training and development of employees, and re-hiring costs them additional charges and time (Frye et al., 2020). This research provides them with a possible solution that may help them in achieving their aims.

In sum, to facilitate the academicians and practitioners, this study is subsequently being carried out to investigate the interrelationships between (1) strategic performance management and employee retention, (2) perceived organizational support and employee retention, (3) the mediating role of empowering role identity in these relationships, within the organizations pertaining specifically to the telecom sector. It explains the mechanisms through which organizations can retain employees by providing organizational support, adopting strategic performance management systems, and empowering their employee's role identity.

## Literature Review

### *Strategic Performance Management and Employee Retention*

Strategic performance management refers to the performance of the employees and employer concerning the strategic goals and objectives of the organization in such a manner

that it makes the organization flexible, learning, and sustainable. The extent to which an organization has effectively implicated its' strategic performance management system can be gauged by its market position against competitors (Yuliansyah et al., 2018). Generally, one of the most frequently used check and balance systems for the employee is performance appraisal (Mbugua et al., 2014). In addition, strategic performance management practices focus on selective staffing, career development appraisal (Heavey et al., 2013), competitive compensation (Singh, 2013), and comprehensive training (Mbugua et al., 2014; Surujlal & Keyser, 2013).

Conversely, strategic human resource management researchers analyze that strategic performance management practices can become a means of the special edge when they are focused on resources or competencies that increase the organization's value (Wright et al., 2004; Raja et al., 2011). It is related to the assistance of practices made for organizational effectiveness, contributing to the organization's competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is the advantage that the sector gets from retaining employees who have a broad vision, are exclusive to competitors, are complex to reproduce, and can be organized for synergy (Ericksen & Dyer, 2004).

The thoughts and developments about performance management indicate that a collection of strategic performance management practices should be used (Takeuchi et al., 2007). These strategies help in making a conducive environment in which not only the administration but also the rest of the employees can develop and emerge as highly productive employees, which are the core of the organization's working (Ana-Maria et al., 2009; Munro et al., 2007).

Thus, an employer's effort is constantly to gain attractive staff to accomplish the objectives and goals of an organization (Mbugua et al., 2014). Employee retention is a concept that means the ability of an organization to withhold their employees for more extended periods. To retain the employees, continuous analysis needs to be done for past mistakes, present opportunities, and future orientations. Once done, this analysis should be given importance and made part of the organization's policies. Once policies are made, they can be changed to goals for which appropriate strategies can be made and achieved through various methods (Fatima, 2011).

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) suggests employee retention occurs when employees believe they are contributing to accomplishing the organizational goals, and in return, the organization supports them. Laschinger et al. (2001) explain that separate policies should be made for the retention of staff. He further explains that the major problem in retaining the employees is that the administration is mostly not supportive and does not facilitate the employees (Ozutku & Ozutku, 2009). This resultant turnover negatively influences organizational performance through the high cost of recruiting new employees and losing time and money spent on training outgoing employees (Allen et al., 2010). The social capital point of view supports this concept as it states that when employees leave, organizations drop precious social dealings, which in return can completely spoil the organizational performance (Holtom et al., 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011, Vos & Meganck, 2009). Hence from the above discussion, we propose our first hypothesis as follows:

*H<sub>1a</sub>*: Strategic performance management has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.

### *Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention*

Perceived organizational support is one of the reasons a worker settles and commits to their job and organization (Abeysekera, 2007; Ahmad, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2011). Employees who perceive their organizations as supportive feel the need to respond positively toward the organization with attitudes and behaviors that benefit the organization (Caesen et

al., 2019; Eisenberger et al., 1990). This concept is the central idea of the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). According to this theory, if the employer provides the employee with a supportive environment and competitive pay, the employee would feel obliged to work hard to return benefits to the organization as a reciprocal response (Wayne et al., 1997). Perceived organizational support and social exchange theory sometimes focus more on the employee and employer relationship and less on contextual factors (Zagenczyk et al., 2020). However, it is essential to note that the social context of organizations provides cues to employees based on which they make perceptions regarding their organizations. Therefore, managerial support is considered an imperative business strategy for employee retention (Li et al., 2017). This perception develops by analyzing employees' socio-emotional desires (Cote et al., 2020), showing a willingness to give employees extra hard work, and providing help and support needed to improve job quality (Luthans & Sommer, 2005).

Intentions are a necessary cognitive antecedent to more than 30% variance in behavior (Steil et al., 2019). Employees engage in positive work behaviors when they feel they have the power to control their behavior. Such perception requires them to perceive their organization as supportive of their job tasks and duties (Frye et al., 2020; Steil et al., 2019). Thus, if managers show appreciation for an employee's work, they will work harder to make them content with their work (Riggle et al., 2009). In addition, if an employee is paid well for the job he does, he perceives his organization as supportive and is, therefore, more likely to remain in it (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). Thus, perceived organizational support affects employee retention through multiple factors. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) explain that out of the things influencing the employee's perceived organizational support, there are three most crucial factors. These factors include organizational culture, supervisory trust, support, and fair dealings (Wayne et al., 1997). Organizational culture refers to the situation in which the employee is operating. Every employee requires a place of his own in the organization, so ergonomics plays a vital role in the employee's job satisfaction. Moreover, the job duties should be in sync with the employee's skills, and the compensation given should be accordingly. Perceived learning opportunities also create a positive environment as the employee believes that acquiring new skills and undertaking initiatives would help him enhance his knowledge and skills (Steil et al., 2019).

Supervisory support means that an employee should feel vital to the company (Loi et al., 2006). This feeling can be inculcated by the managers mostly. If the managers ask for opinions and give credit for the work (Greenberg, 1990) he does, it would create a more positive image of the organization in the employee's mind. Fair dealings mostly refer to the way the rules and regulations are made for the employees. If the same rules apply to everyone, then the atmosphere remains healthy, whereas if favoritism is practiced, then it makes the employee insecure about his job and creates turnover intentions in his mind (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Cropanzano et al., 1997; Karatepe, 2012). Employees' behavioral intentions change consciously according to their perception of the environment. Therefore, a favorable environment will foster their performance and help retain them (Steil et al., 2019). Consequently, we can claim that perceived organizational support is a significant factor in employee retention (Hassan et al., 2013). On the basis of the above discussion, we propose our hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1b:* Perceived organizational support has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.

### *Strategic Performance Management and Empowering Role Identity*

Organizations that aspire to attain aggressive benefits over competitors have a tough obligation to think about strategic performance management practices as essential procedures

to encourage the workers and keep them trustworthy with the organization (Blader & Tyler, 2013; Hin et al., 2013). Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) explains that strategic performance management practices can ensure the best labour relations between workers by using an equal opportunity policy through which every employee feels empowered. In addition, civilizing recruitment practices might help an organization in regard to employment issues (Watson & Abzug, 2005; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009).

Empowerment is considered the formation of perceptions while working in small groups and allowing actions lead to promotions and a better experience. Thinking, considering, and conversation are the main components of empowerment. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) gave a cognitive model in which they suggested that changes in cognitive variables determining individuals' values (function measurement) affect empowerment. They showed that to what degree feelings regarding the opinion of duty create an association with a sense of empowerment. There are four measures of their study. The first measure is called worth, the amount to which behavior is likely to create a variation. The second measure is competence, in which an individual can do his job with skill. The third measure is foremost, which is connected to the value of the task and the goal. The individual's perception of the significance of the work impacts job satisfaction and a sense of empowerment. The fourth measure is independence. People, who are at a high level of independence, have high motivation to control their atmosphere. Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 2a:* Strategic performance management has a significant positive relationship with empowering role identity.

### *Perceived Organizational Support and Empowering Role Identity*

Managers play an essential role in the development of employees on all levels. According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees are automatically productive and retained if managers are supportive and perceptive. Therefore, it is necessary first to empower the manager so that this empowerment chain can be traveled to the subordinates (Laschinger et al., 2001; Surujlal & Grobler, 2014). Aube et al. (2007) put forth the concept that an employee's needs should be met by the organization, especially his social and emotional needs. The social needs include an employee's wish to be recognized and rewarded by the manager and the top authorities. These social and emotional needs also include building employee-employer associations. When an employee feels close to his employer, he will feel more obliged to stay longer in the organization than in a situation where the employee has no contact with the employee (Aube et al., 2007). This association results in the employee feeling more confident and vital to the organization, which results in more outstanding emotional commitment.

Blader and Tyler (2013) relate that when a person thinks he is considered worthy by some individual or organization, he will become loyal to them. This worth is evaluated differently from person to person. Most people might think only verbal appreciation is enough to know your worth, while; others might associate it with monetary rewards. One way of showing worthiness is by empowering the employee so that he has access to the company's main assets, which are relevant to his job (Ali et al., 2010; Erdogan & Enders, 2007).

Empowering role identity is defined and explained as the activity through which proper information and power are shared with the employee to give him the freedom to carry out his job duties in whatever way he thinks is best. It involves a manager's trust in his employee that he would not use the information or power to cause trouble for the organization. In fact, he would help in increasing organizational effectiveness and growth (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2b:* Perceived organizational support has a significant positive relationship with empowering role identity.

### *Empowering Role Identity and Employee Retention*

Spreitzer et al. (1997) clarify the outcome of empowerment as efficiency, work agreement, and less job-related tension. Professional identity is an individual's self-definition as a part of a career and is linked with the performance of a qualified role (Pratt & Dutton, 2000). It is accordingly critical that researchers recognize the dynamics essential for professional role identity transformation. Role identity is collected of related multiple selves distinct further as a hierarchical ranking of identities (Zhang et al., 2020). An individual having these multiple identities chooses wisely which identity to use in particular situations (McCall & Simmons, 1966; Stryker & Serpe, 1994).

Employee retention has a triad nature: physical, social, and mental. The physical dimension is dependent on pay and monetary rewards. In contrast, the mental dimension is affected by the comprehension that the information provided will help improve the output of the job given. The social dimension elaborates on the type of relationships a person forms in the internal and external business world, specifically with its organization (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009). According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), when an employee feels that his organization rewards and appreciates, the need to reciprocate arises. This need propels the employee to consider his organization as part of his role identity and contribute to its success by excelling in performance and not having turnover intentions (Zhang et al., 2020).

In sum, empowered employees satisfy all three dimensions of employee retention. The physical dimension is met as with authority and power, the benefits provided to them are also increased or enhanced. The mental dimension is satisfied as they get access to information and support along with authority to make decisions in the organizations within their job parameters. Lastly, the social dimension is also fulfilled as empowerment brings more correspondence with their contemporaries and subordinates to be updated with the information processing in the organization. Hence empowered employees are more likely to remain in the organization. Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3: Empowering role identity has a significant relationship with employee retention*

### *Empowering Role Identity as a Mediator*

The empowerment concept has existed for a long time as documentation of this term originated in the 17th century (McCarthy & Freeman, 2008). Ellis-Stoll and Popkess-Vawter (1999) opine that empowerment is a concept as old as the 17th century. They connect this concept to the process through which an individual displays control for any purpose related to realistic positive behavior. McCarthy and Freeman (2008) further added that this concept did not come into being until the 1920s when the civil rights movement occurred, nor was it thoroughly discussed or debated about its' application until the 1970s. However, they concluded that this concept was initially prevalent in the nursing field, affecting patient safety, quality care, and fair access to care. Empowerment is a concept that has been studied from different directions in multiple disciplines (McCarthy & Freeman, 2008).

Empowerment was defined for the first time by Gandz (1990). According to his definition, it is considered the organizational role's distribution that this alternative should be given to a person or seen in his organizational role. These empowerments mean a person wants official responsibility. Sandmo (1971) referred to the common dictionary definitions of empowerment: giving out of legislative power, power, assigned mission, and raising the

creature's power. Gandz (1990), however, conceptualized empowerment as the ability to pass on decisions to staff.

Empowering role identity is defined as a procedure of inculcating self-efficacy in organizational members during situations that may cause them to feel hopeless (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Zhang et al., 2020). It is also further explained how the employee understands the mutual benefit he and the organization will get if he uses the information and power provided adequately to him to achieve the responsibilities given to him through his job description.

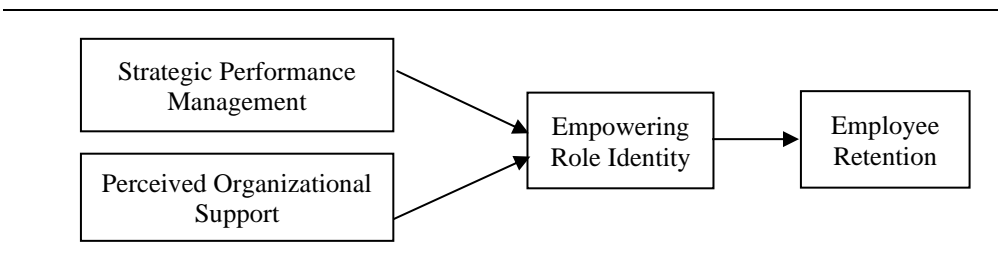
Spreitzer et al. (1997) define empowering role identity as a mediator or emotional condition manifested in four cognitions: sense, ability, independence, and contact. Sense indicates that an employee feels that he is essential to the organization and that his presence is required. Ability indicates that an employee believes he is competent enough to carry out the job duties assigned. Independence indicates the perception of independence to select how to start and hold out responsibilities. Contact means that the employee feels that his work is an important part of the organization and helps in the overall success of the organization

All these four manifestations are depicted in the power of decision-making given to an employee, which is an aspect of extreme importance. Hence, it is one of the main incentives and motivations that could be given to an employee. Methods used to impart this decision-making to employees include empowering employee role identity, structural empowerment, psychological empowerment, and participative management. These methods have a dual purpose. Firstly, they help make the employee feel valued, and second, they help retain the employees within the organization (Laschinger et al., 2001; Robbins, 2003; Robbins et al., 2007). Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses are suggested:

*Hypothesis 4a:* Empowering role identity will mediate between strategic performance management and employee retention.

*Hypothesis 4b:* Empowering role identity will mediate between perceived organizational support and employee retention.

**Figure 1**  
**Conceptual Framework**



## Methodology

### Research Design

The current study is a descriptive, analytical, correlational, and cross-sectional study about the interrelationships between strategic performance management, perceived organizational support, empowering role identity, and employee retention. The unit of analysis is individual employees, which includes all permanent and contractual employees in the given population given. This study is being carried out in the targeted organizations where no change

has been made in the organizational environment; therefore, this study is conducted in a natural setting. Interference from the researcher is kept minimal as any manipulation during data collection or any kind of conscious change in the data entry causes biases in results and makes them faulty.

### *Population and Sample*

Aman-Ullah et al. (2020) explain that in the telecom sector of Pakistan, work climate, especially organizational support, career opportunities, and organizational policies, play a significant role in employee retention. They believe that employees in this sector usually get dissatisfied when they face role overload in their work lives. Therefore, effective strategic performance management practices should be adopted to increase employee loyalty and commitment and subsequently help in employee retention (Haider et al., 2015).

The target sector of the current study is the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. Within this sector, two telecom companies are taken as the population, i.e., Warid and Telenor. The target population consists of all employees except the janitor staff in these two companies. This particular population is targeted as in Pakistan. This is the sector that almost all classes of people are concerned with. It has diverse employees in terms of gender, age, education, social class, etc. Only two companies are targeted as they have a vast network that covers a large number of people.

The targeted sample was 300 (Roscoe, 1975), out of which 292 respondents completed the questionnaire correctly, giving a response rate of 97%. Multi-stage sampling was carried out. In the first stage, four prominent telecommunication companies were taken: Warid, Telenor, Ufone, and Mobilink. Then, through simple random sampling, two of the companies, Warid and Telenor, were selected. In the second stage, data was collected through convenience sampling from these two selected companies. Convenience sampling means that the data is collected in order of convenience of whichever employees were available to the researcher.

### *Measures*

The measurement tool used is a questionnaire. It has five basic parts. The first part consists of demographic information, while the rest of the four parts deal with each study variable. The scale used is a 5-point Likert scale in which 1 is equal to 'strongly disagree' and 5 denotes 'strongly agree.'

*Strategic performance management* is assessed by a 10-item scale cited in Mbugua et al., (2015). A sample item is "The organization has a clear action value plan used to measure the performance." *Perceived organizational support* is assessed through a questionnaire given by Eisenberg et al. (1986), which has 16 items. A sample item is 'My organization values my contribution to its well-being.' *Empowering role identity* was measured by 4 items by Callero (1985). Sample item includes, "I often think about having greater control over my job." *Employee retention* was measured by 9 items by Callero (1985). One of the sample items is "the work I am doing is very important to me."

### *Procedure*

The questionnaire developed for this study comprised demographic information and items related to all the study variables. Nominal scale responses were chosen for the demographic variables taken as control variables: age, gender, formal education, and work experience. In addition, the questionnaire was ensured to be free of any grammatical error and any kind of bias in terms of loaded or leading statements. The HR managers of the chosen



companies were informed of the data collection procedure, and their permission was obtained via telephone. According to their instruction, the questionnaires were distributed to the employees through convenience sampling. Each respondent was informed that their participation is voluntary. The data they give will be used for research purposes only and will in no way affect their performance appraisals. This was done to ensure maximum participation and to develop a positive attitude in employees regarding their response rate. The employees were given a time of one week to fill out the questionnaire according to their availability. This step was done to reduce errors due to respondent fatigue. Once the filled questionnaires were collected, they were entered into Microsoft excel and then to SPSS to carry out the data analysis.

## Results

The current study uses different statistical techniques to investigate the data. Cronbach's Alpha is applied to measure reliability. Correlation is used to find early support for the study hypotheses. Regression analysis is used to study the connection between dependent and independent variables, while Hayes (2013) is used for mediation analysis.

All scales were reliable, with values above 0.6. The data predominantly consists of males (211), respondents with ages below 25 years (203), graduates (185), and people with experience between 1 to 5 years (163).

**Table 1**  
**Correlation among Variables**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Strategic Performance Management	3.70	0.58	1			
2. Employee Retention	3.57	0.54	0.67**	1		
3. Perceived Organizational Support	3.54	0.52	0.58**	0.65**	1	
4. Empowering Role Identity	3.76	0.65	0.28**	0.38**	0.33**	1

\*\*P < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

As shown in Table 1 correlation between all variables is significantly positive. Strategic performance management has a moderate relationship with employee retention (0.67) and perceived organizational support (0.58), while it has a weak relationship (0.28) with empowering role identity. Perceived organizational support is moderately correlated with employee retention (0.65) and weakly correlated with empowering role identity (0.38). Perceived organizational support has a weak relationship (0.33) with empowering role identity.

As shown in Table 2, multiple regression analysis indicates a 55.2% change in employee retention due to strategic performance management and perceived organizational support. The value of F significance, which is 0.00, shows that the model is significant. Beta values show that each unit of strategic performance management increases by 0.43 units of employee retention, and each unit of perceived organizational support increases by 0.40 of employee retention. Therefore, *hypothesis 1a and hypothesis 1b are accepted.*

Multiple regression analysis in Table 2 shows a 12.4% change in empowering role identity due to strategic performance management and perceived organizational support. The value of F significance, which is 0.00, shows that the model is significant. Beta values show that each unit of strategic performance management increases 0.13 units of empowering role

identity, and each unit of perceived organizational support increases 0.26 units of empowering role identity. Therefore *hypotheses 2a and 2b are accepted.*

**Table 2**  
**Regression Analysis**

<b>Multiple Regression with Employee Retention</b>					
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Strategic Performance Management	0.43	0.74	0.55	177.93	0.00
Perceived Organizational Support	0.40				
<b>Multiple Regression with Empowering Role Identity</b>					
Strategic Performance Management	0.13	0.35	0.12	20.42	0.00
Perceived Organizational Support	0.26				
<b>Linear Regression with Employee Retention</b>					
Empowering Role Identity	0.38	0.38	0.15	49.30	0.00

Linear regression analysis in Table 2 shows that there is a 14.5% change in employee retention due to empowering role identity. The value of F significance, which is 0.00, shows that the model is significant. Beta values show that each unit of empowering role identity causes 0.38 units of change in employee retention. Therefore, *hypothesis 3 is accepted.*

Hayes, (2013) regression analysis was used for the mediation analysis. In Table 3 mediation analysis, the effect of empowering role identity is seen in the relationship between strategic performance management and employee retention. In the first step, strategic performance management explained significant and robust variation in empowering role identity ( $R^2=0.078$ ,  $F= 24.60$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Strategic performance management brought a positive and significant increase in empowering role identity after holding constant to other variables ( $\beta=0.31$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

**Table 3**  
**Mediation Analysis with Strategic Performance Management**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	
	<b>Empowering Role Identity</b>	<b>Employee Retention</b>
Constant	2.60	0.84
<i>Independent</i>		
Strategic Performance Management	0.31*	0.57*
<i>Mediator</i>		
Empowering Role Identity		0.17*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.08	0.49
F-sig	0.00	0.00
<b>Indirect Effect of Mediation</b>		
<b>Effect</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
0.05	0.02	0.09

In the second step, empowering role identity and strategic performance management explained significant variation in employee retention. ( $R^2= 0.487$ ,  $F= 137.48$ ,  $p< 0.05$ ).

Strategic performance management brought a positive but significant increment in employee retention ( $\beta=0.57, p<0.05$ ). Strategic performance management brought a positive and significant increase in employee retention when empowering role identity mediated this relationship ( $\beta=0.17, p<0.05$ ).

The indirect effect of strategic performance management and employee retention on empowering role identity is (0.05) significant because data lies between (0.02) to (0.09). So, *hypothesis 4a is accepted* as empowering role identity mediates the relationship of strategic performance management and employee retention.

**Table 4**  
**Mediation Analysis with Perceived Organizational Support**

Variables	Outcome	
	Empowering Role Identity	Employee Retention
Constant	2.27	0.85
<i>Independent</i>		
Perceived Organizational Support	0.42*	0.61*
<i>Mediator</i>		
Empowering Role Identity		0.15*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.113	0.455
F-sig	0.00	0.00
<b>Indirect effect of Mediation</b>		
<b>Effect</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
0.063	0.029	0.112

Table 4 shows that perceived organizational support explained significant total variation in empowering role identity ( $R^2 = 0.113, F = 37.00, p<0.05$ ). Perceived organizational support brought a positive and significant increase in empowering role identity after holding constant to other variables ( $\beta = 0.42, p<0.05$ ).

In the second step, perceived organizational support brought positive and significant increment in employee retention after holding constant to other variables ( $\beta = 0.61, p<0.05$ ). Both perceived organizational support and empowering role identity explained significant total variation in employee retention ( $R^2 = 0.455, F = 120.680, p<0.05$ ). Perceived organizational support brought a positive significant increase in employee retention when empowering role identity mediated the relationship ( $\beta=0.15, p<0.05$ ).

Indirect effects have confidence intervals from (0.029) to (0.112). Hence, the indirect effect (0.063) lie within the assurance distance, but according to normality tests, it is normal ( $p<0.05$ ). So, *hypothesis 2b accepted* as empowering role identity mediate between perceived organizational support and employee retention. So, *hypothesis 4b is also accepted* as empowering role identity mediates the relationship of perceived organizational support and employee retention.

## Discussion

Strategic performance management consists of various practices related to human resource planning (Mbugua et al., 2015). Huseli (1995) explains that the human resource planning process creates a hierarchy of authority, provides a vast range of performance systems, manages salaries, benefits, and increments, and builds personal commitment. With

the usage of all these techniques, staff members feel more comfortable in the organization and maintain a great organizational image. In addition, highly competitive wage systems support employee commitment and help retain a superior workforce (Mbugua et al., 2015). Our study findings also suggest that strategic performance management practices help retain employees. When more strategic performance management practices are implemented, employees retain for a more extended period.

Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) explain that compensation and reward systems enhance employee relationships and performance. When organizations use effective strategic performance management practices like performance appraisal, pension plans, retirement benefits, and many others, it dramatically impacts employee behavior. The employee feels bonded to the organization resulting in perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Alternately, workers who feel they have no autonomy or control over their jobs become dissatisfied, which reduces their will to stay in the organization and contribute to its growth (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Mutual effective communication between employee and employer creates a favorable environment in which the employees feel comfortable and perceive their organizations to support their work. This, in turn, helps empower their work identities, subsequently leading to their retention at the workplace (Eisenberger et al., 1990). These studies also provide support to our findings which suggest that perceived organizational support help in employee retention.

An organization's strategic performance management practices indicate well-organized operations of administrations. This mission for quality involves forming organizations and administration classifications that service the vision and novelty of these practices. Conger and Kanungo (1988) explain that authority is a must for the employees in the organization to promote their self-image, empower their role identity, and build their commitment. Empowerment role identity is defined as a process of increasing the self-efficacy of employees in such a way that they do not feel powerless. Instead, their self-assurance is increased, which results in improving their output (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Empowering role identity, therefore, enhances self-efficacy, innovation and energizes employees to improve work efficiency. Furthermore, when employees feel more empowered in the organization by the manager or supervisor, they feel more comfortable. As a result, they agree to work in the long run, and automatically retention can be increased. Hence these studies support our findings of the relationship between perceived organizational support and empowering role identity.

With the usage of many practices concerned with management and perceived organizational support, empowerment in the organization also increases as well as employee retention (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Empowerment makes an employee autonomous and determined to carry out his job-related activities as he wishes (Pearce et al., 2003). If organizations give proper support to their employees, they feel more empowered, comfortable, and at ease in the organization. So, in that case, most managers can play a crucial role. After all, the discussion comes to conclude when workers have great power and authority. He also shows in different conditions and competitions more attentive in various business meetings and seminars they feel like senior organization members (Manz & Sims, 1987). So, it has viable bonding with empowerment and perceived organizational support as well.

Many factors contribute to the retention of employees, which include the suitable form of hiring, pro-organization labor unions, waging competitive rates, appraising performance and its feedback, counseling, rewarding, and pension plans. Strategic human resource management practices are used to determine the means by which practical implications relate to upper-level managers and their results according to the organization (Leghari et al., 2014). So, it has a strong relationship between strategic performance management and empowering role identity. Therefore, the study of Leghari et al. (2014) supports similar findings.

Many supervisors and upper-level management have inbuilt empowerment in their character or job role. It has the main objective to share power with the subordinates, want to be a perceived organizational support act to control and have more influence on junior staff members and employees, which in turn helps maintain employee retention properly. For the retaining of employees' industries must entertain them by giving incentives and benefits. Senior members assume those employees who want to stay and those who left (Mbugua et al., 2015). Therefore, the study of Leghari et al. (2014) supports our findings related to mediation analysis.

### *Theoretical Implications*

The current study theoretically contributes by providing a contextualized perspective of employee retention regarding the telecommunication sector in Pakistan. The findings shed light on the significant contribution of strategic performance management practices, perceived organizational support, and empowering role identity in retaining employees. Performance management and organizational support are two factors that vary in every organization. Hence, the contextualized study provides us with essential insights compared to studies that generally take the employee as respondents.

According to Aman-Ullah et al. (2020), the studies carried out in the telecom sector in Pakistan have primarily only focused on overall human resource practices. Whereas the current study contributes by focusing explicitly on performance management practices and perceived organizational support as predictors of employee retention. Secondly, organizations that have a supportive work climate usually view it in terms of supervisory support (Caesens et al., 2019; Zagenczyk et al., 2020), whereas this study provides another avenue by suggesting that the employees should be empowered in terms of their role identity. They should be given autonomy for their tasks to work hard to achieve their goals since they would also be solely accountable for them. Therefore, this study provides important insights regarding the mechanisms through which employees could be retained in services industries.

### *Practical Implications*

In service industries, such as the telecommunication industry, employee retention serves a pragmatic role in organizational success. From a managerial perspective, the study proposes that organizations should focus on linking their performance management with the organization's strategic goals as a whole. Strategic performance management has longer-lasting effects on employee retention and can help retain a good and trained workforce which also saves the hiring cost to the organizations. In addition, managers should focus on building healthy relationships between themselves and the employees to develop trust in them and the organization. When an employee believes that he is being supported, he becomes more loyal and is more likely to remain in the organization for a more extended period.

Once strategic performance management is practiced, and the employee is ensured of the organization's support, another factor that facilitates these two variables on employee retention is the empowering role identity. This means that each employee should be told of the power he has over his subordinates and also the power his immediate boss has over him. These limits of power will make him clear on his autonomy regarding his designation and help him be more secure in his job.

Organizational managers/HR managers can understand the standard of employee retention and accordingly can change job designs, compensation, reward systems, and overall system for producing a high-performing working system. In addition, organizations should focus on strategic performance management and perceived organizational support and create

awareness and develop empowering employee role identity. The usage of these practices or strategies properly, organizations would stabilize the retention rate.

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

Several limitations have been acknowledged while conducting the present study. Firstly, the cross-sectional design of the study hinders the establishment of causal relationships between study variables. Future studies should carry out longitudinal studies to ensure causality in the current study relationships and reverse relationships. As much as strategic performance management and perceived organizational support contributes to employee retention, sometimes employee turnover also leads to organizational changes. Secondly, self-reporting of measures may lead to common method bias within our responses. Therefore future studies should focus on other multiple respondents. For example, the supervisor's perspective could be taken and compared with the sub-ordinate response regarding the same variables within the organizational climate. This will provide evidence of whether the perception of support and strategic performance management practices is similar across the organizational hierarchy or varies with seniority level.

Thirdly, our sample is context-specific to just the telecommunication sector and may not be generalizable to other sectors. To some extent, the results may apply to somewhat similar services industries, but the relationship between these variables in the manufacturing sector is yet to be explored. An interesting study would be between the similarities and differences of the study variables between the manufacturing and services sectors. In theory, it is believed that the services sector is more concerned about employee retention as its focus is to give customer support through establishing interpersonal relationships. In contrast, the manufacturing sector is more focused on output and comparatively focuses less on employees. Fourthly, the strategic performance management practices taken in this study are generalized. Future scholars could specify different types of strategic performance management practices and investigate which are more effective in employee retention than others. Thus, following these directions, scholars of this field can further contribute to the existing knowledge on employee retention.

## **Conclusion**

The current study focuses on these variables: strategic performance management, perceived organizational support, empowering role identity, and employee retention. Nowadays, most organizations are run on strategic performance management and perceived organizational support. Regression analysis shows vary vast variations in employee retention and empowering role identity due to the usage of strategic performance management and perceived organizational support. These variables are positively and strongly correlated with each other. Strategic performance management and perceived organizational support, and empowering role identity together brought significant change in employee retention. The study suggests that organizations may establish a competitive advantage by being recognized as attractive places depending on their performance concerning their strategic performance management and perceived organizational support, taking initiatives, helping shape support, caring for the environment, and treating employees fairly. These initiatives help in creating a positive image of the organization in the business world.

At this crucial time when organizational success is dependent on a quality workforce, organizations are becoming aware of the importance of attracting the best workers through job evaluation. It is also the best strategic factor; therefore, they take strategic performance management and perceived organizational support under consideration. It is suggested that the organization should focus on its empowerment medium with the help of which it can

maintain self-efficacy, employee confidence, and satisfaction as well because empowering role identity provides job satisfaction regarding its performance. So, strategic performance management and perceived organizational support must be highlighted with the empowerment for the retaining employees in the organization

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