



Impact of Extrinsic Rewards on employee Innovative work behavior: Role of work Engagement and perceived organizational support

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of extrinsic rewards on employee's innovative work behavior (IWB) and explores the role of employee work engagement as an intervening mechanism between extrinsic rewards and employees IWB. Besides, it investigates the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) for the associations of extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement. Data (N = 307) was collected from the higher education sector by using survey method, comprising of faculty members and administrative staff of Pakistani universities. The findings revealed that extrinsic rewards enhanced the employee IWB. The results show the mediational role of work engagement, and the relationship of extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement is found to be more salient in high perceived organizational support as compared to lower one. The findings are discussed in terms of its implications for theory and practice at the end.



Introduction

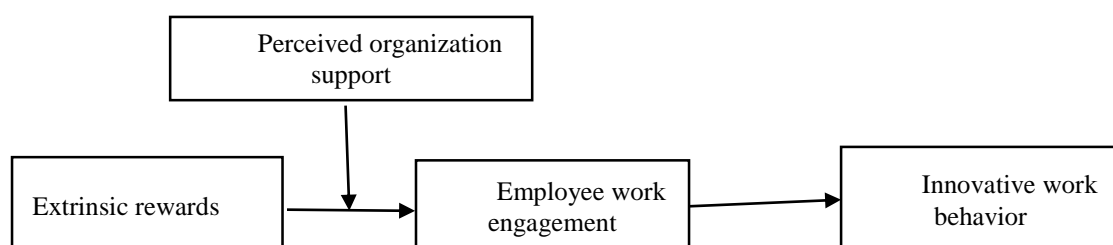
Innovative work behavior is the key to improve the public sector organization's ability to operate efficiently and to deliver high quality services in this competitive and challenging work environment (de Vries et al., 2016; El-Kassar et al., 2022). It is well established that intrinsic rewards boost the creative work performance (Amabile, 1996). But impact of extrinsic rewards on employee creative work performance is still controversial (Malik & Butt, 2017). There are empirical and theoretical conflicting results regarding the relationships between extrinsic rewards and employees innovative work behaviors (Kanama & Nishikawa, 2017). Recent analysis by List et al. (2017) indicated that there is no meta-analytic evidence indicating extrinsic rewards harmful for employees' positive job outcomes. Detrimental consequences of extrinsic rewards on creative /innovative performance can be avoided through the alignment to rewards contingent to job performance (innovation) (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1998). Effect of contingent extrinsic rewards on employee innovation can be positive (Elenkov & Manev, 2005). Behavioral theory suggests that extrinsic rewards can serve to reinforce the positive effects to engage in creative (innovative) performance (Eisenberger & Shanock, 2003). This view favors that properly administered extrinsic rewards act to enhance their creative/ innovative work performance (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1998).

According to Agarwal (2014) "one option for organizations to become more innovative is to encourage their employees to be innovative". This task can be fulfilled only if the employees

are motivated to engage in those work activities that have an aim to generate and implement ideas since motivation is a source of energy to engage in task (Singh, 2016). There are environmental (Basit, 2017) and personal aspects (Latta & Fait, 2016; Basit, 2017) to develop the employee work engagement. As organization use different types of extrinsic motivator such as extrinsic rewards to encourage their employees job engagement i.e., Salary raises, bonuses, benefits, opportunities of promotions, type of work, and job security etc. (Singh, 2016; Fulmer & Li, 2022). Extrinsic motivator, boost the employee’s intrinsic motivation but at the start it is an extrinsic form (Cooper & Jayatilaka, 2006). To make the firm more productive, manger use extrinsic rewards (Singh, 2016) that reinforce the employee job engagement. Employee engagement is a special form of attitude (Singh, 2016), which directs their energy towards desired outcomes (Vroom,1964). Financial rewards are positively associated with work engagement (Crawford et al., 2010; Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Thus, employee work engagement is the key driver for the achievement of organizational goals in this dynamic environment. Researchers reported that employee engagement have a positive effect for innovative work behavior (Alfes et al., 2013). Consequentially the management of the organization need to give priority of the following issue, how they can stimulate and shaped employee IWB?

Situational strength theory (Mayer et al., 2010) postulated, that performance-based rewards inform employees the results of their actions and further continuous provision of rewards/incentives that stimulate their appropriate behaviors. In other, situations where employees perceived that no material change will get in return (e.g., valued outcomes), then they may not comply to the required behaviors (e.g., IWB) (Sanders et al., 2018). Eisenberger et al. (1990) defined the Perceived organizational support (POS) as, employee perceive that their inputs are valued by their employer and in turn organization cares their well-being. The organizational support theory postulated that individual hold a general belief about the firm value their input and reciprocate with the support for their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This is what individuals cognitively perceived about their organizational support and modify their beliefs and attitude towards them (Alfes et al., 2013). Findings of Murthy (2017) reveals that there is significant positive relationship between POS and employee work engagement. Scholars posit that along with extrinsic rewards, if employees cognitively perceived, management support, then, they may voluntarily more engaged in their assign tasks.

Although employees innovative work behavior (IWB) is very important for improving the delivery and provision of services in public firms (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013), but little attention was paid to explore the role of IWB of public sector employees (Bankins et al., 2017; de Vries et al., 2016). Recently, the number of research studies on innovation in the government sector is enhancing (Hartley et., 2013). We still know little about, public employee’s innovative work behaviors and even less aware that how the innovative job behavior of public sector employees will be supported and stimulated (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). Thus, there is strong need to investigate the factors that support the public employees innovative job activities (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). Therefore, keeping in view the existing literature, this study identifies the impact of extrinsic rewards on employee IWB. Further investigate the mediating role of work engagement for the relationship of extrinsic rewards and employees innovative work behavior. Additionally, investigate the interactive effects of POS for the association of extrinsic rewards and work engagement. This study takes the theoretical support from situational strength theory (Mayer et al., 2010) and organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). The proposed model is presented in Fig.1.



Context of the Study

De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) defined employee innovative work behavior as “behavior directed towards the initiation and application of new and useful ideas, processes, products, or procedures”. Employees innovative work behavior is integral to the success of organization as it influences the firm image and performance outcomes (Yuan & Woodman, 2010). Janssen (2000) provide the three dimensions of IWB such as idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization.

Innovation in public sector is very important because innovation impact and is, impacted by the public sector organization diverse policy challenges, it enforces the efficiency, and it needs for legalization (de Vries et al., 2016). Innovative work behaviors are very critical for the success of business venture (Damanpour et al., 2009), and the government sector is often viewed as not very innovative (Suseno et al., 2020). Scholars reported that public institutions do not allow innovation due to nature of sector in terms of rule obsession, short termism, risk avoidances and lack of competition (Frees et al., 2015).

The importance of innovation in academic domain is manifested by many scholars (Nijab, 2010; Rehman, 2014). Rehman (2014) spotlight the need of innovation in research universities through multiple approaches such as create the innovative individuals and community that have the motivation to think, approach and act innovatively.

In response to the importance of innovation in research universities, this study highlights the IWB in public sector institutions. As, little attention has given to explore the determinants of IWB in public institutions (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017).

1. Literature Review research hypotheses

Extrinsic rewards are majorly monetary and financial in nature and in external bodies control whether it is granted or not (Adoko, 2015). It consists of following elements, compensatory time off, promotion, pay raises, social climate, job security, merit bonuses and competitive salaries (Mahaney & Lederer, 2006). The researcher said in the workplace, extrinsic rewards (low salary), less variety of intrinsic rewards and lack of empowerment are among the first top five direct employee demotivators (Kwandayi et al., 2013). Providing a set of extrinsic rewards fetch the employee desirable performance and behavior because human behavior changeable and derivable according to behaviorism perspectives (Proyr et al., 1969; Maltzman, 1960). Some empirical evidence showed that when extrinsic rewards are specifically designed to approach the divergent thinking, subsequently, leads the recipient behavior inclined towards creativity (Farr & Ford, 1990). In the Past empirical studies confirmed that extrinsic rewards such as expected salary stock options, team-based rewards, and security benefits, compensation etc., have positively associated with employee IWB (Laursen & Foss, 2003; Zhou et al., 2009). A recent review also in favor of that extrinsic rewards enhance the employee IWB and employee involvement (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). Another study identifies that when firms deploy compensation system it gives the employee a signal that the firms will recognize their extra role behavior (IWB) (Zhang & Begely, 2011). The bilateral relationship between employee and employer effects the employee IWB (Ramamoorthy et al., 2005). Janssen (2000) argued that employees who feel that their efforts fairly rewarded by the employer likely reciprocate with more extra role behavior (IWB). Hence based on existing literature and situational strength theory (Mayer et al., 2010), I hypothesize that,

H 1: Extrinsic rewards are positively associated with employee IWB.

Extrinsic rewards impact on firm’s productivity and profitability by increasing the level of employee engagement (Singh, 2016). Because it related to the tangible benefits and pay related issues in the work setting. These rewards resolve the employee financial and non-financial issues

and give them an opportunity to live a better life. In the past there is complex relationships between extrinsic rewards and employee engagement, for example Bakker and Demerouti (2009) said that extrinsic rewards inhibit the employee job engagement. While other studies found positive effects between extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement (Omolayo & Owalobi, 2007). To foster the employee engagement is not an easy task for the firms, because employees demand incentives and rewards to fulfill their psychological needs that complements the increasing organizational changes (Adoko et al., 2015). To study role employee work engagement, a good theoretical lens found in SET, because it clarifies the different level of employee work engagement in the organization and other workplaces (Saks, 2006). So, when employer make an investment such as by offering extrinsic rewards, then they are expected from their employees, to reciprocate with more vigor, absorption, and dedication in their assign duties. Thus, employee work engagement is bilateral bond amongst employee and employer (Robinson et al., 2004). Therefore, I suggest that,

H 2: Extrinsic rewards are positively associated with Employee work engagement.

Work engagement is an important predictor for organizational, individual and group level outcomes (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Engagement is something that employee brings with them on the workplace (Kular et al., 2008). The existing literature reveals that engaged employees are tremendously passionate and competent who impact on organization productivity and profitability (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009). In this fast-paced dynamic environment, organization demand that their employees bring innovative ideas along with official job requirement (Janssen, 2009). Bakker et al. (2018) thought that employee work engagement is the highly desirable phenomenon for public and private organization, because it brings high level of creativity, customer satisfaction and job performance etc. Recent studies indicated that engaged employees indulged more in IWB, fetch innovative and entrepreneurial ideas, because they are open for new experiences (Orth & Volmer, 2017; Gawke et al., 2017). Findings of past studies (Singh, 2016; Montani et al., 2020), confirm that when the employee fully engaged in their work then they can go above and beyond the assigned duties, such as extra role behavior (IWB). In the past authors have confirmed that there is a positive and significant association between employee job outcomes and employee work engagement (Nel & Linde, 2019; Agarwal et al., 2012; Agarwal, 2014; Kim & Park, 2015; Wollard & Shuck, 2011). By replicating the past enquiries, scholar proposed that,

H 3: Work engagement is positively associated with employee IWB.

The enquiry on employee work engagement tremendously increases in the past two decades (Bakker et al., 2018). A massive amount of the research studies enforces the mediating role of employee work engagement among the association of antecedents and consequences in organizations (Orgambidez et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2012; Rothwell et al., 2014; Kim & Park, 2017). Work engagement is constructive, affective-motivational state, which state employee experience, strong dedication combined with high level of energy, immersion and a strong focused on work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). To bring the desired employee engagement, the firm need to motivate the employees, by offering extrinsic rewards that full-fill their psychological needs that complements the increasing organizational changes (Adoko et al., 2015). Employee passion and motivation are the key source for the generation of high engagement and IWB (Park et al., 2014). Researcher argued that, engaged employees go above and beyond their job requirement because they have more open mind to accept new experiences, ideas and they are more committed towards their firm (Orth & Volmer, 2017; Gawke et al., 2017). Researchers (Nel & Linde, 2019; Saks & Gruman, 2014) advocated that employee work engagement is a potential mediator, where antecedent effects the level of employee engagement, further it leads to the IWB (Janssen's, 2001). The norm of reciprocity involving both parties equally for the successful relationship, such as, the manger or public sector firms provide the extrinsic rewards for the contribution of their employees generate a sense of obligation in them, reciprocated with more energy, dedication and absorbed in their work,

subsequently make them more committed and innovative employees. Thus, I suggest that,

H4: Employee work engagement will mediate the relationship of extrinsic rewards and employee IWB.

As Dulac et al. (2008) said that norm of reciprocity confirms that if individual positively perceived the firm provide support in their career development, then they will morally feel more obliged to contribute back towards the firm. Previously literature on perceived organizational support (POS) provide the extensive confirmation about the direct link between the POS and employees attitude and behaviors (Rich et al., 2010; Rhoades & Eisenberge, 2002). But it is less likely analyzing the different mechanisms through which these outcomes occur (Alfes et al., 2013). The relationship of extrinsic rewards and work engagement can be explained by the norm of reciprocity (Blaue,1964). POS may vary with the change in policies and procedure that impact on the employees (Erdogan et al., 2004). Presently author suggest that POS unfold it positive consequences as a moderator in the relationship between of extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement. Since perceived fairness of extrinsic rewards is a source of motivation for the employees (Malik & Butt, 2017). This motivational effect of extrinsic rewards and perceived organizational support (POS) work interactively for the relationship of Extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement. Hence in the presence of positive perceived organizational support, the extrinsic rewards act more saliently and generate more engaged workforce. Thus, I, proposed that,

H 5: Perceived organizational support will moderate the relationship of perceived extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement, such that the relationship is stronger at higher level of perceived organizational support as compared to low one.

Methodology

Data collection restricted to only higher education faculty members and administrative staff working in renowned public sector universities located in Pakistan. Because the innovation in academic domain critical for research universities (Nijab, 2010; Rehman 2014). Moreover, rare attention has given to investigate the role of IWB in public institutions (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). Approached to faculty members of different universities facilitated through personal and professional contact. Close ended questionnaire was used to collect data. This study is cross-sectional (Blanche et al., 2006) because data was collected at one point in time. The language of this manuscript is restricted to English language for this publication because English is the official language in Pakistan (De Clercq et al., 2017). A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed out of which 320 questionnaires filled by the respondent and among them 307 are consider for further process, so overall 76.75 % response rate received from the employees working in public institutions of Pakistan. Overall sample comprise of 39.1 % female, 60.9 % male, their mean tenure with the organization was 2 years, their average age was 48 years old, and job nature range from academic staff positions to faculty members included. The education background of respondent has 11.4% graduates, 37.8% masters, 38.4 % MS/MPhill and 12.4 % have PhD/ PostDoc education.

3.1. Measures

All the questionnaire adopted from the previous studies. Five-point Likert scale ranging from (strongly disagree=1), to (strongly agree= 5) has been used for rating purpose. Only the IWB rated by peer/coworker at Never=1, rarely=2, sometimes=3, very frequently=4, Always=5.

Extrinsic Rewards: The scale of this variable was adopted from the Hewett, R. title “Examining the relationship between workplace rewards and the quality of motivational experience; a Self-Determination Theory perspective”. Sample item includes “Because I will get additional financial reward if I do”. It consists of 5 item scale.

Work engagement: The scale of this variable adopted from the past literature (Schaufeli et al.,

2006). It was measured by 9 item version of UWES that have a reliability 0.81. The work engagement consists of three dimensions, dedication, absorption, and vigor. Sample item includes, “I am enthusiastic about my job”.

Innovative work behavior: This variable was measured on 6 item ($\alpha=0.88$) scale designed by Janssen’s (2001). IWB consists of three dimensions, idea generation, idea, promotion, and idea implementation. Sample item includes “Generates original solutions to problem”.

Perceived organizational support: It is measured by 4- item scale (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Participants responded to items, such as ‘My organization shows concern for me.’ Its reliability ($\alpha=0.81$).

Results

The correlations and descriptive statistics have been depicted in table 1. That explains inter-correlation, reliabilities, means and standard deviation for latent variables of this study.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics, alpha reliabilities, and correlation

	Mean	s.d	1	2	3	4
1.Extrinsic rewards	3.040	0.90	(0.87)			
2.work engagement	3.744	0.548	.284**	(0.81)		
3.Innovative work behavior	3.450	0.653	.213**	.400**	(0.88)	
4.perceived organizational support	3.230	0.960	.310**	.560**	.410**	(0.81)

Notes: $n = 175$ * $P < 0.1$ ** $P < 0.01$

Researcher has analyzed the main effects of the proposed hypothesis (1, 2 &3) through multiple linear regression analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) as presented in Table 2. First hypothesis of this study stated that Extrinsic rewards are positively linked with employee’s IWB. The results are in favor of proposed hypothesis 1, researcher found that there is positive association between Extrinsic rewards and employee IWB [$B=0.854^{***}$, $\Delta R^2=0.046$, 95% CI, $p < 0.01$]. The results are also in favor of second Hypothesis (H2), that those employees who are motivated due to perceived Extrinsic rewards involved more in their jobs, as researcher found that perceived extrinsic rewards are positively related with employee work engagement [$B=0.120^{***}$, 95% CI, $\Delta R^2=0.082$, $p < 0.01$]. Moreover, researcher found results in support of third proposed hypothesis (H3), which indicated that employees who engaged more in their assign duties, show the positive IWB, as represented below in table 2. [$B=0.460^{***}$, $\Delta R^2=0.141$, 95% CI, $p < 0.01$].

Table 2.Main effects

Predictors	Work Engagement			Innovative Work Behavior		
	B	R	ΔR^2	β	R	ΔR^2
Control variables for work engagement ^a , innovative work behavior ^b		0.18			0.002	
Extrinsic rewards	0.120***	0.100	0.082***	0.854***	0.047	0.046***
Control variables for innovative work behavior ^b					0.001	
Work engagement				0.40***	0.142	0.141***

For the confirmation of mediational effects in this proposed research framework researcher have adopted the Preacher and Hayes (2004) bootstrapping method and latest PROCESS version 3.2.01 (Hayes, 2017). This test help to provide the indirect effects of perceived Extrinsic rewards on employee IWB. Table.3 represented the mediational effects of proposed research hypothesis H4.

Scholar found the support of the presence of mediational effects of employee work engagement for the relationship of perceived extrinsic rewards and employee IWB. Researcher found that confidence intervals for the indirect effects of extrinsic rewards on IWB under the work engagement did not contain 0 [Boot effect=0.772, 95% CI [0.064, 0.022], $p < 0.01$], scholar found partial mediation for hypothesis 4.

Table 3. work engagement as a mediator for the relationships of extrinsic rewards and job outcomes (IWB and affective commitment)

	B	SE	T	P	R ²	
Total effects						
Extrinsic Rewards → IWB	0.854	0.04	3.68	0.00	0.05	
Direct effects						
Extrinsic Rewards → IWB	0.082	0.04	2.68	0.04	0.15	
Indirect effects						
			Boot effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
Extrinsic rewards → work engagement → IWB			0.772	0.01	0.02	0.06

B = Unstandardized coefficients

No of bootstrap sample = 5000

CI = 95% of confidence interval

For the confirmation of moderating effect of POS for the association of extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement, Scholar has tested the effects of interactional term of extrinsic rewards × perceived organizational support (POS) for the prediction of employees work engagement. Researcher found the significant positive results for proposed interactional effects ($\beta=0.36$, $P < 0.01$). For further clarification, the graphical representation (Fig.2) confirms the interactional effects of POS along with perceived Extrinsic rewards for the association of perceived extrinsic rewards and employee work engagement. From the graph it is shown that level of employees work engagement for the extrinsic rewards on high and low level of POS. This study supports the proposed hypothesis H5. Because employees with high POS involved more in their assigned duties as they find the feeling of indebtedness, reciprocated with more extra role work behaviors such as, IWB. Thus, perceived extrinsic rewards acts more saliently in the presence of high POS as compared to low POS (Fig.2), that boost employee's involvement in assigned duties at workplace. Consequently, trigger their positive behavior of IWB.

Table 4. POS as a moderator for the relationship of extrinsic rewards and work engagement

	B	SE	t	P	R ²	LLCI	ULCI
Extrinsic rewards	-0.6	0.29	-2.44	0.04	0.22	-1.27	-0.14
Perceived organizational support (POS)	-0.38	0.36	-1.02	0.32		-1.08	0.36
Interactional effect of extrinsic rewards × POS	0.36	0.08	2.88	0.01		0.09	0.45

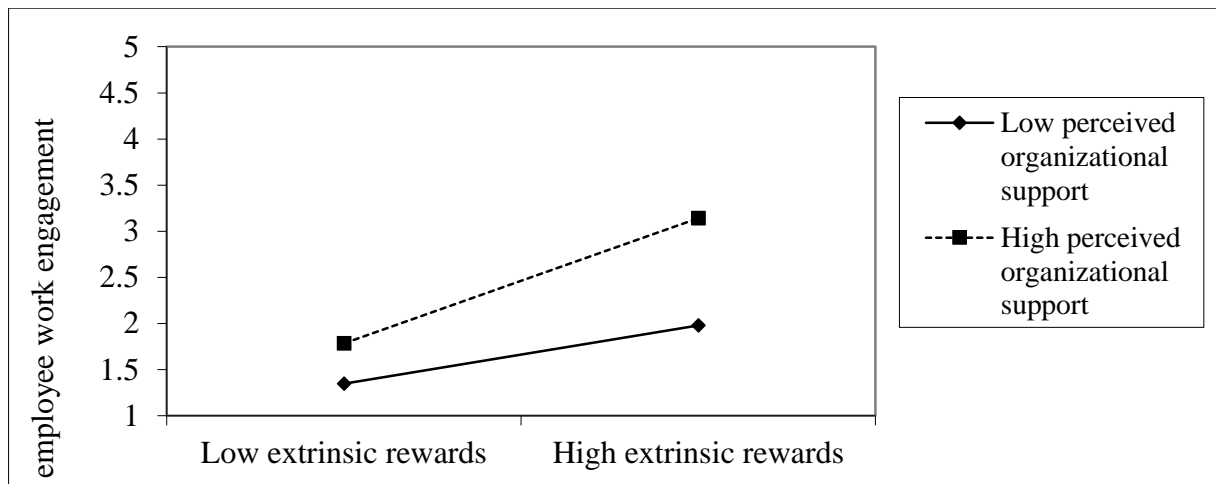


Figure 2. Role of POS a moderator for the relationship of extrinsic rewards and work

Discussion

This study makes the contribution in HRM literature in many folds, first it advances the debate of rewards-innovation/creativity relationship because this phenomenon still controversial without an agreed conclusion (Malik & Butt, 2017; Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). Second it highlights the importance of extrinsic rewards that can trigger the employee IWB, because employees are critical assets of an organization. Machine can be changed but the skilled and talented employee cannot be replaced. In this dynamic environment organization success depends on the innovative capacity of their employee. Third, this study also addresses the gap in literature by investigating the mediating role on work engagement for the relationships of extrinsic rewards and employee IWB. Because in this competitive environment firms are striving to achieve sustained competitive advantage over their competitors by capturing the hearts and minds of their employees through the motivation of rewards and incentives and get their best output in the form of creativity and innovation. For the improvement of organization performance specifically public institutions performance, employer should provide various types of rewards to their employees (Amabile, 1997). In modern enterprises, the reward management plays a critical role in HRM system (Zhou et al., 2009). Effectiveness of reward management system is crucial for the success of organization because it attracts, retains, and motivates the employees (Milkovich & Newman, 2004). Past literature advocate that, there is a need to investigate the ways whether extrinsic rewards can enhance the employee IWB, by increasing their engagement in assign task (Schuh et al., 2018).

This study highlighted the interactive effects of POS for the relation of extrinsic rewards and employee engagement. As in the presence of positive organizational environment in public sector, in which employees are facilitated by the support from the upper echelon, bring the positive feelings in employees, thus, they morally obliged to contribute back to the firms by engaging more in their job (SET-Blaue, 1964). Researchers argued that reward-creativity/ innovation still fertile for future research (Malik et al., 2014). The results of this study also have support from past literature, as extrinsic rewards can increase the motivation for the IWB. This study confirms the existing literature in which scholars suggested that extrinsic rewards are not harmful for the creativity and innovation (List et al., 2017; Eisenberger & Aselage, 2009; Burroughs et al., 2011).

The present study showed that Extrinsic rewards increase the level of motivation of the public sector employees who are fully immersed and engaged in their assigned task with the sense obligation. Scholar advocate that extrinsic rewards are essential condition for emergence of employee IWB (Zhou et al., 2009). Moreover, present research provides many important insights for the manager as well that if they efficiently managed the reward system in their institutions/firms, it could act as a motivational trigger of their employees, so they will reciprocate with something valuable to the organization, such as employee work engagement and innovation. Along with, perceived extrinsic rewards if employees perceived the organizational support (POS) as well, then

they will voluntarily dedicate their energies towards their job and in turn bring some innovative solution for the organizational problem.

There are some limitations of this research work for example, this is a cross sectional study, in future there is a need to conduct it in longitudinal way. Second limitation is, need to incorporate the private sector as well or make a comparative inquiry (public vs private) in future. Third limitation is work engagement used as static state instead of episodic work engagement or weekly work engagement (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Therefore, it is an interesting to explore these facets of work engagement in future.

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