

Positive Side of Overqualification: An examination of Overqualification Perception and Organizational Performance

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The issue regarding the qualifications of workers compared to the requirements of a particular job has become an increasingly significant factor in contemporary organization, mainly due to the increasing number of overqualified individuals working in jobs that do not provide sufficient. Although the traditional perspective regarding overqualification has been linked to negative job attitudes and performance of such workers, contemporary research has demonstrated that such a phenomenon may be linked to various benefits in the psychological and performance domains as well. Drawing from Self-Determination Theory, the current study investigates the possible impact of such a perception on organizational performance via intrinsic motivation if there is a supportive organizational environment. It also provides practical guidance for organizations to effectively utilize overqualified employees by fostering autonomy, opportunities, and an environment to apply their skills and knowledge. The research was conducted using a quantitative research method whereby a cross-sectional survey research design was utilized. The sample size comprised 390 participants drawn from the public and private sectors. Structured questionnaires were administered online and in hard copies to the participants. All variables in the study were measured using existing reliable and valid scales. The data analysis involved the use of the SPSS software package, where methods such as descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation, regression, mediation, and moderation analysis via Hayes' process Macro were carried out. As per the results of this study, overqualified individuals are likely to experience increased levels of competence due to their perception of their skills, knowledge, and education. Moreover, the study highlights the significance of having an environment that enables the occurrence of the psychological phenomenon by authorizing the overqualified employees to make use of their skills. In general, the results indicate that overqualification does not have to be viewed as a negative experience. On the contrary, when coupled with intrinsic motivation and fostered in a positive work climate, it has the potential to positively influence organizational performance.

KEYWORDS: Overqualification perception, intrinsic motivation, supportive work environment, organizational performance

1. INTRODUCTION

People recognize that they are "individuals perceive themselves as overqualified when their qualifications exceed the requirements of their jobs" when they believe their level of qualification surpasses the employment criteria. Over-qualification perception is the name given to this phenomenon. (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). Several variables, including increased education, the economic downturn, and competitive job markets, have resulted in a situation where most people's credentials, experience, and talents surpass the requirements of open positions. Overqualification is the term used to describe this tendency that is common in the global labor market (Jiang et al., 2024). Overqualification is the perception of employees that they are overqualified for the current job (Lee A. E., 2019). According to estimates, one-third of workers worldwide feel they are overqualified for their current positions. (Arvan, 2019). This phenomenon is increasingly noticeable in nations with weak economies (Nasib Dar, 2020) When factors like age, security, high unemployment, and the lack of unemployment benefits force people to accept jobs that are below their working capacity. (Liu S, 2015).

Current studies have started revealing some of the positive elements that come from over-qualification perceptions. For example, new hires who feel overqualified for their jobs tend to place greater emphasis on the value of their work responsibilities, resulting in more organizational citizenship behaviors. (Hu J, 2015). In terms of performance, overqualified employees may exhibit higher task performance and more proactive behavior (Yi Li, 2022). Some scholars have studied the benefits associated with this topic, such as creativity, innovation, and knowledge sharing. Nevertheless, there is a lack of empirical research on the connection between it and the mentioned benefits (Luksyte A, 2015). Researchers argue that overqualification is associated with excellent performance through certain processes and situations. (van Dijk H, 2019). This means that firms can derive benefits from the surplus KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) possessed by overqualified employees. To have a deeper understanding of the connection between overqualification and outcomes, several scholars recommend incorporating attributes as moderators, considering both aspects of overqualification. (Erdogan B B. T., 2011).

The previous research on over-qualification almost explored the positive personal aspect of employees, but the current research will address its positive effects on organizational performance. An employee's overqualification might be in Education, Experience, unique abilities, skills, initiative, creativity, and responsibilities (Rahmani, 2018). To compete and exist in a competitive market, it is essential to have the right employees at the right time and in the appropriate place, and the most important resource in gaining a competitive advantage for organizations is the qualified and capable human capital (Rahmani, 2018). The importance of this topic is related to both employees and organizations. For employees, it is crucial to discover their abilities and talents to use them toward achieving personal development and organizational goals

efficiently. For organizations, it's necessary to effectively manage and utilize the skills, talent, and experience of overqualified employees.

1.1 Problem Statement

Overqualification is becoming increasingly common in the current organizational setting because employees perceive themselves as being overqualified for their current jobs, considering their qualifications, educational background, and years of experience. While extensive literature has already explored the adverse effects of overqualification, including job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions, limited research has examined regarding the possible benefits of overqualification. With the growing relevance of overqualification in the current organizational setting, confusion persists regarding its impact on organizational performance. Some of the existing literature offers contradictory results on the issue, with one set of literature pointing out its negative consequences for employees' behavior and attitudes, while another set suggests the potential benefits of overqualification perception.

Such uncertainty may create challenges for organizations since the mismanagement of overqualified individuals can lead to demotivation and poor performance outcomes. It is thus vital to explore how the perception of being overqualified affects organizational performance.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how overqualification perception affects organizational performance by considering supportive work environments and intrinsic motivation as mediators and moderators, respectively. Such research findings are likely to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon of overqualification perception and provide useful recommendations for leveraging the skills of employees to achieve favorable performance outcomes.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To explore the possibility that overqualified employees will show elevated intrinsic motivation levels.
2. Evaluating the high levels of intrinsic motivation among employees will improve organizational performance.
3. To identify that high levels of intrinsic motivation of overqualified employees will contribute to organizational performance.
4. To determine the effect of a supportive work environment on how strongly perceived overqualification and intrinsic drive are related.

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent does overqualification perception significantly influence employees' intrinsic motivation?

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2. To what extent does employees' intrinsic motivation significantly affect organizational performance?
 3. How much does overqualification perception and organizational performance become mediated by intrinsic motivation?
 4. To what extent do overqualification perception and intrinsic motivation have a moderating effect in a supportive workplace?

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H1: Overqualification perception has a positive effect on employees' intrinsic motivation.

H2: Intrinsic motivation has a positive effect on organizational performance.

H3: Intrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between Overqualification perception and organizational performance.

H4: Supportive work environment moderates the relationship between Overqualification perception and intrinsic motivation, such that the positive relationship is stronger in a more supportive work environment than in a less supportive one.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overqualification Perception

Kristof-Brown examined overqualification in relation to the person–job demand–ability fit perspective (Onat & Eren, 2020). While "ability" relates to the degree of knowledge, skills, training, experience, and other potential qualifications of the individual carrying out the work, "demand" refers to the requirements of the work inside the company. In other words, a demand–ability mismatch occurs when an employee's qualifications, knowledge, skills, or experience exceed the requirements of the job (Onat & Eren, 2020). Overqualification can be conceptualized from both objective and subjective perspectives: subjective and objective (Maltarich, 2011). From an objective perspective, overqualification refers to the extent to which an employee's education, skills, and qualifications exceed the requirements of the job (Maltarich, 2011). However, from a subjective standpoint, overqualification is the belief that a person's abilities surpass what is needed for the job (Maltarich, 2011). Having more knowledge, abilities, education, and experience than what an employer requires of an employee is known as overqualification. (Erdogan B B. T., 2009). Overqualification perception is the perception of employees that they are overqualified for the current job (Lee A. E., 2019) or OQP is the term used to describe people's belief that their experience, education, talents, and abilities exceed the demands of their current position or that there aren't enough possibilities for advancement or a stage on which they may demonstrate their abilities (Johnson et al., 2000).

As mentioned in the research article, Hu et al. (2015) discovered that workers who believe they are overqualified typically place more value on their work, which raises levels of organizational citizenship behaviors (Jiang et

al., 2024). Also, he pointed out that (Deng et al., 2018) suggested that employees' dedication to their careers can be strengthened by overqualification perception, and Ma et al. (2020) proposed that workers with high levels of overqualification perception frequently exhibit higher levels of positive self-perceived resources, which leads to more positive work behaviors (Jiang et al., 2024).

Most of the research conducted on overqualification perceptions tends to highlight the negative aspect, indicating that the perception of overqualification is favorably correlated with turnover tendency, job boredom, and unproductive work conduct and negatively correlated with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job engagement (Jiang. et al, 2024).

To date, many literatures have shown that overqualification perception is related to a series of negative outcomes, such as less positive work attitude and lower happiness (Harari, 2017). This condition of having KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) is generally considered problematic because Empirical data indicate that these workers have lower levels of commitment and satisfaction (Maynard DC, 2006) Additionally, it has been discovered that these workers are more likely to leave the companies of their own volition (Feldman DC, 2002). Businesses can create intrinsic motivation mechanisms that greatly boost self-oriented perfectionism and promote increased invention by providing job possibilities, promotions, and future development prospects. Additionally, companies should empower workers by giving them more freedom to formulate ideas and make choices. Promoting creative behavior through job crafting by establishing a proactive work environment and developing efficient incentive programs (Jiang et al., 2024).

2.2 Intrinsic Motivation

In motivational psychology, intrinsic motivation remains a very essential concept, particularly in relation to Self-Determination Theory (SDT). According to Deci and Ryan, intrinsic motivation is defined as doing something because of the inherent satisfaction associated with the activity and not because of any separate consequences (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In other words, a person engages in a particular activity simply because he finds the activity interesting, enjoyable or personally significant (Deci & Ryan, Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in human behavior, 1985)

Furthermore, in elaborating on the concept of intrinsic motivation, Ryan and Deci state that intrinsic motivation results from people's inherent tendencies to be curious, explore, and master skills.

In organizational contexts, Positive work outcomes like greater job satisfaction, increased engagement, and enhanced performance have been connected to intrinsic motivation. For example, Thomas W. Malone and Mark R. Lepper (1987) underline that those who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to show originality, perseverance, and profound engagement in projects (Malone & Lepper, 1987). Similar to this, Teresa M. Amabile (1996) emphasizes that intrinsic motivation is essential for promoting creativity since people are more

creative when they are motivated by enjoyment and curiosity rather than by rewards from outside sources (Amabile T. M., 1996).

Moreover, new research demonstrates that improved learning results and psychological well-being are linked to intrinsic motivation. According to Ryan and Deci, intrinsic motivation leads to deeper learning, better performance, and greater persistence across various domains, including education and the workplace. (Ryan & Deci, 2020). People who engage in an activity because they find it fascinating and gain spontaneous satisfaction from it are said to be motivated by intrinsic factors (Ginge & Deci, 2005).

The Job Characteristic Model (JCM) states that employment provides opportunities for skill variation, task identity, and task significance, which helps to intrinsically motivate employees. The overqualified worker may look for challenges in his job, which will motivate him. There are two broad types of motivation: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Matrafi, 2024). The motivation arising from external factors like rewards, recognition, and appreciation is known as extrinsic motivation (Matrafi, 2024). On the other hand, intrinsic motivation originates from within, such as the pleasure and contentment a person experiences when completing a task. (Matrafi, 2024).

According to SDT, the most self-determined kind of motivation is intrinsic, which is defined by engaging in activities because they are motivated by a sense of intrinsic fulfillment and interest in the activity. (Deci & Ryan, Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in human behavior, 1985). A study by Grzesiak et al. (2024) discovered that high levels of employee motivation are impacted by a pleasant workplace, job security, autonomy, and creative flexibility in addition to financial incentives. Additionally, the study discovered that highly motivated workers perform better and place a higher value on the caliber of their goods and services, which enhances the business's reputation as an employer.

2.3 Supportive Work Environment

Work Environment encompasses all those things in relation to the surroundings where the activities of the employees take place. This includes the physical as well as social elements of the organization. The work environment includes factors like office layout, safety, communication, coworker relationships, and organizational support systems, which impact the work behavior of the employees (Aggarwal, 2023). The work environment is a critical factor affecting job satisfaction and the performance of employees. A positive work environment leads to improved productivity, employee welfare, and talent retention within organizations, and it also impacts employee attitude towards their jobs (Aggarwal, 2023). A supportive work environment denotes those factors that can assist people in perceiving their value, feeling supported, and motivated to perform better, resulting in better health and increased productivity. An environment of this type can be achieved due to certain actions performed within an organization, by its leaders, and among other people,

thus creating a favorable atmosphere of support in the workplace. The factors that may create this kind of atmosphere include supervisor support, organizational support, and positive relationships between coworkers (Ángeles López-Cabarcos, 2022). This concept appeared due to certain discoveries made by organizational researchers, who concluded from the results of the Hawthorne experiments that the effectiveness of workers was related not only to material conditions but also to psychological support within the working atmosphere (Hassard, 2012). Later, scholars started considering this concept as multidimensional, with components such as perceived organizational support, supervisory support, workplace climate, and coworker relations (Broad & Newstrom, 1992).

Studies confirm that the creation of a conducive work environment results in favorable outcomes for employees. For instance, the perception of organizational and supervisor support is positively related to higher levels of job satisfaction, commitment, and work-family conflict reduction (Allen, 2001). Moreover, supportive environments improve employee performance by fostering motivation, engagement, and creativity. From the psychological point of view, supportive workplace environments result in improved intrinsic motivation and autonomy, which play an important role in fostering good performance among employees. This means that in a supportive environment, people exhibit initiative, creativity, and performance due to psychological empowerment (Aryee & Ryu, 2013). Besides, a supportive work environment helps reduce stress and burnout because of receiving emotional and instrumental support, which positively affects well-being among employees (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Recent research highlights how crucial it is to comprehend that a supportive workplace may have both direct and indirect effects on employee performance. Performance at work can be affected not only directly but also indirectly, mediated by job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and autonomy (Nguyen, 2021).

2.4 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is a key variable used by managers to assess organizational effectiveness and develop organizational strategies since the time of scientific management theory. But researchers themselves have always differed in terms of their perspective on research, and have no accurate definitions (Yu, 2023). The effectiveness with which an organization uses its resources to accomplish its goals and objectives is reflected in its organizational performance, which includes financial results, operational performance, market position, and general efficacy (Rao, 2024). According to Pitt and Tucker (2008), organizational performance is a crucial indicator of the organization that shows how effective procedures or their results accomplish a specific objective (Mwagona & Kinyua, 2023). Further, they mentioned that according to Amaratunga and Baldry (2003), it is defined as the procedure for evaluating the degree to which a predefined objective has been attained. (Mwagona & Kinyua, 2023).

Performance is therefore assessed not only in terms of financial outcomes but also in terms of how these outcomes are obtained and their overall impact on society and the environment (Moumin, 2024). According to agency theory, a company's primary objective is to maximize value for shareholders, is the foundation of the conventional approach to performance. This viewpoint is centered on financial metrics and investor returns. But this narrow perspective is becoming more and more criticized for failing to account for the non-financial facets of an organization's performance (Moumin, 2024). Organizational performance has emerged as a key concern for managers and stakeholders in an increasingly competitive company environment (Almatrooshi et al., 2016). Businesses that perform well are better equipped to endure economic unpredictability and market volatility (Rao, 2024).

Furthermore, performance can be viewed as a complex concept that includes both monetary and non-monetary elements, including efficacy, efficiency, customer happiness, and creativity. (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986). According to (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), Modern performance measurement approaches like Balanced Scorecard have recognized the importance of measuring organizations not just based on their financial performance but also considering customer perspective, process perspective, and finally the learning and growth perspective.

2.5 Theoretical framework

The current research paper focuses mainly on the theory of self-determination that was formulated by Deci and Richard. Self-determination theory is a motivation-based theory of personality, development, and social processes that focuses on analyzing how individual differences and the social environment affect various motivations, including controlled and autonomous motivation (Edward L. Deci, 2015). Self Determination Theory is a theory that tries to clarify the influence of the fulfillment of psychological needs on the motivation and behaviors of an individual. The self-determination theory suggests that individuals are endowed with inherent psychological needs whose fulfillment will lead to optimum behavior. According to Self Determination Theory, fulfillment of psychological needs promotes increased intrinsic motivation and performance (Deci & Ryan, Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in human behavior, 1985), (Ryan & Deci, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, 2000).

According to the Self Determination Theory, the fulfillment of three fundamental psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—determines human motivation and conduct. The first is autonomy, which is the need to be autonomous and self-regulating in actions and behaviors. People feel autonomous when they feel that their actions are voluntary. The second psychological need is competence, which denotes a feeling of skillfulness, effectiveness, and success. People feel competent when they feel that they have the necessary skills and capabilities to succeed in any activity or task. The third need is Relatedness, which denotes an

emotional attachment to other people and a feeling of social supportiveness and belongingness. (Ryan & Deci, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, 2000). Moreover, the SDT states that intrinsic motivation arises from the satisfaction of these three psychological needs.

Considering the study, employees who feel overqualified have an extra number of skills, qualifications, experience, and education that are required for the position. From the perspective of SDT, these employees will be more competent in terms of feeling that they are skillful. The feeling of competence can positively stimulate intrinsic motivation when employees are provided with opportunities to utilize their abilities effectively (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Engaging in things because they are intrinsically fascinating, pleasurable, and personally fulfilling rather than because of incentives or demands from other sources is known as intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, 2000). Deci and Ryan (2000) state that optimal functioning, psychological well-being, tenacity, and performance are all enhanced when the fundamental psychological demands for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. Therefore, the theory supports the positive relationship between Overqualification Perception (OQP) and Intrinsic Motivation (IM).

In addition, Self Determination Theory suggests that workers with intrinsic motivation complete their jobs with more interest, enthusiasm, persistence, and psychological engagement, leading to better job performance and organizational effectiveness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Workers with internal motivation show high levels of creativity, proactivity, and job performance. Thus, intrinsic motivation is probably to have a positive effect on Organizational Performance.

Intrinsic motivation also plays a mediating role in SDT. According to the SDT, psychological constructs like competence and self-efficacy affect employee outcomes via motivation. For instance, in the current research, individuals who feel overqualified develop intrinsic motivation due to their competence, which in turn improves organizational effectiveness.

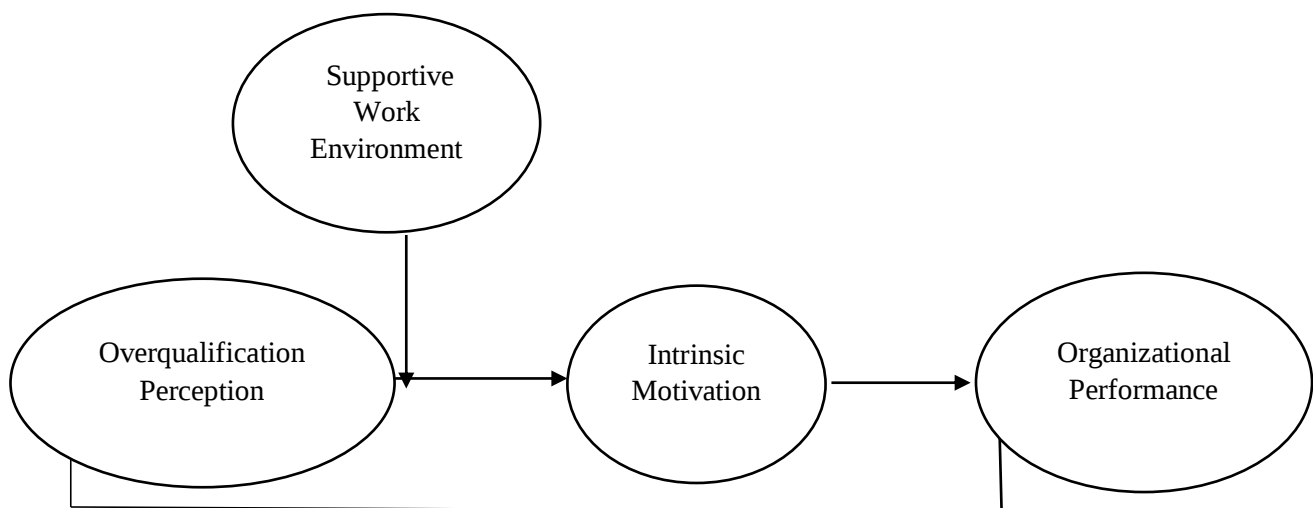
Based on the Perceived Organizational Support Theory, positive employee attitude and behavior emerge when workers feel that their contribution is valued by their organization (Eisenberger et al. 1986). A favorable organizational environment, including supervisor support, favorable job characteristics, feedback, and development, improves employee motivation and performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Concepts from the Job Demands-Resources model developed by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti are incorporated into the theoretical framework for this study. The JD-R model states that employee motivation and engagement are increased by supportive organizational resources such as supervisor support, autonomy, feedback, and growth. (Tummers & Bakker, Leadership and Job Demands-Resources Theory: A systematic

review, 2021). For the current research, a supportive working environment plays a critical role in facilitating the process of turning the excessive qualifications of overqualified employees into motivation and performance benefits. Likewise, Perceived Organizational Support Theory states that those employees who feel organizational support will feel valued and motivated, thus improving their attitudes and motivation (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Hence, a supportive work environment will increase the positive association between overqualification perception and intrinsic motivation.

Based on these theories, the current study postulates that perceived overqualification boosts intrinsic motivation and improves organizational performance; the relationship between perceived overqualification and intrinsic motivation is strengthened in a supportive workplace.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



3.METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methods used to conduct the study. This chapter covers the study population, sampling strategy, data collection techniques, measurement procedures, and data analysis methods. This study aims to demonstrate how over qualification perception improves organizational performance through intrinsic motivation.

3.1 Research Design

In this research, a quantitative methodology has been used. Quantitative methodology has been chosen because it will enable the researcher to collect numerical data and employ statistical methods in analyzing the relationship between the variables. Through this research methodology, the researcher will be able to produce objective findings regarding the relationship between over qualification perception, intrinsic motivation,

supportive work environment, and organizational performance. This study used a cross-sectional survey as its research strategy.

3.2 Target Population

The research target population comprises middle and senior-level employees operating in the private and public sectors. Such a selection criterion is used because employees at this level have better chances of being educated, skilled, and experienced in their professions, making them potentially vulnerable to the feeling of being overqualified for their jobs. As no definite figure regarding the population size exists, the Mamane (1967) formula was utilized to calculate the sample size for research.

3.3 Sample size

The target population was unknown, so according to the Mamane (1967) formula, the sample size of the study should comprise 384 respondents. In fact, a total of 390 valid responses were provided by the respondents that comprises 382 males and 8 females. The female respondents were less because of work limitations for women work in the public and private sectors in Afghanistan. The research utilized a convenient sampling method due to limited access and availability of respondents who felt overqualified. Data collection in the study was done using a structured questionnaire. Specifically, the questionnaire comprised two parts: first, demographic data of respondents, and secondly, measurement scales of the study constructs. Distribution of the questionnaire to the potential respondents was carried out using Google Forms and paper questionnaires.

3.4 Measurement

All the constructs used in the current research were quantified using scales that have been previously tested and validated. The statements were answered by participants using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented strong disagreement, and 5 represented strong agreement. The survey comprised demographic and measurement sections with questions concerning OQP, intrinsic motivation, supportive work environment, and organizational performance. Over qualification Perception (OP) was measured utilizing the scale that had been modified by Dec and Ryan (2006). The modified version used five items that measured employees' perceptions regarding excess education, skills, knowledge, and experience compared to job requirements.

Intrinsic motivation (IM) was defined using an adapted measure of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) developed by Ryan and Dec (2000). Five items related to enjoyment, competence, effort, and importance of work were used in the current study. Supportive Work Environment (SWE) was measured using an adapted instrument based on the Job Demands-Resource framework proposed by Bakker & Demerouti (2007). Five factors that included autonomy, supervisor support, peer support, skill utilization, and feedback were considered. Organizational Performance (OP) was measured by the adapted form of the subjective

organizational performance scale suggested by Wall et al. (2004). Five factors of employee productivity, innovation, customer satisfaction, adaptability, and overall organizational effectiveness were considered.

3.5 Tools and Tests

IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used to evaluate the acquired data. IBM SPSS was used for statistical analysis, whereas Microsoft Excel was used for data encoding and structuring. The data set was examined using measures of central tendency and dispersion, which are classified as descriptive statistics. Cronbach's Alpha analysis was used to determine the scale's reliability. For the exam, a minimum Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.70 was necessary.

The normality of the data was analyzed through skewness and kurtosis statistics. The existence of the relationships between the variables was evaluated by Pearson correlation analysis. Direct relationships between the variables and testing the hypotheses were done through linear regression analysis. Hayes PROCESS Macro, version 4.2, in SPSS software was used to perform the mediation and moderation analyses. To test the mediating effect of Intrinsic Motivation on the relationship between Over qualification Perception and Organizational Performance, PROCESS Model 4 was used. On the other hand, PROCESS Model 1 was used to examine the moderating influence of a supportive work environment between the perception of over qualification and intrinsic motivation. Bootstrapping was used for the estimation of indirect and interaction effects with 5,000 bootstraps and 95% confidence intervals.

The study was conducted in accordance with research ethics. The study's participation was entirely voluntary. Before completing the survey, participants were made aware of the purpose of the study.

Research Design: In this research, a quantitative methodology has been used. Quantitative methodology has been chosen because it will enable the researcher to collect numerical data and employ statistical methods in analyzing the relationship between the variables. Through this research methodology, the researcher will be able to produce objective findings regarding the relationship between overqualification perception, intrinsic motivation, supportive work environment, and organizational performance. This study used a cross-sectional survey as its research strategy.

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4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research investigated the impact of over qualification perception on organizational performance through the mechanism of intrinsic motivation, along with the impact of the supportive environment at work. In contrast to other studies devoted to the negative effects, this one tried to understand how over qualification can be used in a positive way with proper management.

Table 1. Gender of Respondents

		Gender			
	Items	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Males	382	97.9	97.9	97.9
	Female	8	2.1	2.1	100.0
	Total	390	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

Table 1 shows the results obtained from the data distribution in relation to the gender composition of the respondents. Most of the subjects sampled were males, who were 97.9% (382), while females made up only 2.1% (8).

Table 2. Age of Respondents

	Items	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 25	135	34.6	34.6	34.6
	26-35 years	182	46.7	46.7	81.3
	36-45 Years	68	17.4	17.4	98.7
	Above 45	5	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	390	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

Age distribution reveals in Table 2 that most participants are in the 26-35 age group, constituting 46.7% of the respondents, whereas the next highest percentage was for those below 25 years, constituting 34.6% of the total respondents. Those aged 36-45 years constituted 17.4% of the total number of respondents, and those aged above 45 years represented just 1.3%.

Table 3. Respondents Experience

	Items	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less Than 1 Year	54	13.8	13.8	13.8
	1-5 Years	172	44.1	44.1	57.9
	5-10 Years	118	30.3	30.3	88.2
	More Than 10 Years	46	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	390	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

As shown by the data in Table 3, the number of respondents who had 1 to 5 years of experience was highest, forming 44.1% of the total. Respondents who had 5 to 10 years of experience formed 30.3%, and those who had less than 1 year of experience were 13.8%. Those who had over 10 years of experience comprised only 11.8% of the total.

Table 4. Respondents Qualifications

	Items	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High School	7	1.8	1.8	1.8
	Bachelor's	295	75.6	75.6	77.4
	Master's	84	21.5	21.5	99.0
	PHD/ Professional	4	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	390	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

As per the findings presented in Table 4 below, it can be concluded that most of the people in the survey were very highly educated with a large percentage having obtained the Bachelor's degree. The percentage of those who attained Master's was 21.5%, while those who achieved high school level was 1.8%.

Table 5. Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
OQP	390	2.00	5.00	3.77	1.05	1.10
SWE	390	2.00	5.00	3.80	1.04	1.09
IM	390	1.00	5.00	2.99	1.28	1.63
OP	390	2.00	5.00	3.81	1.05	1.11

Sources: SPSS

Note. OQP = Overqualification Perception; SWE =Supportive Work Environment; IM = Intrinsic Motivation; OP = Organizational Performance.

Table 5 displays the descriptive statistics for each of the study's variables (OQP, SWE, IM, and OP). There are 390 valid data points overall in the sample set for each of these variables. On average, the mean values show that most variables have slightly higher mid-scale values, suggesting moderately favorable values for the variables. The maximum mean value is obtained in the case of OP (mean = 3.81, standard deviation = 1.05), while the minimum mean value is obtained in the case of IM (mean = 2.99, standard deviation = 1.28).

Table 6. Normality Test

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
OQP	-0.349	-1.305
SWE	-0.379	-1.277
IM	0.045	-1.232
OP	-0.400	-1.269

Source: SPSS

In Table 6. The normality of the data was assessed through skewness and kurtosis statistics of all the variables of the study (OQP, SWE, IM, and OP). The values of skewness ranged between -0.400 and 0.045, suggesting that the distributions were negatively skewed, except for IM, whose distribution was almost symmetrical. On the other hand, kurtosis values ranged between -1.305 and -1.232, implying that all variables had flat peaks compared to normal distribution (platykurtic distribution); however, their values were still acceptable for normality (skewness range: ± 1 ; kurtosis range: ± 2).

Table 7. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Level
OQP	.937	Excellent

SWE	.933	Excellent
IM	.942	Excellent
OP	.946	Excellent

Sources: SPSS

In Table 7, the Internal consistency reliability of all study variables was calculated by means of Cronbach's Alpha test. According to the results obtained, all variables have a good level of reliability since all alpha coefficients exceed the required indicator of 0.70. Thus, OQP proved to be reliable enough with an alpha coefficient of .937; for SWE, alpha is equal to .933; IM is highly reliable since its alpha coefficient equals .942; OP is the most reliable variable, as its alpha is .946.

Table 8. Multicollinearity Test

Predictor	Tolerance	VIF	Interpretation
OQP	0.663	1.508	Absence of multicollinearity
SWE	0.769	1.300	Absence of multicollinearity
IM	0.605	1.654	Absence of multicollinearity

Source: SPSS

The tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) are used to perform the Multicollinearity Test from Table 8. It can be seen from the above result that all the independent variables OQP, SWE, and IM have good collinearity diagnostics.

Tolerance values were between 0.605 and 0.769, all higher than the suggested value of 0.10. Likewise, VIF values were between 1.300 and 1.654, much lower than the generally accepted value of 5 (or even the conservative value of 10). It indicates that there are no problems with multicollinearity between the independent variables. For regression estimation, the independent variables are therefore sufficiently independent.

Table 9. Correlation Test

Variable	OQP	SWE	IM	OP
OQP	1	.342**	.522**	.574**
SWE	.342*	1	.462**	.316*
IM	.522**	.462**	1	.670**
OP	.574**	.316**	.670**	1

Source: SPSS

Note: Pearson Correlation Coefficients are provided with their respective level of significance in parentheses. (2-tailed) $p < .01$. $N = 390$. OQP = Overqualification Perception; SWE = Supportive Work Environment; IM = Intrinsic Motivation; OP = Organizational Performance.

As seen from Table 9, the Pearson Correlation technique has been used to investigate correlations between OQP, SWE, IM, and OP. All the variables are highly correlated at the 0.01 level of significance ($p < .01$). A very strong positive association was suggested by variable OP with Intrinsic Motivation (IM) ($r = .670$, $p < .01$), implying a very strong positive relationship between the two. Furthermore, Organizational Performance (OP) showed very strong positive correlation with Overqualification Perception (OQP) ($r = .574$, $p < .01$). Relationships were found to be of weak positive between Organizational Performance (OP) and SWE ($r = .316$, $p < .01$). In addition, all the predictors displayed significant correlations of weak and moderate degrees (e.g., OQP and IM, $r = .522$, $p < .01$). As illustrated above, all the research variables are positively related thereby supporting our hypotheses

H1: Overqualification Perception (OQP) has a significant positive effect on Intrinsic Motivation (IM).

Table 10. Model Summary (OQP and IM)

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
.522	.272	.270	1.09134

Sources: SPSS

Note. Dependent Variable: Intrinsic Motivation (IM)

From Table 10, linear regression was used to examine whether there is any statistical correlation between OQP and IM, and whether OQP is a very good and significant predictor of intrinsic motivation. Regression analysis in this study accounts for a sizable amount of the IM variance; the coefficient of determination, $R^2 = .272$, indicates that OQP explained 27.2% of the variance in IM. In addition, the regression analysis is statistically significant at the level of $F(1, 388) = 145.108$, $p < .001$.

As the linear regression analysis indicated, OQP has a positive influence on IM ($B = 0.636$, $\beta = 0.522$, $t = 12.046$, $p < .001$).

Table 11. Coefficients (OQP and IM)

Predictor	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Constant	0.599	0.206	—	2.904	.004
OQP	0.636	0.053	0.522	12.046	.000

Source: SPSS

Note. Dependent Variable: Intrinsic Motivation (IM)

Table 11 shows the impact of OQP on IM. While previous literature has described the phenomenon of perceived overqualification from different angles, current theoretical and empirical approaches have focused on its possible advantages, such as increased motivation of individuals in terms of psychological involvement and competence. According to research findings, workers feeling overqualified tend to develop a higher sense of competency; consequently, their motivation and commitment to work are positively affected. Within the Self-Determination Theory framework, the concept of competency represents one of the most important needs of an individual, and its fulfillment makes an essential contribution to the development of intrinsic motivation. Thus, the phenomenon under consideration may contribute to increasing the level of intrinsic motivation among workers due to their perceived competency (Gagné & Deci, 2005). According to SDT, the fulfillment of the three main psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—causes intrinsic motivation. Workers who feel overqualified may feel more competent because they have knowledge and abilities that go above what is required for the position (Ferneta et al., 2012).

Additional empirical outcomes provide further support for the positive effect of perceived overqualification under favorable conditions. For example, research indicates that workers who have perceptions of high overqualification may engage in proactive behaviors and be creative and involved in tasks when their work context enables them to fully use their skills (Zhang et al., 2021). Furthermore, empirical evidence also demonstrates that organizational conditions play an important role in enabling overqualified employees to use their surplus skills and competencies in ways that result in favorable psychological processes and results, including performance and motivation Ma et al., 2021.

Additionally, workers who believe they are overqualified may look for or produce more challenges in their roles, leading to increased motivation (Batchelor et al., 2014). Thus, perceived overqualification may become a valuable source of motivation for employees when they are able to make full use of their skills and experience at work.

H2: Intrinsic Motivation (IM) has a significant positive effect on Organizational Performance (OP).

Table 12. Model Summary (IM and OP)

R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error
.670	.449	.448	.78180

Sources: SPSS

The regression analysis is displayed in Table 12; it is evident that IM is significantly and positively related to OP in such a way that the percentage of variance explained by OP ($R^2 = .449$) is relatively high because 44.9% of the variance in OP can be attributed to IM. Regression is statistically highly significant ($F(1, 388) = 316.195$,

$p < .001$). Moreover, IM is significantly a strong predictor of OP ($\beta = .670$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H2 is highly supported

Table 13. ANOVA Results (IM and OP)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	193.264	1	193.264	316.195	.000
Residual	237.153	388	.611	—	—
Total	430.417	389	—	—	—

Sources: SPSS

Table 13 shows the regression, and the sum of squares is 193.264, which explains the variation in organizational performance caused by intrinsic motivation, and the residual sum of squares, 237.153, shows unexplained variation in organizational performance. Variation in organizational performance is 430.417.

The model yielded an F-value of 316.195 with a significance level of $p = .000$, less than 0.05, according to a statistical test. It suggests that intrinsic motivation and organizational performance have a statistically meaningful link. Hence, the model can be relied upon when making predictions about organizational performance.

Table 14. Coefficients (IM and OP)

Predictor	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Constant	2.157	0.101	—	21.364	.000
IM	0.552	0.031	0.670	17.782	.000

Source: SPSS

Table 14 shows that intrinsic motivation (IM) and organizational performance (OP) are strongly correlated ($\beta = 0.670$, $t = 17.782$, $p < .001$). Based on the value of the regression coefficient ($B = 0.552$), there is an increase in organizational performance when intrinsic motivation increases. Hence, IM predicts OP very effectively.

According to Gagne and Deci (2005), employees who are intrinsically motivated perform at higher standards because they do their activities with genuine interest and psychological commitment. As proven by meta-analysis, intrinsic motivation serves as an effective predictor of employee performance in various organizations Cerasoli et al. 2014. Moreover, intrinsically motivated employees show enhanced creativity, productivity, and effectiveness within organizations (Amabile T. M., 1993). (Ryan & Deci, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, 2000) stated that intrinsic motivation positively influences behavioral effectiveness and performance by encouraging employees to perform tasks

willingly and enthusiastically. Intrinsically motivated employees tend to demonstrate higher creativity, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. Further, Intrinsic motivation positively contributes to employee productivity and favorable organizational outcomes by increasing employees' psychological involvement in work activities (Cho & Perry, 2012). According to the study's findings of (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2011) Individuals with intrinsic motivation are more likely to utilize job autonomy effectively, which enhances task performance, increases effectiveness, and strengthens organizational outcomes. This research emphasizes how crucial it is to promote intrinsic motivation in the workplace in order to optimize worker performance.

H3: Intrinsic Motivation (IM) mediates the relationship between Overqualification Perception (OQP) and Organizational Performance (OP).

Table 15. Regression Results for Mediation Model (Model 4, Hayes PROCESS Macro)

Path	B	SE	t	p	95% CI
OQP → IM (a path)	0.6358	0.0528	12.046	< .001	[0.5320, 0.7396]
IM → OP (b path)	0.4191	0.0340	12.310	< .001	[0.3522, 0.4860]
OQP → OP (c' path)	0.3097	0.0415	7.465	< .001	[0.2282, 0.3913]

Source: Hayes' PROCESS Macro Version 4.2 (Model 4, SPSS)

Table 15 shows the outcome of the mediating effect analysis using the PROCESS Macro by Hayes (Model 4). As such, it is noted that Overqualification Perception positively predicts Intrinsic Motivation ($B = 0.6358$, $p < .001$). This shows that the higher the perception of being overqualified, the greater an individual's level of motivation will be. In addition, intrinsic motivation positively predicts organizational performance ($B = 0.4191$, $p < .001$). Finally, Overqualification Perception positively influences Organizational Performance ($B = 0.3097$, $p < .001$).

Table 16. Direct and Indirect Effects of OQP on OP (Hayes PROCESS Macro Bootstrapping Results)

Effect	B	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Direct Effect (OQP → OP)	0.3097	0.0415	0.2282	0.3913
Indirect Effect (OQP → IM → OP)	0.2665	0.0282	0.2135	0.3233

Source: Hayes' PROCESS Macro Version 4.2 (Model 4, SPSS)

Table 16 shows the direct and indirect effects based on the results of Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 4) with bootstrap estimates ($n=5,000$). The direct impact of overqualification perception on organizational performance is statistically significant ($B = 0.3097$, 95% CI [0.2282, 0.3913]). Because there was no zero in the confidence interval, the indirect effect through intrinsic motivation was determined to be statistically significant ($B = 0.2665$, 95% CI [0.2135, 0.3233]).

To support our hypothesis, research by José et al. (2021) discovered that autonomous motivation acted as a partial mediator in the connection between perceived overqualification and employee burnout, indicating that motivational mechanisms play an important role in explaining the effects of overqualification and suggesting that employees' motivational states help explain the effects of overqualification in organizations. It has been discovered recently in quantitative research performed within companies of the service sector operating in Afghanistan that emotional intelligence, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership all help to boost worker productivity. Moreover, the research showed that the relationship between the mentioned factors is mediated by employee motivation (Zaheer & Barakzai, 2026).

It was declared that the positive correlation of job autonomy and job performance had been strongly enhanced by intrinsic motivation in another study conducted by Anders Dysvik and Bård Kuvaas. It has been noted that intrinsically motivated individuals do much better than their counterparts when provided with greater job autonomy (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2011). Considering the study's findings, it is apparent that those employees who have intrinsic motivation will be more productive in utilizing their job autonomy, hence increasing their performance and effectiveness. It is essential for the management to ensure that intrinsic motivation among workers is encouraged in order to maximize worker performance.

In addition to that, the study carried out by Ma et al. (2021) discovered that overqualification positively correlated with proactive behavior and work performance through work engagement, demonstrating the mediating function of motivation mechanisms in such relationships. Furthermore, the study conducted by Lee et al. (2021) stated that perceived overqualification positively impacts work performance via task mastery.

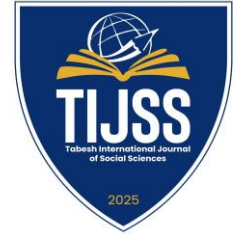
H4: Supportive Work Environment (SWE) moderates the relationship between Overqualification Perception (OQP) and Intrinsic Motivation (IM), such that the relationship is stronger when SWE is high.

Table 17: Moderation Analysis of SWE

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI	Result
Constant	1.6353	0.2972	5.5022	< .001	[1.0510, 2.2197]	—
OQP	0.1539	0.1024	1.5023	.134	[-0.0475, 0.3553]	Not Supported
SWE	-0.0504	0.1006	-0.5007	.617	[-0.2481, 0.1474]	Not Supported
OQP × SWE	0.1102	0.0313	3.5248	< .001	[0.0487, 0.1716]	Supported

Source: SPSS

Model Summary: $R = .6441$, $R^2 = .4148$, $F(3, 386) = 91.2140$, $p < .001$



To ascertain if the Supportive Work Environment (SWE) moderates the association between the Overqualification Perception (OQP) and Intrinsic Motivation (IM), a moderation test utilizing PROCESS Model 1 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics) is presented in Table 17. The results ($F(3, 386) = 91.2140, p < .001, R^2 = .4148$) indicate that the model as a whole is significant.

The interaction term between Overqualification Perception and Supportive Work Environment is significantly positive ($B = 0.1102, SE = 0.0313, t = 3.5248, p < .001, 95\% CI [0.0487, 0.1716]$), meaning that the Supportive Work Environment significantly moderates the relationship of Overqualification Perception and Intrinsic Motivation.

Table 18: Conditional Effect of SWE

Level of SWE	Effect	SE	t	p	95% CI	Interpretation
Low SWE (1.40)	0.3081	0.0650	4.7421	< .001	[0.1804, 0.4359]	Significant positive effect
Moderate SWE (3.00)	0.4844	0.0418	11.5950	< .001	[0.4022, 0.5665]	Strong positive effect
High SWE (4.60)	0.6607	0.0653	10.1096	< .001	[0.5322, 0.7891]	Very strong positive effect

Source: SPSS

Table 18 shows the conditional effects of the interaction term, demonstrating that the positive impact of OQP on IM is even larger for employees who are working in a Supportive Work Environment. As can be seen from the above figure, the effect of overqualification perception on intrinsic motivation changes from $B = 0.3081$ at low SWE levels to $B = 0.6607$ at high SWE levels.

Thus, we can conclude that Hypothesis 4 is supported by the obtained results: The favorable relationship between the feeling of being overqualified and intrinsic motivation has been found to be significantly moderated by the presence of a supportive work environment. As stated by Perceived Organizational Support Theory, when an employee feels that his/her organization recognizes his/her value and importance within the firm, they will feel motivated and develop positive work attitudes (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Furthermore, as per Self-Determination Theory, a work environment that provides autonomy support and psychological support will motivate employees by fulfilling their psychological needs (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Also, Ma et al. (2021) discovered that favorable contextual factors, such as supportive leadership and work settings, amplify the beneficial effects of overqualification perception on employee outcomes. According to Zhang et al. (2021), overqualification perception can lead to positive employee outcomes such as creativity and proactive behavior when supported by favorable organizational conditions. Thus, the favorable correlation between perceived overqualification and intrinsic motivation is reinforced by a supportive work environment. The notion of Job-Demands Resources (JD-R) explains how the workplace environment affects workers' performance and well-being (Tummers & Bakker, Leadership and Job Demands-Resources Theory: A Systematic Review, 2021).

Studies indicate that employees in supportive environments report higher job satisfaction and motivation (Ginge & Deci, 2005).

4.2 DISCUSSION

The empirical results showed a strong positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and organizational performance, as well as between over-qualification perception and intrinsic motivation. These findings imply that overqualified employees can be productive and make use of their skills efficiently.

Besides, the findings proved the significance of intrinsic motivation in the mediation process between perceived over qualification and organizational performance, according to Self-Determination Theory. Moreover, a supportive work environment reinforced the above-mentioned relationship by turning surplus qualifications into superior performance.

Previous research has also been conducted. Research by (Ont & Eden, 2020) has explored the effect of over-qualification perception on the performance of employees, focusing on chefs employed by 4- and 5-star hotels in Turkey. Thus, the main outcome is that employees' performance is adversely affected by perceived over qualification. Additionally, Iran et al.'s (2024) study investigates the impact of over qualification on workers' job-related perceptions and overall psychological well-being, as well as its potential moderation by psychological empowerment. The main conclusions include a positive correlation between psychological anguish and the feeling of over qualification.

As highlighted by Jiang et al. (2024) in the research paper, "Employee Perceived Overqualification and Innovation Performance: The Roles of Self-Oriented Perfectionism and Job Crafting," among 363 employees from China, employee innovation performance was positively impacted by the notion of over qualification. From research, it was discovered that overqualified people had traits linked to job crafting and self-centered perfectionism, which helped them take advantage of their extra qualifications and knowledge, and hence innovate more for their companies. Therefore, from the research findings, one can conclude that perceived over qualification can be turned into an organizational asset if employees get a chance to leverage it creatively.

According to Zhang et al. (2021), the impact of perceived over qualification on creative performance is examined in this paper using a person-organization fit approach. The key point in the investigation is not only the presence of the impact between over qualification and creativity, but also its nature in terms of when and under what conditions it turns into positive or negative relations. The results reveal that the perception of being overqualified does not necessarily have negative implications. On the contrary, over qualification can be positively related to organizational identification as long as several criteria are satisfied. Namely, the relationship between over qualification and identification occurs in the case of high levels of employee

development and orientation of organizational culture. Otherwise, perceived over qualification leads to low levels of organizational identification.

José et al. (2021) discovered that the relationship between perceived over qualification and employee burnout was partially mediated by autonomous motivation, suggesting that employees' motivational states aid in explaining the effects of over qualification in organizations and indicating that motivational mechanisms play a significant role in explaining the effects of over qualification. (Luksyte & Spitzmueller, 2016) discovered that when overqualified workers perceive supportive and progressive work situations, they can exhibit higher levels of creative performance.

Researchers who follow up on this topic are advised to carry out longitudinal studies with large samples recruited from diverse nations.

In conclusion, the study finds that when people have high levels of intrinsic drive in the workplace, over qualification can improve organizational performance. Also, this mechanism is related to the environment provided by organizations; the more desirable the conditions, the more organizations can use the overqualified employees.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This paper explored the correlation between over-qualification perception, intrinsic motivation, and organizational performance, as well as the moderating effect of the supportive work environment on this association. As shown by the results, over-qualification perception has a positive impact on employees' intrinsic motivation, which implies that overqualified employees are potentially very beneficial assets for organizations if their capabilities and skills are used properly. It was found that intrinsic motivation significantly affects organizational performance; thus, motivated employees are better at contributing to organizational success.

Moreover, the findings from the current study confirm the mediating role of intrinsic motivation in the connection between over qualification perception and organizational performance. Therefore, overqualified individuals increase organizational performance through intrinsic motivation and engagement in activities. Lastly, it was determined that the supportive work environment had a favorable moderating influence on the relationship between over qualification perception and intrinsic motivation, which is significant because organizational support and empowerment can lead to increased employee potential.

In general, the paper is a valuable contribution to the emerging research into the positive aspect of over qualification perception because it highlights the idea that over qualification should not always be considered a negative experience within organizations. On the contrary, overqualified workers can become extremely productive and motivated members of organizations when proper conditions and an intrinsically motivating environment are created for them.

5.1 Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Work environments should be created in organizations in which participation, recognition, and growth opportunities can help to motivate overqualified workers.
2. Managers should be able to use the talents and knowledge of over-qualified employees effectively by giving them hard tasks and developing their careers.
3. Motivation-oriented management practices should be applied by organizations to achieve higher productivity for the organizations and their employees.
4. Human resource policies should be formulated to decrease dissatisfaction and motivate overqualified employees.
5. Training and development efforts should be made to motivate employees and make organizations effective.

5.2. Suggestions for Further Research

1. Upcoming research should investigate the correlation between overqualification perception and organizational performance in various industries.
2. Future research could introduce other mediating and moderating variables like job satisfaction, organizational commitment, leadership, and employee engagement.
3. Longitudinal studies should be performed to gain an understanding of the effects of overqualification perception on employee motivation and organizational effectiveness.
4. Future research can be conducted to compare government and corporate organizations regarding the effect of overqualification.
5. The effect of the negative and positive sides of perceived overqualification can be studied at the same time.

5.3. Conflict of Interest

Every author declares that they have no competing interests in any aspect of the study.

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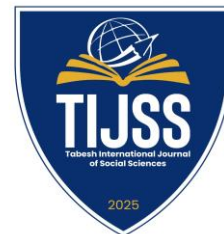
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