



Mediation of The Superior-Subordinate Communication In Determining Work Engagement Among Bureaucrats

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate how the superior-subordinate communication mediates policy formulation and employees' dedication in work engagement among the serving bureaucracy in Punjab (province of Pakistan) government. The study used a cross-sectional design vis-à-vis survey method to collect data from a representative sample (n=250) of serving bureaucrats of the Punjab government. The findings showed that there was a positive association between policy formulation (PF) and dedication towards work engagement (WE). Furthermore, the findings revealed that the relationship between policy formulation (PF) and dedication towards work engagement (WE) was partially mediated by superior-subordinate communication (SSC). The study addressed the research gap regarding the association of the policy formulation (PF) and dedication towards work engagement (WE) by examining the mediation of superior-subordinate communication (SSC) in their association by progressing the LMX theory in a less researched context of Pakistan. The results explained how more sophisticated work engagement could be achieved in the implementation of the policies by improving the communication channels between superiors and subordinates among the different ranks of the bureaucrats.

Keyword: *Superior-subordinate communication (SSC), Policy formulation (PF), Work engagement (WE), Leader-member exchange theory LMX, Bureaucracy, Government of Pakistan.*

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Introduction

Effective superior-subordinate communication is key to the success of an organization. The public policy formulation is a critical element in the pre-decision stage of the policymaking comprising to fix the goals and externalities of each possibility (Kisby, 2011). For instance, it includes classifying a set of strategic alternatives and public policy instruments to resolve a problem (Winska, 2010). Besides, the rules should not be very rigid to make the organization automatic machinery (Hodson, Martin, Lopez, and Roscigno, 2012). The research shows the significance of open communication within the organization to ensure the consultation process in the formulation of the policy (Sethi and Seth, 2009). For example, having the consultation and brainstorming among the policymakers and the implementers can result in more workable policies. In this regard, supporting evidence is available in the literature for the rational decision-making models based on the proper feedback of the implementers (van den Hove, 2007). As a result, a set of objectives is prepared for the ultimate resolutions from which policymakers select by judging the practical viability and political recognition (Evans and Wellstead, 2013).

In addition to the inspiration and contribution, the involvement of civil society, employees working in the field, communal groups, and NGOs are instrumental in devising the policy strategy. However, the notion of the policy formulation remains unaddressed without considering the participation of the stakeholders to clarify the roles and feedback from them, which may affect their work engagement towards the implementation of the policy (Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter, 2011). Therefore,

considering the role of superior-subordinate communication may give a more detailed insight into the underlying managerial communication issue.

The policymakers give the course in terms of the policy and the administrative performances relying on their work engagement with dedication (Jenaro, Flores, Orgaz, and Cruz, 2011). Previous studies suggested the availability of the communication channels within the organization to get feedbacks and consultation of the implementers to have a positive impact on the managerial outcomes. (for example, see, Ahmed, Shields, White, and Wilbert, 2010; Dasgupta, Suar, and Singh, 2012). In the administrative context, superior-subordinate communication has been mostly mentioned as the key element among the stakeholders of any organization. Put it differently, the superior-subordinate communication, by providing the openness and feedback mechanism within the hierarchy of the organization remains significant in attaining the goals like job satisfaction (Limbu, Jayachandran, and Babin, 2014). Moreover, upwards communication remains a very crucial dimension of the superior-subordinate communication in terms of the implementation of the initiatives taken by the top management. Therefore, policy implementation related outcomes in public sector organizations may be facilitated when there is an upward and downward effective communication within the organization (Cooren, Kuhn, Cornelissen, and Clark, 2011). However, little research is conducted to explain how superior-subordinate communication mediates policy formulation and work implementer engagement in the context of the Pakistan public sector organizations. This is

the theoretical and contextual contribution of this study in line with the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX theory).

Many studies have explicitly considered superior-subordinate communication as an important factor that affects numerous organizational performance-related results (Yrle, Hartman, and Galle, 2002). For instance, some studies in this area demonstrate that the superior-subordinate communication has an encouraging influence on job approval and in accomplishing the goals set by the organization, performance assessments and analysis, and impact on relations among the management and employees (Steele and Plenty, 2015). This study, therefore, assumes that superior-subordinate communication is a mediating variable that may increase or decrease the performance in terms of the work engagement in implementing the policy. It also addresses the gap in the strategic communication literature, that is to say, how the improved superior-subordinate communication may advance the work engagement which may improve the policy formulation process in a government organization. In addition, according to the authors' knowledge, no study in the past utilized the primary data gathered from the in-service bureaucrats of Pakistan. Thus, this study, by utilizing the primary data provides insight into the largely undocumented government sector organizations of Pakistan.

Literature Review and Theoretical framework

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

The leader-member exchange theory (LMX) deals with the diverse mutual relations of the leader and the employees of their teams within the organizational setting (Kuvaas, Buch, Dysvik,

and Haerem, 2012). With such diversity, LMX provides an opportunity to understand and examine the manager and team's relations by considering complex phenomena involved to influence the superior-subordinate relations (Walumbwa et al., 2011). The antecedents, recommended in the LMX theory, include the leaders' attributes, followers' attributes, and interactive relations. Furthermore, all these mentioned antecedents have a range of outcomes such as intention, performance, satisfaction and attitudinal outcomes (Vidyarthi, Liden, Anand, Erdogan, and Ghosh, 2010). Therefore, LMX provides a well-established criterion to evaluate certain outcomes as many recent studies have adapted to measure organizational activities-related outcomes. However, previous studies such as (Walumbwa et al., 2011) also recommended examining other possible antecedents in the LMX theory to better understand the role of superior-subordinate communication in the organizational hierarchies.

In this regard, policy formulation is one of the possible variables which may directly be related to the employees' performance, furthermore, which is directly related to the motivation of the employee's work engagement (Flores, Orgaz, and Cruz, 2011). Thus, it remains unclear in the public organization settings that how it may facilitate the several functioning of the organization such as employees' work engagement. We consider the work engagement as the possible positive outcome in case of the positive superior-subordinate communication between the high hierarchies of the Pakistani government organization. In this way, this study extends the LMX

model by adding the new possible antecedent of the policy formulation which remains detached from the LMX model.

By doing so, the study proposes a mediation model whereby superior-subordinate communication mediates policy formulation and employees' work engagement. Previous studies recommended identifying the possible antecedents of the Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) to fully understand the factors that affect the employees' performance. This study fills this research gap and extends the LMX model by examining the direct and indirect effect of the novel antecedent of the policy formulation on employees' work engagement. In addition, no previous study considered the mediating role of superior-subordinate communication in policy formation and employees' work engagement in the context of public-sector organizations. Lastly, in this vein, the proposed study is unique in the sense that it utilizes primary data collected from the in-service bureaucrats of Pakistan.

Superior-Subordinate Communication

Superior-subordinate communication defines the procedures and communications that the superiors use with subordinates to accomplish assignment aims and uphold their associations (Miles, Patrick, and King, 1996). In an administrative background, SSC has been largely referred to as an interchange of facts and effects among the associates of an organization where some of those associates have official power to give the direction and to assess the other associates' administrative performances. Some scholars such as Kassing (2009) outlined that the superior-subordinate communication as the ascending and descending

communication with superiors, comprising the openness in communication, pays attention to the feedback and problems resulting in better planning in the policy formulation as well.

Apart from this, many scholars recently hypothesize that increasing elementary mechanisms of superior-subordinate communication (sender, receiver, network, and meaning) postulating the course of the flow of the information in the provision of the superior-subordinate relationship (Brunetto, Farr-Wharton, and Shacklock, 2011; Lamude, Scudder, Simmons, and Torres, 2004). They recommend that the interaction among the superior and subordinate comprises several sorts of information: work direction, work justification, processes and implementations, feedback, and instructions regarding objectives. While, communication from subordinates to their superiors mainly comprises of their personal performance and the difficulties they faced in performing the given assignments including their subordinates' problems, rules and policies of the organization, and their expectations about the future. Therefore, superior-subordinate communication encompasses the strategic level and the implementation level.

Based on the idea of superior-subordinate communication, several researchers such as (Mawhinney (2006) conducted numerous empirical studies to develop the several kinds of the communication means that occur in the superior-subordinate relations, specifically: (1) direction, (2) information, (3) justification, (4) response, (5) optimistic expression, (6) undesirable expression, and (7) contribution. Some studies later examined the existing approaches towards the superior-

subordinate communication and they suggested that the aforementioned kinds of communication have a noteworthy influence on the organizational efficacy and performances (Mcworthy and Henningsen, 2014; Miles et al. (1996). In studying the expansion of superior-subordinate communication, Mcworthy and Henningsen (2014) argued that it is a multifaceted process as it includes numerous kinds of communication. Similarly, existing approaches and temp to clarify the modes of superior-subordinate communication. He suggested the four comprehensive domains of the superior-subordinate communication performances that can mirror employed in the social communication within superior-subordinate relations, specifically: (1) positive association communication, (2) ascending or the upward openness communication, (3) negative association communication, and (4) work-related communication (Miles et al., 1996).

Hence, positive association communication emphasizes upon the superiors looking for suggestions from their subordinates, being concerned as persons, casually connecting to them, and allow them to give input on vital decisions (Steele and Plenty, 2015). Thus, ascending or openness in upward communication is characterized by an opportunity to probe a superior's direction and to differ with the superior. In contrast, negative association communication refers to the superiors ridiculing assistants, irrationally disapproving them in the presence of others (Schnake, Dumler, Cochran, and Barnett, 1990). In this regard, the work-related communication includes a superior's response to the actions of the subordinates; information

comprises a superior's feedback on performance, information about guidelines and rules, directions, work projects and agendas, and objectives. Therefore, it can help to promote the dedication towards the implementation of the policies and directions set by the superiors. Hence, in the light of this literature, we hypothesize:

H1: There is a positive relationship between policy formulation and superior-subordinate communication.

H2: There is a positive relationship between superior-subordinate communication and employees' work engagement.

Mediation of SSC in the relationship of the Policy Formation and Work Engagement

In previous studies, the policy formulation highlights the consequences of communication tools and outlines its primary expectation about problems, the participation of the stakeholders, and its influence on the stakeholder's behavior (May, Sapotichne, and Workman, 2006). Therefore, it is critical to characterize the better tools of communication as these tools improve the participation of the stakeholders. However, very little empirical research has been conducted to examine its dynamics in the connection of the policy formulation and its outcomes (Sheer and Chen, 2004). For instance, developing the policy of the role of stakeholders must be identified and possible deliberation may improve the outcomes by taking them on board. Besides, SSC requires distinctive channels within the organization, that can guarantee the interaction between the management and all the stakeholders, thus, the SSC eventually affects the nature of

outcomes of the implemented policy (Bisel, Messersmith, and Kelley, 2012).

Whereas, work engagement is an optimistic, gratifying, job-related state of mind that is categorized by strength, dedication, and interest (Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter, 2011). Moreover, the constructive attitude and motivational level, among engaged workforces generate their constructive response, with regards to the obligation, acknowledgment, and achievement (Costa, Passos, and Bakker, 2014). Hence, work engagement is directly related to the executors and implementers of any policy in the organization. The work engagement construct ranges from the dedication towards the tasks to absorption (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003). The policymakers always formulate policies so that these policies can be implemented in their true spirit. However, policy implementation depends on the motivation and the understanding of the executors. Therefore, it is important to examine the work engagement formulation in the context of the SSC as the outcome of the policy.

Besides, the organization pursues its tasks framed in the policy directed to the accomplishment of these tasks, however, the addition of a deliberation element with the stakeholders can correspond to improve (SSC) channels widely. It is observed that the earlier studies on policy formulation lack investigation to elaborate on the role of the SSC (Han, Peng, and Zhu, 2012). Nevertheless, this idea can be persuasively practical for the analysis of the policy formulation. Hence, we argue in the favor of the SSC model to ensure the active participation and improved analysis of the implemented policies at a time. This consideration

of the larger associations involved in the policy formulation alongside the grassroots level organs of the institutions in the communication process will certainly provide the new dynamics of the policy formulation that remains unclear in the previous literature. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H3: There is a direct relationship between policy formulation and employees' work engagement.

H4: Superior-subordinate communication positively mediates the relationship between policy formulation and employees' work engagement.

Methodology

Participants and Design

We used a cross-sectional design vis-à-vis survey method to collect data from the 250 managerial employees (bureaucrats) from several administrative departments belonging to the Punjab government's bureaucracy. The sample was comprised of the field officers, secretariat group, autonomous bodies, and the district management group. The respondents were requested to provide their responses to a 42- item questionnaire. The rationale for collecting data from the said participants is to investigate the role of superior-subordinate communication concerning to policy formulation and their level of work engagement. The sample size (n=250) is derived from the aforementioned population by considering the sample size formula recommended by Bartlett, Kotrlik, and Higgins, (2001).

Measures

Policy formulation. Policy formulation was measured with a 14- item scale adapted from the work of Wellstead et al., (2011), a 5-point scale ranging from (1 least to 5 most likely). These

items could capture the varied nature of the policy formulation which was used to evaluate the policy formulation in the context of superior-subordinate communication.

Work engagement. Work engagement was measured with a 4- item scale adapted from the work of (Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova, 2006), a 5-point scale asked to respond (1 Never, 2 Rarely, 3 Sometimes, 4 Often and 5 Always). These items could determine the implementer's work engagement with dedication in the implementation of the policies in the context of superior-subordinate communication.

Superior-Subordinate Communication.

The Superior-Subordinate Communication was measured with a 24- item scale taken from the study of the Miles et al., (1996), a 5-point scale asked to respond (1 Never, 2 Rarely, 3 Sometimes, 4 Often and 5 Always). This scale was apprehending in nature and covered the several dimensions of the (SSC), ranging from work-related performances, downward communication, positive communication, and upward communication.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis and Demographics

Initially, a descriptive analysis of the total sample (n=250) was conducted. At this stage, data screening and normality were tested (Skewness and kurtosis) along with the distribution was visually supported by observing the histogram of each variable. The close look at the histogram showed that there was no outlier in the sample. The Policy formulation has M=2.8663 SD=.82521, (WE) M= 3.4356, SD=.56640 and (SSC) M=3.1717 and SD=.66069 respectively, the said range of SD is below 1 and observed as the

standard (see Table I). The results showed the normal distribution and it is within the range of normality (see Table I).

Afterward, the demographic analysis revealed that, among n=250, 14 DCO/ ADC's, 4 secretaries, 3 commissioners, 22 additional secretaries, 73 were section officers, 30 assistant commissioners, 46 deputy secretaries, 23 Executive officers', 17 planners and 18 were field officers of the Punjab government. In the total sample (n=250), 14.4 percent were female and the remaining 85.6 percent were male officers. We conducted correlation analysis as recommended by Kline, (2015), which revealed that (PF) and (WE) was .162, between (PF) and (SSC) was .509 and between (WE) and (SSC) was .108 all are significant see Table 1. The scale reliability test revealed that Cronbach alpha (see Table 1) for (PF) 14 item scale was 0.913, for (SSC) 24 item was 0.906, and for (WE) 4 item was 0.904.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis.

Variables	Mean	A	Skewness		Kurtosis		PF	WE	SC
			St	Er	St	Er			
		0.913							
PF	2.8663	.82521	-.093	.154	-	.307			1
					.259				
WE	3.4356	.56640	0.906	-.241	.154	.187	.307	.162**	1
		0.904							
SC	3.1717	.66069	-.268	.154	-	.509**	.108**		1
					.166	.307			

** Sigfnt.at 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The exploratory factor analysis was conducted on a sample of 100 segregated sample from the main sample to evaluate the loadings of the items of each latent construct KMO and Bartlett's test reported significant =.954. Mostly factor was loaded high (see Table 4), instead of some items like PF13, SC7,

SC13, and SC 22 were loaded low. However, they were maintained as in some cases; it is allowed to retain (Hayton, Allen, and Scarpello, 2004) up to .5 for confirmatory factor analysis.

Discriminant and Convergent Validity

Prior to the hypothesis testing, CFA confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the AMOS 20.0 (see figure I and Table II) to detect the goodness-of-fit of the proposed mediation model. Possibly, there was the strength of the AMOS over other packages by assuming a combination of mix fit indices to validate the model. The outcomes suggested the hypothesized mediation model was fit as disclosed $\chi^2/df=2.325$, RMR=.070 recommended value is less than .08, GFI=.925, IFI=.920, TLI=.914, CFI=.919 perfect value is overhead, RMSEA=.073 value between 0.5 and .10 is considered valid (see Table II).

Table 2. Loadings, Error Variance, Item R-Square, and Composite reliability

Variables	Factor Loading	Error Variance	Item R ²
Policy Formation Composite			
Reliability=0.927			
PF1	.809	0.346	0.654
PF2	.794	0.370	0.630
PF3	.693	0.520	0.480
PF4	.700	0.510	0.490
PF5	.706	0.502	0.496
PF6	.586	0.657	0.343
PF7	.750	0.438	0.563
PF8	.806	0.350	0.650
PF9	.741	0.451	0.549
PF10	.660	0.564	0.436
PF11	.782	0.388	0.612
PF12	.802	0.357	0.643
PF13	.127	0.984	0.016
PF14	.548	0.700	0.300
Work Engagement (Dedication)			
CR=0.932			
WE1	.866	0.250	0.750
WE2	.880	0.226	0.774
WE3	.882	0.222	0.778
WE4	.872	0.240	0.760
Superior-Subordinate Communication			
CR= 0.98			
SC1	.928	0.139	0.861
SC2	.925	0.144	0.856
SC3	.937	0.122	0.878
SC4	.912	0.168	0.832
SC5	.886	0.215	0.785
SC6	.906	0.179	0.821
SC7	.932	0.131	0.869
SC8	.948	0.101	0.899
SC9	.938	0.120	0.880
SC10	.930	0.135	0.864
SC11	.940	0.116	0.884
SC12	.964	0.071	0.929
SC13	.958	0.082	0.918
SC14	.857	0.266	0.734
SC15	.893	0.203	0.797
SC16	.824	0.321	0.679
SC17	.905	0.181	0.819
SC18	.851	0.276	0.724
SC19	.936	0.124	0.876
SC20	.914	0.165	0.835
SC21	.913	0.166	0.834
SC22	.871	0.241	0.759
SC23	.836	0.301	0.699
SC24	.854	0.271	0.729

Afterward, CR, AVE, and MSV were calculated by using the master validity stat package on the excel to ensure the discriminant and convergent validity for each variable in the study based on the correlation and standard regression attained in the CFA. In addition to this error variance, item R-squared was calculated to estimate the composite reliability (see Table III) by adopting the formula of CRCMM (Raykov, 1997). The composite reliability of the PF calculated as 0.927, (WE) = 0.932 and (SSC) = 0.98. "Whereby, λ is the standardized factor loading for the item; i and ϵ are the error variance for the item I "(Raykov, 1997 p.175). The AVE and MSV were measured at the later stage after the CFA to ensure the discriminant and convergent validity.

Table 3. CFA of Models

	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMR	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Model	1882.39	810	2.325	.070	.925	.920	.914	.919	.073

It was revealed that the (PF) has CR= .922 increase in the value as we calculated earlier with the CRCMM formula to get the solution, we deleted 3 items, AVE=.519, MSV=0.009, for (WE), CR=.905, it decreased value as we calculated it earlier with CRCMM formula, AVE= .817, MSV= 0.009, and for (SSC) CR=.981, it remained almost same, AVE= .703, MSV=, 0.001 and AVA was. Therefore, the discriminant and convergent validities were accepted (see Table 4). However, 3 items (6, 13, and 14) from (PF) construct were deleted to attain model fitness and desired validities, as it can be also seen in CFA, that the loadings of these items were low but retained for the CFA as the initial composite reliability was seen reasonable at that level.

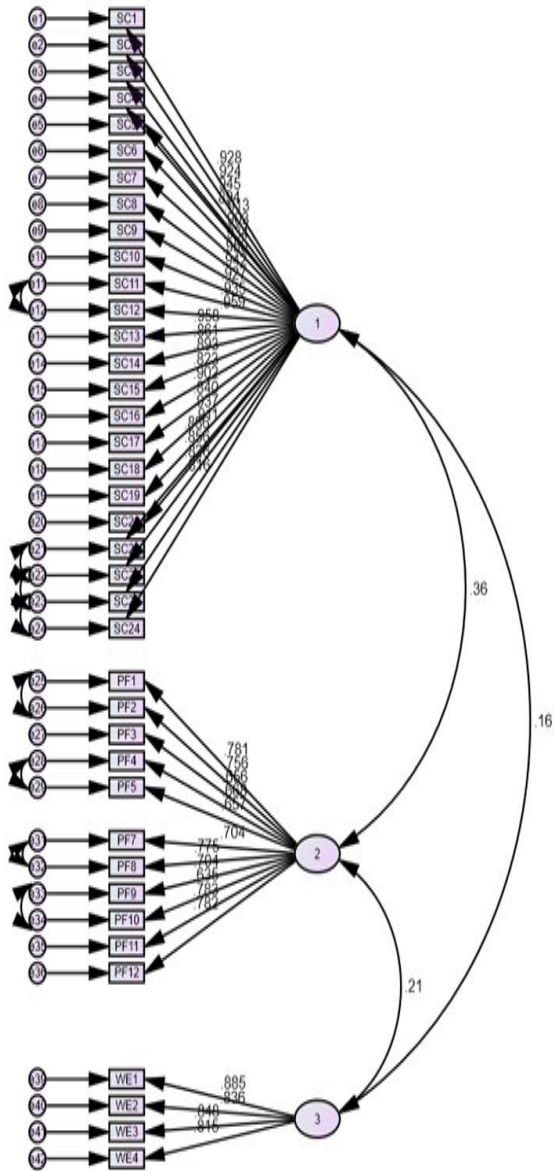


Table 4. Discriminant and Convergent Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PF	SC	WE
PF	0.922	0.519	0.009	0.926	1		
SC	0.981	0.817	0.009	0.993	.36	1	
WE	0.905	0.703	0.001	0.994	.21	.16	1

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing alongside mediation analysis was conducted by the SEM (Structural Equation Model) on the AMOS. 20.0. Initially, hypothesis testing results in Table 6, explicated about the direct relations of the (PF), (SSC) and (WE) variables. In the H1, it was assumed that there is a direct relation between (PF) and (SSC). The outcomes explicated that H1 is accepted as there is a strong relationship observed between (PF) and (SSC) as the regression weight β is 0.43 and significant at $p < 0.001$ (see Table V). In the H2, it was expected that there is a direct link between (SSC) and (WE). The H2 is accepted where moderate relation was observed between (SSC) and (WE), $\beta = 0.13$ and significant at $p < 0.001$ (see Table V).

Table 5. Standardized Regression Weight and Hypothesis testing 1-3.

			β	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypothesis
SSC	<---	PF	.43	.044	9.853	***	H1 Accepted
WE	<---	SSC	.13	.053	2.421	.002	H2 Accepted
WE	<---	PF	.25	.043	5.862	***	H3 Accepted

H3 assumed that there is a direct relation between (PF) and (WE), and H3 is accepted as there is a moderate positive connection between (PF) and (WE) was observed; $\beta = 0.250$ and significant at $p < 0.001$.

For the hypothesis testing of the (PF), (SSC) and (WE) mediation model, The H4 assumption was stated to address the said mediation (see figure II). The H4 is accepted as there is an indirect (mediated) effect of (SSC) on the (PF) and (WE) link was observed in the results as it was expected in the model, $\beta = 0.381$ and significant at $p < 0.001$ (see Table VI).

Table 6. Mediation Results Hypothesis.

Model	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Result	Hypothesis
PF→SC→AAD	.17**(s)	.38*(s)	Full Mediated	H4 Accepted

*significant at $p < 0.001$

****significant at $p < 0.030$

Whereas, the unmediated effect (direct effect) of (PF) on the (WE) is $\beta = .17$ and was also found significant at $p < 0.030$ in this model, which can be explained as there is a full mediation of (SSC) on the (PF) and (WE). The results strengthen the claim assumed in the current study that there is a need to have more consultation through communication between policymakers and the implementers, In the consequence, by considering SSC more positive work engagement and dedication of the implementers are expected.

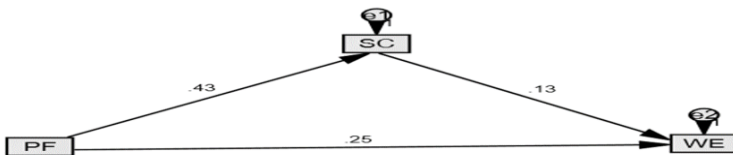


Figure 2: SSC Mediation in the link between PF and WE path diagram (AMOS 20.0)

Discussion

The recent study's investigative approach contributes to the managerial communication literature and proposed some new variables by testing the policy formulation, work engagement, and superior-subordinate communication variables. Hence, this study helps to formulate positive policymaking in Pakistan by adding more effective channels of communication between policymakers and implementers. More precisely, from the perspective of policy formulation in the Punjab government, the results suggested that there can be a remarkable positive work engagement among the bureaucracy if the consultation process may be adopted in a more sophisticated way. The policy formulation can have a more positive influence on workable policies on the part of the implementers by consulting them. Although, practical evidence explicated that the Punjab government is successful to some extent to engage its administration in a dedicated manner towards the implementation of the policies, which seems a positive aspect. While making new policies, open communication within the organization alongside the adoption of more consultation also seems significant. Thus, the outcome of this study validates the findings in the literature about the role of superior-subordinate communication as a vital component (see Steele and Plenty, 2015). It is also suggested that organizations may consider additional positive elements for improving the workplace environment in line with the LMX theory (Kulkarni and Ramamoorthy, 2011).

In the context of Pakistan, this study contributes to our understanding of superior- subordinate communication by

considering the sample of the serving bureaucracy and provides an insight into the Punjab government organizational patterns regarding work engagement. Therefore, the study provides a more practical understanding that how more effective policies can be formulated to improve dedication towards task engagement among the bureaucracy of Pakistan. This is an important contribution of the current study to the existing literature vis-à-vis bridging the gap.

Moreover, the earlier studies used numerous features of the superior-subordinate communications related to the LMX theoretical outcomes. However, they were designed to use predictors related to leaders modeling, motivating the team and its members, and facilitating the relationships between LMX and individuals (see Zhou, Wang, Chen, and Shi, 2012). Hence, the consideration of the policy formulation as the predictor of the work engagement conceptually advances the managerial communication literature by explaining the role of the superior-subordinate communication in this link. Thus, the findings of this study contribute to addressing the missing link by adding relevant policy formulation perspectives. These implications can improve our understanding in the context of superior-subordinate communication regarding the functioning of the Punjab government, that is to say, how the administration perceives the policy. Consequently, the implementation of the policies can be improved by enhancing the consultation with the subordinates assigned to implement the policies.

Limitation and Future Suggestions

This study investigated the policy formulation in the context of superior-subordinate communication to evaluate the dedication towards the work engagement among the serving bureaucracy in the Punjab province of Pakistan. However, we suggest that further studies can extend this model by considering other dimensions of work engagement like vigor and absorption. Moreover, there are some other influential factors such as gender and ethnicity that might be added in the model to give more insight than how superior-subordinate communication works in the context of the policy formulation. This can also give important information about the perception of the female and male administrators how much their suggestions are given importance in the policy-making process. Moreover, while considering gender, it would be useful to know the implications of communication in terms of consultation about the policy. It would enlighten us whether the same or different patterns of work engagement are followed among gender. Another dimension could be the addition of culture to explore whether cultural differences make any difference in how superior-subordinate communication works in the context of the policy formulation. For instance, Zhang, Yousaf and Xu (2017) observed that seeing one's culture as superior to others can hinder effective communication. Thus, future studies can explore the cultural dimension to investigate its role in superior-subordinate communication.

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