Psychological Ownership: It's Relationship with Interpersonal Trust and Work Outcomes

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Organisations are no longer just about achieving profit and growth. Rapid technological changes and increased global competition have changed working life and work organisations. Organisations have realized that employees are satisfied with pay checks rather they consider on the emotional connect. Employees' attitude and behaviour at the workplace contributes to organisational survival and long-term productivity. The traditional managerial practices are now under captivity. Contemporary style of management strategies are sought after. The concept of psychological ownership is based on three motives - efficacy and effectance, self–identity and having a place to dwell. Efficient management of employees has a direct impact on their effectiveness contributing towards the organisation. This article is an attempt to build on the emerging theory of psychological ownership, which has been developed over the last two decades and suggest the scope for research on the influence work environment, psychological ownership and individual work outcomes.

Keywords*: Employee participation in management, Psychological ownership, Interpersonal trust Organisational commitment, and Work Outcomes.*

1. Introduction

Today's work environment is encountered with uncertainty, technological changes, and complex undertakings. Organisations are challenged to do their part in increasing employees' beliefs in their personal competence. The dysfunctions of these feelings, beliefs, fears, and mental health of the employees have a great impact on quality, productivity and retention. Numerous scholars proposed that financial ownership leads to positive consequences for the employees' contribution towards the organisation. Florkowski (1987) put forth that profit sharing could positively affect a firm's productivity, quality, turnover, and absenteeism. Buckho (1992) emphasized that there is a strong relationship between employee attitudes and employee stock ownership plan (ESOP).Ownership is not typically fostering employees financially but psychologically.

In the early 1990's, Pierce *et al.* put forth that psychological ownership is associated with positive behavioural and social psychological consequences. Since then a number of scholars have advocated and consider psychological ownership as an important predictor of employee attitude and behaviour. The basic motivational framework is the significant positive core for tapping human behaviour is called as psychological ownership.

VandeWalle *et al.* (1995) is one the first to identify in-role and extra-role behaviour as the consequences of feel of possession. Since then researchers have examined array of consequences of psychological ownership. The consequences of psychological ownership are job performance (Pierce *et al.* 2004), organisational citizenship behaviour (Van Dyne *et al.* 2004; Pierce *et al.* 2004; Mayhew *et al.* 2007), job satisfaction (Mayhew *et al.* 2007), internal and intrinsic motivation, willingness to take risk, make personal sacrifice, territorial behaviours (Pierce *et al.* 2009; Brown *et al.* 2014), intention to stay (Ozler *et al.* 2008; Avey *et al.* 2009), knowledge sharing behaviour (Han *et al.* 2010), turnover intention and sense of responsibility (Tian Li 2008).

The study on the antecedents of psychological ownership is relatively few when compared with the consequences. It is only recently researchers shifted their focus to investigate the probable antecedents to psychological ownership. The antecedents observed are the work environment structure (O'Driscoll *et al.* 2006; Pierce *et al.* 2004), a climate of self-determination (Wagner *et al.* 2003) and participative decision making (Martins *et al.* 2008), and leadership styles (Tian Li 2008). Thus, development of ownership privileges fosters a psychological employment relationship with the organisation.

In 2009, Luthans F coined the term positive organisational behaviour (POB). Positive organisational behaviour is defined as "the study and application of positive oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace." Psychological ownership falls within the emerging literature of positive organisational behaviour.

Psychological ownership shares a sense of positivity and willingness to strive for accomplish the long term - objectives of the organisation. Initially psychological ownership was not associated with POB. Various research studies have conceptualized psychological ownership as a positive organisational resource. Psychological ownership can be measured, invested in, developed and managed for performance impact and competitive advantage. Based on the extensive review of literature the research gap is identified.

2.   Research Problem

A number of studies by researchers have suggested that psychological ownership among employees will have positive attitudinal and behaviourial effects; in turn, contributing towards organisational effectiveness. This study tries to re-establish the relationship of psychological ownership for an effective employer and employee relationship. The following questions clearly suggest need for the study.

1.   Is psychological ownership is an effective construct supporting positive organisational behaviour?
2.   Does the psychological ownership that employees have for their organisation actually make a difference in their behaviour?
3.   Can psychological ownership involve in unveiling the relationship between psychological ownership and other workplace attitudes?

The research problem enables to identify the key variables needed for the study. It is on the basis of literature and its relevance in the current work environment the constructs are considered. The constructs are psychological ownership, employee participation in decision making, interpersonal trust in the work environment, organisational commitment, role behaviours, knowledge sharing and intention to stay. This study is important, as it tries to understand the role of psychological ownership in the relationship between interpersonal trust and work attitude and behaviour, which has not been studied before.

3.   Theoretical Background of the Constructs

3.1 Psychological Ownership

Psychological ownership has its origin in the psychological study of self and non self regions suggested by James (1890). The study strongly linked to the surrounding environment of the individual and the idea of "mine". In 19th century Brown emphasized the significance of psychological ownership. In the words of Brown (1989) "the key to effectively managing in the 1900s will know how to install psychological ownership. It is psychological ownership that makes the competitive difference". Furby's (1980) study on possessive behaviour is a principal contribution towards the concept building effort of psychological ownership. According to Webb (1912) ownership is an association with the sense responsibility and shared interest with the other owners to protect the target of ownership. A sense of possession among employees embarks directly on the pride and thus motivates to perform at high level.

The concept of psychological ownership was empirically tested by Pierce *et al.* (1991). Psychological ownership is a state in which an employee feels the target as his or her control. The target of ownership can be both material and immaterial in nature. The targets of an employee can be the goals of the organisation, ideas, workplace or the organisation as a whole. The bonding enables the employees exhibit a sense of possessiveness towards the organisation. This sense of associations of the employees creates the connote possessiveness such as "my job" or "our organisation". It is ownership extended by the employees regardless of any kind of legal and financial status. Questions were raised is psychological ownership a discriminate construct? Pierce *et al.* (2001) empirical evidence showed that psychological ownership is discriminate from other related constructs on its motivational bases on possessiveness.

Van Dyne *et al.* (2004) compared psychological ownership with other related constructs. The constructs were commitment and satisfaction. Psychological ownership is about "mine" attitude and "ownership feel" exhibited by the employee. Whereas, commitment is maintenance of membership in the organisation and satisfaction is all about evaluative judgments about the current job. Thus, the complete focus on possession of the employee over a target marks the distinguishing feature of psychological ownership when compared with other related constructs. This study re emphasized the discriminate nature of psychological ownership and is a unique construct. The ownership feel becomes so deeply rooted within one's self-identity that they become viewed as an extension of the self as proposed by Belk (1988).

3.2 The Motives of Psychological Ownership

The motives of psychological ownership enable us to recognize "why" the state exists. Pierce *et al.* (2003) identified the motives as the primary reason for ownership experience. Consequently, these motives lead to the development of the state of psychological ownership. The motives are efficacy and effectance, self–identity and having a place to dwell.

3.2.1 Efficacy and Effectance

Furby (1978) stated that "the motivation for possession stems from the individual's need for effectance and the ability to produce desired outcomes in the environment". It is the central feature of possession – to affect and control the target. Isaacs (1993) also seconded this statement and confirmed that "the motives of possession, is to be in control". In 1959, White put forth control and effectance motivation. The "control" enables an individual to explore and alter their environment. As one holds control or right the feeling of efficacy and pleasure creates an extrinsic satisfaction. Complex task, greater autonomy, higher level of motivation enables an individual to perform successful and to be attributed to the self, and feelings of efficacy and effectance realizable. The changes in value and enforceability of control have direct implications on employees' performance.

3.2.2 Self Identity

Possession is significant in determining self-understanding and self-identity. According to Dittmar (1992) "it is through our

interaction with possession, coupled with a reflection, our sense of identity, our self-definitions, are established, maintained, reproduced and transformed". Thus, through exploration of their environment coupled with reflection facilitates the development of one's identity. An enriched job, characterized with high skill variety enables the individual to invest more skills, imagination, time and effort, thereby revealing their identity. An employee is likely to perceive the organisation as part of one's identity when a scenario of good person-organisational fit exists. The privileges are proliferating among employees as this trend leads to a hybrid form of employment relationship.

3.2.3 Having a Place to Dwell
Ownership and the association of psychological state are explored in an individual's motive to possess a certain territory or space. Having a place to dwell is the third motive put to serve the feeling of ownership. Duncan (1981) put forth that ownership is a psychological phenomenon that has its roots in human needs. The motives of self-identity and having place to dwell are closely associated. Thus a strong sense of self-identification with the organisation and possession that are experienced as "home" are those in which employees will extend emotional investment of themselves. According to Heidegger (1967), dwelling refers to the individual's placement and understanding themselves in time and space. As individual develop their "home base" they become psychologically attached. Thus, it is no longer an object but becomes part of the self. It can be extended to any variety of objects of material or immaterial in nature.

3.3 Employee Participation in Decision Making
Workers participation in management was a popular concept in the fields of Industrial Sociology, Industrial Relations as well as Management. It is any kind of arrangement which is designed to involve other cadre employees in the important decision making within the workplace. In 20th century with the presence of globalization, the job profiles of the employees are re-defined. This concept has made a comeback as "Employee participation in management". An employee is just not an employee but also has to make decisions which are sensitive and complex for the long term development of the organisation. The principal form of employee participation includes information sharing, joint consultation, suggestion schemes. This clearly reflects a growing interest in finding ways to make work more meaningful and continued commitment of employees. This rest on the belief that the organisational goals of high productivity can be best achieved when the higher level needs of the employees are satisfied. Lawler (1986) commented that "participation in management approach by the management is promising as it involves employees both financially and psychologically".

McGregor (1960) stated "that worker participation consists basically in creating opportunity under suitable conditions for people to influence decisions which affect them". Thus, delegation of authority enables greater control, greater freedom of choice with respect to bridging the communication gap between the management and the employees. This serves to create a sense of belonging among the employees. A conducive environment facilitates employees in voluntarily contributing towards the organisational effectiveness. Employee participation in decision making is one of the effective tools for motivating employees to perform effectively and efficiently. It is a mental and emotional involvement of an employee at workplace which encourages contributing to the goals and productivity.

Etzionic (1991) put forth that ownership is a dual creation. It is the psychological attitude and objective entity. It can be experienced in mind and reality. Participation in management satisfies needs of self-actualization and fulfillment. This mechanism increases employee's motivation to contribute to positive attitudes.

3.4 Interpersonal Trust in the Work Environment
The concept of trust is used extensively by number of researchers and practitioners over two decades. In the process of in-depth study by the researchers identified and established the uniqueness of trust. In 1967, Rotter was the first to define interpersonal trust "as an expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal or written statement of another or group can be relied upon". The effects of interpersonal trust has direct impact on the positive workplace attitudes, work place behavior and performance outcomes. According to Mayer *et al* (1995) interpersonal trust "is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party". Empirical studies by researchers have established that organisations collaborative problems are solved mainly due to the interpersonal trust among colleagues and the management.

The employees of the organisation operate as self-managing teams. This is based on the assumption that there is no control and intervention from the management. Interpersonal trust in the work environment influences the attitude and behaviour towards the organisation. This will have direct influence on the morale of the employee. Thus, the employee is highly motivated and exhibits a sense of possessiveness over the organisation. It is a shared psychological state among team members comprising willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of a specific other or others.

According to Hill *et al.* (2009), "a cooperative organisational context induced by cooperative organisational values and a reward system that encourages teamwork promotes trust in coworkers, while a competitive organisational context induced by competitive organisational values and a reward system that encourages individual achievements strengthens the benefits of face-to-face interactions on trust in coworkers." Thus, interpersonal trust in the work environment fosters the thought of protecting and maintaining the organisation which they feel belongs to them.

3.5 Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is imperative for both the employee and the organisation**.** Porter *et al.* (1976) defined organisational commitment "as the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organisation". It is a state in which an employee identifies with the organisation and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to achieve these goals. An individual joins the organisation with all potentials and with certain degree of expectations. When an organisation can provide these opportunities, the likelihood of increasing commitment is increased.

Organisational Commitment is characterized as a strong acceptance of the organisation's values and goals, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation. Allen *et al.* (2000) put forth that "organisational commitment is a psychological state that characterizes an employee's relationship with the organisation and reduces the likelihood that he or she will leave it". Organisational commitment has been investigated as a predictor for several of organisational outcomes as well as specifying organisational effectiveness behaviour over two decades.

O'Reilly& Chatman (1986) noted that commitment as the emotional bond or attachment between the employees and their organisation. Milliman *et al.*, 2003 reported the impact of organisational commitment on behaviour and attitudes at the workplace. Mowday *et al.* (1979) characterised affective commitment by three components (a) belief in and acceptance of the organisation goals and values, (b) a willingness to focus effort on helping the organisation to achieve its goals, and (c) a desire to maintain organisational membership.

Meyer & Allen (1991) developed and validated organisational commitment as a multidimensional construct. The three factors or dimensions are: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment develops when the employee becomes involved in, recognizes the values of and derives his or her identity from the association with the organisation. For example, employees tend to be affectively committed if they feel that the organisation treats them in a fair, respectful and supporting manner. Continuance commitment develops when the employee recognizes that he or she stands to lose investments in the organisation, perceives that there are no alternatives other than remaining in the organisation. Normative commitment develops when people internalize the organisation's norms through socialization and benefits obtained. It is concerned with feelings of obligation to remain at the organisation.

3.6 Employee Role Behaviours: In-Role Behaviour And Extra- Role Behaviour

Barnard (1938) put forth "the importance of employee's behaviour goes beyond normal expectations or job requirements that benefits or is intended to benefit the organisation". Researchers have established a clear delineation between extra-role behaviour and in-role behaviour (e.g., Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

Organ (1988) proposed the concept of in- role behaviour. It is "the behaviour that is required or expected of the members of the organisation. In-role behaviour is predominantly influenced by the Organisational frame work. Mowday *et al.* (1982) suggested that in-role behaviour can be extended to contingencies such as standard operating procedures and group norms. According to William & Anderson (1991) in- role behaviour is a kind that is required or expected of members by the organisation. The presence of in-role behaviour is primarily due to the influence by the Organisational structural contingencies such as standard operating procedures and group norms. Steers (1977) believed that a global measure of performance, which will speculate most likely based on assessment of in-role behaviour.

Extra role behaviour is defined as "the constructive work efforts of an employee that benefits the organisation and the willingness to go beyond than the required job profile". Katz & Kahn (1978) suggested extra role behaviour as a discretionary behaviour which is not formally recognized nor rewarded by the organisation. Mobley *et al.* (1978) stated that the performance of the employees was related to more discretionary behviours. Discretionary behaviours include absenteeism and turnover intentions.

Van Dyne *et al.* (1995) developed and validated the dimensions of extra role behaviour. He established extra-role behaviour as two factor construct with each two-sub folded factors. The two dimensions are promotive behaviour and prohibitive behaviour. Promotive behaviour includes helping and voice and prohibitive behaviour comprises stewardship and whistle-blowing. Helping extra-role behaviour refers to promotive behaviour as it is cooperative and facilitates working relationships, while voice extra-role behaviour is a constructive expression aimed at continuous Organisational improvement as explained by Van Dyne & LePine (1998).

3.7 Knowledge Sharing Behaviour

In the current corporate environment knowledge is viewed as the most important strategic resource for the organisation. The real challenge for the organisation is the management of "knowledge". This is considered critical, as it contributes directly to the organisational success. No longer, the fixed, tangible resources of the organisation are considered as sustainable source of competitive advantage. Knowledge sharing is previewed as one of the important processes for knowledge management. Knowledge sharing presumes a relation between at least two parties, one that possesses knowledge and the other that acquires knowledge. Davenport and Prusak (1998) defines knowledge sharing as processes that involve exchanging knowledge between individuals and groups. Researchers and practitioners have suggested that employees are not born to share knowledge. Employees share knowledge with others only on the basis of willingness. Thus, knowledge sharing implies the giving and receiving of information framed within a context by the knowledge of the source.

Organisations with a centralised, bureaucratic management style can prohibit the creation of new knowledge, whereas a flexible, decentralised organisational structure encourages knowledge sharing, particularly of knowledge that is more tacit in

nature. Hence, organisations with a flatter structure may benefit from increased levels of knowledge-sharing. Organisations in order to be successful in knowledge transfer the structure must be highly flexible and responsive. An employee is motivated to share one's knowledge with another colleague if only one perceives the other to be honest and trustworthy. Thus, upholding trustworthy values such as mutual reciprocity, honesty, reliability and commitment, there is likely to be a greater degree of motivation to participate and share one's knowledge. Knowledge-sharing is likely to be motivated by moral obligation that results in a deeper sense of belongingness.

3.8 Intention to stay
Intention to stay is defined as employees' intention to stay in the organisation on long term basis. Employees intention to stay in the organisation is one of the behavioral issues have received ample attention by the social scientists in the areas of industrial psychology, human resource management and organisational behaviour during last few decades. It indicates the employee's level of commitment towards the organisation and the willingness to remain employed. Intention is conceptualized as statements about the particular behaviour and exhibit stronger effect on turnover than other employees' attitudes such as commitment with the organisation and job satisfaction. Organisations are more concerned about on intention to stay rather than turnover, as whenever an employee has exit, an organisation has to incur the cost of recruiting and maintaining a new employee. According to Tett *et al.* (1993), intention to stay consistently demonstrated a stronger relationship with turnover than did other turnover precursors.

4. Proposed Research Framework
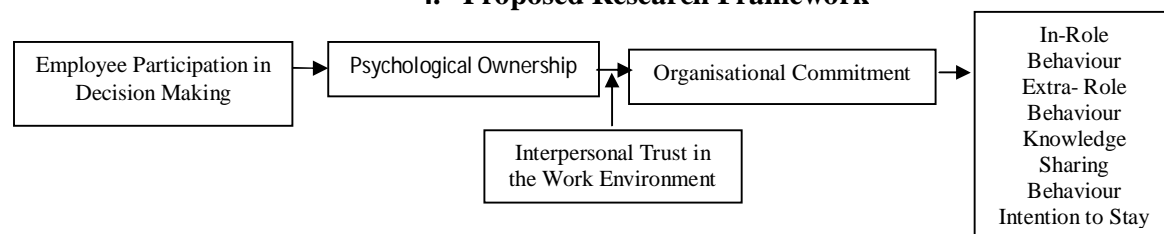
The theoretical background of the variables sets the foundation for the proposed research framework. The proposed research framework analyses employee participation in decision as a potential antecedent influencing psychological and organisational commitment among employees in the organisation. The serial mediation effect between psychological ownership and organsiational commitment enables positive individual outcomes towards the organisation. Interpersonal trust moderates the relationship between psychological ownership and individual work outcomes in an organisation. An insight into the relationship between psychological ownership and identified related construct will highlight the strong theoretical support for the holistic research framework which has not been attempted earlier.

5. Relationship Between Psychological Ownership and other Related Constucts
5.1 Employee Participation in Decision Making and Psychological Ownership.
Masterson *et al.* (2003) argued that participation can strengthen the relationship ties of employees within the organisation. This will have a direct impact on the increase of their investment towards the organisation. Organ (1988) suggested that when an employee confronts to feelings of inequality and indifference are more likely to reduce their contributions. Van Dyne *et al.* (2004) empirical findings suggested that "the greater degree of employees' participation in decision making is associated with a higher degree of altruistic spirit that contributes to psychological ownership". In 2010, Han *et al.* hypothesized the relationship between employee participation in decision making and individual's psychological ownership. Results showed a positive association. The study collected from a single source, a concern of common method bias. Thus, employee participation in decision making has future scope for cross-sectional and longitudinal study.

5.2 Psychological Ownership and Organisational Commitment
Meyer & Allen (1991) defined organisational commitment as "the desire to maintain an association with the organisation". In 1988, Belk put forth that when possessions are viewed as part of the extended self, it ensures that the loss of possessions equates to a loss or lessoning of the self and is associated with detrimental consequences. Thus, it can be established that those individuals who experience feelings of ownership would want to maintain their association with the organisation because of unfavorable consequences if this connection is not accomplished.

In the words of Lawler (1992) "employees must psychologically feel as if they own the organisation in order to develop the organisational commitment characteristic of high-involvement organisations". Subsequently, Florkowski (1987) and Pierce *et al.* (1991) suggest that psychological ownership is a strong antecedent to organisational commitment. This relationship has been supported empirically by Pierce *et al.* (1991 & 2001).

A study conducted by Vandewalle *et al.* (1995) revealed a significant positive relationship between organisation-based psychological ownership and organisational commitment. Indirect support for this relationship has also been obtained, whereby a reduction in team psychological ownership has been related to reduce levels of organisational commitment. Van

Dyne *et al.* (2004) tested the relationship between psychological ownership an organisational commitment. The study was conducted with data collected from three field samples. This was done to increase the generalizability of the findings. Since majority of the respondents were U.S. citizens, future research on the relationship can be examined in other nations.

Pierce *et al.* (2006) and Avey *et al.* (2009) positively related psychological ownership to employee affective organisational commitment. This study complimented the findings of VandeWalle *et al.* (1995), who established that "psychological ownership is linked to, but not totally redundant with, affective organisational commitment". Psychological ownership is positively related to organisational commitment. Hence, the positive consequences of the relationship can be studied.

5.3 Psychological Ownership and Role Behaviours

In 1988, Belk put forth that when an object is owned, greater care, attention, and energy are bestowed upon the object. Thus, the feel of ownership is considered a prime motivator of human behaviour. It is proposed that psychological ownership may produce positive actions such as in-role and extra-role behaviours. In 1991, Pierce *et al.* theorized that psychological ownership would be associated with extra-role behaviour.

Van Dyne *et al.* (1995) put forth that extra-role behaviour encompasses discretionary behaviour, external to formal employment conditions, and it is believed that such behaviour will result in positive outcomes for the organisation. In contrast, in-role behaviour is that required to gain organisational rewards and retain employment as suggested by Van Dyne & LePine (1998).

Vandewalle *et al.* (1995) established a significant positive relationship between extra-role behaviours and psychological ownership, and this relationship was stronger than the relationship between in-role behaviours and psychological ownership. There has been support for psychological ownership to produce increments in extra-role behaviours.

In 2004, the study by Van Dyne *et al.* confirmed a positive relationship between psychological ownership and organisational citizenship behaviour. Van dyne in his words "OCB and extra role behaviour are most accepted labels". Le Pine, Erez, and Johnson (2002) found that the varying terminology of these discretionary behaviours does not produce differences in predictive relationships. Therefore, literature on organisational citizenship behaviour will also be applied to support extra-role behaviours. Since only few studies have been done on this relationship, there is a lot of scope for un-wind in this relationship.

5.4 Psychological Ownership and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour

Han *et al.* (2010) empirically tested the relationship between psychological ownership and individual's knowledge sharing behaviour. The study was done based on the assumptions that employees who have sense of psychological ownership may display altruistic spirit as explained by Van Dyne *et al.* (2004). This enables to consider knowledge sharing behaviour. The study was conducted in High-tech organisations in Taiwanese with a sample size of 260. Thus, the relationship is predominantly new and can be further analysed with large sample size.

5.5 Psychological Ownership and Intention to Stay

Ozler *et al.* (2008) examined the antecedents and impact upon organisational behaviours of psychological ownership. The study was conducted with administrative and academic staff of a state university. The sample size was 709 and it is considered significant statistically. The results suggest that psychological ownership influences employees' chances of long term employment. Avey *et al.* (2009) studied the semantic network of psychological ownership. The results established that there is a positive relationship between psychological ownership would be desirable to develop employees' attitude towards the organisation.

5.6 Mediation Effect of Psychological Ownership and Organisational Commitment

Van Dyne *et al.* (1995) conducted a study on a sample size of 797 residents of university housing cooperatives. He extended empirical support that Organisational commitment would mediate the effects of psychological ownership on extra role behaviour. The relationship was fully mediated and thus added as a strong for the model of psychological ownership. He emphasized that employees with higher level of psychological ownership were likely to engage in extra role that benefits the organisation. Thus, organisations that value organisational commitment extra role behaviour will have to increase the incidence of these behaviours by increasing psychological ownership.

Pierce *et al.* (2006) explored a potential mediating role of psychological ownership in the relationship between levels of work environment structure and employee behaviours. The sample size was 239 New Zealand workers and their managers. The study analysed two hypothesis. The first, psychological ownership will mediate the relationship between work environment structure and the dimensions of employee extra-role behaviour. Results showed one dimension was statistically significant and the other was not. The second hypothesis, psychological ownership will mediate the relationship between work environment structure and affective Organisational commitment. Findings of the analysis suggest that the relationship between work environment and affective commitment was partially mediated.

Mayhew *et al.* (2007) empirically examined the antecedents and consequences of psychological ownership in Organisational settings. In this study, Organisational-based psychological ownership mediates the relationship between autonomy and commitment. Results showed that mediation have strong impact for the relationship.

The study on High-tech organisational employees by Han *et al.* (2010) empirically tested the hypothesis Organisational commitment mediates the relationship between psychological ownership and knowledge sharing behaviour. Results suggest that the mediating effect of organisational commitment is approved, thus the hypothesis is supported.

5.7 Interpersonal Trust in the Work Environment - The Moderator

In the words of Brown *et al.* (2014) the environment of trust would serve several critical roles in the expression and impact of psychological ownership. He empirically examined the role of trust in the work environment. The study is based on the assumption that trust in the work environment, psychological ownership may lead to territorial behaviours. The data collected for the analysis are working adults. Findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between psychological ownership and territoriality and this relationship is moderated by the trust environment. High trust environment reduces territorial behaviour associated with psychological ownership. The relationship can be further analysed by exploring the trust, psychological ownership and territorial behaviours of individual and workgroups.

6. Conclusion

This study will help in understanding the dynamics of psychological ownership and work attitude and behaviours also provide strong support for both the antecedents and consequences of psychological ownership. The concept is popularly used in the European Union. Recently, researchers in Asian countries have begun to explore the facets of psychological ownership. The "feel" of possession makes a clear reflection on the employees' has emotional, attitudinal and behaviourial effects. However, the theory of psychological ownership was formulated very few studies have comprehensively examined the variables identified as a model involving mediators and moderators. Hence, this study would draw attention to psychological ownership which is an effective managerial construct with significant practical implications for management.

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