

“Impact of employee loyalty on job performance: Mediating role of job satisfaction on the example of Zain company, Bahrain”

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IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE LOYALTY ON JOB PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION ON THE EXAMPLE OF ZAIN COMPANY, BAHRAIN

Abstract

The study aims to examine the effect of employee loyalty on job performance in Bahrain. Further, it investigates the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between employee loyalty and job performance. One hundred two participants employed by Zain company were selected through an online convenience sampling technique. The study chose Zain, a telecommunication company in Bahrain, due to easy access to employees, interest in studying company culture/methods, collaboration opportunities, and Zain's reputation for innovation. SmartPLS4 was used to investigate potential correlations between employee loyalty and job performance and how job satisfaction indirectly affects employee loyalty and job performance. Findings show that employee loyalty significantly influences job performance and job satisfaction. Further, job satisfaction is significantly associated with job performance. In terms of mediating effect, the study found that job satisfaction significantly influences the relationship between employee loyalty and job performance. Every variable studied had an impact on job performance. As a result, the current study's hypotheses are all confirmed. The model of the study is well fit, as the R-square is greater than 51%. The main contribution of this study is the insight that job satisfaction is a substantial mediator of the relationship between employee loyalty and job performance. Through theoretical and practical contributions, this study offers valuable implications that might benefit managers at companies, including Zain company, as well as interested readers and researchers.

Keywords

employee loyalty, job performance, job satisfaction, Zain company, Bahrain

JEL Classification

O15, J24, J53, K38, M54

INTRODUCTION

Employee loyalty is an important concept to consider when assessing job performance in an organization (Phuong & Vinh, 2020). Zain Telecommunication is no exception. The loyalty of employees has been linked to job satisfaction, which can lead to higher job performance and more efficient operations (Al Kurdi et al., 2020). By understanding the role of job satisfaction in influencing the employee loyalty-job performance connection, Zain Telecommunication can better identify the factors that lead to improved job performance and develop strategies to foster loyalty and job satisfaction. Employee loyalty is a commitment to the organization, dedication to their work, and willingness to go beyond duties (Farrukh et al., 2020).

It is widely accepted that employee loyalty positively impacts job performance and job satisfaction (Egenius et al., 2020). Companies that invest in their employees and foster loyalty tend to have improved job performance, as loyalty increases employees' commitment to their

work and encourages them to put in extra effort (Budrienė & Diskienė, 2020). Loyal employees are also more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, as they are more likely to receive recognition and rewards for their efforts (Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022). In addition, employee loyalty also helps to create a sense of community in the workplace, leading to improved job satisfaction.

The association between job performance and job satisfaction is complex, but Loan (2020) indicated that job performance positively correlates with job satisfaction. Employees that are happy in their occupations are more likely to be productive, driven, and engaged at work. On the other hand, those who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more prone to be disengaged, unmotivated, and unproductive (Krekel et al., 2019). Thus, job satisfaction can be seen as a mediating variable between employee loyalty and job performance.

Employee loyalty has a positive influence on job performance. Studies have found that employees more loyal to a company are more likely to be pleased with their job and perform better (Farrukh et al., 2020; Phuong & Vinh, 2020). Additionally, job satisfaction has been found to mediate the relationship between loyalty and job performance, suggesting that job satisfaction is an important factor in determining job performance (Krekel et al., 2019). Furthermore, Book et al. (2019) and Al Kurdi et al. (2020) showed that loyalty is also associated with other positive outcomes, such as increased commitment, reduced turnover, and improved customer service. Thus, job satisfaction and employee loyalty are critical factors for organizational success.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

The importance of employee loyalty cannot be overstated, particularly in today's more competitive market. Companies must foster a work climate that encourages employee loyalty since the advantages of doing so are apparent (Phuong & Le Ha, 2022). A company with devoted, loyal workers is likelier to prosper than one with a high staff turnover rate. Employee loyalty may increase performance, boost team morale and productivity, and enhance customer service (Mahaputra & Saputra, 2021). Promoting a workplace loyalty culture also contributes to job happiness, as workers are more inclined to remain once they feel appreciated and valued (Haryanti & Zulganef, 2023).

Employers must establish a pleasant work environment by offering incentives such as promotions, recognition, and awards. Hence, employees will become more productive and loyal alike. In contrast, businesses should ensure that both corporate goals and personnel responsibilities are well-defined (Yang & Ha-Brookshire, 2019). This guarantees everyone is working toward the same objective, fostering team drive and commitment.

Employee loyalty is not only advantageous for a company but also for the employees themselves.

For instance, a committed employee is more likely to obtain promotions and raises. In addition, they often enjoy an environment of trust and camaraderie since their commitment and devotion to their jobs are appreciated (Liza et al., 2021). In essence, employee loyalty is essential for any business. Employers should establish an atmosphere that promotes and rewards loyalty to foster success. Managers can ensure that their business has the best chance of achieving its goals by focusing on a positive work atmosphere, incentives, recognition, rewards, and open dialogue between staff and management.

Regarding job performance, it refers to how well an employee fulfills job requirements and responsibilities assigned to them. It is usually measured in terms of the quality of work produced, the amount of work completed, and the speed of work completion. It is also closely linked to employee motivation and satisfaction (Ali et al., 2023). Clearly, people who demonstrate superior performance will have a larger desire for employment than those who do less well. High achievers are required to satisfy an organization's aims and statements and sustain the development of competitive advantages (Lăzăroiu et al., 2020). Therefore, for a business to be more productive, it must find and implement solutions that may improve the work performance of its personnel.

There are different ways to explain what “job performance” means. For instance, Javed et al. (2014) stated that job performance is, in general, how well a worker does his or her job. Avey et al. (2011) asserted that the behaviors themselves define performance; it excludes the outcomes of an employee’s actions. Performance has to do with how employees act or behave, not how much they make or what they make. Moreover, performance is a function of an individual’s ability, skill, and effort in a given situation (Habtoor & Ali, 2023). Furthermore, an employee’s work performance is the total anticipated value to the company of discrete behavioral episodes they carry out over a certain period (Naji et al., 2022). Two components of employee work performance can be measured: task performance and contextual performance (Ali, 2022).

In the telecommunication sector, employee job performance is defined as applying specialized knowledge and abilities to accurately complete duties per standards of service processes. Employees execute various responsibilities inside a firm, including supplying customers with functions such as customer services and other extra services and positions linked to aspects like finance, accounting, marketing, sales, and people. All of these staff actions are connected to the organization’s objectives.

According to Lee et al. (2022), job satisfaction is a vital factor in influencing employee loyalty and their work performance and hence, results in the growth and stability of the corporation. To promote employee loyalty, a company must provide gratification. It is indicated that the greater the number of employees who quit their jobs, the worse their job satisfaction (Katebi et al., 2022). In brief, contented workers become loyal when a company provides them with opportunities to learn and advance; this employee loyalty displays itself via the enhancement of their job satisfaction. In this approach, all employees will contribute to the business success, resulting in increased job satisfaction and, ultimately, stronger employee loyalty (Phuong & Vinh, 2020). Djordjevic et al. (2020) conducted empirical research to gather data from 261 workers to examine the relationship between employee happiness and loyalty. Senior workers were shown to be more loyal because they had greater job satisfaction. Furthermore, Mahmoud

et al. (2022) indicated a positive association between worker loyalty and job happiness, with $r = 0.41$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$, indicating that job satisfaction is positively associated with employee loyalty. Thus, job satisfaction affects employee loyalty. Based on this, the current study expects a significant association between employee loyalty and job satisfaction.

It is commonly acknowledged that employees’ productivity increases when they are thrilled with their work. Mustajab et al. (2020), Javed et al. (2014), and Phuong and Vinh (2020) also support this view. For instance, the analysis of the collected data from 77 employees at 24 shops in the Kepong region of Wilayah Persekutuan, Kuala Lumpur, showed that job satisfaction positively influences employee job performance (Yvonne et al., 2014). In addition, Javed et al. (2014) did research using a sample of 150 Bahawalpur workers. The study found that work satisfaction affects job performance. Job satisfaction adds 14% to job performance, indicating that job efficiency may be described by how satisfied individuals are with their jobs. Consequently, the current study expects a significant association between employee loyalty and job performance.

Job satisfaction is crucial in determining whether an employee is happy in their role. It is often seen as an essential measure of well-being, as those who are satisfied with their job tend to be more productive and content in their day-to-day lives (Murtza et al., 2021). Various factors, including job security, salary, job environment, career progression opportunities, and other benefits, such as flexible working and holidays, determine job satisfaction. It is important for employers to ensure that all employees are provided with a comfortable and productive working environment, as well as the resources and support needed to perform their roles effectively (Davidescu et al., 2020). Employees are more likely to be content with their work if they feel supported and respected. Employers should offer recognition and rewards for going the extra mile and provide opportunities for learning and development, such as training and workshops.

Having an open communication channel with employees and providing regular feedback is also essential, as it helps to foster a sense of belonging

and encourages employees to give their best (Al Balushi et al., 2022). Ali et al. (2023) revealed that employees who feel satisfied with their job tend to be more productive and engaged in their work and are more likely to stay with their employer for longer. Therefore, employers must invest in their employees and create an environment conducive to job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction becomes high with employees who have high loyalty to the organization. The significance of employee loyalty in boosting organizational success is crucial (Dhir et al., 2020). Loyal employees may be more productive since they typically consider the broader picture. They choose a job path out of a desire to follow their hobbies and interests rather than out of a need for monetary compensation or a sense of duty. Therefore, loyal employees are more likely to improve company performance over which they have authority (Navia & Umpiérrez de Reguero, 2021).

Employee loyalty also has a favorable link with a distinctive contribution to determining job performance (Abdullah et al., 2021; Blanco-Gonzalez et al., 2020; Huynh & Hua, 2020). Raaper and Brown (2020) examined the connection between employee loyalty and work performance. Their study analyzed data from the workplace in the United Kingdom in 2004 to determine the favorable influence of employee loyalty on job performance. The obtained findings demonstrated that employee loyalty affects job performance. Consequently, the current study expects a significant association between job satisfaction and job performance.

The literature review led to the presumption that work position would influence establishing the degree of linkages among employee loyalty, as an independent variable, job satisfaction, as a mediation variable, and job performance, as a dependent variable, in the telecommunication sector, namely Zain company. Hence, the study aims to examine the effect of employee loyalty on job performance. Further, it investigates the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between employee loyalty on job performance.

The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between job loyalty, as an independent variable, and job performance, as a dependent variable,

at Zain Telecommunication company. Further, it investigates the mediating effect of independent variables on the relationship between job loyalty and job performance.

Thus, the following study hypotheses are developed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between employee loyalty and job satisfaction.

H2: There is a significant relationship between employee loyalty and job performance.

H3: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job performance.

H4: Job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between employee loyalty and job performance.

2. METHODOLOGY

This section describes the study's design and provides the techniques for selecting the study sample, collecting reliable data, and analyzing the collected data. Discussions about instrumentation (the instrumentation of online surveys), data processing, sampling, and validation (Al-refaei et al., 2023; Ali et al., 2023) are also conducted in this section.

The research design is a framework that specifies how the data are gathered, processed, and presented. This may ensure that the data acquired and analyzed accomplish study goals and offer the most definitive answers to research questions. The present investigation adopted the quantitative approach for data collection and analysis. A structured online questionnaire was used (Almaamari et al., 2022; Dawwas, 2022). A descriptive study is conducted to provide an accurate and reliable description of the aspects pertinent to the research problem. A co-relational research approach is also employed to examine the statistical relationship between the variables (Ateeq et al., 2022).

Regarding population and sampling, participants were chosen from Zain employees and requested to participate in the current study; the study's sample was selected using the convenient sampling tech-

nique. According to Cochran’s estimates, a sample size of around 102 is required for a population of 400 to yield a margin of error of 0.05 and a critical value of 1.96.

The study’s data were analyzed using SPSS version 28 and descriptive statistics. Using latent variables, PLS-SEM was utilized to estimate complicated cause-and-effect link models. Exogenous and endogenous variables’ internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha) was 0.938, demonstrating the validity of the questionnaires.

3. RESULTS

The results section provides a clear summary of the study’s findings and the implications of these findings (Muff et al., 2022). It includes clear explanations of the results and a discussion of the implications. All relevant statistical values, such as the mean, median, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients, are included when presenting the results. Additionally, graphs and tables illustrate the findings (Paul & Barari, 2022).

Concerning reliability measurement, the study checks internal consistency for varied measurements (Kalkbrenner, 2023). Acceptable dependability must be more than 0.70. The composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha were evaluated using SPSS 28. Composite reliability (CR) varied from 0.93 to 0.90, while Cronbach’s alpha ranged from 0.936 to 0.885. It is also shown that the square root of AVE is between 0.73 and 0.53, which is more than 0.50, showing discriminant validity. Therefore, there were no superfluous components in the model. Thus, Cronbach’s alpha, AVE, and composite reliability fulfilled the approval requirements. Table 1 lists these characteristics. Cronbach’s alphas are more than 0.7, and composite estimates of dependability are greater than 0.90. The study can be, therefore, reliable. Due to congruence and consistency, the outcome is also valid. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of the study.

Convergent validity reflects how well a set of variables used in the study, as measures of the same concept, agreed with each other (Bălăceanu et al., 2022). Convergent validity requires multiple checks and proofs to ensure they are correct. To

Table 1. Reliability and composite reliability

Construct	Cronbach’s alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
Employee Loyalty	0.928	0.933	0.738
Job Performance	0.936	0.938	0.723
Job Satisfaction	0.870	0.906	0.538

Note: JS: Job satisfaction, EL: Employee loyalty; JP: Job performance.

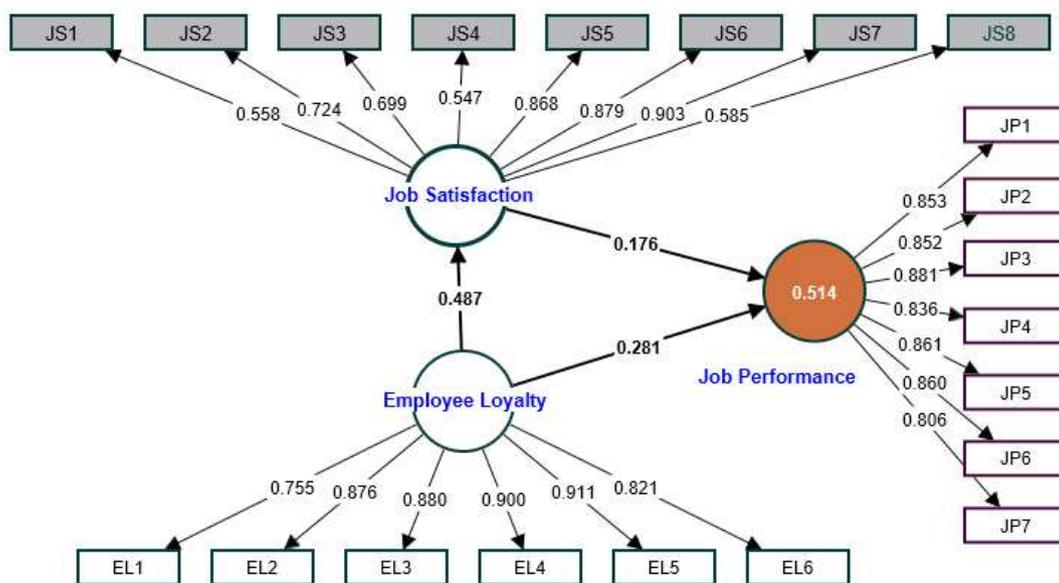


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Table 2. Convergent validity analysis

Construct	Code	Number of items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Employee Loyalty	EL	6	0.857	0.933	0.738
Job Performance	JP	7	0.850	0.938	0.723
Job Satisfaction	JS	8	0.720	0.906	0.538

Table 3. Discriminant validity analysis

Construct	Employee Loyalty	Job Performance	Job Satisfaction
Employee Loyalty	0.859		
Job Performance	0.654	0.850	
Job Satisfaction	0.572	0.614	0.734

fulfill these requirements, factor loadings, composite reliability, and average extracted variance were estimated in accordance with the specified procedure (Agegnehu et al., 2022). As a result, item loadings were investigated. All objects were discovered to have loadings greater than 0.50. This means that item loadings are respectable (Ren et al., 2022). Composite reliability assesses the consistency with which a combination of elements reflects the concept at concern. Table 2 shows CR values ranging from 0.857 to 0.720, which exceed the minimum criterion of 0.7. These results verify the model's convergence. The AVE values were analyzed to ensure model fit convergence. The AVE is the average variance in measurement error over a set of objects. The accurate AVE is more closely related to the indicator variation than to the measurement error variance. Table 2 shows the calculated AVE values. It was discovered that the AVE values of all constructs are more than 0.5. This suggests that the model's convergent validity is reasonable, ranging from 0.738 to 0.538.

Regarding discriminant validity, it assesses the significant differences between a concept and others (Flake et al., 2022). It proves that different structures do not cross over. Despite their connections, constructions measure many concepts. The variance between concepts and measures should be bigger than among constructs if the measures' discriminant validity can be demonstrated (Kezios et al., 2022). In other words, it prevents the collision of objects with different structural characteristics. The AVE in this study exceeds the correlation between factors since every variable has sufficient discriminant validity. The findings of each variable's AVE are also discovered to be more tightly related (Table 3).

Regarding prediction relevance, the variance of a variable described by predictor variables is given by the R-square of an endogenous variable (Yuniningsih et al., 2019). A higher R^2 indicates that a model is more predictive (Chicco et al., 2021). R-square must be larger than 0.75 with a precision bigger than 0.25 to be meaningful. The dependent variables of job performance, according to Table 4, accurately reflected the data. The model can explain 51% of the variance in job performance in this investigation. More than 51% of the variance was disclosed or explained by dependent variables. Job performance is a word used to indicate an organization's level of loyalty to its purpose.

$$R^2 = 1 - \frac{Rss}{TSS} \quad (1)$$

Table 4. Coefficient of determination result R^2

Model	R-square adjusted
Job Performance	0.514

Concerning the effect size f^2 , it is typically employed to analyze the impact and connection of variables. Cohen (1988) defines the optimal effect size as less than 0.02 (0.02 = little, 0.15 = medium, and 0.35 = high). Employee loyalty to job satisfaction has the greatest effect size. In contrast, job satisfaction has the lowest effect size impact among other variables on job performance, as shown in Table 5 and Figure 2.

Table 5 and Figure 2 demonstrate that employee loyalty \rightarrow job satisfaction had the largest effect size among all the independent factors (0.487). The job satisfaction \rightarrow job performance path had the smallest impact magnitude, although influences regarded any number above 0.176 as significant (Brydges, 2019). Even yet, this was regarded

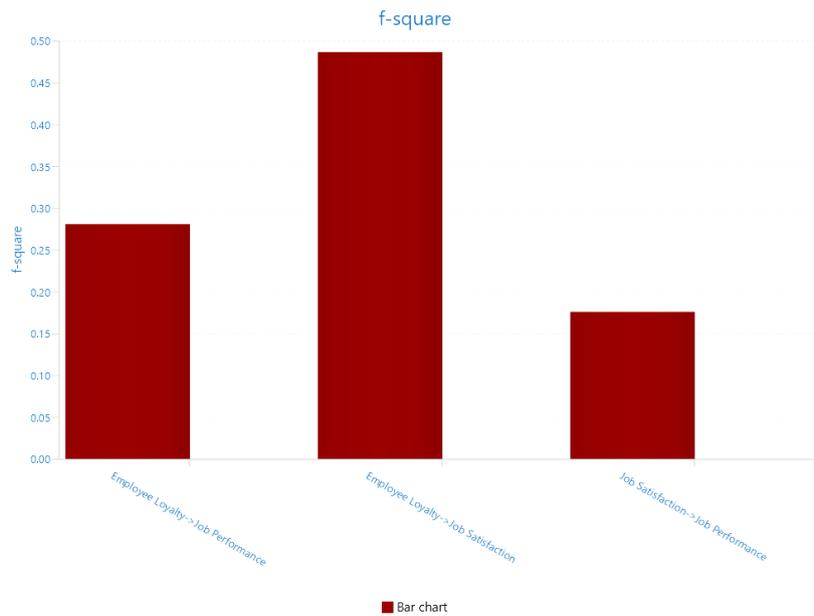


Figure 2. Effect size f^2

as acceptable. The employee loyalty → job performance value of 0.281 ranks it second compared to the other variables. Table 6 shows the results of hypotheses testing.

Table 5. Effect size f^2

Construct	Job Performance	Job Satisfaction
Employee Loyalty	0.287	0.487
Job Satisfaction	0.176	-

Note: $f^2 = (R^2 \text{ included} - R^2 \text{ excluded}) / (1 - R^2 \text{ included})$; Key: f^2 0.02 weak, 0.15 moderate, 0.35 strong effects (Brydges, 2019).

The bootstrapping approach and Smart PLS4 were used in this inquiry to confirm the statistical significance of the path coefficients. The study also calculated the p-values for the hypotheses, and the findings are shown in Table 6 and Figure 3.

The study used bootstrapping to calculate t-values and coefficients. Job performance, the dependent variable, was found to be significantly (at a significance level of 1%) impacted by employee loyalty ($\beta = 0.450, = .449, SD = 0.059, t = 7.635, p = 0.000$).

Table 6. Mean, STDEV, t-values, p-values, decision

No.	Hypothesis	β	μ	SD	t-value	p-values	Decision
H1	EL → JP	0.450	0.449	0.059	7.635	0.000	Supported
H2	EL → JS	0.572	0.575	0.041	13.841	0.000	Supported
H3	JS → JP	0.357	0.359	0.057	6.226	0.000	Supported

Note: JS: Job satisfaction, EL: Employee loyalty; JP: Job performance.

Increasing employee loyalty will lead to increased job performance. These findings accept the null hypothesis. Similarly, the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance was supported as the study found that job satisfaction has a significant effect on job performance at the significance level of 1% ($\beta = 0.357, \mu = 0.359, SD = 0.057, t = 6.226, p = .000$).

Furthermore, the study found that employee loyalty has a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction at the significance level of 1% ($\beta = 0.572, \mu = 0.575, SD = 0.041, t = 13.841, p = .000$). This means that increased employee loyalty will result in increased job satisfaction. In conclusion, all the direct hypotheses of the study are supported.

Regarding the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the association between employee loyalty and job performance, the study also used the bootstrap approach in Smart PLS. As shown in Table 7, employee satisfaction at Zain company partially mediates the association between employee loyalty and job performance, accounting for 24% of the variance. This means that employee satisfaction

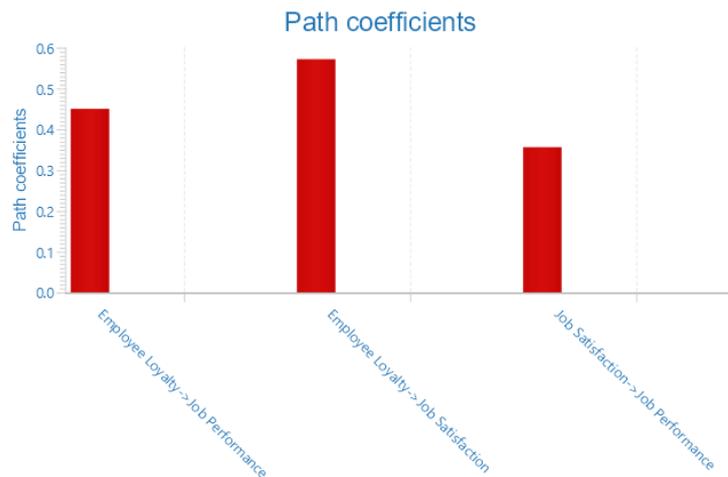


Figure 3. Path coefficient bar chart

Table 7. Mediation analysis

No.	Hypothesis	Indirect effect	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision	Mediation type
H4	EL → JS → JP	.0240	0.037	5.450	0.000	Supported	Partial Mediation

Note: JS: Job satisfaction, EL: Employee loyalty; JP: Job performance.

mediates the association between job satisfaction and employee loyalty. Hence, the study confirmed the significance of job satisfaction as a mediator for the significant association between employee loyalty and job performance.

4. DISCUSSION

Using a structured web-based survey, the study examines the influence of employee loyalty and job satisfaction on job performance at Zain company. The results show that employee loyalty has a significant impact on job performance. This result is consistent with other studies where employee loyalty significantly affects job performance and job satisfaction (Dhir et al., 2020; Phuong & Vinh, 2020). The current study shows that employee loyalty was found to have the most significant impact on job satisfaction in Zain telecommunication company, with an estimated effect of f^2 49% and a significant positive effect on job performance (f^2 28%). In addition, employee loyalty → job satisfaction was considered to have the greatest statistically significant impact on the participants due to its highest mean and path coefficient among the rest variables as well as the independent variable with the highest correlation to the outcome, at the significance level of 1% ($\beta =$

0.450, $\mu = .449$, $SD = 0.059$, $t = 7.635$, $p = 0.000$). This is perhaps due to the highest mean and path coefficient among the other variables.

It was found that employee loyalty had the greatest statistically significant impact on the participants. This result revealed that employee loyalty is one of the most important and influencing factors for the participants at Zain Telecommunication company. This outcome is consistent with Phuong and Vinh (2020), who asserted that employee loyalty has a significant positive effect on job performance and underlined the significance of job satisfaction in fostering employee loyalty and job performance.

According to the statistics, job satisfaction → job performance had the lowest t-value and the highest SD, which suggested that it had the lowest significant beneficial influence on job performance within the significance level of 1% ($\beta = 0.357$, $\mu = 0.359$, $SD = 0.057$, $t = 6.226$, $p = .000$). This result is in line with Ali (2022). As a result, the study accepts that the mathematical evidence leaves room for other hypotheses to exist. Also, it has been noted that a number of the factors involved have a noticeably positive effect on how well employees perform in their jobs in Zain company. These results are consistent with earlier publications.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to determine the effect of employee loyalty and job satisfaction on the job performance of Zain Telecommunication employees and to identify the different causes underlying job satisfaction and employee loyalty. The study concludes a significant association between employee loyalty and job satisfaction on job performance among Zain employees. This study revealed that the fundamental variables of job satisfaction include career, development, motivation, working environment, and self-satisfaction. The findings showed that employee loyalty's fundamental components include belongingness, work participation, and organizational commitment. It is also found that employee loyalty positively influences job satisfaction (0.488) and job performance. Moreover, employee loyalty significantly influences job performance (0.281).

These findings highlighted the significance of employee loyalty in fostering employee commitment and productivity of workers in Zain company. In conclusion, it can be stated that a satisfied employee may also be loyal to his/her organization: the more successfully individuals do their duties, the greater their devotion to the company. In other words, when employees' expectations are fulfilled, they experience job satisfaction. Consequently, employee loyalty and job performance result from job satisfaction. In conclusion, employee loyalty is essential in determining job performance, and organizations should strive to create an environment where employees feel appreciated and valued.

Based on the obtained findings, the study highly recommends that organizations strive to create an environment where employees feel appreciated and valued, as this will lead to increased loyalty and job satisfaction, which will boost improved job performance. As for future research, the present study recommends enlarging samples to generalize the results since this study might not fully represent the Bahraini telecom industry.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Ali Ateeq, Mohammed Alzoraiki, Marwan Milhem, Mujeeb Al-Absy.

Data curation: Mohammed Alzoraiki.

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Validation: Ali Ateeq.

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Writing – original draft: Ali Ateeq, Mohammed Alzoraiki, Marwan Milhem.

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