

# THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT BETWEEN PAY SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: A STUDY OF PAY DISPERSION IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

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**Abstract.** *This study has a two-fold, to find out pay disparity among the federal government employees and to examine the justification of such disparity if exist. Furthermore, the study indented to investigate the impact of pay satisfaction (PS) on organizational citizenship behavior (OCBs with mediating role of Organizational commitment (OC). Documented analysis of pay slips were conducted to analyzed the level of pay variation considering the gross pay of the employees at federal level in the same pay scale. Actual pay slips of 90 employees were analyzed for this purpose, where significant pay differences were noted by equally place (BPS) employees in same scale. Moreover, 22 participants participated through semi structure interview to provide information regarding such pay disparity. For achieving the second purpose of the study, a conceptual model was drawn connecting PS and OCB with OC as mediating variable. To test the conceptual model, structured questionnaires were used to collect the data from the employees of public sector organizations. Total 251 respondents of eight public sector organizations participated in the study. During analysis of the data, it was observed that PS positively effects OCBs. Moreover, the results also revealed that this relationship is mediated by OC. These findings point out that when there is pay disparity, there will displeasure among the employees. Further, PS significantly affects employees' OCBs, and OC. The study advocated that a consistent pay structure will improve employees' OCBs, and OC which ultimately improve organizational performance.*

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## 1. Introduction

Employees' rewards are always considered as a multi-faceted phenomenon in organizations. Rewards play a very vital role not only in attracting skillful human resource but it also has a significant impact on employees' retention decision. Gupta and Shaw (2014) argued that pay is an imperative subject for organization

as it has sufficient share in the available limited resources in organization. The reward and compensation management are relatively a demanding task as it influences employees' attitudes and behaviors. Effective rewards improve the quality of employees in organizations as well as the probability of job acceptance by the talented employees. It also inspires employees' performance and retention (Dineen & Williamson, 2012).

Pay satisfaction is considered as one of the most crucial issues of HRM in organizations. It referred the positive feeling regarding salary. (Williams,2006). Miceli and Mulvey (2000) suggested that PS is the pleasant emotion of workers towards their pay. Pay is one of the major parts of organizational rewards as it allows employees to get other rewards as well (Heneman III and Schwab (1985). Similarly, Rasmussen et al. (2016) conjured a link between job and pay satisfaction and found that a satisfied workers put extra efforts in the accomplishment of tasks.

An effective pay system considered to be a source of nurturing OCBs in employees which ultimately leads to improved employee's performance. OCBs referred to employees' discretionary behaviors in the welfare of their organization (Singh and Singh (2019). In an earlier study Farooq, Bilal, and Khalil (2020) argued that PS stimulate unique changes in the level OCBs among the employees. Christopher (2015) found a relationship of pay pleasure and OCBs and established that pay satisfaction positively influences employees' OCBs. Pay level satisfaction is particularly important in determining employees OCBs (Lee (2015). However, Nur Agustiningih (2016) argued that pay does not influence OCBs.

OC is another important work-related employee's behavior which is referred to an employee's strong sense of belonging with his or her organization (Hung, Lee, & Lee, 2018). Pay satisfaction also influences employees' OC as it is taken as one of the most important reward employees receive from their organization (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Both, pay satisfaction and OC are important in the field of HRM as they play a vital role in important work-related attitudes and behaviors like turnover intentions, employees' productivity and performance. A satisfied and committed employees is considered as an asset for any organization as he/she contribute in the overall success of an organization (Samad & Hassan, 2007).

The review of literature related with PS, OC and OCBs indicate that the analysis was examined in different organizational contexts, however, limited study has been conducted at federal level. Literature also suggests that OC may be considered as mediator. Therefore, the findings of the study will attract the policy makers in understanding the pay related issues of the public sector employees. Pakistanis are relatively inclined towards strong affiliations with their families and also consider institutions as a family. They also display similar behavior in organizations and develop a sense of strong affiliation with their employer if they have a sense of satisfaction with organizational policies. They will consider themselves as part of the family and will be committed to their organizations (Kwantes, Karam, Kuo, &

Towson, 2008). Farooq et al. (2020) conjured that staff get different sum of salary which has a different and unique impact on their behavior. Such type of variation in pay is referred as disparity in remuneration (Bloom & Michel, 2002).

Pay dispersion exists when employees working in the same scale and are paid differently. Pay disparity is inherently a collective concept, having some negative consequences at the workplace. Numerous researchers highlighted the issue of pay dispersion in different aspects, to grab the attention of policy makers as it has a direct impact on employee's attitudes and reaction (Bloom & Michel, 2002). In labor market, it is still not clear that how the distribution of pay mirrors the distribution of human capital, or the quality of labor within the market. This insight about pay variation generally has been ignored in labor market research (Langton nancy and pfeffer Jeffrey, 2023).

In Pakistan BPS is a common pay scale used to differentiate the pay of government servants. Mostly government departments follow the same BPS pay structure. Apparently, it is assumed that BPS pay structure offers same pay a cross all organizations, however, once can easily note very substantial disparities in the gross pay of different public sector organizations working under the same umbrella. Hence, it becomes crucial to further examine the extent to which pay disparity exist and what are the consequences of such disparity in the context of Pakistan. Although, most of authors have been examined salary differences in different context however, Baruch et al., (2004) suggested that national differences play a significant role in the investigation of pay and related employees' outcomes (Baruch, Wheeler, & Zhao, 2004). This is a unique study which has taken BPS and indented to explored pay differences in same pay structure. Considering the above-mentioned facts, the study in hand has the potential to further elaborate this phenomenon in the context of Pakistan.

## **Review of Literature**

### ***PS and OCB***

It is true that an efficient pay structure can inspire both OCB and non-OCB employees, which eventually improves the organization's performance. According to Porter et al. (1975), one of the most significant benefits that businesses can give their employees is pay. They revealed that the primary source of employee motivation is pay for the work they performed.

Organ and Konovsky (1989) observed that how participants feel about their career, especially in regard to money, and discovered that OCB differed significantly depending on the pay. Lawler III (2000) placed even greater focus on employees' pay. According to literature OCB influence firms' performance (Walz & Niehoff, 1996), and manager take OCB into consideration in appraising the staff, their promotion and even increase in their pay.

It has generally been found that a charming pay structure motivates the workforce and has influence on OCB. Organ (1997) defines OCB as an optional, non-compensatory, and comprehensive approach to the organisation. Later on in 1997, he amended the non-compensation of OCB as: If one engages in OCB, they can expect to receive less remuneration than when they are performing a work. As a result, numerous scholars have looked at how OCB and compensation gratification are related. In a study published in 1989, Organ and Konovsky made an effort to analyse and understand OCB in terms of job satisfaction. These empirical results revealed that improving OCB depends on the performance evaluation and pay satisfaction. The findings revealed that self-sacrifice and OCB and compliance behavior were significantly predicted by pay perception. (Allen & Rush, 1998; Werner, 1994)) endorsed that those individuals take positive performance evaluation who are effective in OCB.

According to studies, employees who are willing to obtain additional pay feel more satisfaction and express OCB in the workplace (Johnson et al., 2002). Some research looked at the relationship between high pay and job satisfaction, which in turn increase OCB performance. Christopher (2015) explored the connection of PS and OCB and concluded the association between job satisfaction and OCB. In contrary, Nur Agustini (2016) conjured that salary has no association with OCB. Pay rise is a crucial determinant of organizational participation, motivation, and job satisfaction. Consequently, it indirectly aids in accomplishing organizational goals (Lee, 1971). Williams et al. (2002) made the claim that compensation practices that are unjust or prejudiced result in worse OCB. Despite the fact that OCB is an unofficial and volunteer behaviour, a voluntary attitude can directly affect their formal role of an employee. With a theoretical justification, Deckop et al. (1999) hypothesized that PS affected OCB. Choi, Heo, and Kim (2015) discovered that pay is another important factor in boosting OCB activities. Christopher (2015) investigated the impact of pay satisfaction on OCB. Employee perceptions of pay satisfaction in small- and medium-sized hospitals with yearly salary systems were positively correlated with the OCB (Lee, 2015).

According to Kuehn and Al-Busaidi (2002), factors influencing OCB include salary satisfaction, gender, age, and marital status. According to research by Podsakoff et al. (2009), OCB improve organizational performance, which is connected to incentives like salary raises, job satisfaction, bonuses, promotions, and other perks associated to the workplace. Welbournel and Cable (1995) examined the positive relationship between OCB and satisfaction with pay. Pay happiness happens to be the starting point for JS, PE, and motivation, all of which are predictors to OCB. Theoretically, it has been clarified and accepted that pay satisfaction is a major factor influencing OCB.

Pay is a significant factor that effects OCB alone or in combination with other factors, it is found. The studies showed a connection between OCB and pay satisfaction. According to studies, one essential component of a monetary reward

is a person's sense of pay satisfaction (Choi et al., 2015). Researchers have noted a lack of studies looking at how culture affects the deployment of OCB (Kwantes et al., 2008). In contrast to the subcontinental region, particularly Pakistan, where culture, environment, values, norms, and work practises differ and need to be explored, major research in the domain of OCB have been undertaken in a context of western culture. In order to validate a conceptual model of the link between pay satisfaction and OCB in the cultural contexts of the sub-continent, the current study was undertaken to look into how pay satisfaction affects citizenship behavior. It also developed the following hypothesis for testing.

H1: Pay satisfaction has a positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviour.

### ***Pay satisfaction and organizational commitment***

For a variety of reasons, the connection between pay satisfaction and organizational commitment is crucial. So first of all, pay is the foundation of our economy, it is a key concern for both employees and employers. Organizations look at the pay paid and the initiatives used for workers' compensation. Second, it's thought that employee organizational commitment is a multifaceted phenomenon. Employee commitment is influenced by a variety of potential antecedents, including organizational survival, job security, and PS (Devece et al., 2016).

The key factor at the workplace is pay (Mowday et al., 1982). When Ward and Davis (1995) investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and pay satisfaction, they discovered a positive link between them. According to Dulebohn and Martocchio (1998), there is a high association between organizational commitment and predicted pay satisfaction, as well as perceptions like knowing the effectiveness of the pay plan. Miceli and Mulvey (2000) studied the pay structure and pay level satisfaction with OC. The findings showed that affective commitment was positively connected with pay level and scheme. The research findings of Meyer et al. (2002) also find positive relationship between PS and three aspects of OC.

Pay satisfaction, according to DeConinck and Stilwell (2004), is an indirect predictor of organizational commitment. Nawab and Bhatti (2011) discovered a favourable association between organizational commitment and pay satisfaction. According to research by Islam et al. (2012), job satisfaction and organizational commitment are both positively correlated with pay satisfaction. Pay has a substantial impact on establishing employees' commitment and devotion as a key incentive for staff, according to research by Whitley (2002). People received different pay for their task, which ultimately influences their commitment level.

Poor compensation has been linked to lower organisation earnings, according to research Ajila and Abiol, (2004). Low morale, lack of dedication, and low

productivity were all related with the pay gap between high- and low-income earners. Sattar and Jan (2015) looked into pay satisfaction, promotion, and the work environment in Pakistan's public sector and discovered that these are the key elements affecting the level of commitment. Employee commitment also influenced by their relationship with their coworkers, their salary, and their leadership. Pay satisfaction and job satisfaction are crucial factors in employee retention, performance, and productivity, thus they cannot be ignored. Employee commitment and satisfaction help the organization to develop and perform in better way (Samad & Hassan, 2007).

In their 2016 study of the Indian insurance industry, Raina and Roebuck discovered that if employees are satisfied with their overall working conditions—including pay, supervisor behaviour, career advancement, and commitment from their coworkers—they will be loyal to the company and have a strong sense of commitment. In numerous cultural contexts, the literature on pay satisfaction, organizational commitment, and OCB have been investigated; however, only a small number of these studies have specifically addressed the federal government of Pakistan. Since many departments are struggling with pay satisfaction, organizational commitment, and OCB, it was deemed necessary to investigate these issues in the Pakistani context. Pakistanis tend to have a close bond with their families and show this behaviour in work situations. They experience the angers of working for their employer. The following hypothesis is designed to test the assumption that if federal employees feel satisfied and see themselves as members of a family, they will be happy and committed to the company.

H2: Pay satisfaction has a positive impact on employee's organizational commitment.

### ***Organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour***

OCB and OC are related (Allen & Meyer, 1996., According to Cohen and Vigoda (2000) and Uluda et al. (2011) OCB contributes to affective commitment. Zeinabadi (2010) investigated the idea that OCB is significantly impacted by OC. Although Liu and Cohen (2010) conjured continuous commitment has effects on OCB, Garca-Cabrera and Garca-Soto (2011) also explored connection between OC and OCB. In their study of organizational commitment and OCB in the banking industry, Zayas-Ortiz et al. (2015) found a significant correlation between OC and OCB. He added that there was a significant correlation between the OCB components measuring civic virtue and affective commitment.

In the Japanese context, Wang (2015) discovered that continuance commitment is positively correlated with OCB. In a competitive job market, the normative and affective components have an equal impact. The study also discovered that in environments with high unemployment rises continuous commitment significantly (Devece and others, 2016).



OC and OCB have a positive relationship because committed employees are expected to engage in behaviors that add value to the organization. Salehi and Gholtash (2011) also looked into the favorable relationship between JS, OC, and OCB. Ahmed et al. (2012) also explored the correlation between OCB and job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. Noor et al. (2011) investigated how Pakistani public sector workers perceived their co-worker citizens' behavior. Their research revealed a significant link between commitment and OCB.

The organizational commitment of public sector employees' aids in the implementation of public policies. Committed public employees work hard to support colleagues in completing organizational tasks. They did so voluntarily and without any expectation of additional rewards, which led to a positive relationship with OCB (Kims, 2006). The researcher came to the conclusion that pay satisfaction significantly affects OC and OCB based on the prior research. Institutional pay satisfaction has a strong positive influence on employees' organizational commitment. It makes sense that employees with high salaries demonstrate a high level of organizational commitment, and are more likely to promote OCB. In light of this, it is hypothesized that pay satisfaction has a significant impact on OCB and that OC will mediate this relationship.

H3: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between pay satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour.

**Theoretical Framework**

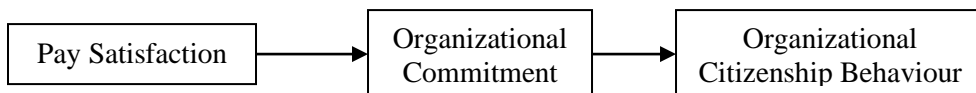


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

**Methodology**

The employees of FGP were the target population of the study. A sample is often considered as the most convenient and effective method to collect data from the population of interest; however, selection of sample needs a lot of care as it has to be the true representative of the target population. In current study, the focus was not only on determining the level of pay disparity that may exist among the same grade but it also evaluated the effect of pay satisfaction on the OCBs. Moreover, the mediating role of OC was also observed. The data to determine the pay disparity was collected by using cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling provided an excellent opportunity to compare the differences at the group level. Data was gathered from federal government institutions. Variation in salary was observed by anglicizing pay slip of 90 employees place in (B.P.S 16 & 17). 92% participants included male while 8% were female. Semi-structured interviews with

22 key personnel were conducted to find out rationale of such dispersion. data regarding variables were gathered through simple random sampling technique. Total 301 questionnaires were distributed among 251 were received back, having 83.3%. response rate.

**Research instruments and measurements**

As discussed earlier, different types of data collection techniques were used to fulfill the purpose of the study. In first instance, the pay slips of different employees were analyzed for identification of pay disparity. To identify the reasons of pay disparity, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 government officials working in the eight selected organizations of federal government. Moreover, the self-administered structured questionnaire was used to get employee’s insight on other variables of the study, like pay satisfaction, OC and OCBs. The 5-points Likert scale was used to record the responses. The level of pay satisfaction was measured (Heneman III & Schwab, 1985) through pay satisfaction questionnaire (PSQ).

OCB was measured through Williams and Anderson (1991) scale, consisted of 14-items. OC was measured through the 18-item scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1991).

**Data analysis tools**

Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied to analyze the collected data.

**Results**

Table 1 shows that percentage wise distribution of respondents. Table explain that 56% of the participants are in grade 16 and 44% are serving in BPS 17.

Table 1 Scale Wise Distribution of the Respondents (N = 256)

BPS	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 16	143	55.99	55.99	55.99
17	113	44.1	44.1	100
Total	256	100	100	

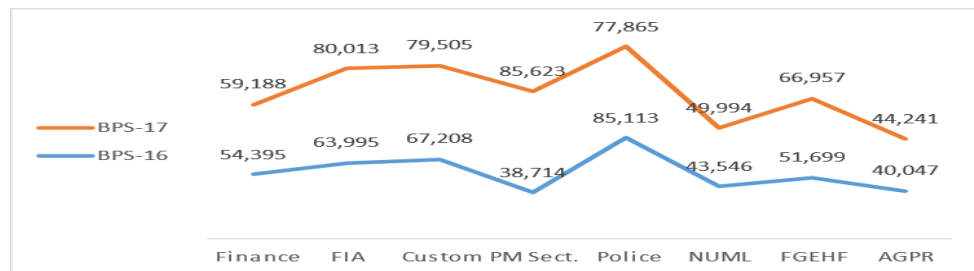


Figure 1 Graphical Depiction of Pay Variation in BPS (16 & 17)



In Figure 1, the distribution of pay of both BPS-16 & BPS-17 employees of the targeted organizations is explained. It is evident from the information that the salary of police department is significantly higher than the other departments. Similarly, the employees working in FBR also receive higher gross salary than the employees of the same grade in AGPR. Hence, it is evident from the data that pay disparity exists among the employees of federal government. To further inquire about the causes and consequences of such pay disparity, the researcher conducted the semi structured interviews and thematic analysis for obtaining in-depth information.

**4.2 Thematic Analysis**

Theme refers to description or an idea (Roulston, 2001). The current study is mainly focused on two themes: Pay assessment and justification of pay variation. To further inquire about these themes, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 key respondents. In thematic analysis, it was noted that only few employees compare their salary with the salary of other employees working in different departments. Hence, they are not aware of the pay differentiation that actually exists in the pay of employees working in the same pay scale in different departments. During interviews, the salary slips of the few other departments were shared with them, which was taken as a great surprise for them. The employees presented different justification for such a huge pay disparity like admissibility of different allowances in certain departments, discouraging illegal earnings, risk involved and the technical nature of the work. The inferential statistical techniques like correlation and regression were used to test the hypotheses of the study.

Table 2: *Correlation Analysis and Reliabilities of Scale*

		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1	PS	(0.71)*		
2	OC	0.67**	(0.73)*	
3	OCB	0.68**	0.65**	(0.72)*

\*Cronbach Alpha; \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In table 2, the values of correlation and Cronbach alpha are presented. It can be noted that all the variables of the study are significantly correlated with each other which provided a preliminary support for the proposed hypotheses. Similarly, the Cronbach Alpha values (> 0.7) also show that the items used in different measures of the variables are internally consistent, hence reliable.

Table 3. *Results of Regression Analysis*

	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>sig</b>
<b>PS → OC</b>	.78	23.32	.000
<b>OC → OCB</b>	.71	19.45	.000
<b>PS → OCB</b>	.73	21.33	.000

Table 3 above explain that PS has significance influences on OC as ( $\beta=0.78$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Similarly, OC is directly related to OCB ( $\beta=0.71$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and further, it was found that PS is positively correlated with OCB ( $\beta=0.73$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). All the values are in the range of significance, thus support the hypotheses.

Table 4 *Mediating Regression Analysis*

Path	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	95% CIc	
				Lower-level	Upper -level
PSO → CO → CB	0.64	0.26	0.38	0.27	0.50
a. PS → OCB	b. (PS → OC) × (OC → OCB)				

The direct effect of PS on OCB was noteworthy (.26,  $p < .01$ ) and not directed effect via OC was (.38,  $p < .01$ , 95% CI=0.27, 0.50) was also important. Total (direct and indirect) influence of PS and OC on OCB was found 0.64 because of direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of pay satisfaction on OCB, when OC increases by 1 standard deviation, OCB increases by 0.64 standard deviations. The result indicates OC mediates the relationship between PS and OCB.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Documented analysis was carried out to find actual pay variation of employees serving in BPS-16 & 17 and to find a rationale of such variation if exist. Real time pay concerned data was searched out, included collection of actual pay slips and remuneration policy. Data revealed substantial differences in gross pay of public servants. Previous studies like Treiman and Hartmann (2015) also explored 267% variation in pay for listed nurses, likewise Dunlop (2018) also described as wage differences of 100% between two classes of truck drivers. Campbell (2000) conjured that this is against the evident of equity theory which postulates equal pay for equal work and determine whether the distribution of resources is of justifiable to both partners.

Salary differences is an important issue face by many institutions in Pakistan. Currently universities faculty have raised their voice against the two different pay system of TTS and BPS as there is huge variation in pay. Studying previous different court record pertaining to pay variation it is obvious that individual as well as organizations have filed petitions opposing each other pay structure.

The study further elaborated a positive linkage of PS with OCB and OC among employees at federal level. Deckop et al., (1999) also investigated the same association of PS with OCB. Researchers have conjured similar relationship of pay satisfaction with OC. The study also explored that OC mediates the association of PS and OCB. This exploration might be first of its kind where BPS system has been examined for such meditation and meaningfully contributes to the prevailing works on PS, OC and OCB relationship.

### **Limitation and Future Research Directions**

This study has some limitations. The absence of documented rationale behind salary variation among pay structure of various organizations. No notification regarding pay variation was provided. Another limitation is that the result explains the connection of two variables i.e., PS and OCB and has confirmed the mediation linkages of OC, however, further research might investigate proactive personality, organizational pride and cyber loafing as mediator.

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