

Global Management Journal for Academic & Corporate Studies (GMJACS)  
Fall 2021, Vol 11, No. 2, pp.123-142  
ISSN: 2219-6145 (Print), 2305-0756 (Electronic)  
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Published By Bahria University Karachi Campus

## **The Negative Role of Organizational Embeddedness in Organizational Support, Trust and Deviance Relationships: Evidence from Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

It is the need of current research to assess the negative aspect of organizational embeddedness. In order to develop an understanding of its power, it is essential to assess its all dimensions so as to reduce its effects on employees and organizations. A sample of 454 employees has been drawn from various organizations operating in Pakistan. SPSS is used to assess demographics and PLS-SEM is used to test the research relationships. The findings of the study support the hypothesis that there exist a negative relationship of organizational support and trust with workplace deviance and trust-deviance relationship is weakened while support-deviance remains the same with organizational embeddedness serving as a moderator. The study caters the gap existing in research by highlighting the negative face of organizational embeddedness. Majority of the research depicts that organizational embeddedness leads to desirable employee and organizational outcomes. Moreover, it focuses on one of the commonly faced problems of the organizations not only in Pakistan but in rest of the world i.e. workplace deviance.

**Keywords:** Perceived organizational support, workplace deviance, Organizational trust, Pakistan

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## 1. Introduction

Granoveter first coined the term Job embeddedness in 1985 as an innovative concept in order to determine the level of social engagement and embeddedness an individual possess within their institution (Jamshaid and Malik 2018). The inception of the idea of 'job embeddedness' dates back to 1995 when Tom Lee, Terry Mitchell and their colleagues started developing interest in the idea of 'why do people stay?' more than 'why do people leave?'. During discussion they realized that there are certain factors that led Mitchel and Lee stay at Washington since 1969 and 1983 respectively. These factors included linkage created with doctoral students and community, comfort provided by the University of Washington and the sacrifices they will have to make while leaving university for instance problems created for many doctoral students. The focus of Mitchel and colleagues shifted from affect-saturated constructs like employee involvement, commitment etc. to contextual influences that affect staying (William Lee, Burch et al. 2014).

Job embeddedness is referred as the "network" of connections built by employees within the organization and community which lead them to stay on their occupation (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). The organizational or on-the-job factors that render employees to stay on the job is known as organizational embeddedness (OE). The factors related to community or off-the-job is considered as community embeddedness (CE). It has been depicted in research work that the most logical negative predictor of voluntary turnover is job embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001, Lee, Mitchell et al. 2004, Allen 2006, Halbesleben and Wheeler 2015, Singh 2016, Singh 2019).

Lee, Mitchell et al. (2004) determined predictive validity of job embeddedness on organizational citizenship and job performance. It showed that the benefit of job embeddedness is that it results in higher job performance and higher organizational citizenship behavior. On the contrary, researchers argued that the effect of job embeddedness on employee performance is not direct rather it serves as a moderator and mediator in different relationships. William Lee, Burch et al. (2014) from the year 2007, Ng and Feldman did an interesting expansion of the idea of job embeddedness by showing its relationship with innovation-related behaviors, careers, social and human capital, and work-family conflict.

Insufficient research work has been done in order to assess the negative aspect embeddedness and its connection with other work insights and behaviors. Therefore, in order to assess the power of embeddedness completely, it is essential to explore its negative side (Allen, Peltokorpi et al. 2016, Greene, Mero et al. 2018, Singh 2018). Marasi, Cox et al. (2016) are among the few studies exploring the possible negative aspects of embeddedness (Singh 2019).

Beginning from Industrial Revolution, organizations are facing major problem of workplace deviance (Klotz and Buckley 2013). It is a major issue facing all the organizations irrespective of the fact that they are operating in developing or underdeveloped countries (Nasir and Bashir 2012). Every year, the cost of organizations is increased to billions of dollars just because deviant behaviors shown by employees (Marasi,

Cox et al. 2016). The results of empirical studies confirm that there exist a distinct type of workplace deviance in Pakistan such as wasting resources, fraud, stealing from companies properties, voluntarily working slow, showing favoritism etc. which ultimately lead to organizational loss resulting in increased cost, decline in work performance, reduced productivity and company reputation (Shahid and Ahmad 2016). It has been observed that low organizational support and trust leads employees to show deviant work behavior (Singh 2019). Therefore, the research aims to build relationship among aforementioned variables by exploring the role of job embeddedness as a possible moderator for this relationship.

When it comes to smaller countries, then the role of organizational embeddedness in ascertaining desirable organizational outcomes is more prominent than community embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001, Lee, Mitchell et al. 2004). It has been observed that in small countries, employees are usually less inclined towards changing or relocating “communities” (Singh 2019). Therefore, usually organizations consider positive viewpoint of embeddedness and most of the research work is also in favor of this idea.

The negative side of embeddedness is considered by (Sekiguchi, Burton et al. 2008, Marasi, Cox et al. 2016) only. The former mentioned research work depicted that the desired leader-member relationship is adversely affected by embeddedness. The latter mentioned study used embeddedness as a moderator between organizational trust-deviance and support-deviance relationship. Same has been explored by Singh (2019) and the results showed that the desirable relationship between support-deviance and trust-deviance is weakened by embeddedness.

In the present study, the aforementioned call has been answered through the assessment of influences embeddedness has over perceived organizational support-deviance and organizational trust-deviance in non-western world. It therefore intends to elaborate the work of (Singh 2019) by building on the idea that two major factors affecting workplace deviance are perceived organizational trust and support, and embeddedness can harm both of the aforementioned relationships. The applicability of organizational embeddedness is more in developing countries like Pakistan because low rate of relocation makes community embeddedness less valid. Research work done related to job embeddedness in Pakistani context focuses more towards its positive side as an ingredient for improving employee performance (Fatima, Shafique et al. 2015), employee innovative behavior (Ansari, Siddiqui et al. 2018), perceived organizational justice (Jamshaid and Malik 2018) etc. but scarcity of literature exists when it comes to the potential negative side of job embeddedness.

Indeed, the support provided by the employer to employees is an important factor for building up the perception in employee’s mind (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990). It shapes up their expectations about future actions of the organization i.e., whether its actions will be advantageous and favorable for them or not (Robinson 1996). If the perceptions of the employees related to organizational trust and support is positive then it ultimately lessens the chances of destructive workplace behavior which is a part of workplace deviance (Robinson and Bennett 1995). In an evidence received from Pakistan, high level of perceived supervisor

support, which comes under the domain of perceived organizational support, reduces the chances of workplace deviant behaviors where organizational support served as a mediator (Khan, Mahmood et al. 2015). Similarly, considerable research work has been done in Pakistani context to highlight various factors leading to workplace deviance behaviors. Nasir and Bashir (2012) explored multiple antecedents of workplace deviance in public sector organizations of Pakistan including lower job satisfaction, financial pressures, employee perception, organizational injustice etc. Shahid and Ahmad (2016) reasoned that lack of organizational learning opportunities compel employees to show deviant workplace behaviors.

Therefore, the major input of this paper is that embeddedness does not necessarily results in positive employee and organizational outcome. This study emphasizes that the wanted impact of perceived organizational support and trust on workplace deviance is weakened by embeddedness. This study is also undertaken in the situation of developing nation which portrays a different viewpoint with respect to developed country perspective. The focus of the study is not community embeddedness as it is not commonly observed in the context of developing country.

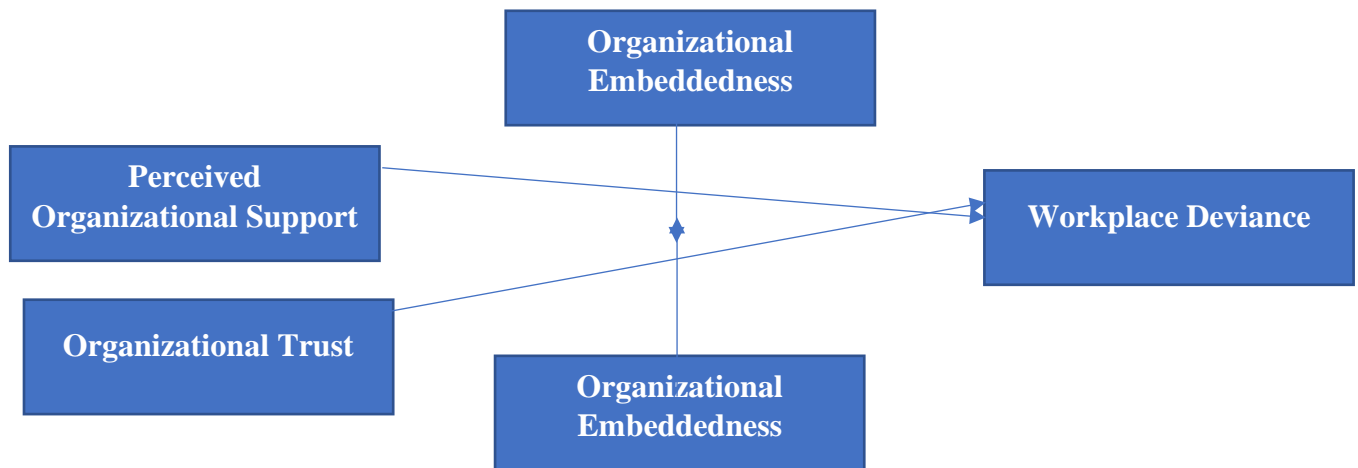
There are three theories that have been used in this study (1) reactance theories (Brehm 1966) (2) social exchange (Blau 1964), and (3) embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). Social exchanges reflect the concepts of perceived organizational support and organizational trust. The relationship between aforementioned concepts and workplace deviance is grounded in social exchange theory. Theories of reactance and embeddedness are employed to measure the potential negative influence of organizational embeddedness. The model of research has been shown in Figure 1.

This is a novel attempt as no previous study offered to explain the role of organizational embeddedness in leading towards workplace deviance in Pakistani context. Hence, this would further extend the research frontier and provide a much-needed generalization of organizational embeddedness and workplace deviance literature.

## **2. Theory and Hypothesis**

### **2.1. Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Trust**

Employees build perceptions in their mind with respect to the value given to their contributions (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990). Perceptions are also developed with respect to the care and support provided by the organization for wellbeing of its employees (Allen, Shore et al. 2003). These perceptions are classified as organizational support gained from the organization of employment (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990).

**Figure 1: Research Model**

(Source: Self-Made)

The study of perceived organizational support started with the following observations: managers concern for employees' commitment manifest itself in the form of employees concern for commitment level that organization portrays (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990, Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002, Shanock and Eisenberger 2006). The ideas related to organizational support is developed by employees to fulfil the needs for esteem, consent and association and also to analyze the advantages of intensified work exertion. Therefore, perceived support compels employees to assist the organization in reaching its goals, their expectations and emotional commitment to the organization that progressive performance will be compensated. Social Exchange Theory is in lined with the idea of perceived organizational support (Blau 1964). This theory highlights the existence of mutual exchange relationships between organization of employment and its employees. Thus, the idea of perceived organizational support reflects that it becomes mandatory for organizations to support wellbeing of its employees when its employees feel that their organization supports them (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990, Singh 2019). Kurtessis, Eisenberger et al. (2017) proposes that perceived organizational support often brings positive results for individuals and organizations.

Employees' organizational trust is defined as their expectations and perceptions that the current as well as future actions of the organization will be advantageous, favorable and in lined with their interest (Robinson 1996). Another definition of organizational trust has been presented by Cook and Wall (1980); Jena, Pradhan et al. (2018); Jena and Pradhan (2017) as the degree to which employees have confidence on actions and words of their employers and are willing to attribute good aim to the organization. Sitkin and Roth (1993) suggested that the base of organizational trust is value congruence. They elaborated the idea by proposing it as the extent to which values, beliefs and engagement of employees is in lined with visions and strategic goals of the organizations. Colquitt, Scott et al. (2007) believes trust as an essential ingredient in active relationships built at workplace in their research including 132 studies considering meta-analysis of trust.

Employees recognize various features of organization trust for instance trust in your subordinates such as co-workers and supervisors, and trust in the organizational values and policies (Sousa-Lima, Michel et al. 2013). There exist a direct association between trust and many of the positive organizational results such as rising performance (De Jong, Bijlsma-Frankema et al. 2014, Kong, Dirks et al. 2014). Social exchange theory also embeds trust in it (Blau 1964). Trust serves to be the essence of social exchanges and its development largely depends on such exchange relationships. Due to positive social interactions, employees feel that it is obligatory for them to work as per the interest of the organization.

Indeed, research supports the idea that perceived organizational trust and perceived organizational support are responsible for the advancement of employee work attitude such as commitment to the organization (Tan and Tan 2000), job satisfaction and employee engagement (Agarwal 2014). The engagement of employees in workplace deviance is also dependent on these employee perceptions.

## **2.2. Workplace Deviance**

Workplace deviance is defined as the intended use of harmful behaviors for organization and/or its components (Robinson and Bennett 1995). Workplace deviance can be bifurcated into two types i.e., the behaviors damaging the organization (organizational deviance) and the behaviors damaging individuals in the organization (interpersonal deviance). There are certain examples of organizational deviance such as working at a pace that is slower than the capability of an individual and coming late for work (Bennett and Robinson 2000). Moreover, deviance can transform itself into various different forms including small acts like embarrassing co-workers and spreading rumors to grave acts of misconduct including sabotage and theft Baharom, Sharfuddin et al. (2017); (Singh 2019). Appelbaum, Semerjian et al. (2012) mentions that different forms of workplace deviance are being experienced by 11 percent of all British employees and 1.7m Americans such as threats and intimidations, physical and verbal assault, sabotage, humiliation, withdrawal behaviors, general corruption within the workplace and distraction in production processes. This pattern consistently occurs at global level.

The synonym for workplace deviance is counter-productive work behavior (Fox, Spector et al. 2001, Fox and Spector 2005). Chang and Smithikrai (2010) and Sackett and DeVore (2001) also determined that workplace deviance is same as counter-productive work behaviors with dreadful results for the organization. There exist various factors that shape deviance including perception of employees towards their employer.

### **2.2.1. Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Trust and Workplace Deviance**

The existing research give little attention to the relationship between workplace deviance and perceived organizational support. However, the foundation for the description of exchange relationships between the organization and employees is still based on employee perception of organizational support. Theorist believing in social exchange theory suggests that the ideas developed by employees related to organizational support creates an obligation for them to worry about a caring organization (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990).

Thus, the attachment of such employees with the organization is increased when they feel that it is obligatory for them to work towards growth of the organization (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). On the contrary, when employees perceive that no organizational support is given to them then they develop employer related negative feelings and indulge in undesirable actions within the workplace (Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. 1990). Leaders or supervisors play a significant role in transferring organizational support (Maher and Youssef 2016). Employees express their feelings with the help of undesirable emotions such as outrage, hatred and anger (Folger 1993); when they experience any restrictions on perceived organizational support or perceive any injustice. Moreover, Farasat and Ziaaddini (2013); Chen, Fah et al. (2016); Chung (2017); Alias and Rasdi (2015); Singh (2019) also discussed about support and deviance relationship at different levels. In consideration of the theoretical argument, following hypotheses is proposed:

*H1a. Perceived organizational support is negatively related to workplace deviance.*

The perception of employees related to organizational trust can be extended to social exchange theory. The interaction of an employee with his/her employer determines employee's trust and the confidence that future interactions will be the same as done previously (Robinson 1996). Therefore, trust is considered as a biproduct of interactions and experiences. It is a significant element of interactive relationships, which occurs between employees, managers and department leaders (Demir 2011).

Thau, Crossley et al. (2007); Berry, Ones et al. (2007); Marasi, Cox et al. (2016) maintained that employees indulge in deviant behaviors due to lack of organizational trust. According to Blau (1964) due to unfavorable interactions, it is likely that these employees reject organizational norms and values. Therefore, Holmes and Rempe (1989) noted that low organizational trust manifest itself in the form of negative employee loyalty and motivation, and deviant behavior increases (Thau, Crossley et al. 2007). In consideration of the aforementioned idea, the following hypothesis is deduced:

*H1b. Organizational trust is negatively related to workplace deviance.*

### **2.3. The moderating role of organizational embeddedness**

Organizational embeddedness is the on-the-job element of job embeddedness theory. It elaborates the organizational links, fit and sacrifices that bind workers to their employer (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). The idea of 'Links' accounts for the relationships and networks developed by employees within the organization. 'Fit' refers to the extent to which employee goals and organizational goals/values are compatible with each other. 'Sacrifices' describe the psychological and material benefits gained by employees while working in the organization that will be lost once, they leave. The stronger the links, fit and sacrifices are, the greater will be the organizational embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001, Lee, Mitchell et al. 2004, Halbesleben and Wheeler 2008, Bergiel, Nguyen et al. 2009, Ng and Feldman 2011, Yang, Ma et al. 2011, Singh 2016, Singh 2019).

Employees stay on their job due to “stuckness inertia” associated with embeddedness. It not only reduces cost incurred due to voluntary turnover, recruitment and training but it also increases retention (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001, Hom, Tsui et al. 2009). Sociologists sees embeddedness as a force that restrict employees to stay with the organization. Over the period of time, the employees who were compelled to stay develop frustration. It ultimately leads to “reactance” (Ng and Feldman 2011, Singh 2019). Leading studies by Marasi, Cox et al. (2016);(Singh 2018); Greene, Mero et al. (2018); Allen, Peltokorpi et al. (2016) depicts that the relationship of organizational embeddedness with other employee behaviors and perceptions is not always positive.

Brehm (1966) noted that Reactance theory acknowledges belief of individuals regarding certain extent of behavioral freedom in which they can engage. A motivational state (reactance) is generated as a result of certain events leading to the loss of behavioral freedom in order to restore the freedom in question. When employees are unable to alter their situation, it elevates their frustration and increases the chances of engaging in negative or destructive forms of “reactance” like workplace deviance. Does the behavioral freedom of employees threaten by organizational embeddedness? Perhaps, it can, and employees pressurized by their embeddedness can engage in workplace deviance in order to “act out”. On the contrary, only those employees do not automatically and directly indulge in high level of workplace deviance who perceives that the organization provides high level of support and trust, as theorized in *H1a* and *H1b*, the degree and intensity of indulgence in such behaviors largely depends on the level of embeddedness of employees in their job/organization.

When employees have to sacrifice their freedom to leave, then they react in different ways (Brehm 1966). They feel reluctant in portraying helping and cooperative behavior towards other in the organization (Singh 2019). Workers forbade from leaving current employment when they are not only supported by but also trust their organization and are also enmeshed in their jobs (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). It is necessary for embedded employees to have autonomy and control otherwise it is likely that they will indulge in deviant behaviors to compensate this loss. In consideration of the aforementioned arguments, the current study proposes the following hypotheses:

*H2a.* Organizational embeddedness will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and workplace deviance, such that the negative support-deviance relationship becomes weak with strong organizational embeddedness and vice versa.

*H2b.* Organizational embeddedness will moderate the relationship between organizational trust and workplace deviance, such that the negative trust-deviance relationship becomes weak with strong organizational embeddedness and vice versa.



### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Research design, procedure and sample

A survey method has been used to validate the conceptual model. The questionnaire has been distributed among 500 employees. In return, the data has been collected from the sample (n=454) comprised of employees from various national and multinational companies operating in Pakistan particularly Karachi.

#### 3.2. Measurement

Five-point Likert Scale has been used for the assessment of each item on each measure ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The values of Cronbach  $\alpha$  clearly demonstrate internal consistency of each scale. The items employed for measuring research variables has been depicted in Appendix-A.

*Perceived organizational support.* Eisenberger, Fasolo et al. (1990) presented eight-item scale to measure perceived organizational support. The reliability of this scale is equal to  $\alpha = 0.73$ . On eight statements, questions were asked from respondents to elaborate as to how much their organization supported them. An item from the sample is: "The organization values my contribution to its well-being".

*Organizational trust.* Robinson (1996) presented seven item scale was used to measure organizational trust. The reliability of this scale is  $\alpha = 0.82$ . Seven statements were used to judge the degree of trust an employee has over his or her employer. An item from the sample is: "I believe my employer has high integrity".

*Organizational Embeddedness.* Out of 12-item scale developed by Clinton, Knight et al. (2012), 6 items were used to measure organizational embeddedness ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ). The selection of these items is done in consideration of the fact that these items measured organizational embeddedness while the remaining were not measuring the desired variable. Sample items of the scale includes: "The organization provides me with a way of life that suits me", "Overall, I have strong ties with people throughout the organization would be difficult for me to leave this organization" and "There would be many things about organizational life that I would be sad to lose if I left".

*Workplace Deviance:* Bennett and Robinson (2000) 19-item scale were used to measure workplace deviance. Out of 19 items, 13 items were used (8 items for organizational deviance and 5 items for interpersonal deviance). The reliability of this scale is  $\alpha = 0.85$ . Sample items include: "Said something hurtful to someone at work" and "Come in late to work without permission".

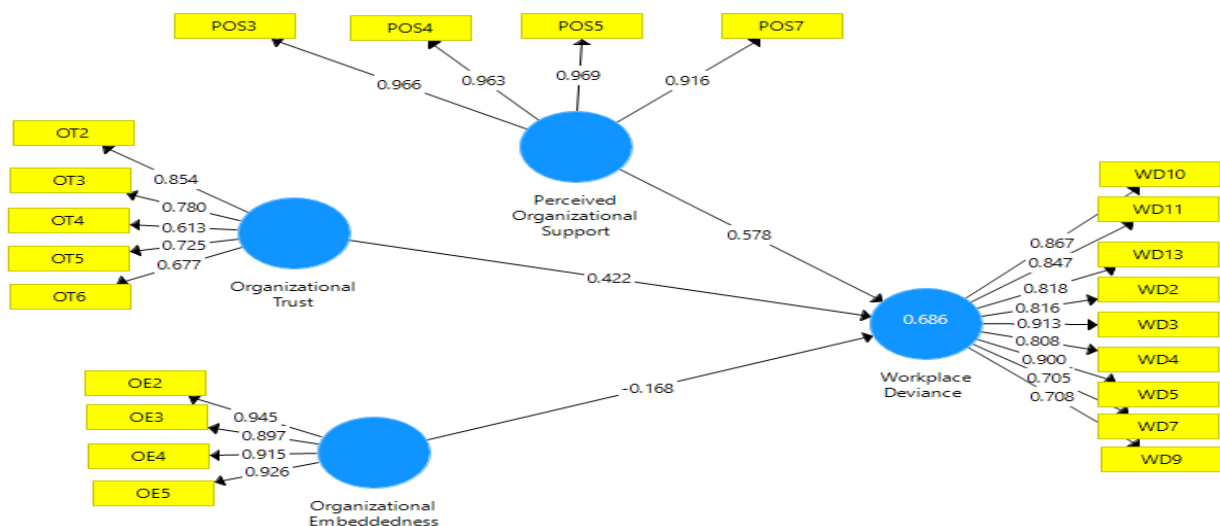
### 4. Analysis and Findings

SPSS has been used to analyze demographic variables of the data i.e., gender, age, education and designation. Additionally, PLS-SEM has been used to study the relationship between variables and to analyze the effect of moderator on the relationship.

Out of 454 participants, 267 participants were male, and 187 participants were females. Additionally, 34.1% participants belonged to the age group of 31 to 40 year and 32.4% belonged to 21 to 30 years. Least number of participants were above 50 years. Majority number of participants were graduates i.e., 63%. In addition, Executive level employees were 151 out of 454, managerial level were 33, officer level were 186 and 71 supervisor level employees.

In SEM, a variable is either exogenous or endogenous. An exogenous variable has path arrows pointing outwards and none leading to it. Meanwhile, an endogenous variable has at least one path leading to it and represents the effects of other variable(s) (Chin, Marcolin et al. 2003). According to the Figure 2, the exogenous latent variables for the study are perceived organizational support, organizational trust, and organizational embeddedness while the endogenous latent variable is workplace deviance.

**Figure 2: PLS-SEM Model**



To test the study hypothesis, we have used the structural equation model (SEM) whereas the testing has been gone through Smart PLS software. SEM is used widely to assess different models and methods of regression (Barron and Kenny, 1986).

Reliability implies stability of questionnaire outcome (Hair, Black et al. 2006). For the current study, composite reliability has been calculated in order to determine the reliability of the measurement instrument. Its value is greater than or equal to 0.6 showing high levels of internal consistency.

Moreover, In case of confirmatory factor analysis, construct with the loading of .5 are consider as strong loading variables whereas the constructs with the loading of below .5 are considered as less are better to be removed from the table (Hair, Black et al. 2006). Similarly, in the current study, the constructs whose loadings are low have been removed while the constructs having loadings greater than 0.5 have been considered.

Convergent Validity is the assessment to measure the correlation existing between various indicators of the same construct that are in agreement (Hair, Black et al. 2006). All AVE values in this study are greater than 0.5 depicting the establishment of convergent validity.

Discriminate validity can be defined as any single construct when differs from other constructs in the model. Discriminate validity results are satisfactory when the constructs are having an AVE loading more than 0.5 which means that minimum 50% of variance was took by the construct (Chin, Marcolin et al. 2003). The results of the study show the existence of discriminant validity.

**Table 1: Path Coefficients**

|  | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P Values     |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Modeartor OT*WD -&gt; Workplace Deviance</b>                  | -0.196              | -0.207          | 0.076                      | 2.584                    | <b>0.010</b> |
| <b>Modeartor POS*WD -&gt; Workplace Deviance</b>                 | 0.011               | 0.027           | 0.094                      | 0.119                    | <b>0.906</b> |
| <b>Organizational Embeddedness -&gt; Workplace Deviance</b>      | 0.154               | 0.167           | 0.080                      | 1.931                    | <b>0.054</b> |
| <b>Organizational Trust -&gt; Workplace Deviance</b>             | -0.160              | -0.175          | 0.058                      | 2.760                    | <b>0.006</b> |
| <b>Perceived Organizational Support -&gt; Workplace Deviance</b> | -0.365              | -0.350          | 0.087                      | 4.202                    | <b>0.000</b> |

Table 1 shown above clearly depicts that trust-deviance relationship is negative as the sig value is less than 0.05. It clearly shows the acceptance of hypothesis *H1a*. Additionally, the negative and significant relationship exist between perceived organizational support and workplace deviance (the value of  $p$  is  $0 < 0.05$ ). It reveals the acceptance of *H1b*.

Also, it is evident from Table I that hypothesis *H2a* is rejected as the sig value is  $0.9 > 0.05$ . It reveals that organizational embeddedness when serving as a moderator does not weakens the negative support-deviance relationship. On the contrary, the moderating effect of OE is significant in the relationship between organizational trust and workplace deviance as the  $p$  value is  $0.01 < 0.05$  and  $t$ -value is  $2.58 > 2$ . This shows the acceptance of hypothesis *H2b*.

## 5. Discussion

First, there exist a negative relationship of organizational support and organizational trust with workplace deviance, which ultimately make it acceptable to assess the moderating effect of organizational embeddedness. The acceptance of the hypothesis is in lined with the theoretical arguments present in the literature. The idea of workplace deviance is usually characterized as a response to annoying organizational stressors, such as societal, working and financial situations (Robinson and Bennett 1995). Positive working

and social conditions lead to increased degrees of perceived organizational support and organizational trust which is considered as an essential ingredient for the development of employment relationships over the period of time. The reduction of frustration ultimately results from such positive conditions (Hollinger and Clark 1982, Robinson and Bennett 1995). Additionally, the research work done in the context of Pakistan also suggest that workplace deviance is a key problem for organizations. Nasir and Bashir (2012) explored multiple antecedents of workplace deviance in public sector organizations of Pakistan including lower job satisfaction, financial pressures etc. Shahid and Ahmad (2016) reasoned that lack of organizational learning opportunities compel employees to show deviant workplace behaviors. Therefore, in lined with the previous work done, the result of the study suggests that in order to reduce the effect of stressors leading to workplace deviance, the provision of high level of organizational support and organizational trust is important.

The hypotheses determining the moderating effect of organizational embeddedness has been partially accepted. The rejection of hypothesis *H2a* depicts that the support-deviance relationship is not weakened by organizational embeddedness serving as a moderator. This result is in lined with the idea of social exchange theory that when employees build a positive perception about organizational support then they feel obligatory to work towards its progress (Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). Hence, it is less likely that they will indulge in deviant actions. Even high level of organizational embeddedness will not weaken this relationship between organizational support and workplace deviance. Most notably the aforementioned wanted relationship between organizational trust and workplace deviance is majorly weakened by organizational embeddedness. Usually, it has been observed that organizations are experiencing workplace deviance due to elevating global competition, economic changes, restructuring and downsizing (Marasi, Cox et al. 2016). In such cases when the level of organizational embeddedness is quite high, strong relationship between perceived organizational trust can also not lower down workplace deviance. When employees are not given enough autonomy to leave their job then it enhances their frustration (Brehm 1966, Mitchell, Holtom et al. 2001). In order to repossess their autonomy, employees go towards deviant behaviors as suggested in this study. It has also been suggested in the study that “stuckness” linked with organizational embeddedness weaken the negative trust-deviance relationship (Marasi, Cox et al. 2016).

### **5.1. Research/theoretical implications**

The current study has many theoretical implications. It depicts the negative aspect of organizational embeddedness and thus extending the research work of embeddedness in this direction. This study employs reactance and social exchange theories. It depicts that when organizational embeddedness serves as a moderator of certain relationships, then outcomes are usually negative. Unlike previous research work done in Pakistani context where embeddedness has always been viewed as an ingredient for desirable organizational outcomes (Fatima, Shafique et al. 2015). This study is also significant for its contribution towards the idea of workplace deviance. This particular idea is linked with high organizational cost (Case 2000, Harris and Ogbonna 2006) . Correspondingly, evidence received from Pakistan also suggest that workplace deviance is an ongoing problem in the organizations (Nasir and Bashir 2012). Therefore, it is

important to study the concept in detail and highlight various reason due to which workplace deviant behavior can occur within the firm.

## **5.2. Practical Implications**

This study also presents a number of practical contributions. Firstly, it is important for organizations to take initiative for strengthening employee perception of organizational trust and support. It will prevent employees from going towards deviant behaviors. Secondly, managers are responsible for considering organizational embeddedness, as if not managed properly and reached on high level then ultimately it will lead towards deviant behaviors. Therefore, organizations operating in Pakistan must try that employee do not feel like “stuckness” and as a result, they must not feel constrained otherwise it can lead to high organizational cost.

## **5.3. Limitations**

Firstly, the sample used for the study is limited which creates a boundary for generalizability of results. Secondly, in this study, the impact of only two variables have been considered on workplace deviance while there are other variables present in the environment as well that influence deviant behaviors.

## **6. Conclusion**

The paper focused on the two major ideas that are of utmost importance in theoretical as well as practical domain. It tends to assess the applicability of old established relationship between organizational trust – deviance and support-deviance in Pakistani context. The results of the study are in lined with the research work done in the past proving that negative relationship exist between trust – deviance and support – deviance in the organizations functioning in Pakistan (Nasir and Bashir 2012). Moreover, contradictory to the already existing research work, where embeddedness is always viewed from positive perspective, this study highlighted negative facet of organizational embeddedness. It has been observed that organizational embeddedness always yields favorable organizational outcomes such as higher job performance and organizational citizenship behavior (Lee, Mitchell et al. 2004). But this study tends to fill the gap in the literature by highlighting the desirable relationship between trust-deviance is weakened by organizational embeddedness. Employees start feeling “stuckness” associated with organizational embeddedness due to which they exhibit deviant behaviors.

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### Appendix-A: Questionnaire

| <b>PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT</b><br>(Eisenberger et al., 1986)                      |           |          |          |          |           |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
|  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| The organisation values my contribution to its well-being                                  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation fails to appreciate any extra effort from me [r/c]                        | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation would ignore any complaint from me [r/c]                                  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation really cares about my well-being  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Even if I did the best job possible, the organisation would fail to notice [r/c]           | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation cares about my general satisfaction at work                               | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation shows very little concern for me [r/c]                                    | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work                                 | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| <b>ORGANISATIONAL TRUST</b><br>(Robinson, 1996)  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| I believe my employer has high integrity   | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| I can expect my employer to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion               | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| My employer is not always honest and truthful [r/c]  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| In general, I believe my employer's motives and intentions are good                        | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| I do not think my employer treats me fairly [r/c]  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| My employer is open and upfront with me  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| I am not sure I fully trust my employer [r/c]  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| <b>ORGANISATIONAL EMBEDDEDNESS</b><br>(Clinton et al., 2012)                               | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| The organisation provides me with a way of life that suits me                              | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Overall, I fit very well in the organization   | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| My closest friends are in the organization   | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Overall, I have strong ties with people throughout the organisation                        | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| I would miss the excitement that this job brings if I left                                 | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| There would be many things about organizational life that I would be sad to lose if I left | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| <b>WORKPLACE DEVIANCE</b><br>(Bennett and Robinson, 2000)                                  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| Made fun of someone at work  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Said something hurtful to someone at work  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Played a mean prank on someone at work   | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |
| Acted rudely toward someone at work  | 1         | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5         |

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Publicly embarrassed someone at work   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Taken property from work without permission  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Come in late to work without permission  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Littered your work environment   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Neglected to follow your boss's instructions   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorised person                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |