

## **Understanding Interpersonal Conflicts from Relational Perspective in Pakistan: The Mediating Effect of Empathy**

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### **ABSTRACT**

#### **Keywords:**

*Interpersonal  
Conflicts, Empathy,  
Productivity and  
Performance,  
Relational Energy.*

Interpersonal conflicts often create tensions in organizations leading to lower productivity and job performance. Previous research has explored contextual and individual factors causing interpersonal conflicts. One area that is not been investigated to t a great deal is the role of relational energy at workplace and its effect on interpersonal conflicts. This study aims to examine the role of relational energy on interpersonal conflicts. Moreover, the mediating role of empathy is also explored. This is a quantitative study and data were collected through surveys. A total of 359 employees filled questionnaire. Results show that relational energy negatively affected interpersonal conflicts. Furthermore, empathy mediated the effect of relational energy on interpersonal conflicts. The study has important implications for managers that are discussed at the end.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Interpersonal conflicts often lead to burnout and decrease capability to manage work tasks effectively. Organizations continuously look for strategies that can curb interpersonal conflicts because of negative consequences such as poor communication, lower productivity, decreased team cohesion and trust, and toxic work environment (Zahid & Nauman, 2024). When interpersonal conflicts are not managed properly at workplace, the overall culture of distrust and tension prevails that can harm organizational success. Academicians and practitioners are interested in antecedents of interpersonal conflicts. While a number of determinants of interpersonal conflicts are known, relatively little is investigated in context of psychological resource of an individual (Aquino, 2000; Gilin Oore, Leiter, & LeBlanc, 2015; Kanwal et al.,

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2023; Lalegani et al., 2019). Relational energy is one such psychological resource that can decrease interpersonal conflicts. Relational energy is the ability to manage relationships and interactions and dealing with others with a positive mood. This research proposes that relational energy would negatively affect interpersonal conflicts (Fan, Wei, & Ko, 2021; Owens et al., 2016). Moreover, the intervening mechanisms that can explain interpersonal conflicts with an individual perspective are most often related to feelings and values of an individual. This research proposes that empathy is going to mediate the relationship between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts.

Interpersonal conflicts refer to disagreement between two or more than two individuals over goals, values, tasks, interests, behaviors, and roles that can cause emotional friction and tension. Interpersonal conflicts usually occur when there is incompatibility between two parties over goals and interests (Barki & Hartwick, 2004; Kundi et al., 2023; Losada-Otalora, Pena-Garcia, & Sanchez, 2021; Spector, Gray, & Rosen, 2023). These conflicts lead to frustration, anger, and dissatisfaction. It can affect relationships and can be due to a single incident or a recurring pattern of events. When there are differences in personalities, interpersonal conflicts occur (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2021; Gandhi, Dawood, & Schroder, 2021; Irshad, Malik, & Sarfraz, 2023; Soleimani & Yarahmadi, 2023). If there is an extrovert interacting with an introvert, relationship conflicts might occur. For example, extroverts like to talk more and express every idea in strong terms whereas introverts usually prefer to listen others and communicate passively rather than actively. Another example is the difference between power distance orientation. While some would accept authority, order, and hierarchy, others would like to remain independent and flat organizational structures. Miscommunication is another major cause of interpersonal conflicts (Losada-Otalora, Pena-Garcia, & Sanchez, 2021). Different people interact differently in organizational settings. The tone and message should be clear and explicit to avoid confusion. When there are language barriers, interpersonal conflicts arise. Competing for limited resources also causes friction and tension among individuals.

There are limited financial and other resources and everyone strives to get maximum share of it. When there is a competition for these resources, conflicts in roles, tasks, relationships, and processes occur. Workplaces nowadays have tremendous working pressures. These pressures lead to frustration and interpersonal conflicts. Work ethics also vary among employees. Some might perceive moral obligations as the driving principle of work, others do not commit to ethics to a great deal (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2011; Qayyum et al., 2018). These differing ethical principles also lead to increase in interpersonal conflicts. Responsibilities should also

be clearly stated to avoid conflicts in relationships. When there is ambiguity in assigning responsibilities, interpersonal conflicts start to increase. There are different theories that explain why and how interpersonal conflicts arise. Conflict theory asserts that where there are human beings interacting with each other in any organizational setting, conflicts occur because of differences in power, status, resources, and values (Donohue & Cai, 2014). Conservation of resource theory explains that when there is a threat to any resource of an employee, he/she might protect time, energy, money, or any other resource with every possible effort. In doing so, he/she might become aggressive or defensive depending upon the type of situation but the sole focus is on protecting the resource, increasing it, and avoiding the depletion of it.

Relational energy is a social exchange that is a positive psychological resource rooted in interactions with others. These interactions provide emotional support and motivate employees to perform better at jobs. Relational energy improves one's mood and relationship behaviors. Interpersonal conflicts usually arise due to emotional instability where one is unable to understand emotions and moods of others (Mao et al., 2022). This is especially true in cases where an individual is having a negative mood. When interacting with others, one's own mood is highly responsible for how one reacts to situations. In case of small argument with others, if the mood of an individual is negative, it would affect how one behaves with others. Relational energy also provides impetus to self-regulate emotions. It is extremely important to understand other's values, moods, and emotions (Yang et al., 2019). When an employee knows that others have reacted to situations on the basis of their own emotions, it becomes easy to resolve such conflicts. Interpersonal conflicts happen in situations where compatibility of emotions is weakened. If an employee thinks of others' emotions in a calm and neutral manner without attaching any reason or prejudice with it, interpersonal conflicts are bound to decrease.

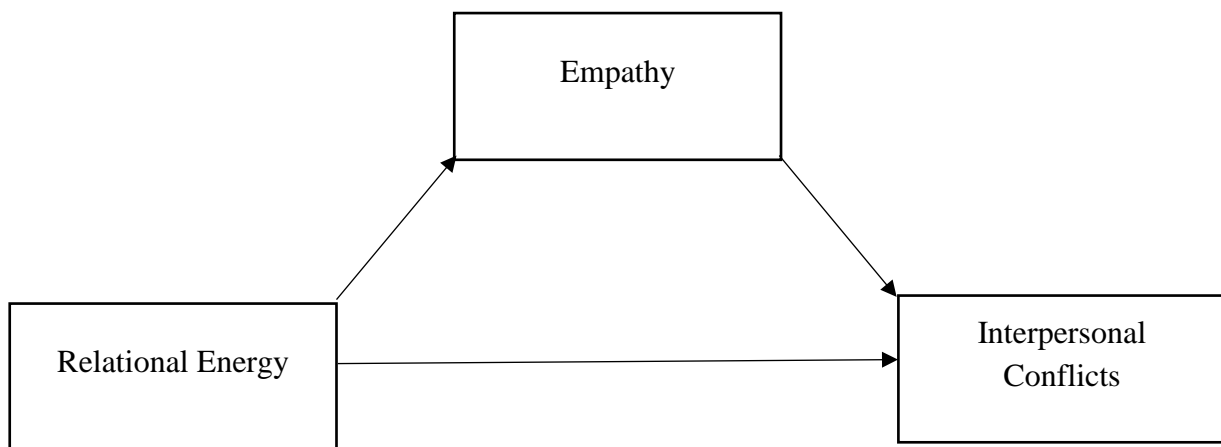
Relational energy helps in building trust and understanding. Research shows that trust and understanding are detrimental to interpersonal conflicts (Chan, Huang, & Ng, 2008; Sahoo & Sahoo, 2019). This is because when there is a high level of trust and understanding, interpersonal conflicts do not reach to an escalating point. The parties involved in interpersonal conflicts resolve conflicts because they understand other's perspectives, values, emotions, and limitations. Trusting relationships also cause individuals to build on positive aspects instead of just looking at the negative side of conflict. Positive relational energy keeps individuals enthusiastic and they communicate openly and without concealing information. When there is a culture of open communication and collaboration, interpersonal conflicts do not escalate. The parties involved in interpersonal conflicts have goodwill for each other and they resolve conflicts by listening to each other and communicating openly through active collaboration.

Relational energy serves as a psychological buffer reducing stress to a level where it does not deteriorate relationships. More often, interpersonal conflicts increase due to stressful situation that is caused among the parties involved. If there is calmness and lower stress, interpersonal conflicts start to resolve. Relational energy also increases one's engagement in behaviors that are focused on social interactions (Braha & Karabulut, 2023). Relational energy makes employees to help others, interact more regularly with others, share experiences with each other, and build goodwill. These prosocial behaviors help in situations where conflicts arise. During interpersonal conflicts, the parties involved think of the goodness that they have extended to each other during positive times (Baker, 2019; Shapiro, 2010). This would naturally help in resolving conflicts. Energy is considered a critical organizational resource that enhances employees' motivation and capacity to perform their tasks effectively and achieve work goals (Quinn, Spreitzer, & Lam, 2012). Despite its importance, energy is often underutilized or insufficiently managed in many organizations, and evidence suggests it may be in decline (Sumpter & Gibson, 2023). Limited energy resources have significant implications, as their absence can lead to negative psychological states such as burnout (Baker, 2019; Shapiro, 2010), stress (Sonnentag, Kuttler, & Fritz, 2010), and disengagement (Braha & Karabulut, 2023). Increasing job demands, including extended work hours, organizational change, technological intrusions into personal time, heavier workloads, and job insecurity, further exacerbate energy depletion in the workplace. In this context, the preservation and renewal of employee energy have become essential topics in organizational research, particularly as firms strive to enhance performance with limited resources.

Empathy refers to thinking about other's emotions and perspectives (Antonopoulou, 2024). It is about willingness to understand what others feel and how others react to different situations. Empathy is responding to others' emotions and feelings at the workplace. It helps in developing healthy relationships with others and resolving conflicts. Empathy at workplace is not a single trait. It involves understanding others' perspectives, motivations, and attributions. If a colleague has missed a deadline, it can be due to external attributions rather than internal attributions. Instead of blaming the individual for missing the deadline, empathetic employee would attach other reasons to it (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019; Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011; Rahman, 2016; Worley, 2019). He/she may have missed the deadline because too many other tasks are to be performed simultaneously and he/she has not been given proper time to comprehend the task. It might have been due to organization's inability to provide proper resources to execute the task within the given deadline. Another reason can be that team members responsible for meeting the deadline have been below par

(Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011). Likewise, if a subordinate is late, it can be due to reasons such as he/she could not get transportation on time, his/her route was congested with traffic, and/or he/she was unable to come on time due to emergency that was unavoidable. Empathetic individuals put themselves in others' shoe and try to analyze situation by thinking how they would have felt about the situation. If someone is upset, empathy demands concern and being polite to the particular individual. Instead of taking others for granted, empathetic individuals understand that an organization is a mix of people having different moods and emotions.

Figure 1 presents the research model of this study.



**Figure 1: Research Model**

### **Hypotheses development**

Individuals tend to draw upon their personal resources to cope with adversity in order to satisfy their psychological needs (Rahman, 2016). When these needs are threatened, individuals are likely to engage in self-protective behaviors, such as preserving self-esteem or avoiding anticipated unhappiness. As a result, withdrawal behaviors may emerge, accompanied by a reduction in positive discretionary actions. Leader characteristics that reflect warmth, closeness, and interpersonal support (Sumpter & Gibson, 2023) can influence the likelihood of withdrawal, which is often a deliberate and conscious behavioral choice. Relational energy functions as a psychological resource that enhances role performance and well-being, particularly in challenging organizational contexts such as restructuring or job insecurity (Braha & Karabulut, 2023). In this context, relational energy acts as a buffer against resource loss and mitigates the emergence of negative behavioral outcomes. Moreover, high relational energy fosters interpersonal attunement, allowing employees to respond to one another's emotional cues, thereby promoting positive emotional contagion.

Relational energy is a positive psychological resource that helps in building mutual trust, respect, harmony, cohesion, and communication. Research shows that trust and understanding are detrimental to interpersonal conflicts (Chan, Huang, & Ng, 2008; Sahoo & Sahoo, 2019). This is because when there is a high level of trust and understanding, interpersonal conflicts do not reach to an escalating point. The parties involved in interpersonal conflicts resolve conflicts because they understand other's perspectives, values, emotions, and limitations. Trusting relationships also cause individuals to build on positive aspects instead of just looking at the negative side of conflict. Positive relational energy keeps individuals enthusiastic and they communicate openly and without concealing information. When there is a culture of open communication and collaboration, interpersonal conflicts do not escalate.

All employees cannot experience similar emotions on the same day. Some might be upset while others might be joyful (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019; Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019). Some might be facing problems while others enjoying the perks. Some might be less motivated while others fully engaged and committed. Empathy makes one's attitude as helpful and trustworthy. Whenever others need help, compassion jumps in and empathy makes people to help each other and calm emotions. Empathetic employees are always good listeners and observers. They listen to others' perspectives and observe behaviors with deep thought. They communicate better because they are great observers (Rahman, 2016; Worley, 2019). That is why misunderstandings and misinterpretations do not happen frequently with emphatic individuals. Emphatic employees are tolerant and respectful. They try to resolve tense situations through mutual respect and tolerate negative emotions. When arguments are treated with respect, situations normally do not escalate. They believe in cohesion and bonding. Instead of looking for differences, they bring collaboration in play. They cherish similarities and build team collaboration on these similarities. When there is a high level of relational tension, emphatic employees resolve conflicts through trust and reciprocity norms. The parties involved in interpersonal conflicts have goodwill for each other and they resolve conflicts by listening to each other and communicating openly through active collaboration. Having relational energy thus helps in decreasing interpersonal conflicts due to better understanding, greater trust and harmony, and enhanced cohesion and working relationships. Therefore, it is hypothesized:

**H 1:** *There is a negative relationship between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts.*

Empathy is about willingness to understand what others feel and how others react to different situations. It is responding to others' emotions and feelings at the workplace. It helps in developing healthy relationships with others and resolving conflicts. Empathy at workplace is not a single trait. It involves understanding others' perspectives, motivations, and attributions.

If a colleague has missed a deadline, it can be due to external attributions rather than internal attributions. Instead of blaming the individual for missing the deadline, empathetic employee would attach other reasons to it (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019; Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011; Rahman, 2016; Worley, 2019). Empathy serves as a buffer between psychological resource and conflicts at workplace. This is because when an individual has relational energy, the tendency to help others and display empathy increases which in turn leads to resolving conflicts without engaging in arguments and/or misunderstandings.

Empathetic individuals put themselves in others' shoe and try to analyze situation by thinking how they would have felt about the situation (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011). If someone is upset, empathy demands concern and being polite to the particular individual. Instead of taking others for granted, empathetic individuals understand that an organization is a mix of people having different moods and emotions. Empathetic employees are always good listeners and observers. They listen to others' perspectives and observe behaviors with deep thought. They communicate better because they are great observers (Rahman, 2016; Worley, 2019). That is why misunderstandings and misinterpretations do not happen frequently with emphatic individuals. Emphatic employees are tolerant and respectful. They try to resolve tense situations through mutual respect and tolerate negative emotions. When arguments are treated with respect, situations normally do not escalate. They believe in cohesion and bonding. Thus, empathy tends to mediate the relationship between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts. Therefore, the study proposes:

**H2:** *Empathy mediates the effect of relational energy on interpersonal conflicts.*

## METHODOLOGY

### *Participants and procedure*

The purpose of this study is to understand how relational energy affects interpersonal conflicts. This is a quantitative study and surveys were used to collect data. A wide variety of industries (banks, universities, construction, hotels, food, and retail) was selected to take diverse and multiple perspectives on relational energy at work as well as interpersonal conflicts. In order to collect data, the authors selected top five companies in each industry on the basis of number of employees. In total 36 companies six from each industry were selected. The human resource officials of these companies were approached. Only head offices were contacted and research purpose was shared with them in detail. Each head office was requested to allow for on site paper based questionnaires. After seeking permission, the authors visited offices and distributed 600 surveys to the respondents. After several reminders, the researchers were able

to collect 359 surveys which were complete and valid. 63% of respondents were males. The average experience of respondents in current organization was 3.9 years. 78% of the sample was having Master degree.

### **Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire used to collect data comprised of two parts. The first part was about some general demographic information such as type of industry, name of company, gender, education, experience in current job, total experience, and managerial position. The second part of the questionnaire was about items measuring three key constructs of this study (relational energy, empathy, and interpersonal conflicts). Previously well-validated and reliable scales were used to measure these three variables. Each item was measured with the help of five point Likert scale. Relational energy was measured through five items which was developed by Owens et al. (2016). Empathy was measured with the help of 16 item scale developed by Spreng et al. (2009). A four items scale developed by Spector and Jex (1998) was used to measure interpersonal conflicts.

### **Analysis and Results**

To validate constructs (relational energy, empathy, and interpersonal conflicts), the research model was estimated with a confirmatory factor analysis. Table 1 shows reliabilities, composite reliabilities, standard factor loadings, and average variance extract. The test result of adaptability for three-factor model were  $\chi^2 = 389.88$ ,  $df = 206$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 1.89$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.074$ ,  $GFI = 0.96$ ,  $NFI = 0.97$ ,  $NNFI = 0.98$ , and  $CFI = 0.97$ .

**Table 1: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Items	Standardized factor loading	Composite reliability	Average variance extract	$\alpha$
<b>Time 1</b>				
<b>Relational Energy (RE)</b>		0.85	0.71	0.87
RE1	0.89			
RE2	0.71			
RE3	0.82			
RE4	0.74			
RE5	0.83			
<b>Interpersonal Conflict (IC)</b>		0.89	0.62	0.91
IC1	0.79			
IC2	0.71			
IC3	0.75			
IC4	0.98			
<b>Empathy (EM)</b>		0.87	0.55	0.88
EM1	0.83			
EM2	0.76			
EM 3	0.69			

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EM4	0.71
EM5	0.80
EM6	0.88
EM7	0.76
EM8	0.74
EM9	0.87
EM10	0.62
EM11	0.73
EM12	0.78
EM13	0.83
EM14	0.63
EM15	0.72
EM16	0.77

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Relational energy is negatively and significantly correlated with interpersonal conflicts ( $r=-0.59$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and positively and significantly related with empathy ( $r=0.63$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), respectively. Empathy is also negatively and significantly correlated with interpersonal conflicts ( $r=-0.56$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### ***The structural model***

Simultaneous maximum-likelihood-estimation procedures were utilized in order to examine the hypothesized relationships among relational energy, empathy and interpersonal conflicts. Table 2 shows the results for fit indices of direct, full mediation and partial mediation models. The difference ( $\Delta\chi^2$ ) between the Direct Effects Model and Full Mediation Model  $\chi^2$  is 52.19. Empathy full mediating role is confirmed if the relationship between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts disappears when empathy is introduced into the regression equation predicting interpersonal conflicts. Similarly, the partial mediation is confirmed when the coefficient between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts after introducing empathy into the regression equation remains significant but is reduced. The indices, GFI, CFI, NNFI, and RMSEA of the Full Mediation Model indicated good adaptability, indicating that the Full Mediation Model had better adaptability than the Direct Effects Model. Next, we compared the Partial Mediation Model to the Full Mediation Model; the difference of  $\chi^2$  is 148.24. Adaptability indices were  $\chi^2/df = 1.68$ , GFI = 0.956, CFI = 0.969, NNFI = 0.984, and RMSEA = 0.056 which demonstrated that partial mediation is more adaptable than full mediation. The model adaptability was satisfactory, and in accordance with the research framework. The results show that the Partial Mediation Model was a suitable model.

**Table 2: Results for fit indices of structural models**

Model	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2/\text{df}$ (<2)	$\Delta\chi^2$	GFI(>0.9 )	CFI(>0.9 )	NNFI(>0.9 )	RMSEA(<0.08 )
Direct Effects Model	521.13** (df=206)	2.52		0.774	0.824	0.863	0.0756
Full Mediation Model	489.28** (df=204)	2.39	31.85	0.857	0.868	0.924	0.0701
Partial Mediation Model	341.04** (df=203)	1.68	148.24	0.956	0.969	0.984	0.0511

Table 3 presents the results of the coefficients, t-values and goodness-of-fit statistics. The model achieved a satisfactory level of goodness of fit in predicting the variance of relational energy (51%) and interpersonal conflicts (44%). As expected, relational energy and empathy are two powerful predictors of interpersonal conflicts. Similarly, relational energy and empathy negatively predicted interpersonal conflicts (the coefficients were -0.55 and -0.33, respectively). These results provide additional support that the effect of relational energy on interpersonal conflicts was significant ( $\beta = -0.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 1.

**Table 3: Structural Equation Model**

	Coefficient	t-value
Dependent variable: Empathy		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.51	
Relational Energy	0.54	8.03*
Dependent variable: Interpersonal Conflicts		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.62	
Relational energy	-0.59	6.33*
Empathy	-0.47	5.77*
Goodness-of-Fit Statistics		
Chi-square (p-value)	321.44	
df	204	
GFI	0.956	
CFI	0.969	
NNFI	0.984	
RMSEA	0.0511	
(90% CI)	(0.051 - 0.071)	

\*  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

We used three-step approach to test the mediating impact of empathy on the relationships between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts. This approach first regresses empathy on relational energy. If this regression is significant, then interpersonal conflicts is regressed on the relational energy in a second regression model. Finally, if the second regression is found to be statistically significant, interpersonal conflicts is regressed on empathy and relational energy using the same regression. The reduction in the effect size of relational energy in this final regression supports mediation; an insignificant relational energy in this final regression indicates full mediation. According to Table 4, relational energy featured significant path coefficient (relational energy→ interpersonal conflicts : -0.39,  $p < 0.05$ ). Based on the complete mediation model in Table 4, the coefficients between relational energy and empathy were positive and significant (relational energy→ empathy: 0.44,  $p < 0.001$ ), as was the impact of empathy on interpersonal conflicts (-0.31,  $p < 0.001$ ). The study found that empathy was a partial mediator between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts. The increased  $R^2$  value (0.19, from 0.58 to 0.77) resulting from adding empathy in the equation as shown in Table 3 is significantly large thus supporting mediating role of empathy. The study thus validated Hypothesis 2.

**Table 4: Path of structural model**

			Standardized path coefficients(t-value)			
			Direct Effects Model	Full Mediation Model	Partial Mediation Model	
Relational Energy	→	Interpersonal Conflicts	-0.42 (3.63*)		-0.43(3.84**)	
Relational Energy	→	Empathy		0.49 (3.79*)	0.37 (4.59**)	
Empathy	→	Interpersonal Conflicts		-0.46(3.54***)	-0.41(3.88***)	

Note: \*  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p$ -value  $< 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p$ -value  $< 0.001$ .

## DISCUSSION

This research proposes that relational energy would negatively affect interpersonal conflicts. Moreover, the intervening mechanisms that can explain interpersonal conflicts with an individual perspective are most often related to feelings and values of an individual. This research proposes that empathy is going to mediate the relationship between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts. There are two important findings of this study. First, relational energy decreases interpersonal conflicts. When employees have high level of relational energy, they tend to remain positive in their interactions and hence do not engage in interpersonal conflicts. Relational energy improves one's mood and relationship behaviors. Interpersonal

conflicts usually arise due to emotional instability where one is unable to understand emotions and moods of others (Mao et al., 2022). This is especially true in cases where an individual is having a negative mood. When interacting with others, one's own mood is highly responsible for how one reacts to situations. In case of small argument with others, if the mood of an individual is negative, it would affect how one behaves with others. Relational energy also provides impetus to self-regulate emotions. It is extremely important to understand other's values, moods, and emotions (Yang et al., 2019). When an employee knows that others have reacted to situations on the basis of their own emotions, it becomes easy to resolve such conflicts. Interpersonal conflicts happen in situations where compatibility of emotions is weakened. If an employee thinks of others' emotions in a calm and neutral manner without attaching any reason or prejudice with it, interpersonal conflicts are bound to decrease. Relational energy helps in building trust and understanding. Research shows that trust and understanding are detrimental to interpersonal conflicts (Chan, Huang, & Ng, 2008; Sahoo & Sahoo, 2019).

Second, empathy mediates the link between relational energy and interpersonal conflicts. Empathy serves as a buffer between psychological resource and conflicts at workplace. This is because when an individual has relational energy, the tendency to help others and display empathy increases which in turn leads to resolving conflicts without engaging in arguments and/or misunderstandings. Empathetic individuals put themselves in others' shoe and try to analyze situation by thinking how they would have felt about the situation (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011). If someone is upset, empathy demands concern and being polite to the particular individual. Instead of taking others for granted, empathetic individuals understand that an organization is a mix of people having different moods and emotions. Empathetic employees are always good listeners and observers. They listen to others' perspectives and observe behaviors with deep thought. They communicate better because they are great observers (Rahman, 2016; Worley, 2019). That is why misunderstandings and misinterpretations do not happen frequently with emphatic individuals. Emphatic employees are tolerant and respectful. They try to resolve tense situations through mutual respect and tolerate negative emotions. When arguments are treated with respect, situations normally do not escalate.

### ***Limitations and future research areas***

This study has three main limitations. First, data was cross-sectional in nature. This is a potential limitation because single source bias and mediating effect results are ambiguous when data is cross-sectional. Future studies should collect data at multiple points in time. Second,

there has been a limitation about generalizability of the findings. Data was collected from Pakistan and future studies should collect data from other countries, cultures, and industries. Third, the moderators as boundary conditions have not been tested in this study. There can be personal variables such as personality, values, self-identity, and morality can play moderating roles and future studies should examine them to better understand the research model.

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