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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Assessing the Moderating Role of Resilience and Gender in HR Practices and Affective Commitment**

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**ABSTRACT**

Employee turnover is a major problem for employers throughout the world. Organizations are seeking ways to increase employees' loyalty to the job and keep their current workforce. Present study has been conducted to investigate the moderating role of Resilience and gender in the relationship between HR practices and Affective commitment (AC). In this quantitative study data were collected using purposive convenient sampling strategy, information was gathered from 300 participants with (age range 20 to 60 years) from two telecommunication sectors in Rawalpindi, Islamabad. Information on study variables was collected using Brief Resilience Scale, Scale of affective commitment and HR practices scale for measuring Autonomy (AT), Feedback (FB), and Opportunities for Training and Development (OTD). Hypotheses testing was conducted using PROCESS MACRO. Significant and positive impact of HR practices was found on Affective commitment. Similarly, positive impact of resilience was found on affective commitment. Moderated impact of resilience was found in the AT and AC relationship. Future studies may use mixed method to test same model. Moreover, moderating role of workplace harassment in the HR-AC relationship may be tested in future studies.

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**KEYWORDS** Affective Commitment, HR Practices, Resilience

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**Introduction**

Businesses expect worker turnover to increase (Kholiq & Miftahuddin, 2019; Mahmud & Wong, 2022). Managers don't have enough time to search for new employees in a competitive market (Kaur & Sandhu, 2017; Nadeem & Malik, 2021; Koçak & Kerse, 2022; Xuecheng et al., 2022). If retention isn't reevaluated, managers won't be able to inspire staff to perform top-notch work or execute change in the future. Businesses are at risk from high turnover because it reduces productivity and effectiveness. In some cases, it might represent a serious danger to the ability of the organization to continue its activities (Park et al., 2019). Human resources must first be able to retain employee happiness by improving quality and services before they can provide value to the company. Giving employee's feedback and maintaining open channels of communication can help one increase employee satisfaction. Finally, they need to provide their feedback about the company as a whole (Alagaraja & Dooley 2003).

High staff turnover also undermines Affective Commitment (AC), which has a negative impact on how people see their organizations. This typically happens because few people are aware of their responsibilities and because managers are frequently seen as being unsupportive. In order to inform employees of how their work has been evaluated by management, what innovative or even incorrect work they have completed, and what they may expect in the future, managers provide feedback by analyzing the performance of their subordinates (Greller, 1998). Feedback is seen as a crucial component of performance management since it may tell managers about whether or not employees are performing their jobs in a right and ethical manner (Badura, 1977; Johnson et al., 2022). When an employee recognizes they haven't achieved their objective to the planned level, they're inspired to work more, per the goal-setting concept. According to Ilies and Judges (2005), goal-setting performance will be positively correlated with feedback since it allows employees to evaluate their current performance.

### **Literature Review**

According to a meta-analysis by Morrisette and Kisamore (2020), employees who encounter role ambiguity continue to have low levels of overall commitment. Additionally, job autonomy enhances one's cognitive and creative capacities while organizing one's workload for better results. The Job Demand and Resources (JDR) model sees autonomy as a resource. The "psycho-social workplace" is the theory that interactions at work have an influence on a company's culture (Rugulies, 2018). The psychological workplace resources lessen the strain brought on by the demands of the job and boost output; and improve personal learning, growth, and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Employees should be better able to handle high work demands and other significant workplace pressures when job autonomy levels rise. Work autonomy has a significant influence on employee engagement and retention, which is great for organizational success, according to Ahmed and Nawaz's (2015) study.

It's intriguing to observe that highly skilled individuals who cooperate and share information can increase production on a general level. Training is the process of imparting through teaching practical and useful information, skills, and abilities in order to successfully manage a challenging situation.

Githinji (2014) assessed how training affected the performance of foreign public servants in Somalia. The findings of his study showed that employee performance and loyalty are frequently enhanced by training. Hanif (2013) in his study found that on job training increased employees' skills and drive. Most companies communicate with one another on a daily basis using technology like computers, the Internet, and e-mail (Yamin, 2019). As a result, persons with little or no computer knowledge need to be provided instruction.

According to Mensah, hiring and selection, employee engagement, a fair system for performance appraisal, employee empowerment, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and performance review are all essential components of effective HR management in an organization (2014). If a person doesn't feel connected at work, they are more inclined to leave and look for these relationships elsewhere, despite all the benefits and incentives (Khan et al., 2017). The Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been shown to greatly increase workplace productivity. If employees believe that the company cares about their personal well-being, they become able to develop meaningful relationships at the workplace and are likely to be productive and dedicated.

As a result, a person's sense of belonging to a firm affects their ability to retain employees. According to Meyer and Allen, "affective commitment" refers to a worker's "close connection to, involvement with, and affiliation with the company" (1997, p.11). People who are emotionally committed stick with a firm (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The commitment is described as "an attitude or disposition toward an organization that binds or connects the person's identity to the organization" by Sheldon (1971). (p.143).

Organizational commitment model by Meyer and Allen (1997) views affective commitment as being influenced by elements like job complexity, role clarity and role difficulty, equity, personal importance, peer unity, feedback, participation, and reliability. Workers put out their best effort despite HR regulations that don't directly affect them, less autonomy, a lack of feedback on how to improve performance, and management's lack of interest in employee development, which is a significant contributor to workplace stress (Tepper et al., 2007). Moreover, organizational issues that pose a risk to this resource's viability must be resolved. According to the conservation of resources theory (CoR), situations in which significant resources are in danger of being lost or are already gone cause stress and provide a framework for understanding how people respond to stress. Employees put up their best efforts in the face of HR practices that have minimal effects on workers, less autonomy, less input about how their work is going, and less administration focus on employee training and development, which is a significant source of stress at work (Tepper et al., 2007).

The solution of organizational issues is also necessary for the sustainability of this resource. According to the CoR theory circumstances in which significant resources are either in danger of vanishing or have already disappeared cause stress and provide a framework for understanding how individuals respond to stress. Despite HR practices that have minimal effects on workers, less autonomy, less feedback on job performance, and less administration focus on employee training and development, which is a major cause of workplace stress, employees make every attempt (Tepper et al., 2007). The resiliency of this resource also depends on addressing organizational problems. According to CoR circumstances in which important resources are threatened with vanishing or have already vanished lead to stress and offer a framework for comprehending how individuals react to stress. Employees make every effort despite HR practices that significantly increase workplace stress because they give workers little perks, less autonomy, less feedback on their work performance, and less administrative focus on employee development (Tepper et al., 2007). Addressing organizational issues is also necessary for this resource to be resilient. Women are seen being more likely than men to get support at workplace. Research (Angel & Perry 1981) has found that women are more devoted to their groups than males. They provided two explanations for this outcome. Women are more likely to stay in one place due to their historically lower inter organizational mobility than males and lower degree of economic involvement.

In this situation, it is crucial to pinpoint the fundamental causes that companies are now disregarding in order to avoid losing excellent personnel. To fully comprehend the dynamic behavior of human resource management, it was highlighted to conduct study in this area (Slater et al., 2014). Although there are several elements that affect employee engagement, money is not the primary one. Flexible work arrangements, incentives, opportunities for professional development and growth are the few factors that promote employee retention. There is an urgent need to talk about how diverse human resource management strategies affect workers in developing nations and the possible advantages of coping mechanisms for increasing employee loyalty to a corporation. Employee retention will increase and staff turnover will be reduced as a result of acknowledging it. According to Budhwar and Debrah (2004), it is becoming a

more crucial requirement for businesses to comprehend how workers from across the world assess various human resource strategies in diverse circumstances (Bibi et al., 2018). Academics and practitioners concur that the development of this notion is significantly influenced by human resource management (Ng, 2022).

Present study has been designed to fill a knowledge gap regarding HRM practices, AC and RES relationship in the context of the telecommunications industry in Islamabad. Current study has investigated the moderating role of resilience in the HR practices (autonomy, feedback, and opportunities for training and development) and affective commitment relationship among employees of telecom sector.

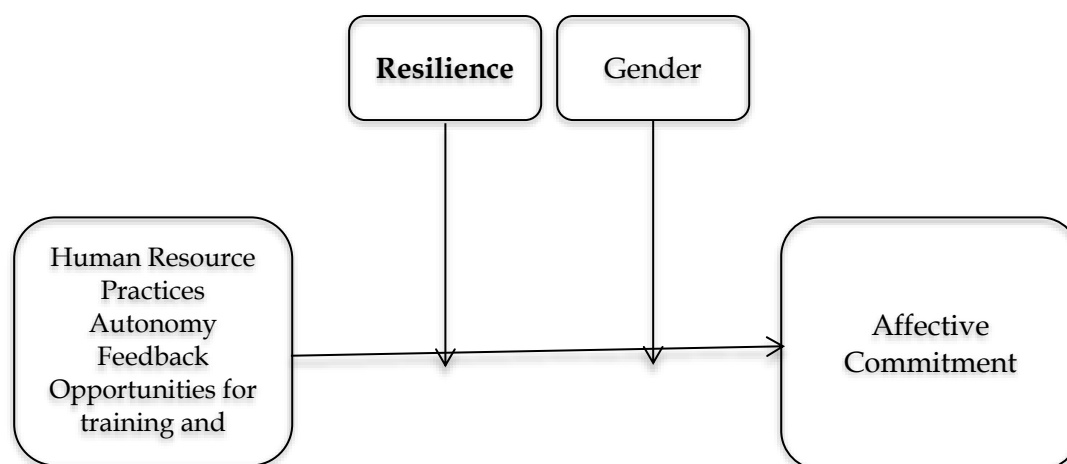


Figure 1: Framework of present study

**Following hypotheses have been formulated**

### Hypotheses

1. Autonomy significantly predicts Affective Commitment
2. Feedback significantly predicts Affective Commitment
3. Opportunities for training and development significantly predicts affective commitment.
4. Resilience moderates the relationship between Feedback and AC relationship
5. Resilience moderates the relationship between Autonomy and AC relationship
6. Resilience moderates the relationship between opportunities for training and development and AC relationship
7. Gender moderates the relationship between Feedback and AC relationship
8. Gender moderates the relationship between Autonomy and AC relationship
9. Gender moderates the relationship between opportunities for training and development and AC relationship

## **Material and Methods**

### **Participants and Procedure**

The current study was carried out at Telenor and Nayatel, two businesses in the telecommunications sector with offices in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Data from employees were collected in their workplace. Participants received a thorough explanation of the study's purpose and time commitment from the briefing., employees were given the assurance that the information they submitted would be kept private and utilized exclusively for research reasons. They were also given the guarantee that they might leave the study whenever they wanted, without having to give a reason.

In the current study, purposive convenient sampling technique was used to contact the workers from the two distinct firms namely Telenor and Nayatel . Three hundred employees of age range 20 to 60 years old (150 women and 150 men) were approached with the HR managers' approval. They were informed about the objectives of the study, they were informed that the responses provided by them will remain confidential and will be used for research purposes only. They were informed that they could withdraw from this research activity any time. After obtaining the written informed consent, questionnaires about study variables and socio demographic questionnaires were given to the participants, they were asked to provide honest responses.

### **Measures**

#### **Autonomy**

A 3-item self-report questionnaire (Bakker, 2014) was used to measure autonomy. Increased autonomy scores correlate with higher autonomy in the workplace, and vice versa. In one of previous research (Bakker et al., 2005), Cronbach's alpha of this scale in present study was .76.

#### **Feedback**

A 3-item self-report questionnaire developed by Bakker (2014) was used to evaluate feedback. Higher feedback scores correlate with higher feedback responses in the workplace, and vice versa. Cronbach's coefficient of the scale in the previous study was 0.86 (Bakker et al., 2005), however in the current study, it was.88.

#### **Opportunities for training and development**

A 3-items self-report measure by Bakker (2014) was used to evaluate opportunities for training and development. A higher rating for training and development indicates that the employee will have more possibilities from the company, and the opposite is also true. In the current study, Cronbach's coefficient was .93, whereas in previous study it was .92 (Bakker et al., 2005).

For all HR practices (autonomy, opportunities for training and development and Feedback following response format was followed (1=never, 2 =seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = frequently, and 5 =always)

#### **Resilience**

A self-report six-items resilience scale (Smith et al. 2008) was used to assess resilience. Using a Likert scale (1=strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree). Higher

scores on the resilience among the research participants are indicative of more resilience, and vice versa. In the present study Cronbach alpha was .69.

### Affective Commitment

Eight-item affective commitment scale Meyer, & Allen, (1991). was used to assess AC on a 7-point rating scale, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 7 indicates strongly agree. Greater affective commitment to the organization among research participants was indicated by higher scores on the affective commitment measure, and vice versa. Cronbach alpha of this scale in the present study was .73.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Descriptive statistics and Alpha Reliabilities Coefficients**

Measures	M	SD	Alpha Coefficients	Skewness
AC	3.17	.51	.80	.39
AT	3.46	.67	.76	.37
OTD	2.91	.96	.93	.24
FB	3.07	.95	.88	-.24
RES	2.99	.38	.69	.34

*Note.* AC = Affective Commitment, AT= Autonomy, OTD= Opportunities for Training and Development, FB = Feedback, RES= Resilience

Descriptive statistics and Alpha coefficients of study variables are shown in Table 1. Alpha reliabilities coefficients range is between .69 to .93.

**Table 2**  
**Pearson correlation among study variables**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. AC	1	.28**	.30**	.04	.01
2. AT		1	.68**	.01	.01
3. OTD			1	.05	.09
4. FB				1	.08
5. RES					1

*Note:* AC = Affective Commitment, AT= Autonomy, OTD= Opportunities for Training and Development, FB = Feedback, RES= Resilience

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

The correlation coefficients between the research variables are shown in table 2. The relationship between the predictors, moderator and outcome variables have been displayed in the above table. AT and OTD are positively significantly related to each other. Moreover, AT is significantly positively related to Affective commitment. similarly, OTD was also found significantly positively correlated with AC. However, predictor variables as well as outcome variable was not correlated with the moderator variable.

**Table 3**  
**Moderating Effect of Resilience on Autonomy and Affective commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1				
Antecedent		Coeff.	SE	p
Constant		19.00	1.15	.00

X (AT)	.63	.12	.00
W (RES)	2.71	1.15	.02
X*W (AT * RES)	.32	.12	.01
R <sup>2</sup> = .02			
F = 6.16, p<.001			

Note: AT=Autonomy, RES=Resilience

In Andrew Hayes' (2013) model 1, moderated regression was conducted utilizing PROCESS MACRO. A significant interaction effect emphasizes moderation. The interaction was statistically significant in this case ( $b = .32$ , 95% CI [.56, .06],  $t = 2.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that resilience moderates the relationship between AT and AC.

**Table 4**  
**Moderating Effect of Gender on Autonomy and Affective commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1			
Antecedent	Coeff.	SE	p
Constant	20.78	3.58	.00
X (AT)	.38	.38	.30
W (G)	1.19	2.36	.61
X*W (AT *G)	.15	.24	.52
R <sup>2</sup> = .001			
F = .41, p>.001			

Note: AT=Autonomy, G=Gender

The table above shows the gender-specific regression coefficients for autonomy and AC. The interaction term was not significant ( $b = .15$ , 95% CI [-.33, .64],  $t = .63$ ,  $p > .001$ ), the relationship between autonomy and AC is unaffected by gender.

**Table 5**  
**Buffering Effect of Resilience on Opportunities for training and development and Affective Commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1			
Antecedent	Coeff.	SE	p
Constant	19.34	1.00	.00
X (OTD)	.63	.11	.00
W (RES)	.83	.97	.39
X*W (OTD * RES)	.12	.11	.26
R <sup>2</sup> = .00			
F = 1.24, p>.001			

Note: OTD= Opportunities for Training and Development, RES= Resilience

The interaction is not significant in this case ( $b = .12$ , 95% CI [-.34, .09],  $t = 1.11$ ,  $p > .001$ ), indicating that resilience does not play buffering role in the relationship between OTD and AC.

**Table 6**  
**Buffering Effect of Gender on Opportunities for training and development and Affective Commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1			
Antecedent	Coeff.	SE	p
Constant	15.92	3.14	.00

X (OTD)	.96	.35	.00
W (G)	2.37	1.99	.23
X*W (OTD * G)	.23	.22	.29
R <sup>2</sup> = .003			
F = 1.09, p>.001			

Note: OTD= Opportunities for Training and Development, G= Gender

The relationship between opportunities for training and development and affective commitment is not moderated by gender ( $b = .23$ , 95% CI [-.66,.20],  $t = 1.04$ ,  $p >.001$ ).

**Table 7**  
**Moderating Effect of Resilience on Feedback and Affective Commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1				
Antecedent	Coeff.	SE	p	
Constant	23.94	1.12	.00	
X (FB)	.08	.11	.47	
W (RES)	.55	1.06	.59	
X*W (FB * RES)	.06	.11	.54	
R <sup>2</sup> = .001				
F =.37, p>.001				

Note: FB= Feedback, RES= Resilience

The interaction term is not significant in this case ( $b = .06$ , 95% CI [-.28, .15],  $t =.60$ ,  $p >.001$ ), indicating that resilience does not function as a moderator in the relationship between feedback and AC.

**Table 8**  
**Moderating Effect of gender on Feedback and Affective Commitment (N= 300)**

Model 1				
Antecedent	Coeff.	SE	p	
Constant	25.39	3.57	.00	
X (FB)	.14	.37	.70	
W (G)	.95	2.23	.66	
X*W (FB * G)	.15	.23	.51	
R <sup>2</sup> = .001				
F =.41, p>.001				

Note: FB= Feedback, G= Gender

The interaction term is not significant ( $b =.15$ , 95% CI [-.31, .61],  $t =.64$ ,  $p>.001$ ), suggesting that gender does not play a moderating role in the relationship between feedback and AC.

Present study has been conducted to investigate the moderating role of resilience and gender in the relationship between HR practices (Feedback, autonomy and opportunities for training and development). Moderating role of resilience was found in Autonomy and AC relationship. Our findings about moderating role of resilience for AT-AC relationship is consistent with previous studies that shows employees who have a sense of autonomy at work have Affective commitment. Autonomy has been viewed as a resource by the Job Demand and Resources (JDR) model (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2007). Autonomy impacts firm commitment in terms of perceived job stress and work-family



conflict. Workplace resilience is connected to job happiness, organizational devotion, and higher levels of self-efficacy. In present study the main effects of REC were not found on AC, however, interaction effects of REC with AT were significant in the HR-AC relationship. Resilience was found moderating the relationship between Autonomy and affective commitment relationship.

Feedback has been shown to influence a variety of behavior, including job performance, organizational commitment and organizational success. Data of the present study revealed that feedback had only a moderately beneficial effect on employment outcomes, and it has a negative impact in more than 38% of the cases. The negligible association seen in this study might be attributed to how the employees were provided feedback. Feedback given after a task is finished and in response to client concerns minimizes the likelihood of an employee doing additional work. Only in a few cases employee performance evaluation is completely based on customer input. Employees refrain from providing critical feedback. Finally, feeling targeted by a boss impact a worker's attachment to a firm, raising the chance of employee turnover. The outcomes of this study support the assumption that chances for training and growth have impact on affective commitment. This study also discovered that employees' perceptions of the availability of training opportunities had a significant influence on their levels of affective commitment to the organization, which is important information for assessing the relationship between HR practices and levels of commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) view affective commitment being influenced by elements like job complexity, role clarity and role difficulty and the like. Results of this study indicate that gender does not moderate the relationship between HR practices and AC. This finding may be due to the gender equality in modern culture. According to data acquired from commercial telecom businesses, these associations promote equal treatment for both gender.

## **Conclusion**

Resilience was found moderating the relationship between AT and AC relationship. However, moderating role of resilience was not found for other two HR practices. Similarly, gender could not significantly moderate the relationship between the human resource practices (autonomy, opportunities for training and development, feedback) and AC relationship. The study looked at how gender and resilience influenced the relationship between Human Resource practices and affective commitment. The study's outcomes revealed a substantial link between autonomy and affective commitment.

## **Recommendations**

Future studies may use mixed method for studying moderating role of workplace harassment and work incivility in the relationship between HR practices and AC. It is suggested to test this model on sample from health care sector.

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