



Evaluating the Mediating Effect of Employee Training on the Link between Employee Empowerment and Organizational Performance

Mohamed Abdulla Al Mansoori^{1,2}, Ahmad Nur Aizat^{1*}

¹Faculty of Technology Management and Business,
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Parit Raja, Batu Pahat, Johor, MALAYSIA

²Federal National Council, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

*Corresponding Author

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Abstract: Assessing employee training as a mediator on the relationship between employees' empowerment and organizational performance offering insights for effective training interventions to further enhance employee empowerment and overall organizational success. Hence, this paper discusses a study on assessing a mediation effect of employee training which act as mediator to the relationship between the employee empowerment constructs with organisational performance construct. Data used to develop this mediation model was from 115 employees of UAE Federal National Council Organization. The model was developed and assessed in SmartPLS software using the concept of PLS-SEM technique of model development. The model was assessed in three processes which are the PLS Algorithm; Blindfolding and Bootstrapping. The results of mediating modelling assessments found that there is no evidence of mediation effect of Employee Training on the relationships of Meaning and Organization Performance and also, between Competence and Organization Performance. However, there is a partial mediation effect of Employee Training on the relationship between Impact and Organization Performance, indicating that Employee Training partially mediates the relationship between Impact and Organization Performance. Additionally, Employee Training fully mediating the relationship between Self-determination and Organization Performance. The table provides insights into the complex relationships within the model, clarifying the role of mediation in explaining the associations between variables. The findings from this study contributes knowledge on the mediation model of employees' empowerment on organisational performance.

Keywords: Mediating impact, employee empowerment

1. Introduction

The most asset for any business is its people, and substantial investments are made to enhance their skills and capabilities to align with the organization's goals and objectives (Magableh & Al-Tarawneh, 2021; Alimah, 2021). Research has emphasized the importance of employee empowerment through training and effective management of information flow to enhance organizational performance and strengthen the human resource capacity (Al-Omari, Alomari, & Aljawarneh, 2020). Effective corporate leaders demonstrate a habit of empowering their workforce and prioritize the interests of others (Al-Omari et al., 2020). Empowerment is recognized as a crucial aspect of successful leadership, particularly in servant leadership styles (Roozitalab & Majidi, 2017). Employee empowerment involves

granting employees more responsibility, authority, and power, ultimately inspiring them to work towards shared organizational goals (Abukhait, Bani-Melhem, & Zeffane, 2019).

Empowered employees, who feel in control of their work, demonstrate awareness, responsibility, and actively contribute to organizational performance (Al-Lozi, 2017). Empowerment encompasses power-sharing, visibility, and recognition of staff, fostering employee motivation and self-awareness (Darmawan et al., 2020). Transformational leaders utilize empowerment to inspire their followers to achieve organizational objectives (Bartram & Casimir, 2007). Empowerment involves delegating authority from upper management to lower levels, resulting in increased productivity and job satisfaction (Hameed et al., 2020).

To empower individuals effectively, leaders must treat their followers as unique individuals and cater to their developmental needs through coaching and mentoring (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Empowerment strategies focus on providing employees with flexibility and control over task-related activities (Osborne et al., 2017). Employee empowerment is considered a powerful management technique that leads to "win-win" scenarios for both employees and managers (Manzoor et al., 2019).

Empowerment is defined as establishing supportive relationships, allowing individuals to make choices, and enabling them to determine their approach to their work (Shah et al., 2018). Servant leadership places a strong emphasis on empowering employees and supporting their development (Darmawan et al., 2020). Empowered employees contribute significantly to improved organizational performance, and executive coaching plays a vital role in this process (Baird et al., 2018). Employee empowerment, coupled with training and development, has a positive impact on organizational performance (Alzaabi & Ghani, 2021). Training plays a critical role in bridging the gap between current and desired performance levels (Sultana et al., 2021).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empowerment and Organizational Performance

The recent business and management literature has extensively explored various initiatives and applications aimed at enhancing employee creativity and innovativeness to achieve organizational performance. A widely accepted consensus suggests a positive link between employee empowerment and organizational performance. Baird et al. (2018) conducted a study on "psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation," employing descriptive-analytical methods. Their findings revealed that empowerment dimensions influence psychological empowerment, leading to empowered employees who exhibit confidence in their roles within the organization. Employee empowerment was identified as a key predictor of creativity, as it positively impacts employees and encourages them to contribute to improving organizational performance. Hewagama et al. (2019) analysed data from a large-scale survey of Dutch companies to establish a link between workplace innovation and both quantitative and qualitative organizational performance, along with employee commitment. The study emphasized the significance of employees' work in the success of innovative projects, identifying six components of employee work quality that significantly enhance organizational performance: communication, coordination, member contribution balance, mutual support, effort, and cohesion.

In a study on a university's Research and Development division, Hirzel et al. (2017) found that employee empowerment positively influenced organizational performance and attitudes. Perceived work-based social support moderated the effect of employee empowerment on employee productivity, while perceived work-based organizational support moderated the effect on customer service. Additionally, perceived justice and gender diversity among employees were associated with job satisfaction. Idua (2014) investigated the influence of institutional factors and job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance in public universities in Kenya. The study highlighted that employees in public universities often do not feel involved in decision-making. In another study focused on Nigeria's First Bank Plc, Abubakar (2014) examined the impact of employee empowerment on work satisfaction. The research encompassed nine out of fifteen branches in Kaduna, and the results indicated a favourable and significant impact of employee empowerment on job satisfaction. Kariuku and Murimi (2015) investigated Tata Chemicals Magadi Ltd's employee empowerment and organizational effectiveness in Kenya, using gender, age, and tenure as control variables. The study explored the relationship between four dimensions of empowerment (autonomy, decision making, information sharing, and training) and organizational performance. The findings revealed that gender had a significant impact on organizational performance, and all models exhibited a positive impact on it. Training and information sharing moderately influenced employee empowerment and organizational performance, while the impact of autonomy and decision-making on organizational performance was minimal.

2.1.1 Empowerment and Organizational Performance

Organizational meaning has become a subject of great interest to researchers, academics, and practitioners alike. Studies exploring the concept and transformation of organizations have highlighted the benefits it brings, including improved organizational performance and competitive advantages (Hoe and McShane, 2010; Jyothibabu et al., 2010; Hishamudin et al., 2010). In the context of Spanish organizations, Jimenez and Vela's (2011) study on "innovation, organizational meaning, and performance" revealed that organizational meaning positively influences both innovation

and organizational performance. Similarly, Hajipour and Kord's (2011) study on "Effects of Strategic Alliances on the Relationship Between Organizational Learning, Innovation, and Financial Performance" found that organizational learning and innovation directly impact the financial success of a company. The relationship between organizational meaning and performance was also confirmed in Lopez et al.'s (2005) study titled "Organizational Meaning as a Determining Factor in Organizational Performance." Mazlumi et al.'s (2014) findings demonstrated a significant correlation between organizational performance, continuous improvement, and organizational purpose and trust.

Organizational meaning is intertwined with formal education, work experience, skill improvement, and training within the company. This underscores the importance of encouraging all staff members to actively participate in the learning process through practice, discussions, and mutual learning (Hodgkinson, 2000). The debate on whether organizational meaning is a cognitive or behavioral shift has largely dissipated, with most scholars agreeing that it is a change in knowledge resulting from experience (e.g., Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Declarative knowledge (facts) and procedural knowledge (skills and processes) are both considered forms of knowledge, and learning organizations play a crucial role in knowledge management (Svetlik & Stavrou-Costea, 2007)

2.1.2 Competence and Organisation Performance

According to Siriwaiprapan (2004), competence encompasses various qualities, including adaptability to change, a readiness to learn and develop oneself, the ability to take initiative, trust, endurance, receptiveness, open-mindedness, self-discipline, self-esteem, individuality, and self-determination. It involves the capacity to evaluate personal and professional goals, recognize strengths and weaknesses, handle pressure, and understand and respond to emotions and motivations in the workplace (Elbaz et al., 2018). Self-competence is believed to enhance employees' capabilities, effectiveness, performance, success, and ability to handle pressure (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Research shows that self-competence significantly and positively impacts job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Bhagat & Allie, 1989), leading to improved organizational performance. Employee performance is largely influenced by their level of self-competence, which allows organizations to achieve their goals and deliver superior results (Potnuru & Sahoo, 2016).

In the context of team performance and organizational effectiveness, "team competence," as defined by Potnuru and Sahoo (2016), refers to an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to develop, assist, and lead a team to achieve goals. It involves displaying appropriate behaviours and a positive outlook among team members, contributing to the accomplishment of both individual and organizational objectives. Eby and Dobbins (1997) emphasize that team competency fosters shared efforts, information sharing, and better resource allocation, resulting in improved performance. This leads to cohesive and successful teams, the achievement of group goals, increased team participation, and enhanced organizational effectiveness. With the growing focus on collaboration, organizations have been compelled to enhance and nurture their employees' team competency, which ultimately leads to faster and sustainable organizational growth.

2.1.3 Self-Determination and Organisation Performance

Hagström et al., (2009) investigated a company's market orientation contributes to the development of organizational competencies, leading to exceptional performance. A total of 35 research hypotheses were statistically tested using survey data from 159 acute care hospitals. The findings reveal that market orientation significantly contributes to the development of employee autonomy, which, in turn, results in improved performance in cost containment, revenue growth, patient retention, and the success of new services. Hagström et al.'s (2009) study explores how employees in a bank perceive the business culture and its relation to background factors like gender and age, as well as participation in regular regulatory activities established by the organization. The study employs a multi-methodological case study, using an "abductive" approach drawing on action, adult developmental, complexity, and "holon" theory. The survey was conducted throughout the entire bank in Sweden, with a major focus on multiple linear regression analysis. The results demonstrate that active participation in routine and regulatory activities is strongly integrated into the organizational culture. The regression analysis clearly indicates that these activities have a greater impact on cultural integration than specific background variables. However, the results also highlight an increase in cultural scepticism, which may be influenced by generational differences and personal growth.

Bani-Hani and AL-Hawary (2009) conducted a study on a Jordanian insurance organization, examining the impact of self-determination on competitive advantage. The study population consisted of all leaders from Jordanian insurance groups. A simple random sampling procedure was used to select respondents, and a total of 61 questionnaires were distributed among respondents from 18 companies. The study employed multiple regression and Spearman correlation statistical tools to evaluate the hypotheses. The results demonstrate a significant positive association between self-determination and competitive advantage from the perspective of the sample. Additionally, the study reveals that fundamental competencies significantly influence competitive advantage. Based on a study by Bani-Hani and AL-Hawary (2009), the study applied to a Jordanian insurance organisation and looked at the effect of self-determination on competitive advantage. All of the leaders of the Jordanian insurance groups made up the study's population. The respondents for this study were picked using a straightforward random sample procedure, and a total of 61 questionnaires

were given to respondents selected from 18 companies. Multiple regression and spearman correlation statistical tools were employed to evaluate the hypothesis. The results showed that, from the perspective of the sample, there is a considerable positive association between self-determination and competitive advantage. Additionally, the study demonstrated that the fundamental competencies significantly impacted competitive advantage.

2.1.4 Impact and Organisation Performance

Employee impact, as defined by Hewitt, encompasses the zeal, passion, and "fire in the belly" that employees possess for their coworkers, driving them to stay committed to the organization, speak favorably about it, and strive to exceed minimal requirements. Kahn's work on employee impact, further developed by Luthans and Peterson in 2002, offers a comprehensive explanation for Gallup's empirically derived employee effect. Emotional engagement involves developing deep relationships with others and displaying empathy, while cognitive engagement is characterized by a strong awareness of one's purpose and role in the workplace. Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) describe active impact as having a high level of action, initiative, and responsibility.

According to Towers Perrin (2003), "impact" refers to both the emotional and logical aspects of employment and the overall work experience. Wellins and Concelman (2004) emphasize that employee impact is the elusive force that propels workers to higher levels of performance, combining commitment, loyalty, productivity, and ownership. This energy also encompasses employee attitudes and feelings toward their organizations and jobs. Robinson et al., Perryman, and Hayday (2004) state that impact represents an employee's positive attitude toward the firm and its values. Engaged employees are conscious of the organizational context and collaborate with coworkers to enhance job performance, fostering a two-way interaction between employers and employees.

The Gallup Organization's research in 2004 revealed critical connections between employee impact, customer loyalty, corporate growth, and profitability. Highly engaged workgroups within organizations consistently outperform groups with lower employee impact levels. Lucey, Bateman, and Hines (2005) define employee impact as "how each employee engages with the firm and the customers," while Pittsburgh-based Development Dimensions International Inc. (DDI) (2005) sees it as "the extent to which employees enjoy and believe in what they do and feel appreciated for doing it." Overall, employee impact plays a crucial role in driving organizational success and performance.

2.2 Empowerment and Training

Hanayasha (2016) emphasizes that businesses should provide employees with diverse opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills, as it aligns with long-term objectives and offers mutual benefits. Lawler et al. (1992, p. 16) underscore the significance of knowledge and skill development, stating that without proper abilities, employees may find it challenging to actively participate in the business and influence its direction. They further assert that individuals lacking essential skills cannot efficiently perform most tasks. According to Melhem (2003), greater knowledge instills confidence in employees, enabling them to make informed judgments and better assist consumers. Additionally, Drucker (1989) highlights that empowered personnel require knowledge, skills, and expertise to effectively interact with consumers and utilize their abilities or knowledge in the process.

The researcher contends that employees should not only possess competence and confidence to undertake projects but should also be provided with opportunities to grow and succeed. As employees gain experience and management acquires new information and skills, confidence and competence naturally increase. The lack of necessary understanding among staff can result in providing customers with inappropriate services or delays in service delivery, leading to customer resentment or frustration. Diminished confidence due to ignorance can also lead to slower service. Thus, the researcher stresses the importance of identifying specific knowledge that enhances an employee's capacity and confidence to make informed judgments and provide excellent customer service. The researcher explores whether customers' satisfaction can be achieved through well-informed staff who promptly address customer questions and concerns, ultimately saving time and effort for both management and customers.

2.3 Training and Organizational Performance

Careful planning is imperative for the organization's training program (Armstrong, 2000). The development of such training should be influenced by the specific needs of the workforce (Khan, Khan, and Khan, 2011). Successful businesses understand that creating effective training programs requires alignment with both employee and business requirements (Partlow, 1996). In this regard, effective training design considers legal considerations, various training philosophies, and learning theories (Mathis and Jackson, 2000). The design of the training program holds significant influence over the effectiveness of both the organization and its employees. A poorly designed training program leads to wastage of time and resources (Tsai and Lin, 2004).

When developing training, Mathis and Jackson (2000) identify three essential considerations: assessing the readiness of learners, understanding different learning styles, and creating transferrable training. To ensure training's effectiveness and its impact on organizational performance, three conditions must be met: the learners' capacity to learn, their desire to learn, and their self-efficacy. The ultimate goal of training is to enable learners to develop the behaviors necessary for efficient work performance, making a solid grasp of learning theories crucial in designing training programs.

Flippo (1984) emphasizes that highly motivated learners tend to acquire new skills or knowledge more quickly and thoroughly. The learners' recognition of the need for training and their commitment to the process significantly influence their ability to learn. Even with a well-designed and implemented training program, if learners lack motivation and confidence in their learning abilities, the program's impact will be limited. It is essential, therefore, to align the training's objectives with the learners' goals. This alignment may be achieved by tying the training to a need that learners believe it will help them meet, such as professional success, recognition, and other incentives (Bryan, 1990).

With practice, learners enhance their ability to recognize relevant cues and associate them with the intended behaviors. The third step is the response, where learners implement what they have learned. After training, it becomes crucial to provide timely and positive reinforcement so that learners can experience the desired outcomes. If reinforcement is not prompt, positive, and consistent, there is a risk that it may not have the intended effect. Another essential criterion is feedback, which involves providing learners with information about the quality of their responses. The feedback should be delivered as quickly as possible to optimize the learning process. While these learning principles hold validity, the author failed to address their applicability when learners actively apply the acquired abilities and knowledge. Additionally, individual differences in aptitude and intelligence can influence teaching strategies (Bryan, 1990).

According to G.P. Nunvi (2006), development aims to enhance talents for future work positions, while training programs focus on preserving and improving existing work performance. In the contemporary era, several professions have become obsolete due to technological advancements, necessitating the acquisition of qualifications like training and competency, both for those currently employed and those aspiring for growth in the future. Aguinis, H., and Kraiger, K. (2009) discovered that training exercises not only boost individual performance but also enhance team performance. These exercises can yield further positive results in areas like attitudes, motivation, and empowerment, both at the individual and collective levels.

Existing research indicates that training and development significantly impact employee performance. Purcell, Kinnie, and Hutchinson's review in 2003 revealed that some studies focused solely on personnel performance, while others took a more comprehensive approach, considering organizational performance as well (Guest, 1997; Swart et al., 2005). These two aspects are closely intertwined, as employee performance influences overall organizational performance and vice versa. Effective training programs lead to improved employee competencies, resulting in enhanced current job performance and the acquisition of abilities, understanding, and attitudes essential for future roles, ultimately boosting the effectiveness of the entire company (Wright & Geroy, 2001).

Previous research has yielded unexpected findings regarding the connection between worker performance and training. Training has been shown to enhance employee performance by developing their knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies, and behavior, thereby benefiting both the individual and the organization (Appiah, 2010; Harrison, 2000; Guest, 1997). Studies, like Swart et al.'s (2005) work, delve deeper into training as a strategy to bridge performance and skill gaps and increase employee productivity. Closing performance gaps involves implementing appropriate training interventions to improve employee performance and foster the development of specific skills and competencies, as emphasized by Swart et al. (2005). Training is crucial for organizations to recognize and address the need for underperforming employees to change their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes.

While employees are expected to possess a certain level of skills for their specific duties, it is essential to understand that this alone is insufficient. Workers must continuously adapt to the evolving standards of performance in their roles. Therefore, businesses should proactively invest in personnel retention and training efforts rather than waiting for skill and performance gaps to arise. According to Wright & Geroy (2001), effective training programs have the power to transform staff competencies. These programs not only improve individuals' current job performance but also enhance their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, which are vital for future roles, ultimately contributing to overall organizational performance. By developing employee capacities through training, organizations enable efficient job execution and successful achievement of company objectives. Moreover, when employees receive appropriate training, they experience a sense of accomplishment and awareness of their growing skills, leading to reduced complaints of discontent, absenteeism, and turnover (Pigors & Myers, 1989).

2.4 Employee Training; Empowerment and Organizational Performance

Training serves as a systematic approach to enhance employees' capabilities and overall organizational performance. The primary objective is to promote and enhance employee learning, with a specific emphasis on acquiring job-related skills. The growing influence of technology and globalization in the business landscape has led to the proliferation of training programs (Dubrim, 2019). Employee empowerment, on the other hand, hinges on the competence of the employees. To empower individuals, they must first excel in their roles, comprehending the what, why, and how of their actions within the broader organizational context (Mullins, 2021). It becomes impractical to grant decision-making authority, implementation rights, or the ability to take action if employees are not fully competent. According to Brown and Lawler (1995), employees need to understand how their tasks interconnect with upstream and downstream operations.

Dobbs (2020) asserts that technical training, decision-making skills, and group process skills are all crucial components for embracing empowerment and achieving positive outcomes. Employee training is based on the belief that investing in internal talent development yields significant benefits. By enhancing workforce competency, organizations

gain a competitive advantage, with top competitors adopting empowerment principles through training and development practices to bolster their workforce's ability to execute company strategies (Schuler and Werner, 2019). The primary objective of employee empowerment is to harness their knowledge, skills, and abilities effectively in the workplace, a feat achievable only through training. Consequently, acquiring the necessary social skills becomes a vital aspect of the empowerment process. Training and development programs play a pivotal role in boosting employees' confidence, enabling them to act in a more empowered manner.

2.5 Conceptual Model

Based on the literature reviewed as mentioned in the earlier section, the conceptual framework/model of this study is to developed relationships between three key variables/constructs which are the independent variables (IV); the dependent variables (DV), and mediating variable (MV). In this case the variables are the employees’ empowerment (*Meaning; Competence; Self-determination; and Impact*) act as independent variables; the organisational performance act as dependent variables and the employees’ training act as mediator variable. This relationship can be demonstrated as in figure 1

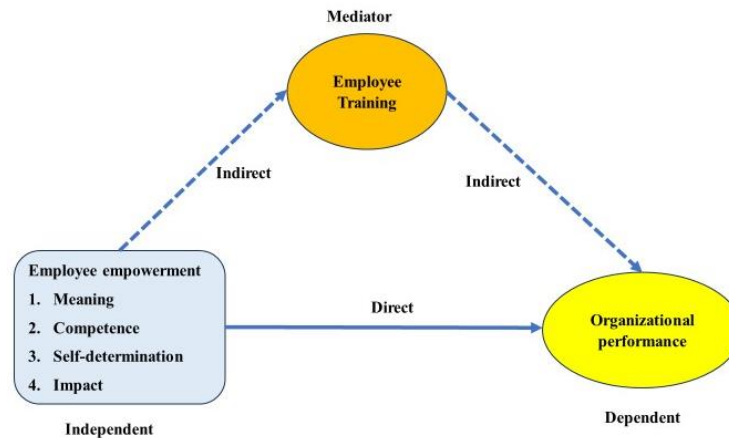


Fig. 1 - Conceptual model

3. Mediation Effect of PLS-SEM Model

PLS-SEM model evaluates mediation effects by analysing the direct and indirect connections between the variables. Mediation analysis centres on discerning if the impact of an independent variable (X) on a dependent variable (Y) operates via a mediator variable (M). When the direct path from X to Y is significant and also significant indirect path through mediator M, it indicates partial mediation. If the direct path from X to Y is significant, yet the indirect path through M is not, no mediation is evident. Conversely, when the direct path from X to Y lacks significance but the indirect path via M is significant, full mediation is indicated. Finally, when neither the direct nor indirect paths are significant, no mediation effect is observed (Ghasemy et al., 2020). To summarise, table 1 shows the consideration for mediation effects.

Table 1 - Summary of mediation effects

| No | Direct relationship | Indirect relationship | Mediation effect |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Significant | Significant | Partial mediation |
| 2 | Significant | Not significant | No evidence of mediation |
| 3 | No significant | Significant | Full mediation |
| 4 | No significant | No significant | No mediation |

4. Data for Developing PLS-SEM Mediation Model

The study's sample size comprised 115 participants, aligning with Kreijie & Morgan's (1970) suggestion for generalizability to a population of 115 workers. Purposeful sampling was employed to understand the perspectives of operations staff. Thus, 115 questionnaires were distributed and collected from employees of the UAE Federal National Council. The construct and the items of questionnaire are as in table 2.

Table 2 - List of construct and items for questionnaire

| Types of constructs | Name of construct | Code | No. of indicators/items | Sources |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------|-------------------------|---|
| Independent | Meaning | MEA | 5 | (Adeniji et. al., 2013), (Darrag, et. al., 2010). |
| Independent | Competence | COM | 5 | (Hassan, et. al., 2013), Adeniji et. al. (2013) |
| Independent | Self-determination | SEF | 5 | (Wright & McMahan, 2011). Mukhtar, et al (2012) |
| Independent | Impact | IMP | 5 | (Hassan, et. al., 2013). (Anastasia, 2013), |
| Dependent | Organizational performance | OP | 5 | (Borkowski, 2011), (Redmond, 2010), (Corpuz, 2006), (Lim & Ling, 2012). |
| Mediator | Employee Training | ET | 5 | (Jarrar & Zairi, 2011), (Lim & Ling, 2012). |

Table 2 categorizes constructs into three types: Independent, Dependent, and Mediator. Independent constructs include Meaning, Competence, Self-determination, and Impact, each with five individual constructs. The Dependent construct is Organizational Performance, while the Mediator construct is Employee Training, both consisting of five individual constructs. Codes are provided for easy reference.

The questionnaire was developed to assess 30 factors grouped into six categories. Participants were asked to rate these factors using a 5-point Likert scale based on their perspectives. The survey was administered through convenience sampling, utilizing readily accessible respondents. A total of 115 respondents were selected from the employees of the UAE Federal National Council. Demographically, 60.9% of participants were male, and 39.1% were female. Regarding age distribution, 9.6% were above 35 years old, 19.1% were aged 20 to 25, and 32.8% were between 26 and 30 years old. The largest portion, accounting for 47.6%, fell within the 31 to 35 age range. Nationalities of respondents revealed that 47.6% were UAE natives, 25.1% were from Asia, 5.6% from North and South America, 3.8% from Australia and Africa, and 5.6% from Europe. Marital status showed 55.8% were married, while 44.2% were single. Education-wise, 49.3% held bachelor's degrees, 26.7% had diplomas, 14.4% had master's degrees, 8.7% held high school diplomas, and a small fraction possessed PhDs (0.2%).

4.1 PLS Algorithm

The purpose of the PLS Algorithm in SmartPLS software is to perform structural equation modelling (SEM) using the Partial Least Squares approach. PLS is particularly well-suited for complex and small sample size data sets, making it ideal for exploratory analysis and model development. SmartPLS implements the PLS algorithm to estimate path coefficients, loadings, and latent variable scores such as convergent and discriminant validity and others. After conducting the PLS Algorithm, the final model is as figure 2.

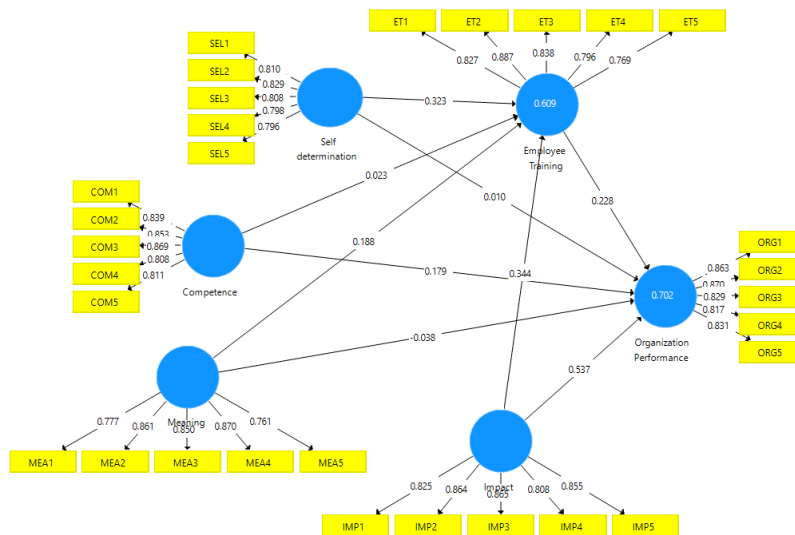


Fig. 2 - Final model after conducting PLS Algorithm

4.1.1 Convergent Reliability and Validity

Convergent reliability and validity are vital criteria in assessing a Partial Least Squares (PLS) model. Convergent reliability ensures that the indicators consistently measure the same latent construct, indicating the accuracy and consistency of measurement. Convergent validity demonstrates that the indicators effectively capture the theoretical concept and are related to other constructs as expected, enhancing the overall quality and trustworthiness of the PLS model. The Convergent reliability and validity values generated from the model are as in table 3.

Table 3 - Convergent reliability and validity

| Constructs | Cronbach's Alpha | rho_A | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Competence | 0.892 | 0.894 | 0.921 | 0.699 |
| Employee Training | 0.881 | 0.882 | 0.914 | 0.68 |
| Impact | 0.898 | 0.899 | 0.925 | 0.712 |
| Meaning | 0.882 | 0.885 | 0.914 | 0.681 |
| Organization Performance | 0.898 | 0.9 | 0.924 | 0.709 |
| Self determination | 0.867 | 0.868 | 0.904 | 0.653 |

Table 3 presents reliability and validity measures for each construct in the model. Cronbach's Alpha values indicate high internal consistency and reliability, ranging from 0.867 to 0.898. The rho_A (Composite Reliability) values demonstrate good construct reliability, ranging from 0.868 to 0.9.

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are all above the recommended threshold of 0.5, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. These findings suggest that the constructs are reliable and valid measures of their underlying theoretical concepts, supporting the robustness and validity of the PLS model's measurement model. Researchers can have confidence in the accuracy and quality of the model's measurements and interpretations.

4.1.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity values in a PLS model assess the extent to which the constructs in the model are distinct from each other. High discriminant validity indicates that the constructs are well-differentiated and not highly correlated with one another, supporting the idea that they measure distinct underlying concepts. Low discriminant validity values raise concerns about potential issues of construct overlap or multicollinearity, which could affect the accuracy and reliability of the model's predictions and interpretations.

Table 4 - Results of discriminant validity

| Constructs | Competence | Employee Training | Impact | Meaning | Organization Performance | Self determination |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Competence | 0.836 | | | | | |
| Employee Training | 0.638 | 0.824 | | | | |
| Impact | 0.717 | 0.712 | 0.844 | | | |
| Meaning | 0.729 | 0.645 | 0.662 | 0.825 | | |
| Organization Performance | 0.688 | 0.706 | 0.809 | 0.602 | 0.842 | |
| Self determination | 0.714 | 0.704 | 0.701 | 0.656 | 0.649 | 0.808 |

Based on the correlation matrix presented in the table 4, it can be observed that all the variables (Competence, Employee Training, Impact, Meaning, Organization Performance, and Self-determination) are positively correlated with each other. The correlation coefficients range from 0.602 to 0.844, indicating moderate to strong positive relationships between the variables.

The diagonal elements in the correlation matrix represent the correlations of each construct with itself, which is also known as auto-correlation. These values ideally should be 1.00, indicating a perfect correlation between the construct and itself. In the provided table, the diagonal elements range from 0.836 to 0.908, showing high values close to 1.00, indicating strong internal consistency and reliability for each construct. This suggests that the measurement items within

each construct are highly related, effectively capturing their underlying theoretical concepts. The high auto-correlation values enhance the credibility of the PLS model's measurement model, indicating that the constructs are reliable and internally consistent.

4.1.3 Impact and Organisation Performance

Employee impact, as defined by Hewitt, encompasses the zeal, passion, and "fire in the belly" that employees possess for their coworkers, driving them to stay committed to the organization, speak favorably about it, and strive to exceed minimal requirements. Kahn's work on employee impact, further developed by Luthans and Peterson in 2002, offers a comprehensive explanation

Table 5 - Results of discriminant validity

| Name of constructs | Mediator construct | Dependent construct |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| | Employee Training | Organization Performance |
| Competence | 0.023 | 0.179 |
| Employee Training | x | 0.228 |
| Impact | 0.344 | 0.537 |
| Meaning | 0.188 | -0.038 |
| Self determination | 0.323 | 0.01 |

Table 5 presents the path coefficients of the independent variables (Self-determination, Competence, Meaning and Impact) on the dependent variables (Organization Performance and Meaning), as well as the on the Mediator construct (Employee Training).

4.1.4 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The coefficient of determination (R²) represents the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that can be attributed to the independent variable. It is computed as the squared correlation between an endogenous concept's actual and expected values. In essence, R² quantifies the collective influence of the independent factors on the endogenous dependent variables. Its range lies between 0 and 1, with 1 indicating overall predictive accuracy.

Chin (2010) classifies R² values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 as significant, moderate, and weak, respectively, for the dependent variable. For dependent constructs, Hair et al. (2011) recommended R² values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25, corresponding to strong, moderate, and weak influences, respectively. It is important to note that R² is dependent on correlation. Moreover, Falk and Miller (1992) proposed that R² values should be greater than or equal to 0.10 for the variance explained in a particular unobserved construct to be considered acceptable (Ramayah et al., 2016). The R² values were calculated using SmartPLS, and the results of the structural model can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 - Coefficient of Determination (R²)

| . Constructs | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Employee Training | 0.609 | 0.605 |
| Organization Performance | 0.702 | 0.698 |

Table 4.11 displays the R-squared values for two constructs. "Employee Training" as a mediator construct shows a high R-squared value of 0.609, indicating that the independent constructs explain approximately 60.9% of the variance in the mediator construct. Then, for "Organizational Performance" as a dependent construct having R-squared value of 0.702 indicating that the independent constructs explain approximately 70.2% of the variance in the dependent construct

The adjusted R-squared values, which consider the number of predictors in the model, are slightly lower for both constructs but remain substantial, with 0.605 for Employee Training and 0.698 for Organizational Performance.

4.2 Blindfolding

Blindfolding in a PLS model involves withholding a portion of the data during model calibration to assess predictive validity. This resampling technique tests the model's ability to generalize and make accurate predictions on new, unseen data. By evaluating the model's performance on withheld data, researchers can gain confidence in its robustness and suitability for real-world applications. The shape of the model after conducting blindfolding is as figure 3.

Construct cross-validated redundancy assesses how well a construct predicts its indicators using cross-validation. Higher values indicate better predictive validity. Communality measures the shared variance between a construct and its indicators, indicating the construct's explanatory power. Both measures are crucial for evaluating construct quality in a PLS model, enhancing reliability and validity.

Table 7 presents the results of construct cross-validated redundancy analysis for different constructs in the PLS model. SSO (Sum of Squares for the construct) and SSE (Sum of Squares for the Error) are provided, and the Q² values are calculated as 1-SSE/SSO.

Table 7 - Construct cross validated redundancy

| Construct | SSO | SSE | Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO) |
|--------------------------|------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Competence | 1990 | 1990 | |
| Employee Training | 1990 | 1196.431 | 0.399 |
| Impact | 1990 | 1990 | |
| Meaning | 1990 | 1990 | |
| Organization Performance | 1990 | 1021.853 | 0.487 |
| Self determination | 1990 | 1990 | |

The Q² values in table 7 represent the proportion of variance in the constructs' indicators that is explained by the constructs themselves. A higher Q² value suggests that the construct has good predictive validity and is effective in predicting its indicators.

In the context of Construct Cross-Validated Communality, table 8 provides the results of the analysis on the model. The table includes the Sum of Squares for the Construct (SSO) and the Sum of Squares for the Error (SSE), along with the Q² values, which are calculated as 1 - (SSE/SSO).

Table 8 - Construct cross validated communality

| Construct | SSO | SSE | Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO) |
|--------------------------|------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Competence | 1990 | 912.17 | 0.542 |
| Employee Training | 1990 | 972.358 | 0.511 |
| Impact | 1990 | 875.938 | 0.56 |
| Meaning | 1990 | 961.156 | 0.517 |
| Organization Performance | 1990 | 880.718 | 0.557 |
| Self determination | 1990 | 1046.367 | 0.474 |

The Q² values in table 8 represent the proportion of variance in the constructs' indicators that is shared with the constructs themselves. Higher Q² values indicate stronger construct communality, meaning that a larger portion of the variance in the indicators can be explained by the constructs.

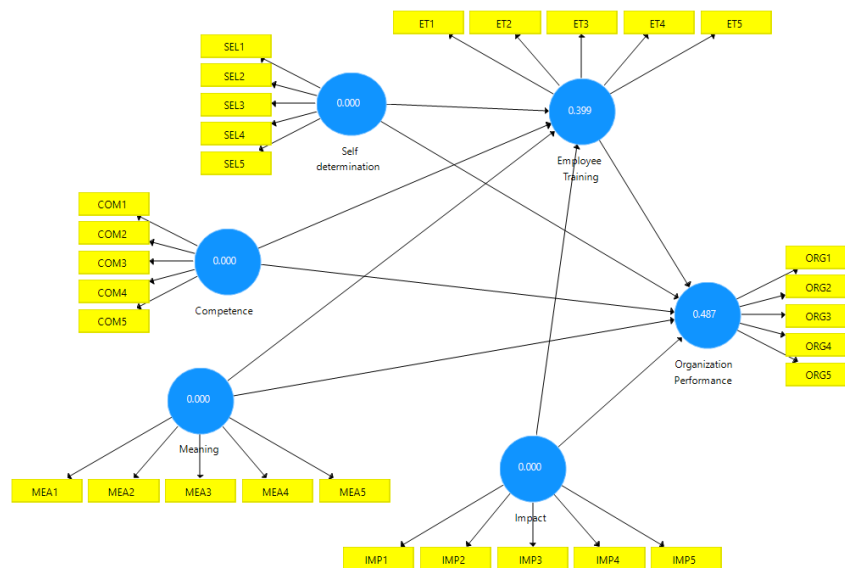


Fig. 3 - Final model after conducting Blindfolding process

4.3 Bootstrapping

Bootstrapping in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) is essential for hypothesis testing as it allows researchers to assess the significance of model parameters, such as path coefficients and indirect effects,

without relying on strict distributional assumptions. By generating thousands of resamples from the original data, bootstrapping provides reliable estimates of standard errors, confidence intervals, and p-values, enabling researchers to make more robust inferences about the relationships between variables in their model. **Figure 4** is the result of bootstrapping conducted on the model.

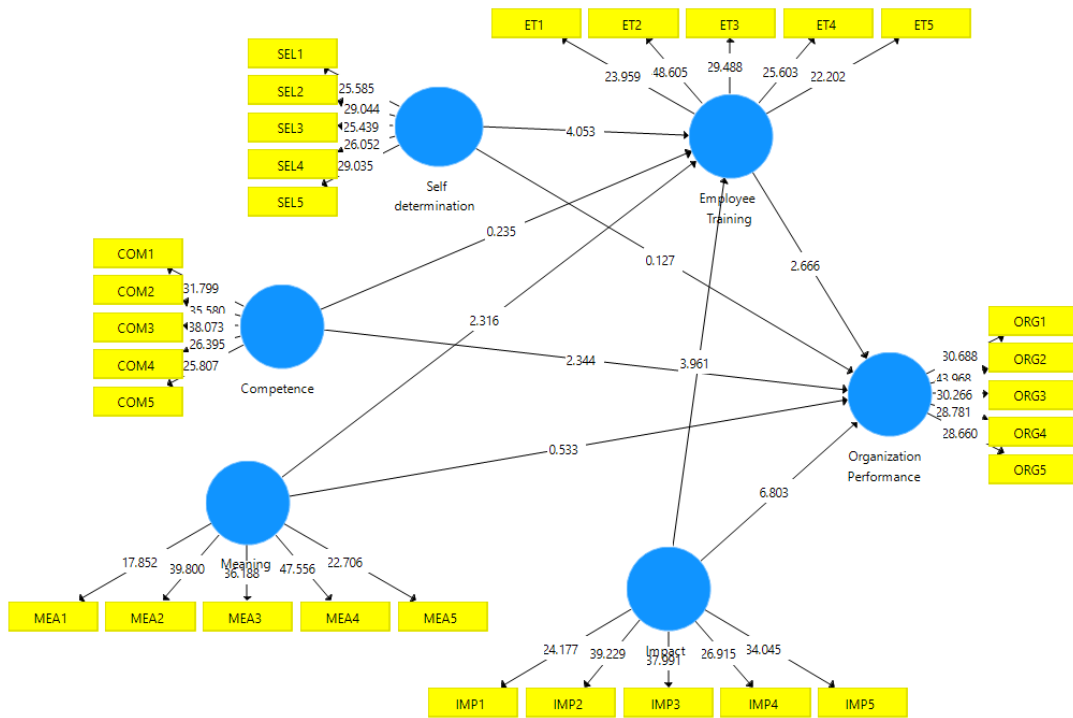


Fig. 4 - Final model after conducting bootstrapping process.

4.3.1 Impact and Organisation Performance

Since the relationships of the model is in the form of mediation model, thus it involved direct relationship and indirect relationship. The results of the hypothesis testing of the direct relationship are as in table 9.

Table 9 - Results of hypothesis testing of direct relationship

| Direct relationship | Original Sample | Sample Mean | Standard Deviation | T Statistics | P Values |
|--|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Competence -> Employee Training | 0.023 | 0.026 | 0.096 | 0.235 | 0.814 |
| Competence -> Organization Performance | 0.184 | 0.18 | 0.076 | 2.408 | 0.016 |
| Employee Training -> Organization Performance | 0.228 | 0.228 | 0.085 | 2.666 | 0.008 |
| Impact -> Employee Training | 0.344 | 0.348 | 0.087 | 3.961 | 0.000 |
| Impact -> Organization Performance | 0.615 | 0.615 | 0.07 | 8.841 | 0.000 |
| Meaning -> Employee Training | 0.188 | 0.188 | 0.081 | 2.316 | 0.021 |
| Meaning -> Organization Performance | 0.005 | 0.012 | 0.073 | 0.071 | 0.944 |
| Self-determination -> Employee Training | 0.323 | 0.318 | 0.08 | 4.053 | 0.000 |
| Self-determination -> Organization Performance | 0.083 | 0.08 | 0.070 | 1.197 | 0.232 |

Table 9 presents the results of hypothesis testing for various direct relationships in a research model. The t-statistics and p-values are used to assess the significance of each relationship. The Competence -> Employee Training and Meaning -> Organization Performance relationships are **not significant**. However, the Competence -> Organization Performance, Employee Training -> Organization Performance, Impact -> Employee Training, Impact -> Organization Performance, Meaning -> Employee Training, and Self-determination -> Employee Training relationships are all found to be **significant**. These results provide insights into the strength and direction of the associations between the variables in the model. The results of the hypothesis testing of the indirect relationship are as in table 10.

Table 10 - Results of hypothesis testing of indirect relationship

| Indirect relationship | Original Sample | Sample Mean | Standard Deviation | T Statistics | P Values |
|---|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|----------|
| Meaning -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.026 | 1.657 | 0.098 |
| Competence -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance | 0.005 | 0.006 | 0.023 | 0.219 | 0.827 |
| Impact -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance | 0.078 | 0.08 | 0.038 | 2.087 | 0.037 |
| Self-determination -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance | 0.074 | 0.072 | 0.033 | 2.254 | 0.025 |

Table 10 presents the results of hypothesis testing for indirect relationships in a research model. The Meaning -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance, Impact -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance, and Self-determination -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance relationships are found to be **significant**, suggesting that the effect of these variables on Organization Performance operates through Employee Training as a mediator.

However, the Competence -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance relationship is **not significant**. These results provide insights into the mediating effects of Employee Training on the associations between Meaning, Impact, Self-determination, and Organization Performance.

4.4 Determining Mediation Effect

In this study model is comprises of 4 independent constructs which are Meaning; Competence; Impact; and Self-determination. One dependent construct which is Organization Performance and one mediator construct which is Employee training. Hence for mediation effects, it considers 4 relationships that as 4 direct relationships and 4 indirect relationships as in the following table 11.

Table 11 - Mediation effect of employee training

| Mediating effect | Direct | Indirect | Mediation effect |
|---|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Is Employee Training Mediating Meaning and Organization Performance? | Not sig. 0.944 | Not sig. 0.098 | No mediation |
| Is Employee Training Mediating Competence and Organization Performance? | Sig. 0.016 | Not sig. 0.827 | No mediation |
| Is Employee Training Mediating Impact and Organization Performance? | Sig. 0.000 | Sig. 0.037 | Partial mediation |
| Is Employee Training Mediating Self-determination and Organization Performance? | Not sig. 0.232 | Sig. 0.025 | Full mediation |

Table 11 shows that there is **no evidence of mediation effect** of Employee Training on the relationships of *Meaning and Organization Performance* and also, between *Competence and Organization Performance*. However, there is a **partial mediation effect** of Employee Training on the relationship between *Impact and Organization Performance*, indicating that Employee Training partially mediates the relationship between Impact and Organization Performance. Additionally, Employee **Training fully mediating** the relationship between Self-determination and Organization Performance. The table provides insights into the complex relationships within the model, clarifying the role of mediation in explaining the associations between variables.

5. Conclusion

Assessing employee training as a mediator on the relationship between employees' empowerment and organizational performance offering insights for effective training interventions to further enhance employee empowerment and overall organizational success. Hence, this paper discusses a study on assessing a mediation effect of employee training which act as mediator to the relationship between the employee empowerment constructs with organisational performance construct. Data used to develop this mediation model was from 115 employees of UAE Federal National Council Organization. The model was developed and assessed in SmartPLS software using the concept of PLS-SEM technique of model development. The model was assessed in three processes which are the PLS Algorithm; Blindfolding and Bootstrapping. The results of the modelling assessments found that there is no evidence of mediation for the paths: Meaning -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance and Competence -> Employee Training -> Organization Performance. However, there is a partial mediation effect observed for the path Impact -> Employee Training ->

Organization Performance, indicating that Employee Training partially mediates the relationship between Impact and Organization Performance. Additionally, the path Self-determination → Employee Training → Organization Performance exhibits a full mediation effect, with Employee Training fully mediating the relationship between Self-determination and Organization Performance. The findings from this study contributes knowledge on the mediation model of employees' empowerment on organisational performance.

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