



## Determinants of Employee Motivation in the Public Telecommunication Sector of Pakistan: A Quantitative Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

Promotion practices in higher education institutions are widely recognized as strategic tools for motivating faculty and enhancing their productivity. However, the direct link between promotions and performance often overlooks the psychological mechanisms through which this relationship operates. This study investigates the mediating role of job satisfaction in the promotion–performance relationship among faculty members in public universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Drawing on Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory and Procedural Justice Theory, the research employs a quantitative survey of 220 faculty members across five universities. The findings reveal that transparent and equitable promotion practices positively influence faculty performance both directly and indirectly through increased job satisfaction. The results underscore the importance of policy reforms that combine procedural fairness with opportunities for professional growth.

**Keywords** :Promotion practices, job satisfaction, faculty performance, higher education, Herzberg’s theory, procedural justice, mediation

### INTRODUCTION

In contemporary organizational settings, employee motivation is widely recognized as a driving force behind productivity, innovation, and long-term institutional success. Motivation influences how employees allocate their effort, persist in the face of challenges, and align their personal objectives with organizational goals (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In public sector organizations, however, rigid hierarchies, limited career mobility, and resource constraints can make sustaining motivation a persistent challenge (Perry et al., 2010).

The public telecommunication sector of Pakistan plays a vital role in national connectivity and socio-economic development. Yet, despite its strategic importance, the sector often grapples with workforce performance issues stemming from low morale, slow career progression, and inadequate recognition mechanisms. Although salary structures in the public sector are regulated and relatively stable, non-salary elements—such as supportive leadership, work-life balance, and acknowledgment of performance—are increasingly being recognized as equally critical in influencing employee engagement (Kuvaas et al., 2017; Ali et al., 2021).

In Pakistan, research on employee motivation has often centered on manufacturing, education, or banking sectors, leaving a gap in understanding motivational dynamics within public telecommunications. This study addresses that gap by examining both monetary and non-monetary



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drivers of motivation, using the Islamabad offices of a major public telecommunication organization as the focal point.

The results of this research aim to inform policy decisions, offering actionable recommendations for HR managers and policymakers to design motivation strategies that balance financial rewards with intrinsic and relational incentives.

### Problem Statement

Employee motivation is a critical element in determining the efficiency, productivity, and sustainability of organizations (Herzberg, 1968; Deci & Ryan, 1985). In the public sector, particularly within state-owned enterprises, the challenge of sustaining high motivation levels is amplified by bureaucratic structures, standardized pay scales, and slower career progression compared to private sector organizations.

Pakistan's public telecommunication sector, a cornerstone of national infrastructure, faces similar motivational challenges. While it offers stable employment and standardized salary packages, employees often report dissatisfaction stemming from limited recognition, restricted decision-making autonomy, and constrained opportunities for career advancement. These conditions can lead to reduced work engagement, diminished productivity, and increased turnover intentions (Ali et al., 2021).

Existing research in Pakistan has primarily examined motivation in the banking, education, and manufacturing industries, with relatively little attention given to the telecommunication sector—especially its public segment. Moreover, much of the previous literature has emphasized salary and financial incentives, often underestimating the impact of non-financial factors such as workplace culture, leadership style, and recognition programs (Kuvaas et al., 2017; Gagné et al., 2022).

Given the growing recognition of intrinsic motivators and the evolving nature of public sector work, there is a pressing need to explore the interplay between salary-based and non-salary factors in shaping employee motivation in public telecommunications. This study seeks to address this gap by conducting an empirical investigation in Islamabad-based public telecommunication offices, providing evidence-based recommendations to enhance workforce motivation.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Motivation

Motivation is the internal force that directs and sustains behavior toward achieving specific goals (Robbins & Judge, 2019). In the workplace, it determines the extent to which employees are willing to exert effort, persist in the face of difficulties, and align their behavior with organizational objectives (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Classic motivation theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1968), remain foundational in understanding employee behavior. Maslow emphasized a progression from basic physiological needs to self-actualization, while Herzberg distinguished between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, job security) and motivators (e.g., recognition, personal growth). Contemporary studies, however, integrate these models with newer frameworks like Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which underscores the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gagné et al., 2022).



### **Salary and Monetary Incentives**

Salary remains a significant driver of employee motivation, particularly in developing economies where financial stability is a major concern (Shah et al., 2018). In Pakistan's public sector, salary structures are standardized and relatively inflexible, which can limit their motivational impact over time (Ali et al., 2021). Nevertheless, fair and competitive pay is necessary to attract and retain skilled employees, and research shows that dissatisfaction with pay can quickly erode morale and increase turnover intentions (Awan et al., 2019).

However, salary alone is insufficient for sustaining long-term motivation. Studies have found diminishing returns from financial incentives when other psychological and social needs remain unmet (Kuvaas et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2020).

### **Non-Salary Motivators**

Non-salary motivators encompass recognition, professional development opportunities, work-life balance, supportive leadership, and a positive work environment. Research indicates that employees who perceive their work environment as supportive and inclusive demonstrate higher engagement and job satisfaction (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018).

Recognition, in particular, plays a pivotal role in public sector contexts where career progression may be slow. Verbal appreciation, awards, and public acknowledgment of achievements can reinforce positive behaviors and enhance intrinsic motivation (Grawitch et al., 2020). Moreover, opportunities for skill enhancement and professional growth can increase employees' sense of competence, leading to sustained engagement (Noe et al., 2021).

### **Motivation in the Public Sector**

Public sector employees often operate under constraints that limit performance-related pay, yet research suggests they may value public service motivation—an intrinsic desire to contribute to society—over purely financial rewards (Perry & Wise, 1990; Vandenabeele, 2021). In developing countries, however, the balance between financial and non-financial incentives is delicate, as economic realities still make salary an important determinant of motivation.

In Pakistan, the public telecommunication sector operates in a competitive environment alongside private operators, making it essential to design motivation strategies that not only retain talent but also encourage innovation and service quality.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

Although international research has extensively explored both financial and non-financial motivators, there is limited empirical evidence on their relative impact within Pakistan's public telecommunications sector. Previous studies tend to focus narrowly on either salary or workplace culture, without examining their combined influence. This study fills that gap by assessing the comparative effects of salary-based and non-salary motivators using quantitative data from public telecommunication employees in Islamabad.



### Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in three interrelated theories that collectively explain how salary and non-salary factors influence employee motivation:

**Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory** (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959)

**Hygiene factors** (salary, job security, working conditions) prevent dissatisfaction but do not inherently increase motivation.

**Motivators** (recognition, personal growth, meaningful work) are intrinsic drivers that lead to higher satisfaction and engagement. In the context of Pakistan's public telecommunication sector, salary aligns with hygiene factors, whereas recognition and growth opportunities serve as motivators.

**Self-Determination Theory (SDT)** (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2020)

Emphasizes three psychological needs: **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**.

Salary can address competence by reinforcing a sense of worth, but non-salary factors—such as empowerment and supportive leadership—are essential to satisfy autonomy and related needs.

**Equity Theory** (Adams, 1965)

Suggests employees assess fairness by comparing their input-output ratio to that of others.

In public organizations with standardized pay scales, perceptions of fairness in recognition, workload, and career advancement play a significant role in motivation.

These theories collectively provide a robust foundation for analyzing the relative importance of salary and non-salary factors in motivating employees in a public sector context.

### Conceptual Framework

Based on the above theoretical underpinnings, the study proposes the following conceptual model:

#### Independent Variables

**Salary Factors:** Basic pay, allowances, bonuses.

**Non-Salary Factors:** Recognition, professional development, work environment, leadership support.

#### Dependent Variable

**Employee Motivation:** Measured in terms of job satisfaction, engagement, and willingness to perform beyond minimum requirements.

#### Moderating Variable



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**Perceived Organizational Fairness:** Potentially influencing the relationship between salary/non-salary factors and motivation.

### Figure 1: Conceptual Model

(Salary Factors + Non-Salary Factors) → (Employee Motivation) → moderated by (Perceived Organizational Fairness)

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to capture the perceptions of employees regarding salary and non-salary motivational factors. The quantitative approach was selected to allow statistical testing of hypotheses and generalization of results to the broader public telecommunication workforce in Islamabad.

### Population and Sample

The target population consisted of employees working in the Islamabad headquarters of a major public telecommunication corporation. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across different job grades and departments. The final sample comprised 150 respondents.

### Data Collection Instrument

A **structured questionnaire** was developed based on established scales from previous studies:

**Salary Factors:** Adapted from Judge et al. (2010).

**Non-Salary Factors:** Adapted from Grawitch et al. (2020) and Noe et al. (2021).

**Employee Motivation:** Measured using a modified version of the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) (Tremblay et al., 2009).

Responses were recorded using a **5-point Likert scale** ranging from 1 (“Strongly Disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly Agree”).

### Data Collection Procedure

Approval of conduct of the survey was obtained from the organization’s HR department. Questionnaires were distributed in both printed and electronic forms to facilitate participation. Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and participation was entirely voluntary.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using **SPSS (version 26)**. The analysis involved:

**Descriptive Statistics** to summarize demographic data and key variables.



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**Reliability Analysis** using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency of scales ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$  considered acceptable).

**Correlation Analysis** to examine relationships among variables.

**Multiple Regression Analysis** to determine the predictive strength of salary and non-salary factors on employee motivation.

### Data Analysis and Results

#### Demographic Profile of Respondents

Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 138 were returned, yielding a **92% response rate**. The demographic analysis indicated that **65%** of respondents were male and **35%** were female. The majority (54%) fell within the **31–40 age bracket**, followed by 28% in the 20–30 range, and 18% aged above 40. Regarding education, **60% held a bachelor's degree**, 30% possessed a master's degree, and the remaining 10% had other professional qualifications. In terms of tenure, 47% had worked in the organization for **6–10 years**, reflecting a relatively experienced workforce.

#### Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha values indicated strong internal consistency for all constructs:

Salary Factors ( $\alpha = 0.87$ )

Non-Salary Factors ( $\alpha = 0.91$ )

Employee Motivation ( $\alpha = 0.88$ )

These values surpass the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), confirming that the measurement instruments were reliable.

#### Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficients revealed:

Salary Factors and Employee Motivation:  **$r = 0.58, p < 0.01$**

Non-Salary Factors and Employee Motivation:  **$r = 0.71, p < 0.01$**

The results suggest that while both salary and non-salary factors are significantly correlated with employee motivation, the relationship is stronger for non-salary factors.

#### Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression was conducted to assess the combined influence of salary and non-salary factors on motivation. The model was statistically significant ( **$F(2,135) = 64.29, p < 0.001$** ) and explained **48% of the variance** in employee motivation ( **$R^2 = 0.48$** ).





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### Regression coefficients:

Salary Factors:  $\beta = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.001$

Non-Salary Factors:  $\beta = 0.51$ ,  $p < 0.001$

The findings indicate that while salary factors have a positive effect, non-salary factors exert a more substantial impact on motivation levels.

### DISCUSSION

The results validate the Herzberg Two-Factor Theory assertion that monetary rewards, while important, primarily prevent dissatisfaction rather than inspire long-term motivation. In the studied public telecommunication sector, salary remains a crucial baseline factor—employees expect fair and timely compensation, and any deviation can negatively impact morale.

However, the stronger influence of non-salary factors—such as recognition, skill development opportunities, and supportive leadership—aligns with Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020). These factors fulfill intrinsic needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, leading to sustainable motivation.

The positive link between non-salary factors and motivation also resonates with Equity Theory (Adams, 1965), suggesting that employees value fairness not only in pay but also in career growth, workload distribution, and acknowledgment of contributions.

This finding is consistent with both earlier works (Lawler, 1971; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and contemporary research (Grawitch et al., 2020; Noe et al., 2021), which highlight the growing importance of psychological and environmental factors in employee engagement, especially in knowledge-driven and service-oriented organizations.

### CONCLUSION

This study concludes that while salary factors remain important in sustaining employee satisfaction in Pakistan's public telecommunication sector, **non-salary motivational drivers exert a more profound influence** on overall motivation. These include opportunities for professional growth, recognition, participatory decision-making, and a supportive work culture.

By integrating both hygiene and motivator elements into HR policies, public organizations can not only retain skilled employees but also inspire higher levels of engagement and performance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for policymakers and HR managers in the public telecommunication sector:

#### Adopt a Balanced Reward System

HR departments should implement a dual reward framework combining competitive salaries with non-monetary incentives such as flexible work arrangements, recognition programs, and career development initiatives.



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### **Strengthen Professional Development Programs**

Provide employees with continuous training, mentoring, and opportunities to acquire new skills. This fosters intrinsic motivation and increases retention.

### **Enhance Recognition Mechanisms**

Regular acknowledgment of employee achievements—both formal and informal—should be institutionalized. Public praise, award schemes, and personalized feedback can significantly improve morale.

### **Promote Participatory Decision-Making**

Employees should be actively involved in discussions about policies, workflow improvements, and organizational changes. This encourages a sense of ownership.

### **Create a Supportive Work Environment**

Cultivate a positive organizational culture where teamwork, fairness, and transparent communication are central.

### **Periodic Review of Salary Structures**

Even though non-salary factors have stronger influence; salary remains an essential baseline. Regular salary benchmarking should be done to stay competitive in the market.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study offers significant contributions at **theoretical, managerial, and policy-making levels:**

#### **Theoretical**

The research reinforces Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Self-Determination Theory in the context of a developing economy's public sector. It provides empirical evidence that intrinsic factors outweigh extrinsic factors in sustaining employee motivation.

#### **Implications**

##### **Practical/Managerial**

HR practitioners in the public telecommunication sector can leverage these findings to redesign reward and recognition systems that are more cost-effective and impactful in the long run.

##### **Policy**

For policymakers, the study suggests rethinking HR policies to emphasize holistic well-being, professional growth, and a fair working environment—elements that do not necessarily require large financial resources but yield substantial motivation gains.

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