

WORK-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE AND ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL
OWNERSHIP AMONG EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR
ORGANIZATIONS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

Mudassar Shah^{*1}, Dr. Sher Dil Khan², Prof. Dr. Syeda Farhana Kazmi³

^{*1} (PhD Scholar), Department of Psychology, Hazara University, Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

² Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Hazara University, Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

³ Professor Department of Psychology, Hazara University, Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Corresponding Author: *

Mudassar Shah

capt.mudassar@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study examined how Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) is related to Organizational Commitment (OC), and whether Psychological Ownership (PO) mediate this relationship, among 770 employees in public and private sector organizations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan. A correlational, quantitative research design was employed which is cross sectional. The data were gathered through three validated questionnaires namely the WRQoL Scale, the PO Questionnaire, and the OC Questionnaire. SPSS and SmartPLS were used to analyze the data. Results indicated that WRQoL was significantly and positively correlated with PO ($r = .402$) and OC ($r = .574$) and PO was significantly correlated with OC ($r = .470$) (all $p < .001$). WRQoL was the strongest predictor of OC ($B = .554$, $\beta = .574$, $R^2 = .330$, $p < .001$). Path analysis by PLS-SEM revealed that WRQoL was a significant predictor of PO ($\beta = .451$) and OC ($\beta = .456$); and PO was a significant predictor of OC ($\beta = .408$, all $p < .001$). The direct effect of WRQoL on OC was significant, and also the indirect effect through PO was significant (indirect $\beta = .184$, 95% CI (.145, .223) $p < .001$). overall WRQOL is significant predict item 24 of its scale, which is a single global item. No significant difference was found in the structural paths between organizational sectors (all $p > .05$). These findings make PO a crucial psychological pathway between WRQoL and OC, and thus have implications for organizations around the world through the findings of this study.

1. Introduction

Organizations striving to maintain employee well-being, attachment, and effectiveness are increasingly attuned to the importance of the experiences of employees at the workplace (Supardi et al., 2023). WRQoL is defined as employees' general impression of the quality of their work and their work's support for their well-

being, relationships, and personal needs (Van Laar et al., 2007; Easton & Van Laar, 2018). Employee perceptions of a positive WRQOL are consistently linked to higher levels of OC, indicating that WRQOL experiences influence employees' intentions to stay and engage with the organization (Zeng et al., 2024)

OC has been defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a specific organization, including a strong sense of belonging, belief in the goals of the organization and desire to stay (Mowday et al., 1979).

Employees with high OC are more inclined to share the organizations vision, stay with the organization, and work hard (Yeh & Huang, 2025). The correlation between WRQOL and OC may not only be direct but also mediated by employees' psychological experiences, as shown in previous studies (Qiu et al., 2025; Meephumroo & Phinaitrup, 2024).

Employees feel a sense of possession of the job, job tasks and the organization. PO occurs when individuals control, know and invest themselves in an object and is rooted in human needs for efficacy, self-identity and belonging (Pierce et al., 2004). PO is manifested by employees internalizing organizational goals as personal goals, putting in personal resources, and showing increased organizational attachment (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Carberry et al., 2024). Recent studies have shown that PO is indeed positively related to OC and that it serves as a mediator in the process of positive organizational experiences leading to commitment (Khan & Ahmed, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2024; Renz, 2024).

Though a considerable amount of research has been conducted on WRQOL, PO, and OC separately, none of the research has investigated all three constructs together in a single integrated model, and no research has tested the mediating role of PO between WRQoL and OC, especially in public and private sector organizations. This is a critical gap as the majority of Pakistan's workforce is employed in these two sectors, where low employee commitment is one of the prevailing and pressing organizational problems (Qamar et al., 2024).

Although there are many studies done in different countries organizational settings have been relatively under-investigated (Mosadeghrad et al., 2008). The present study is filling this gap by being the first to test this combined model especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK),

Pakistan Such as WRQOL, PO, and OC in one theoretical line of reasoning to explain how positive work experiences lead to increased psychological sense of ownership and, consequently, increased OC, and to explore this process is similar for both public and private sector employees.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The present study is supported by four interrelated theoretical frameworks collectively explaining the proposed WRQOL-PO-OC pathway. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that relationships are regulated by the norm of reciprocity, meaning that when organizations invest in their employees' well-being and working conditions, employees respond with loyalty, ownership feelings and commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). WRQL is the quality of organizational investment as perceived by employees, while OC is the attitudinal response in which reciprocity is manifested as sustained organizational attachment in this model. The Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) suggests that people are motivated to gain, maintain, and increase valued psychological resources. Under positive working conditions, employees build up psychological resources like sense of ownership, sense of identity and sense of belonging, which they re-invest in OC (Carberry et al., 2024).

According to Psychological Ownership Theory (Pierce et al., 2003), ownership feelings can be created through three experiential routes: control over a target, intimate knowledge of a target, and investment in a target. Good work conditions that allow autonomy, meaningful participation and adequate resources enable all three of these ways and in turn create PO that further enriches OC. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) also suggests that employees who come to feel "at home" in their organization, who feel like they belong to it, will come to feel attached to it, and thus will not leave for instrumental reasons. These four theories are interdependent and create a logical sequence of explanation.

WRQOL fosters psychological resources and sense of ownership. Ownership fosters organizational identity, and reciprocity fosters commitment.

2.2 Work-Related Quality of Life and Organizational Commitment

A strong association between WRQOL and OC has been observed in various occupations and cultures. The study by Bashir et al., (2026) revealed that WRQoL had significant positive predictive power for university academics. Hartini et al., (2026) were also that WRQOL significantly and positively influenced OC among public sector employees in Indonesia, while job satisfaction further strengthened the influence of WRQOL on OC. Santiago Prado et al., (2025) concluded that there was a relationship between the quality of working life and the organizational attachment and commitment of public sector workers.

Bataineh et al., (2025) also found a significant positive correlation between WRQoL and OC, with improved working conditions and supportive workplace resources being related to enhanced commitment. Sriboonpeng and Chairatana (2025) discovered that having higher perceived WRQOL was associated with greater commitment to the organization. Job security and rewards were found to be important WRQOL dimensions that relate to high commitment (Lê Việt Anh et al., 2025).

Nguyen and Uong (2025) found that WRQoL had a positive impact on OC, and job satisfaction was a key mechanism that connected to them. Raj et al., (2024) reported that faculty engagement was a mediator between the WRQOL and OC, suggesting that WRQoL may lead to higher levels of commitment through higher employee engagement. Hermanto et al., (2024) partially confirmed the relationship between WRQOL and the supportive leadership on enhancing OC. One exception was reported by Meephumroo and Phinaitrup (2024), who found no significant direct relationship between WRQOL and OC, but a significant indirect relationship between WRQoL and OC through

job satisfaction, suggesting that the relationship between WRQoL and OC may be mediated by psychological mechanisms in some cases.

All these results suggest that WRQOL is a robust and stable predictor of OC and suggest the role of psychological mediators in this relationship.

2.3 Work-Related Quality of Life and Psychological Ownership

While there is no direct evidence in the empirical literature linking WRQoL as a holistic construct to PO, there is evidence that suggests a meaningful and theoretical connection. Pierce et al., (2001) found that work environment characteristics like, employees' sense of control and meaningful involvement are important antecedents of PO.

Ozler et al., (2008) revealed that positive and participative work environment was related to high levels of PO. Khan and Gul (2021), in their study with Pakistani employees, revealed a positive relationship between PO and subjective happiness and work engagement, indicating that positive conditions in the workplace are conducive to the development of PO.

Carberry et al., (2024) also found that high performance work practices led to PO and contributed to employee commitment. All these findings indicate that the 6 dimensions of WRQOL (general well-being, home-work interface, job and career satisfaction, control at work, working conditions, and stress at work) encompass everything that is necessary for PO to develop. However, no study has examined this association in a comprehensive framework (WRQOL) to date, which the current study fills.

2.4 Psychological Ownership and Organizational Commitment

The PO and OC relationship is well known in different cultural and organizational settings. Erkmén and Esen (2012) detected that PO completely mediated the relationship between internal locus of control and OC. Judeh et al., (2022) and Zhao et al., (2022) mentioned that PO is a major mediator between leadership and reward practices and OC. Khan and Ahmed

(2025) indicated that PO significantly mediated the relationship between ethical leadership and OC.

Judeh et al., (2024) revealed that leadership practices for PO also positively influence OC. Based on a cross-cultural meta-analysis, Renz (2024) found that PO was a significant positive predictor of commitment in a variety of organizational settings. Han et al., (2024); Wang et al., (2025); Kiranmayi, (2026) all found that PO is always and positively related to a stronger influences OC, irrespective of cultural organizational contexts. Nguyen et al., (2024) revealed that PO is a positive predictor of OC among millennial employees, mediated by job satisfaction. This body of evidence is a strong testament to the fact that PO is a theoretically and empirically based predictor of OC.

2.5 Psychological Ownership as Mediator and Sector as Moderator

In addition to being directly linked to OC, PO is also suggested to be a mediating process by which WRQOL affects OC. Employees who feel their work environment is supportive and of high quality are more likely to be able to control their work, to gain knowledge about their organization, and to put themselves into their organization, the three pathways through which PO develops. After PO is achieved, employees adopt the organization's objectives as their own, feel accountable for the results, and are more committed (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

The direct WRQoL-OC pathway is explained by Social Exchange Theory as reciprocity, and the indirect pathway is explained as the generation of PO, which is reinvested as commitment (Hobfoll, 1989; Blau, 1964). The significant direct path and the significant indirect path indicate partial mediation, supporting recent findings (Carberry et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024). The central theoretical contribution of the present study was the fact that no study has yet tested PO as a mediator of the WRQoL-OC relationship.

The structural features, resources, incentive mechanisms, and organizational culture of public and private sector organizations in Pakistan could

potentially impact the experiences of working life and organizational attachment among employees (Qamar et al., 2024). Although there is some research suggesting that the psychological mechanisms that connect work quality to commitment can vary across sectors, recent evidence shows that in many cases, the mechanisms may be similar across sectors (Manlapig, 2025; Garzon Paredes et al., 2025).

As yet, there is no empirical evidence that organizational sector moderates the WRQoL-PO-OC structural pathways in KPK, Pakistan, which is explored by multi-group analysis in the present study. The study contributes original empirical, theoretical, and practical contribution to the literature of employee commitment by testing PO as a mediator and sector as a moderator between employees working in public and private sector organizations of KPK.

2.6 Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: WRQoL will positively related to OC and PO.
- H2: WRQoL will positively predicts OC.
- H3: PO will positively predict OC.
- H4: WRQoL and PO jointly predict OC.
- H5: PO mediates the relationship between WRQOL and OC.
- H6: Sector (Public and Private) will moderate the structural Paths among WRQOL, PO and OC.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

The research design employed in this study was quantitative, correlational and cross-sectional. Convenient sampling technique was used for recruiting the 770 employees from public and private sector organizations of KPK Province, Pakistan. A structured and validated self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data at one time (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

3.2 Participants

The sample included 770 respondents who were employees of public (n = 529, 68.7%) and private (n = 241, 31.3%) sector organizations in KPK, Pakistan. It included 492 men (63.9%) and 278 women (36.1%), the majority of whom were married (79.9%) and aged 31–40 years (45.5%). Education levels ranged from Matric (n = 6, 0.7%) through Intermediate (n = 11, 1.4%), Bachelor's degree (n = 78, 10.1%), Master's degree (n = 351, 45.6%), MS/M.Phil. (n = 257, 33.4%), MBBS (n = 2, 0.3%), to PhD (n = 65, 8.4%). Data were obtained after formal ethical clearance and written informed consent via online administration.

3.3 Measures

WRQoL was measured by the WRQoL Scale-24 (Van Laar et al., 2007; Easton & Van Laar, 2018) comprise on six dimensions (general well-being, home-work interface, job and career satisfaction, control at work, working conditions, and stress at work). 24 is a stand-alone global quality of working life indicator and is not part of the total ($\alpha = .910$) of the 23 items. PO was assessed with the 16 item PO Questionnaire (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) comprising five dimensions (Territoriality, Self-Efficacy, Accountability, Belongingness and Self-Identity) ($\alpha = .859$). OCQ was measured with the OC Questionnaire (Mowday et al., 1979), after purification from 15 following item analysis ($\alpha = .786$). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

4. Results

4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 1. *Correlations among WRQOL, PO, and OC (N = 770)*

Measure	N	M	SD	1	2	3
1. WRQOL	770	84.30	13.54	–		
2. PO	770	59.87	8.94	.402***	–	
3. OC	770	75.31	13.06	.574***	.470***	–

Note. *** p < .001.

3.4 Measurement Model Assessment

To evaluate the measurement properties of each scale, the scales were tested before structural model testing. Items with standardized outer loadings < .50 were dropped in line with PLS-SEM item purification guidelines (Hair et al., 2019). One item on the WRQoL scale had a loading of .471, which was less than .50, and was therefore dropped. The other items on both scales were above .50. The final item sets retained for use in all model analyses were: WRQoL (22 items for six facets), PO (16 items for five facets), and OC (7 items as a first-order construct). Measurement model reliability and convergent validity was acceptable for all retained items, resulting in an acceptable measurement model for structural testing.

3.5 Data Analysis

In data analysis, three steps were followed: (a) Pearson correlation analysis; (b) simple and multiple linear regression and (c) PLS-SEM path analysis in SmartPLS 4.0. Path invariance was analyzed by sector using multi-group analyses (PLS-MGA). Throughout, a p-value of < .05 was considered statistically significant. PLS-SEM is a popular multivariate method, it is not limited to normally distributed data, and it is appropriate for complex path models with multiple mediators (Hair et al., 2019). SmartPLS 4.0 was used because of its user-friendliness for structural model testing, bootstrapping of indirect effects, and multi-group analysis (Ringle et al., 2022).

The above table portrays bivariate correlations among WRQoL-PO-OC. WRQoL is moderately positively correlated with PO ($r = .402$, $p < .001$), highly positively correlated with OC ($r = .574$, $p < .001$), and PO was moderately-to-highly positively correlated with OC ($r = .470$, $p < .001$).

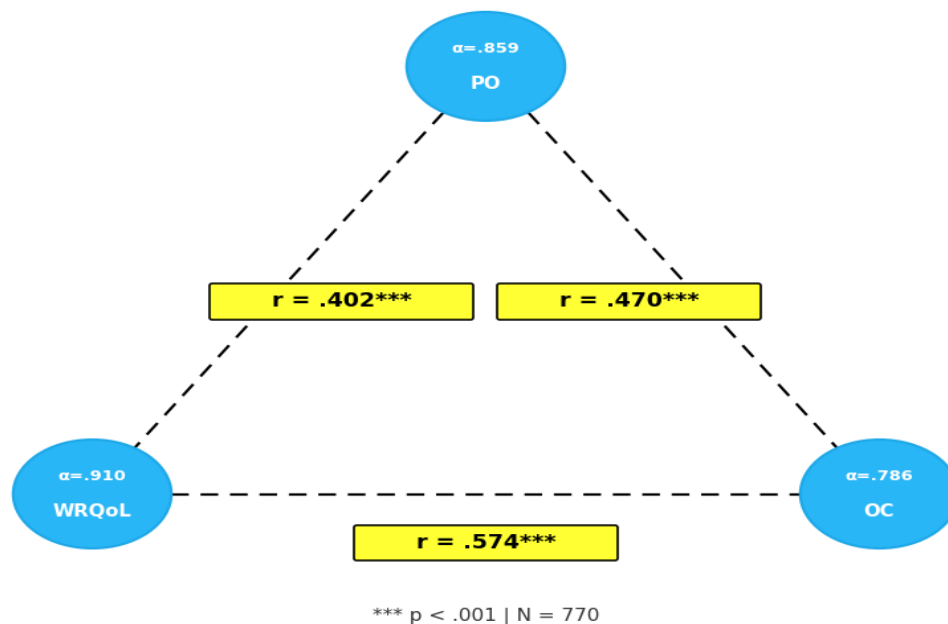


Figure 1. In this figure the blue circles denote the three constructs, WRQoL with its Cronbach's alpha (reliability) score of .910, PO with its Cronbach's alpha (reliability) score of .859 and OC with its Cronbach's alpha (reliability) score of .786. The bivariate correlation coefficient (r) between each pair of constructs is shown in the yellow boxes: PO-WRQoL ($r = .402$), PO-OC ($r = .470$), and WRQoL-OC ($r = .574$) were all significant ($p < .001$).

4.2 Regression Analyses

Table 2. WRQOL Predicting OC ($N = 770$)

Predictor	R	R ²	B	β	F
WRQoL	.574	.330	.554	.574	377.86***

Note. *** $p < .001$

The above table indicates “Simple linear regression analyses” are represented with WRQoL as a predictor and OC as an outcome. A path coefficient of $\beta = .574$ indicated that

WRQoL significantly and positively predicted OC, accounting for 33% of the variance in OC ($R^2 = .330$). This is the largest predictive effect of this study.

Table 3. *PO Predicting OC (N = 770)*

Predictor	R	R ²	B	β	F
Psychological Ownership	.469	.220	.683	.469	208.23***

Note. *** $p < .001$

The simple linear regression with PO as the predictor and OC as the outcome is displayed in above. PO was a significant and positive predictor of OC with a path coefficient of $\beta = .469$, which accounted for 22% of the variance in OC ($R^2 = .220$).

Table 4. *WRQoL and PO Jointly Predicting OC (N = 770)*

Predictor	B	SE B	B	t	P
Constant	13.12	2.91	—	4.51	< .001
WRQoL	0.44	0.03	.460	15.02	< .001
PO	0.42	0.05	.288	8.90	< .001

Note. $p < .001$

The results of the multiple regression with both WRQoL and PO as simultaneous predictors of OC are shown in above table. The overall model was significant and explained 39.8% of the variance in OC. WRQoL was the stronger predictor ($\beta = .460$, $t = 15.02$, $p < .001$), and PO was a significant independent predictor ($\beta = .288$, $t = 8.90$, $p < .001$).

4.5 PLS-SEM Path Analysis

The bootstrapping technique was used to assess path coefficients with 5,000 resamples. WRQoL and PO directly predicted OC, with path coefficients of .456 ($t = 14.715$, $p < .001$) and .408 ($t = 12.588$, $p < .001$), respectively. WRQoL also directly predicted PO ($\beta = .451$, $t = 13.581$, $p < .001$). PO indirectly affected OC with an indirect beta of .184 (95% CI [.145, .223], $p < .001$).

Table 5. *PLS-SEM Direct Structural Path Coefficients (N = 770)*

Path	β (O)	M	SD	t	P
WRQoL → OC	.456	.456	.031	14.715	< .001
WRQoL → PO	.451	.453	.033	13.581	< .001
PO → OC	.408	.408	.032	12.588	< .001

Note. β (O) = original bootstrap path coefficient; M = bootstrap mean; SD = bootstrap SD; bootstrapping: 5,000 subsamples.

The above table shows the direct structural path coefficients. WRQoL→OC was the strongest path ($\beta = .456$, $t = 14.715$, $p < .001$), followed by

WRQoL→PO ($\beta = .451$, $t = 13.581$, $p < .001$) and PO→OC ($\beta = .408$, $t = 12.588$, $p < .001$).

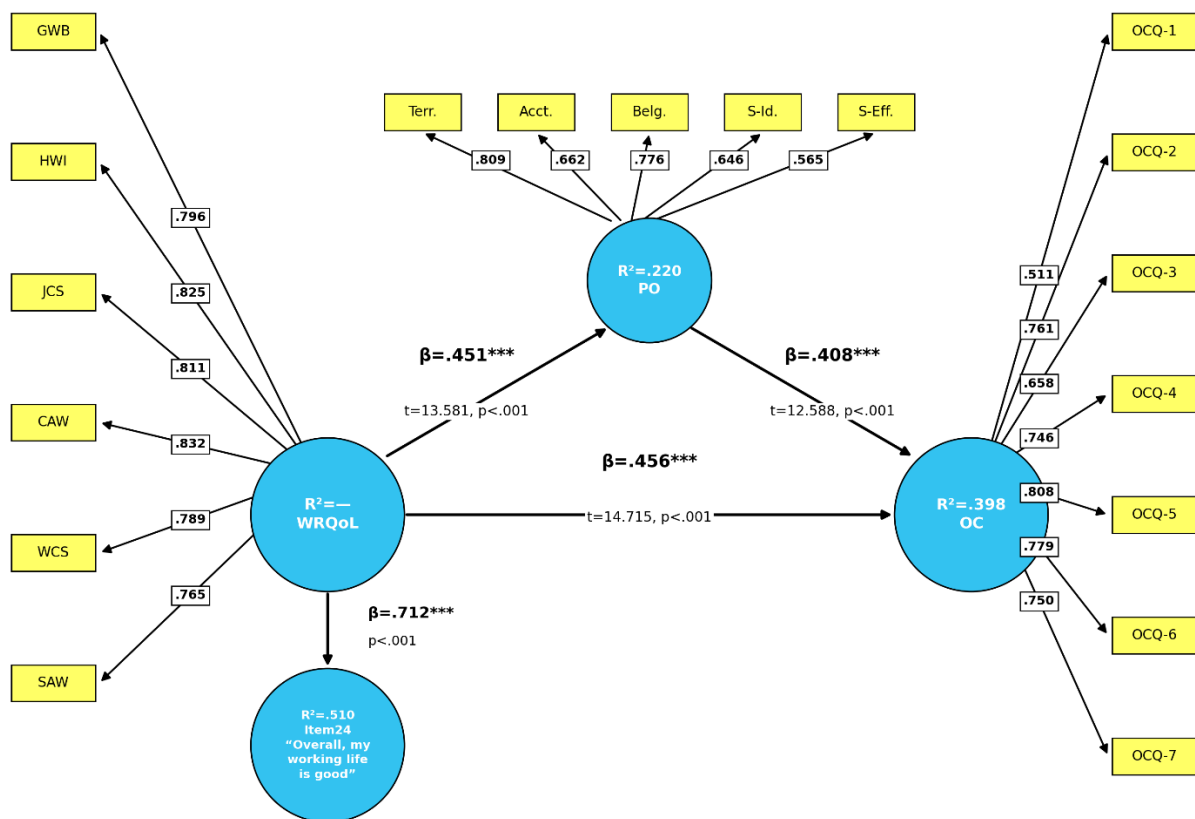


Figure 2. Full structural model showing the blue circles representing the three latent constructs – WRQoL, PO ($R^2 = .220$), and OC ($R^2 = .398$) – with the yellow boxes as their observed sub-scales with the following loadings: for WRQoL, GWB = .796, HWI = .825, JCS = .811, CAW = .832, WCS = .789, SAW = .765; for PO, Terr. = .809, Acct. = .662, Belg. = .776, S-Id. = .646, S-Eff. = .565; for OC, OCQ-1 = .511, OCQ-2 = .761, OCQ-3 = .658, OCQ-4 = .746, OCQ-5 = .808, OCQ-6 = .779, OCQ-7 = .750. The thick black arrows show the structural path coefficients, all significant at $p < .001$: WRQoL $\rightarrow$ PO ($\beta = .451$, $t = 13.581$), PO $\rightarrow$ OC ($\beta = .408$, $t = 12.588$), and the direct path WRQoL $\rightarrow$ OC ($\beta = .456$, $t = 14.715$). Additionally, a redundancy analysis was conducted to confirm the validity of WRQoL as a formative higher-order construct: WRQoL was regressed on a single global item, Item24 ("Overall, my working life is good"), yielding a substantial and significant path coefficient ($\beta = .712$, $p < .001$) and explaining 51% of the variance in the global item ($R^2 = .510$), providing strong support for the construct's validity. *** $p < .001$; $N = 770$.

4.6 Mediation Analysis

Table 6. PO as Mediator of WRQOL on OC ($N = 770$)

Effect	B	SE	p	LLCI	ULCI
Indirect: WRQoL $\rightarrow$ PO $\rightarrow$ OC	.184	.020	< .001	.145	.223

Direct (c'): WRQoL → OC	.456	.031	< .001	.395	.517
Total (c): WRQoL → OC	.650	.037	< .001	.577	.723

Note. 95% CI computed via bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples).

The mediation analysis results for indirect, direct and total effects are shown in Table 8. The indirect effect of WRQoL on OC through PO was $\beta = .184$ (SE = .020, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.145, .223]), with a confidence interval that did not

include zero. WRQoL was still directly related to OC ($\beta = .456$, $p < .001$) when PO was controlled, thus indicating a partial, rather than total, mediation. The total effect was $\beta = .650$ ($p < .001$).

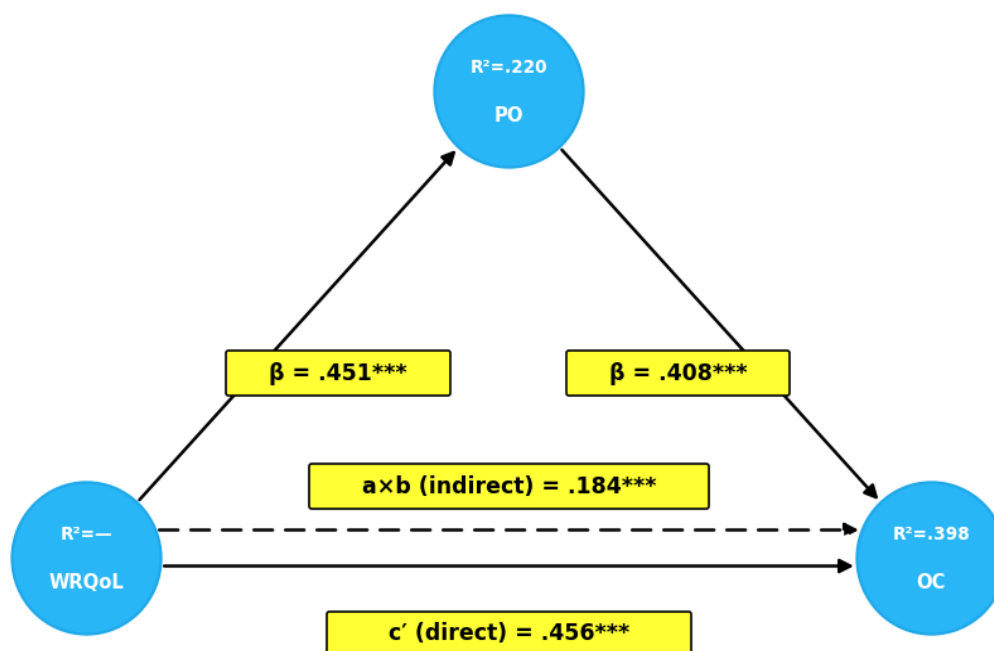


Figure 3. This is the mediation model that depicts the pathway from WRQoL to OC via PO. The blue circles represent the constructs – WRQoL (exogenous, no R^2), PO ($R^2 = .220$), and OC ($R^2 = .398$). The solid arrow from WRQoL to PO ($\beta = .451$, $p < .001$) and from PO to OC ($\beta = .408$, $p < .001$) together represent the indirect effect, which combines to an indirect effect ($a \times b$) of .184, $p < .001$. The solid direct path ($c' = .456$, $p < .001$) between WRQoL and OC is the direct path remaining after controlling for PO. Both the direct and indirect routes are important, so there is partial mediation between WRQoL and OC.

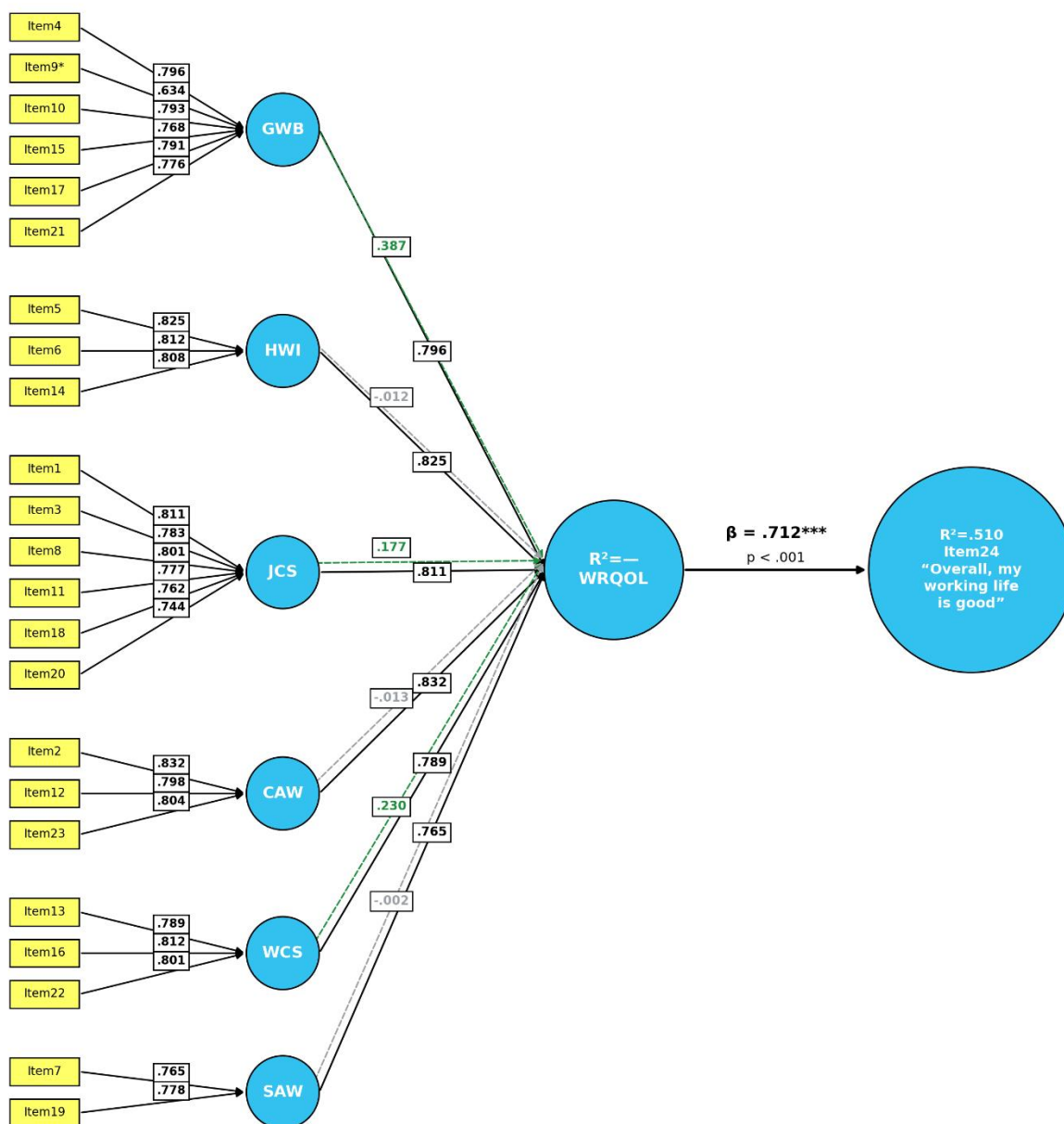


Figure 1. WRQoL sub-scales predicting Item 24 (global quality of working life). Significant predictors shown in table alongside figure. N = 770.

4.8 Multi-Group Analysis by Sector

Table 7. PLS-MGA: Structural Paths by Sector (Private n = 241, Public n = 529)

Path	β (Priv)	β (Pub)	Diff.	p (Priv)	p (Pub)	p (diff.)
WRQoL $\rightarrow$ OC	.428	.468	.040	< .001	< .001	.525
WRQoL $\rightarrow$ PO	.503	.425	-.078	< .001	< .001	.251
PO $\rightarrow$ OC	.471	.375	-.097	< .001	< .001	.130

Note. 2-tailed p (diff.) = PLS-MGA difference-in-coefficients test.

The structural path coefficients are separately shown for the private sector employees and public sector employees in Table 11. Each of the three paths was statistically significant for both sectors. The WRQoL $\rightarrow$ PO path was stronger numerically in the private sector ($\beta = .503$) than the public sector ($\beta = .425$), and the PO $\rightarrow$ OC path was stronger numerically in the private sector ($\beta = .471$) than in the public sector ($\beta = .375$). But none of the between-group differences were significant, suggesting that none of the structural paths were moderated by organizational sector.

5. Discussion

The present study investigated the relationship between WRQoL-PO-OC among 770 employees in KPK, Pakistan. 5 of 6 hypotheses were supported. The findings are presented in terms of correlations, direct predictions, mediations, then the results of Item 24 and the multi-group results.

The findings supported H1, indicating that “WRQoL will positively related to OC and PO”. WRQoL is significantly and positively correlated with PO ($r = .402$, $p < .001$) and OC ($r = .574$, $p < .001$), and PO is positively correlated with OC ($r = .470$, $p < .001$).

This result support the meaningful and distinct relationship between the three constructs.

According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the more an organization invests in the working conditions of its employees, the more they feel like they are part of the organization and are committed to it. Favorable working conditions, in addition, help employees to develop psychological resources such as ownership and commitment, according to the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). The results are consistent with the results of Yang and Mostafa (2024) and Chambel and Carvalho (2022) who identified positive relationships between work environment quality and employee commitment.

The findings supported H2, indicating that “WRQoL will positively predicts OC”. WRQoL significantly and positively predicted OC ($B = .554$, $\beta = .574$, $F(1, 768) = 377.86$, $p < .001$), accounting for 33% of the variance. WRQoL was the only significant predictor of OC in the current study. This can be understood based on Social Exchange Theory, which suggests that when the organization invests in the working conditions of their employees, they, in turn, invest more commitment and loyalty to the organization (Bashir et al., 2026; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Aras et al. (2025), Mehra (2023), and Al-Dossary (2022) reported a positive direct effect among nurses, manufacturing workers and hospital staff, respectively. The results support

WRQoL as a strong and cross-contextual predictor of OC.

The results supported H3, indicating that “PO will positively predict OC”. PO significantly and positively predicted OC ($B = .683$, $\beta = .469$, $F(1, 768) = 208.23$, $p < .001$), accounting for 22% of the variance. The PO→OC path ($\beta = .408$, $p < .001$) was the second strongest path in the structural model in PLS-SEM. After controlling for WRQoL, PO was still a significant independent predictor ($\beta = .288$, $p < .001$) in multiple regression. It is clearly explained by Psychological Ownership Theory that employees who perceive ownership of the organization will see its objectives as personal objectives, feel accountable for its results and will be more likely to stay with and contribute to it. The same PO and OC relationship was observed by Khan and Ahmed (2025) via ethical leadership. This was reinforced in the case of millennial workers in Vietnam (Nguyen et al., 2024). It was also detected by Judeh et al. (2024) in healthcare workers in Jordan. This relationship is confirmed in the present finding in the context of Pakistan.

The findings supported H4, indicating that “WRQoL and PO jointly predict OC”. WRQoL and PO together explained 39.8% of the variance in OC ($R^2 = .398$, $F(2, 767) = 252.06$, $p < .001$). Both variables contributed unique, significant variance: WRQoL ($\beta = .460$, $p < .001$) and PO ($\beta = .288$, $p < .001$). This joint effect is explained by Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989): WRQoL and PO are two different but related resources, both of which have a direct positive impact on OC. WRQoL is the quality that employees get from their organization, PO is the quality that employees psychologically give back. Both matters independently.

The findings supported H5, indicating that “PO mediates the relationship between WRQoL and OC”. The indirect effect of WRQoL on OC through PO was significant ($\beta = .184$, 95% CI [.145, .223], $p < .001$). The direct effect was still statistically significant ($\beta = .456$, $p < .001$), indicating a partial mediation. WRQoL affects OC in a direct and indirect way by developing PO. This mechanism is supported by all four

theories. Social Exchange Theory: WRQoL creates a sense of belonging and ownership by employees who feel well treated. Theory accounts for the connection between PO and OC ownership feelings create responsibility and identification. The Conservation of Resources Theory provides an explanation for the chain: WRQoL is a resource that produces PO which is re-invested as commitment. The deeper bond is explained by the Social Identity Theory: When employees feel like part of the organization, they include it in their self-concept, increasing their commitment.

The partial mediation suggests that WRQoL also influences OC in further ways, not accounted for in this model, such as job satisfaction or perceived organizational support, that future studies should investigate.

The findings supported H6, indicating that “Sector (public and private) will moderate the structural paths among WRQoL, PO, and OC”. The results of the multi-group analysis (PLS-MGA) showed that none of the structural path differences between public and private sector employees were statistically significant. The path from WRQoL to OC was marginally stronger for public sector employees ($\beta = .468$) than private sector employees ($\beta = .428$) and the difference is not significant ($p = .525$). The WRQoL→PO path was also numerically higher for private sector employees ($\beta = .503$) than for public sector employees ($\beta = .425$); however, the difference is not significant ($p = .251$). In the same way, the numerical strength of the PO→OC path was greater in the private sector ($\beta = .471$) than in the public sector ($\beta = .375$), but this difference is not significant ($p = .130$). Each of the three paths was statistically significant in both the public sector and the private sector sub-groups (all $p < .001$), suggesting that the WRQoL-PO-OC mechanism functions well in both types of groups. The results of this study indicate that there is no significant difference between the psychological mechanisms of WRQoL, PO, and OC in public and private sector employees in KPK.

This makes sense in light of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which suggests

that regardless of the context (public or private) the process of feeling attached to an organization and coming to feel like one of its own members is associated with increased commitment. The organizational context (bureaucratic or market based) does not seem to change the underlying psychological mechanism by which the ownership and commitment to work are increased by improved work quality.

The results are aligned with Manlapig (2025) who noticed that there was no significant difference among the sectors regarding the antecedents of OC, and Garzon Paredes et al., (2025) who observed a similar effect on the relationship between happiness at work and its behavioral outcomes among public and private sector employees. There are several contextual factors in KPK which might further account for this null finding. In KPK, public and private sector organizations share the same socio-cultural context, same labor force demographics and the same labor market conditions. Both employees share the same socio-cultural norms about work, loyalty and belonging to the organization. Consequently, the psychological mechanisms that underlie the creation of the WRQOL, in terms of PO and commitment, are probably more influenced by the shared cultural factors than by the formal distinction between public and private work.

6. Conclusion

The study aim was to explore the relationship between WRQoL and OC and to investigate the role of PO as a mediator between these variables among the employees of public and private sector organizations in KPK, Pakistan. WRQoL is the best predictor of OC, which means that employees who have a better quality of working life also have a stronger OC. The WRQoL-PO-OC pathway was theoretically coherent and statistically supported, as WRQoL significantly predicted PO, which in turn significantly predicted OC. PO partially mediated the WRQoL and OC relationship, and the direct link between WRQoL and OC remained significant after controlling for PO, suggesting that WRQoL can have both direct and indirect

effects on OC through the development of PO. Both WRQoL and PO had unique and significant predictive power on OC and accounted for a large amount of variance. The WRQoL-PO-OC mechanism worked the same way for both public and private sector workers, thus demonstrating the general applicability of this mechanism in the KPK organizational context.

7. Implications

1. The findings add to the literature of WRQoL and OC by identifying psychological ownership as a key mediator.
2. To promote employees' organizational commitment, organizations need to enhance work related quality of life.
3. Special attention should be paid to General Well-Being, Working Conditions and Job and Career Satisfaction, which were more predictive of WRQoL.
4. Increase psychological ownership by engaging with employees in decision making, goal setting, and work-related decisions.
5. Job enrichment, recognition and advancing opportunities can also help to reinforce employees' feelings of ownership and commitment.
6. The pattern in the public and private sectors were similar, meaning that common HR practices to enhance WRQoL and psychological ownership can be used across both sectors.
7. WRQoL should be measured regularly, to detect a downward trend in work quality and to intervene early in cases of disengagement and turnover.
8. WRQoL monitoring should be integrated into HR policies, with a broader view to the promotion of employee well-being and organizational stability.
9. Longitudinal and cross-cultural/cross-organizational studies of the WRQoL-PO-OC mechanism are suggested for future research.
10. The role of psychological ownership as a mediator should be investigated in developing country contexts, especially in situations in which

the evidence regarding the WRQoL and commitment relationship is limited.

8. Limitations

The following should be taken into consideration when interpreting these findings:

1. Data was obtained at one point in time and therefore causal direction cannot be determined. Longitudinal studies are required to determine if there is a long-term increase in PO and OC associated with improvement in WRQoL.

2. All measures have been filled out by the employees themselves, which may be a source of common method bias. Future research should incorporate multiple data sources (e.g., supervisor ratings or organizational records) along with self-reports.

3. The participants were selected using the method of availability sampling which means that the generalizability of the results of this study is limited only to the context of KPK. Future studies would benefit from random sampling over a larger geographic region to better support the external validity.

4. Only the samples from KPK, Pakistan have been selected. More studies are required to evaluate if the WRQoL - PO - OC mechanism is generalizable across national, cultural and regulatory contexts.

5. The OC Questionnaire was used as a whole. Future studies should investigate whether WRQoL and PO predict different types of commitment (affective, continuance, and normative) to provide organizations with more specific directions on how to strengthen each type of commitment.

6. Part of the WRQoL and OC relationship was explained by PO. Future research is needed to examine other mediators like job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and work engagement to complete the explanation model.

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