

# Organizational justice and employee megaphoning in the UAE: the role of employee–organization relationship

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – While Western studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between employee megaphoning (EM, employee voice) and organizational justice (OJ), non-Western research on this is limited. This study aims to assess the internal information-sharing behaviors of employees in the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) travel and tourism industry, focusing on positive employee megaphoning internally (PEMI) and its association with perceptions of OJ. The employee–organization relationship (EOR) is also explored as a mediator between various dimensions of OJ and PEMI.

**Design/methodology/approach** – An online survey was administered to 600 full-time employees over four months, starting May 2023, following a rigorous sampling procedure. Structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the study hypotheses.

**Findings** – PEMI was strongly related to OJ, meaning employees who perceived their organization as just and fair tended to speak positively about it. In addition, EOR played a mediating role in the influence of OJ on PEMI.

**Originality/value** – The correlation between OJ and internal megaphoning among employees in the UAE is explored, elucidating how EOR mediates OJ and employees' internal megaphoning in non-Western countries. The findings provide theoretical and practical implications for organizations.

**Keywords** Organizational justice, Employee-organization relationship, Positive employee megaphoning internally, UAE, Communication

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

Employee-favorable megaphoning is essential in organizations to promote an atmosphere of dialogue and provide staff members with the freedom to express their ideas and accomplishments. This, in turn, encourages employee advocacy, boosts morale, enhances organizational reputation and improves internal communicative behavior (Kim, 2021). Positive employee megaphoning (EM) relates to employees' active promotion of an organization's positive aspects and is relevant to employee advocacy, internal branding and corporate communication. Conversely, employees' negative communication can potentially harm a corporation's reputation, especially when negative information created by employees is spread and then disseminated by other audiences, it can significantly damage an organization's reputation. Therefore, preventing such negative behavior is crucial in maintaining a company's reputation (Lee and Kim, 2020). As employee advocacy plays a fundamental role in brand image and customer satisfaction, it is imperative to understand the role of internal positive EM in various situations. Prior research suggests that employees may express and process negative emotions by sharing negative information about their respective organizations (Mostafa, 2025). Despite the importance of positive EM, there is insufficient research on the topic of various types of EM, particularly internal

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positive EM. To gain insights into how positive EM can be used internally to create a positive work environment, improve employee engagement and enhance organizational performance, investigating the role of internal positive EM is imperative. Furthermore, the study conducted in India by [Singh and Singh \(2019\)](#) has shown that organizational justice (OJ) positively impacts psychological empowerment. Conversely, employee perceptions of injustice could lead to negative feelings, in turn triggering negative behavior ([Cao et al., 2023](#); [Kim et al., 2021](#)). This finding suggests that employees' mental health plays a significant role in their workplace behavior, leading to negative EM ([Kim et al., 2021](#); [López-Cabarcos et al., 2015](#)). Accordingly, employee–organization relationships (EORs) have drawn considerable attention from scholars ([Chon et al., 2021](#)). Several studies have examined employee engagement as an outcome of effective corporate communication and workplace culture. Conversely, several studies have explored the cognitive aspects of communication and culture of employee relationships ([Kang and Sung, 2017](#)). According to [Sriramesh et al. \(1996\)](#), communication is crucial in shaping and changing a culture. However, there is limited research on the impact of EOR on organizations, especially related to its role in improving OJ and positive employee megaphoning internally (PEMI) ([Ha and Lee, 2022](#)). A recent study by [Almazrouei and Bani-Melhem \(2023\)](#) on voice behavior in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) shows that there are no significant relationships between leadership, leader–member exchange and voice behavior. Rather, the study shows that psychological empowerment is the only way to build relationships. However, research on how organizations treat their employees ethically in a non-Western context is limited ([Malla and Malla, 2023](#)). To understand the correlation between these constructs, it is imperative to investigate the relationship between justice, PEMI and EOR based on OJ theory (OJT) and social exchange theory (SET), as proposed by [Akram et al. \(2020\)](#). This study examines how employees in the UAE travel and tourism industry engage in PEMI, considers the effects of OJ and explores EOR as a mediator between OJ and PEMI. It seeks to enhance the theoretical understanding of employees' megaphoning behavior within an organizational context. Specifically, the concurrent influence of emotional experiences and EOR quality as “mediators” on diverse forms of such behavior is investigated ([Aggarwal et al., 2022](#)).

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Theoretical background

The theoretical background comprises the fundamental concepts, principles and frameworks that provide the foundation for research or study. Within the context of organizational dynamics and the relationships between employees and organizations, particularly in relation to positive internal EM, this study considered two theoretical perspectives that offer valuable insight and analysis:

1. *Organizational Justice Theory (OJT)*: During the 1960s and 1970s, researchers within organizations expressed interest in examining justice at their respective workplaces ([Greenberg, 1987](#)). Drawing influence from theorists such as George Homans, John Adams, Elaine Walster and Ellen Berscheid, studies have examined propositions related to the distribution of payment and work-related rewards based on equity theory ([Cropanzano et al., 2001](#)). OJ is the fairness level that an organization displays toward its employees. Justice can be categorized into three dimensions: distributive, procedural and interactional ([Colquitt, 2001](#); [Adams, 1965](#); [Visser and Scheepers, 2022](#)). The effects of justice across different dimensions become more powerful when organizations uphold high standards of justice. When individuals perceive that sources of justice honor their rights, transcend personal biases and maintain respectful communication, they embody the essence of interactional justice ([Unterhitzenberger and Lawrence, 2023](#)). On this backdrop, it is evident that there is a good understanding of OJ, its influences and its outcomes. Although most studies have focused on permanent organizations, quantitative research on the impact of OJ on EM in

megaphoning-based organizations remains scarce ([Changaranchola and Samantara, 2024](#); [Lim and Loosemore, 2017](#)).

2. *Social Exchange Theory (SET)*: This concept was first introduced by George Homans and Peter Blau in psychology and later expanded by Thibault and Kelley in sociology, demonstrating the impact of social interaction and structure on a larger societal framework ([Blau, 1986](#); [Homans, 1958](#); [Jun and Eckardt, 2025](#); [Yue and Thelen, 2023](#)). Research has demonstrated that social and psychological factors affect employee behavior and performance, influencing attitudes, motivation and group dynamics ([Brown et al., 2005](#); [Wang, 2025](#)). EOR is founded on SET, which emphasizes the significance of mutual benefits. Social interactions allow individuals to gain rewards and avoid negative consequences ([Mora Cortez and Johnston, 2020](#)). It will help investigate and understand how employee treatment can affect PEMI in the organization. Aligning with the research objectives, which seek to establish a scientific correlation between OJ, EOR and internal employee advocacy, it is essential to underscore the importance of our hypotheses. To substantiate this inquiry, we intend to evaluate the validity of the four proposed research hypotheses, which are meticulously delineated in the research model and are theoretically grounded to ensure their scholarly validity and pertinence. Given the context-sensitive nature of SET perceptions, it is important to understand how individuals perceive fairness in organizations, what influences those perceptions and what their consequences are (positive employee perceptions). SET theory is presented in this document to answer these questions and illustrate a better understanding of the involved dynamics. Most previous studies have emphasized how EM behaviors impact organizations, but we need to investigate positive EM behaviors in the UAE ([Oh and Ki, 2024](#)). By integrating these theoretical frameworks, scholars and professionals can holistically comprehend the intricate relationship among OJ, employee–organization interactions and internal employee advocacy. This topic has not been adequately addressed despite the importance of frequent social interactions between employees and their impact on positive EM within organizations. The concepts of OJ and EOR, considering SET, are expected to account for the key role of PEMI ([Seate et al., 2024](#)). This multidisciplinary methodology facilitates a deeper exploration of the effects of internal employee advocacy and OJ, as well as the efficacy of EOR within the UAE.

## 2.2 Organizational justice

Concerning the previously mentioned dimensions of justice, distributive justice (DJ) centers on the fairness of resource distribution ([Parmentier and Fischer, 2021](#)), procedural justice (PJ) addresses the fairness of decision-making processes and policies ([Cropanzano and Byrne, 2012](#); [Under and Gereade, 2025](#)) and interactional justice (IJ) underscores the fairness of interpersonal dealings during policy implementation ([Patnaik et al., 2023](#)). Ensuring fair employee treatment is crucial for OJ, leading to a positive work culture, increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which in turn contributes to an organization's success. Respecting employees also leaves a positive impression on an organization's image and builds trust by emphasizing informational justice. Maintaining organizational sustainability and viability by ensuring OJ is crucial. To enhance employee satisfaction and well-being, organizations must express a strong commitment toward them. This is measured by the level of commitment employees have toward the organization. Treating employees fairly is also key to improving their behavior and performance, which, in turn, strengthens the organization's commitment to them ([Changaranchola and Samantara, 2024](#)). As an essential factor for predicting positive outcomes for employees and organizations, OJ helps foster growth and development within organizations ([Cruz et al., 2025](#)). Conversely, a lack of justice could lead to disastrous consequences, affecting employee behavior and attitude toward the organization, including job satisfaction, turnover intention and commitment toward the organization. When an organization lacks fairness in

its practices, it could negatively impact employees' ability to innovate and perform well, leading to reduced cost-effectiveness and efficiency. To address this, some organizations may appoint a temporary regulator to ensure that justice is delivered, although this is not sustainable without appropriate OJ strategies in place (Ki *et al.*, 2022). "Employee voice (EV)" refers to employees' efforts to influence those in positions of power to make changes, and express opinions and ideas to their employer (Alkhadra *et al.*, 2022). Understanding the relationship between employee intelligence (EI) and EV is crucial for recognizing individuals' emotions at the workplace. An open communication culture enables employees and employers to leverage EI for effective interaction. Employees with high EI confidently share their thoughts when management is open to feedback and ideas. Encouraging EV fosters trust, accountability and organizational development (Lim and Loosemore, 2017). OJ is key to effectiveness, while EOR mediate the interactions between employees and organizations. Research shows that EOR interventions positively impact employee engagement, communication behavior and organizational effectiveness. EOR interventions also promote a culture of respect and fairness, boosting job satisfaction, reducing turnover and increasing productivity. Furthermore, positive EOR interventions can help organizations foster trust, improving overall outcomes (Oh, 2019). Meanwhile, effective EOR practices bridge OJ and EV, balancing both parties' interests. A study found a strong relationship between OJ and EOR; EOR could reduce negative megaphoning on anonymous online channels. However, injustice does not influence negative megaphoning through external (friends, family) or internal (colleagues) channels (Lee, 2022a). In addition, employee satisfaction is significantly correlated with their perception of the organization, which could have a direct impact on their job engagement. Nevertheless, the authors identify gaps in understanding how "symmetrical communication" within organizational culture impacts employee relationships. This study examines how employees' perceptions of organizational structures and justice affect their relationships with employers, both internally and externally (Kong *et al.*, 2018; Pathardikar *et al.*, 2023). It aims to expand the current OJ perspective. Furthermore, a shared phenomenon underpins OJ and assumes drivers of EV behaviors, known as EM. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. There is a significant positive relationship between OJ and PEMI.

### 2.3 Positive employee megaphoning internally

EM is a new concept referring to employees voluntarily expressing their opinions about their organizations, both positive and negative, internally or publicly (Mostafa, 2025). Meanwhile, positive EM specifically amplifies an organization's strengths and promotes a positive image through various communication channels (Ye *et al.*, 2023). EM describes employees' voluntary practice of using their personal and professional networks, both online and offline, to share their opinions, feedback and experiences regarding their workplaces (Hassanie *et al.*, 2025). Communication can occur through various channels. Recent studies have revealed that EM encompasses the public expression of employees' ideas, perspectives and experiences related to their company, workplace and relevant issues on social media and other public platforms (Colladon *et al.*, 2023). EV and EM are crucial for fostering team voice, driving innovation and enhancing organizational mindfulness. Positive communication through EM occurs when supportive leadership motivates employees, contributing to organization growth (Kim and Rhee, 2011). This enhances employees' scouting behavior, promotes knowledge-sharing and cultivates positive work culture. Although EM enhances productivity and problem-solving, it can also position employees as either advocates or adversaries, depending on EOR (Oei *et al.*, 2022). EM is an invisible asset shaped by a positive organizational culture. Consistently maintaining trust and transparency within an authentic workplace environment strengthens the connection between the organization and external audiences, boosting brand reputation (Lee, 2022b). As EM can significantly affect an organizations' reputation, it is essential to promote positivity in the workplace by fostering effective internal communication and building a

supportive organizational culture that encourages and leverages employee positive megaphoning. This, in turn, enhances the organization's reputation, attracts talent and builds customer trust (Bojanic, 2023; Ye *et al.*, 2023). To strengthen the effectiveness of positive megaphoning, this study examines the role of OJ as a theoretical framework to address gaps in EM research. It aims to demonstrate how EOR mediates the relationship between OJ and PEMI.

## 2.4 Employee–organization relationship

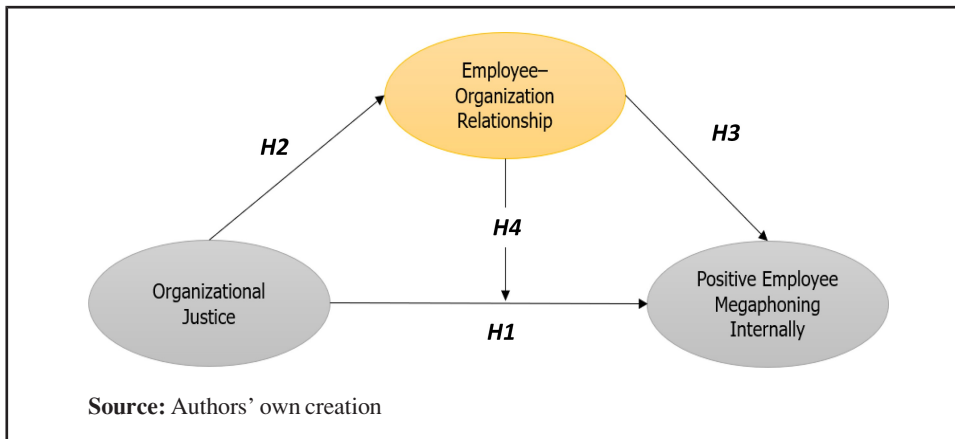
In public relations, internal communication programs are crucial for understanding the relationship between employees and organizations (Neves and Story, 2015). According to Hon and Grunig (1999), the four high-level indicators of organization–public relations outcomes include trust, satisfaction, commitment and control mutuality (Seate *et al.*, 2024). EOR is a dynamic and complex association between employees and the organization in which they work (Clark and Mills, 1979). This association is influenced by the culture, policies and practices of the organization. EOR is the psychological, emotional and social link between employees and their employers, and includes their attitudes, perceptions and behaviors, in response to their experiences at work (Kang and Sung, 2017). EOR develops over time and involves the exchange of contributions, obligations and trust between employees and the organization (Blau, 2017). Positive EOR leads to employees feeling valued, respected and supported in their roles, resulting in increased job satisfaction, commitment and discretionary effort. By establishing a positive relationship between an organization and its employees, both parties can reap numerous benefits. Research suggests that a strong EOR can facilitate employee development and foster a healthier work-life balance, including heightened engagement, communication, productivity and job satisfaction (Roberts and David, 2020). Conflict over personal preferences or differences in interpersonal interactions is referred to as relationship conflict. Fostering EV in businesses enhances employees' sense of control at work (Cullen, 2022; Neves and Story, 2015). EOR plays a crucial role in whistleblowing because a positive EOR increases the likelihood of employees reporting unethical or illegal practices. Employees are more likely to enunciate ethical violations if they feel supported and valued by their organization. Several studies have examined how symmetrical internal communication (SIC) influences employees' communication behaviors. Some studies (Kim, 2021; Lee, 2022b) have shown how disclosures negatively affect brand-related attitudes, while another study (Kim *et al.* (2023); Yue *et al.* (2022)) examined the relationship between OJ and employee ethical leadership, as well as EV and EM have highlighted the need for further research to fully comprehend the impact of EOR on OJ. This study contributes to the literature on human resource communication strategies by identifying essential factors that provide employees with the confidence to speak up positively and strengthen employee participation. This study estimates that EOR has a direct positive impact on OJ, in addition to a direct effect on positive PEMI; however, eventually, EOR would mediate between OJ and positive EM and ultimately directly affect PEMI positively. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model. It enhances the literature on increasing employee engagement, particularly through positive EM within an organization. Considering the discussion above, the following hypotheses have been proposed:

- H2. There is a significant positive relationship between OJ and EORs.
- H3. There is a significant positive relationship between EORs and PEMI.
- H4. EOR mediates the positive relationship between OJ and PEMI.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Sample and procedure

This study analyzes how employees' PEMI is affected by OJ and EOR in a non-Western setting, using the UAE travel and tourism sector as the sample setting, to understand their

**Figure 1** Conceptual model

perceptions of these constructs. The study aims to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of these constructs in promoting positive work-related outcomes in a culturally diverse and dynamic organizational environment. To reach employees of five-star hotels in the UAE, a questionnaire was developed and distributed using the online panel, Questionpro and it was shared with hotel coordinators and internal emails in the hotel. Study participants included different working levels of (designation, experience, educational level, age, gender and nationality) in different sections, facilitating a comprehensive perspective. Participants in the survey were all voluntary, which encouraged insightful responses. Our proactive engagement with multiple tourism organizations in the UAE enabled us to reach a broader audience of employees and collect valuable information. This study required 382 respondents according to sample size of Krejcie and Morgan's (1970), considering that the number of employees in tourism and hospitality is estimated at 809,000 (according to <https://wtcc.org/>). In total, 655 full-time employees participated. However, 600 questionnaires were left after removing incomplete answers. Table 1 demonstrates that 37.8% ( $n = 227$ ) of

**Table 1** Demographic data

| Category           | Item            | Frequency | %    |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------|------|
| Age                | 20–29           | 110       | 18.3 |
|                    | 30–39           | 267       | 44.5 |
|                    | 40–49           | 174       | 29.0 |
|                    | Age 50 or above | 49        | 8.2  |
| Gender             | Female          | 227       | 37.8 |
|                    | Male            | 373       | 62.2 |
| Educational level  | High school     | 11        | 1.8  |
|                    | Diploma         | 48        | 8.0  |
|                    | Bachelor        | 320       | 53.3 |
|                    | Master's        | 181       | 30.2 |
| Nationality        | Doctorate/PhD   | 40        | 6.7  |
|                    | UAE local       | 100       | 16.7 |
|                    | Expatriate      | 500       | 83.3 |
| Designation        | Nonmanagerial   | 423       | 70.5 |
|                    | Managerial      | 177       | 29.5 |
| Working experience | 0–5             | 67        | 11.2 |
|                    | 6–10            | 208       | 34.7 |
|                    | 11–15           | 211       | 35.2 |
|                    | More than 15    | 114       | 19.0 |
| N                  |                 | 600       |      |

**Source(s):** Authors' own creation

respondents were female and 62.2% ( $n = 373$ ) were male. In addition, 34.7% of respondents had 6–10 years of experience, while 35.2% had 11–15 years. The survey targeted adults aged 20 and above, with the largest percentage of respondents (44.5%) falling in the age range of 30–39, followed by 29.0% in the age range of 40–49 (see [Table 1](#)).

### 3.2 Measurement scale

The study used items from prior research ([Table 2](#)). All measurement items used in the study were obtained from cited sources and were chosen based on their relevance to the research objectives.

*OJ* was measured using 14 items adapted from [Colquitt \(2001\)](#). The scale measures all three OJ dimensions – PJ (4 items), DJ (4) and interpersonal justice (6). All items ( $\alpha = 0.866$ ) were considered reliable. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to measure the construct items ([Aggarwal et al., 2022](#)). The results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) indicated that the second-order model fits the data well:  $\chi^2 = 7.927$ , GFI = 0.864, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.874, root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.034, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.108, suggesting that all components were good indicators.

*EOR* was measured using 16 items adapted from [Hon and Grunig \(1999\)](#). The scale measures four EOR subitems: first, trust (6 items); second, control mutuality (3 items); third, commitment (3 items); and fourth, satisfaction (4 items). All items ( $\alpha = 0.908$ ) were considered reliable. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to measure the construct items ([Lee, 2022a](#)). CFA indicated that the second-order model fits the data well:  $\chi^2 = 6.521$ , CFI = 0.884, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.884, RMR = 0.030 and RMSEA = 0.096, all components were good indicators.

*PEMI* was measured using ten items adapted from [Kim and Rhee \(2011\)](#) and [Cropanzano et al. \(2001\)](#). Five items were used for external megaphoning and five items were used for internal megaphoning. All items ( $\alpha = 0.800$ ) had good reliability. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to measure the construct items ([Kang and Sung, 2017](#)). CFA indicated that the second-order model fits the data well:  $\chi^2 = 9.405$ , CFI = 0.900, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.900, RMR = 0.034 and RMSEA = 0.118, all components were good indicators.

## 4. Data analysis and results

To test these hypotheses, we conducted comprehensive tests on all constructs using two types of IBM software to ensure data accuracy. We used SPSS Version 29 to conduct our initial testing, which included Cronbach's alpha, correlations and the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test. Second, we used SPSS AMOS Version 29 to test CFA and assess the accuracy of the data model fit ([Anderson and Gerbing, 1988](#)). We considered various indicators, such

**Table 2** Mean, std. deviation and correlation

| Factor name | Mean   | SD      | 1       | 2       | 3       | 4       | 5       | 6 |
|-------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| PEMI        | 3.9275 | 0.64227 | –       |         |         |         |         |   |
| PJ          | 4.0725 | 0.68989 | 0.542** | –       |         |         |         |   |
| DJ          | 3.9875 | 0.64007 | 0.561** | 0.680** | –       |         |         |   |
| ERTRUST     | 4.0125 | 0.60470 | 0.543** | 0.518** | 0.596** | –       |         |   |
| ERCM        | 4.0139 | 0.65345 | 0.519** | 0.466** | 0.556** | 0.761** | –       |   |
| ERCOM       | 3.9644 | 0.60499 | 0.565** | 0.488** | 0.574** | 0.718** | 0.709** | – |

Note(s): \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source(s): Authors' own creation

as RMSEA, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), CFI, IFI, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) and normed fit index (NFI) to evaluate the model fit. Finally, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE) and factor loadings were tested.

#### 4.1 Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test

The KMO test was used to assess the suitability of data for factor analysis. Table 4 provides the range and level of suitability (Kaiser and Rice, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity determines the significance level, which is considered statistically significant if  $p < 0.5$ . This indicates that construct correlations could be established (Anthoine *et al.*, 2014). The study shows that the KMO test result was 0.945, indicating a remarkable level of adequacy. Our study also provided strong evidence of a significant correlation between the construct and factors, with  $p < 0.00$ . In addition, all commonalities were greater than 0.5, indicating an excellent fit. Table 2 shows the significant positive correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) between independent constructs (DJ and PJ), mediator (EOR) and dependent constructs (PEMI).

#### 4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

CFA was conducted to ensure that all the research constructs were accurately defined and that the data fit the model. CFA was used to establish the discriminant validity of the study constructs before hypothesis testing. The primary model was subjected to discrimination using a sequence of other models. This approach ensured the accuracy and precision of the analysis, resulting in a confident interpretation of the findings. According to Hair *et al.* (2006), a good fit is indicated by an RMSEA value below 0.08 and an SRMR value below 0.09, while CFI, TLI, IFI and NFI values should exceed 0.90. When we analyzed CFA, the outcomes showed poor fit ( $\chi^2/df = 4.099$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.000, RMSEA of 0.072, RMR of 0.031, CFI of 0.838, TLI of 0.828, IFI of 0.838 and NFI of 0.797). We then performed a common method bias test, which did not show positive results; the total variance explained by eight factors in this study was 60%. Unfortunately, neither the CFA nor the total variance explained was good; therefore, we had to remove constructs EORTrust 2–3, EORSat1–4, PJ1–2, JI1–IJ6 and EPMInt3 to reach the final result below. Subsequently, different models (alternatives) were developed until the best fit was obtained. For the first alternative, we removed external positive employee megaphoning (PEME) and focused on PEMI and EOR Trust, Control Mutuality, Commitment, PJ and DJ. For the second alternative, we removed PEMI and tested PEME, EOR Trust, Control Mutuality, Commitment, PJ and DJ. For the third alternative, we eliminated all elements of EOR and analyzed only the Trust component of EOR, while keeping the other variables (PEM, both internal and external, PJ and DJ). For the fourth alternative, similar to the third alternative, we removed all EOR components and focused solely on Control Mutuality from EOR, alongside all other variables (PEM, both internal and external, PJ and DJ). For the fifth alternative, we excluded all EOR components and studied only the Commitment aspect of EOR, along with all other variables (PEM, both internal and external, PJ and DJ). For the sixth alternative, we removed PJ and tested DJ, while including all other variables (EOR Trust, Commitment, Control Mutuality and PEM, both internal and external). The hypothesis model that was found to have a better goodness-of-fit than other models was the first alternative, indicating superior and exceptionally well-fit model indices ( $\chi^2/df = 2.405$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.000, RMSEA of 0.048, RMR of 0.020, CFI of 0.963, TLI of 0.955, IFI of 0.963 and NFI of 0.938) as shown in Table 3. In addition, all factor loading values were found to be statistically significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level, demonstrating a factor loading of 0.6 or higher.

#### 4.3 Common method bias

Harman's single-factor test, which involved examining the total explained variance, was the third test conducted to evaluate common method bias. Total explained variation refers to

**Table 3** Model fit summary

| Model               | p     | $\chi^2/\Delta$ | NFI   | RFI   | IFI   | TLI   | CFI   | GFI   | AGFI  | RMR   | RMSEA |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CFA                 | 0.000 | 4.099           | 0.797 | 0.785 | 0.838 | 0.828 | 0.838 | 0.788 | 0.764 | 0.031 | 0.072 |
| CFA- Model fit      | 0.000 | 2.446           | 0.923 | 0.911 | 0.953 | 0.945 | 0.953 | 0.923 | 0.903 | 0.023 | 0.049 |
| Alternative Model 1 | 0.000 | 2.405           | 0.938 | 0.925 | 0.963 | 0.955 | 0.963 | 0.940 | 0.920 | 0.020 | 0.048 |
| Alternative Model 2 | 0.000 | 2.434           | 0.935 | 0.923 | 0.961 | 0.953 | 0.961 | 0.937 | 0.918 | 0.022 | 0.049 |
| Alternative Model 3 | 0.000 | 2.783           | 0.934 | 0.918 | 0.957 | 0.946 | 0.956 | 0.938 | 0.915 | 0.024 | 0.055 |
| Alternative Model 4 | 0.000 | 2.681           | 0.941 | 0.926 | 0.962 | 0.952 | 0.962 | 0.944 | 0.921 | 0.022 | 0.053 |
| Alternative Model 5 | 0.000 | 2.449           | 0.928 | 0.916 | 0.956 | 0.949 | 0.956 | 0.930 | 0.911 | 0.022 | 0.049 |

Source(s): Authors' own creation

the total amount of explained variation across all clusters (Kviz, 1981). The test helps detect whether a single factor dominates the variance, which would suggest that common method bias is present and would undermine the validity of the findings. The total variance explained by a single factor in this study was 44.385%, which was less than 50%; thus, a single factor did not account for most of the variance in all variables, indicating that the model is free of common method bias. Based on these results, it is concluded that common method bias was not a serious threat to the current data (Hair et al., 2006). This is supported by the strong validity of all factors, indicating the accuracy and reliability of the results.

#### 4.4 Composite reliability, average variance extracted and factor loadings

The final test was used to determine the reliability and validity of the data from all constructs, which involved measuring CR and AVE. For each construct, CR is deemed satisfactory when it surpasses the critical value of 0.7, as established by Bacon et al. (1995) and Nunnally (1967). Moreover, data within a construct were deemed acceptable only if AVE was greater than 0.5. As per Fornell and Larcker (1981), the data are also acceptable if the AVE for the construct is below 0.5 and the CR is higher than 0.5. AVE values for PEMI, OJ and EOR are 0.433, 0.510 and 0.511, respectively, and CR values are 0.753, 0.862 and 0.912, respectively. All CR values were deemed acceptable. Although PEMI's AVE value was lower than 0.5, it was considered acceptable given the higher CR value of 0.70, as established by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Therefore, the proposed measurement model was retained as the final model, as presented in Table 4. To assess the study's convergent validity, we observed that the item loadings for all four constructs exceeded 0.50 and were statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Loading values for the OJ items ranged from 0.694 to 0.744, while for PEMI items, they ranged from 0.629 to 0.693. EOR items had loading values ranging from 0.629 to 0.797 and PCSP items from 0.787 to 0.798. The proposed model achieved convergent validity, as our findings showed higher values for significant factor loadings (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Despite deducting the constructs, the final result showed that all data in the model fit were considered good. This test confirmed that all results were acceptable and reliable.

#### 4.5 Hypothesis testing

We used SEM SPSS Amos V.29 software to test  $H1-H3$ . First, the analysis showed that OJ had a positive effect on PEMI ( $\beta = 0.426$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting  $H1$ . Second, the analysis showed that OJ had a positive effect on EOR ( $\beta = 0.726$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting  $H2$ . Finally, the results showed a positive relationship between PEMI and EOR ( $\beta = 0.340$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that  $H3$  was also supported (see Table 5).

#### 4.6 Testing mediator

The relationship between the two constructs can be modified by adding a third construct. This relationship can be strengthened, weakened or altered. We first tested the relationship

**Table 4** Reliability and convergent validity

| Factor name | Item name | Standardized factor loadings | Cronbach's alpha | Composite reliability | Average variance extracted | Total variance explained | KMO   |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| PEMI        | PEMInt1   | 0.629**                      | 0.800            | 0.753                 | 0.433                      | 44.385%                  | 0.945 |
|             | PEMInt2   | 0.656**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | PEMInt4   | 0.651**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | PEMInt5   | 0.693**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
| OJ          | PJ3       | 0.696**                      | 0.866            | 0.862                 | 0.510                      |                          |       |
|             | PJ4       | 0.712**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | DJ1       | 0.744**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | DJ2       | 0.722**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | DJ3       | 0.716**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | DJ4       | 0.694**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
| EOR         | EORTrust1 | 0.638**                      | 0.908            | 0.912                 | 0.511                      |                          |       |
|             | EORTrust4 | 0.626**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EORTrust5 | 0.696**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EORTrust6 | 0.743**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EORCM1    | 0.753**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EORCM2    | 0.797**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EORCM3    | 0.746**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EOR COMM1 | 0.717**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EOR COMM2 | 0.727**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |
|             | EOR COMM3 | 0.686**                      |                  |                       |                            |                          |       |

**Note(s):** Model Fit:  $\chi^2/df = 2.446$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.000, RMSEA of 0.049, RMR of 0.023, CFI of 0.953, TLI of 0.945, IFI of 0.953 and NFI of 0.923 (Miles and Shevlin, 1998; Dairehooper *et al.*, 2008)

**Source(s):** Authors' own creation

**Table 5** Hypothesis test

| Regression weights        | $\beta$  | S.E.  | t      | p-value | Significant | Decision |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|--------|---------|-------------|----------|
| H1: PEMI $\leftarrow$ OJ  | 0.426*** | 0.065 | 6.578  | 0.001   | (+) sig     | Support  |
| H2: EOR $\leftarrow$ OJ   | 0.726*** | 0.052 | 13.966 | 0.001   | (+) sig     | Support  |
| H3: PEMI $\leftarrow$ EOR | 0.340*** | 0.062 | 5.475  | 0.001   | (+) sig     | Support  |

**Note(s):** PEMI = positive employee megaphone internally, OJ = organizational justice, EOR = employee organization relationship; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Source(s):** Authors' own creation

between OJ and internal EM, and found it to be significant, as was the relationship between OJ and EOR and between EOR and internal EM. This confirmed that we can, and we did, test the influence of OJ on PEMI through EOR (Baron and Kenny, 1986). The findings, which indicate that OJ had a significant and positive impact on EOR quality, are presented in Table 6.

**4.6.1 Direct effect.** The value of 0.001 at the intersection of OJ and PEMI shows two-tailed significance. This value, which is lower than 0.05, indicates that EOR mediates the relationship between OJ and PEMI. Based on these results, we can conclude that OJ has a significant direct effect on PEMI through EOR. The direct effect of OJ on PEMI is ( $\beta = 0.426$ , CIs: [0.065, 6.578],  $p < 0.001$ ). The lower-bound confidence interval is 0.272, and the upper bound is 0.702. As this confidence interval did not cross zero, the direct effect is significant.

**4.6.2 Indirect effect.** OJ has a significant relationship with PEMI ( $\beta = 0.287$ , CIs: [0.147, 0.459],  $p < 0.001$ ), implying that the influence of OJ on PEMI is partially mediated by EOR. The lower-bound confidence interval is 0.147 and the upper bound is 0.459. Considering

**Table 6** Mediation test

| Hypothesis testing<br>direct and interaction effects | $\beta$  | Bootstrap<br>95% confidence interval |              | p-value | Significance | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|----------|
|                                                      |          | [Lower level                         | Upper level] |         |              |          |
| Indirect effects                                     | 0.287*** | [0.147                               | 0.459]       | 0.001   | (+) sig      | Support  |
| H4: PEMI $\leftarrow$ EOR $\leftarrow$ OJ            |          |                                      |              |         |              |          |
| Direct effects                                       | 0.496*** | [0.272                               | 0.702]       | 0.001   | (+) sig      |          |
| Total effect                                         | 0.783*** | [0.664                               | 0.886]       | 0.001   | (+) sig      |          |
| Partial mediation                                    |          |                                      |              |         |              |          |

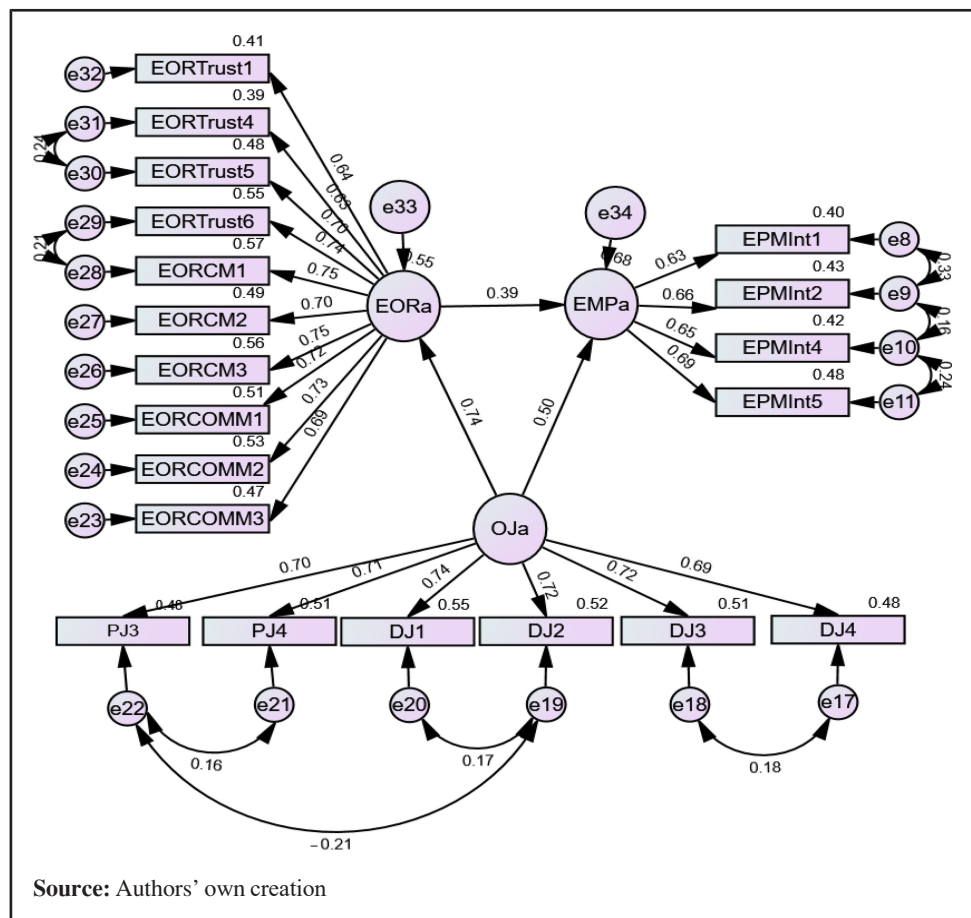
**Note(s):** PEMI = positive employee megaphone internally, OJ = organizational justice, EOR = employee–organization relationship; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Source(s):** Authors' own creation

that this confidence interval did not cross zero, the indirect effect appears to be significant. Therefore, the result supports H4. Figure 2 shows the hypothesized results.

## 5. Discussion

Establishing a healthy and positive work environment in the tourism and hospitality industry is paramount for a work atmosphere that fosters higher levels of employee satisfaction and engagement, as well as directly and positively impacting the overall quality of service

**Figure 2** Hypothesized results of the model

delivered to customers (Tkalac Verčič, 2021). It also leads to increased employee satisfaction and productivity, reduced turnover rates and enhanced organizational reputation (Ki *et al.*, 2022). By using two compatible theoretical models (OJT and SET), this study contributes to the discussion on internal megaphoning of employees in Middle Eastern countries. Our study examined the impact of EOR and OJ on employee communication from the perspective of positive internal communication. The aim of this study was to provide empirical evidence for conceptualizing OJ, EOR and PEMI as social exchange processes. According to SET, individuals evaluate the potential outcomes of their actions based on their benefits and drawbacks (Blau, 1964). Conversely, employees consider OJ to be an implicit agreement between the company and the employees: fair treatment promotes reciprocity. Furthermore, EOR influences employees discretionary, positive and extra-role activities that contribute to the organization's overall EM. When employees are treated fairly, they reciprocate with enhanced EOR, seeing these extra efforts as a form of social exchange. This study also makes a significant contribution by connecting OJ to the realm of internal communication, particularly in understanding employee communicative behaviors (PEMI). By exploring concepts like employee voice and megaphoning, it builds on earlier research surrounding OJ and PEMI, emphasizing the crucial role of leadership in shaping employee actions within the workplace. It is worth noting that employees often express their opinions not just within company walls, but also to their supervisors and management. Employees often express their opinions not just within company walls to their supervisors and management, but also outside the organization to friends, family and sometimes the public (such as through social media). Much of the academic discourse has centered on how OJ encourages employees to share their ideas, suggestions and solutions concerning their work and organizational procedures. The results of this study not only support these previous findings but also provide deeper insight into internal communication behavior. By examining the relationship between OJ (including DJ, PJ) and employees' positive megaphoning behavior, the research revealed that OJ significantly influences how employees advocate for or critique their companies within their roles as informal representatives of the organization. This highlights the power of a fair workplace in empowering employees to speak up and engage authentically, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the organization. The findings of the current study support *H1*, confirming earlier findings that OJ contributes positively to EM (Kang and Sung, 2017). However, according to Lee (2022a), employees' negative megaphoning behaviors increase when perceived organizational injustice exists. The result of *H2* is also in line with previous studies that indicate that EOR can affect EM. Consistent with Kang and Sung's (2019) study in South Korea, we found that OJ perceptions were directly related to EOR quality and the findings by Lee and Chon (2021). Another study (Lee, 2022a) shows that injustice insight decreased EOR quality. The study proposed that the quality of the relationship between the organization and its employees is a significant factor that drives individuals to actively seek, share and disseminate information about current and potential organizational challenges or interests. The finding for *H3* revealed that organizations can cultivate positive relationships with their employees by engaging with them. This enhanced relationship quality, in turn, boosts the likelihood of proactive behavior among employees. These findings are similar to those of studies conducted in Korea by Kang and Sung (2017) and Kim and Rhee (2011), as well as more recent studies by Lee *et al.* (2019) and Kang *et al.* (2023). However, the study by Lee (2022a) shows that the relationship between EOR and internal EM is negative. Furthermore, negative internal EM behaviors increase when EOR mediates between it and injustice (Lee, 2022a). Thus, a key contribution of this study is that it provides theoretical insights into the complex interactions between perceived justice and EOR by examining their combined impact on a comprehensive set of positive megaphoning behaviors within a single model. The finding for *H4* emphasizes that employees' positive megaphoning is linked to justice-related cognition, with positive emotions serving as a key mechanism for translating justice perceptions into behavior. While previous research has shown that perceptions of injustice can lead to negative

feelings and destructive behavior (Cropanzano and Byrne (2012), Cropanzano *et al.*, 2001) this study added new knowledge and illustrates how perceptions of fair outcomes and fair processes influence employees as communicators of organizational information. Notably, positive megaphoning has significant implications for organizational reputation management compared to other positive behavior. In addition, EOR plays a crucial mediating role between justice perceptions and positive megaphoning. These findings contribute significantly to businesses seeking to improve their recovery efforts and externally enhance their overall employee satisfaction, which is linked to organizational reputation (Colladon *et al.*, 2023).

### 5.1 Theoretical implications

This study extends the understanding of EM and highlights the impact of EOR strength on internal communication behavior, especially in Middle Eastern (non-Western) countries, particularly Arab countries, which previous literature had neglected. First, the results of EOR correlate with internal communication: the stronger the EOR, the higher the information shared about the company and management by employees. Most organizations can reduce negative information sharing by improving communication and relationship management efforts among their employees, as supported by communication and HR literature (Kim and Rhee, 2011). This study shows that EOR quality is a critical motivator of employees' communication behavior. The results indicate that OJ affects employee behavior and the likelihood of sharing positive or negative feedback. In summary, fair treatment and employee well-being are important factors in promoting positive communication within organizations (Al Halbusi *et al.*, 2022; Lee and Kim, 2022). The finding of this study, that EOR is significantly related to how employees share organizational information with their colleagues is consistent with those of previous research, which revealed that employees who maintain positive relationships with their employers are likely to engage in internal communication more (Lee and Kim, 2022; Ki *et al.*, 2022). However, EOR quality may not always demotivate employees' internal megaphoning behaviors, as per the latest findings of Lee (2022a), who demonstrated that implementing EOR had no significant effect on internal megaphoning behavior. This study fills the gap identified by Lee by analyzing factors affecting megaphoning. Second, our study also aligns with Lee *et al.*'s (2022) finding that communal EORs are linked to SIC, as well as suggesting that employee satisfaction also correlates with employees' views of their organization, thus affecting their job engagement. This study addresses the research gap on how SIC in the organizational culture impacts employee relationships and how perceptions of organizational structures and justice affect employee–employer relationships (Wang *et al.*, 2017). Third, employees may discuss both the positive and negative aspects of their workplace with colleagues as part of regular communication, irrespective of their level of trust or satisfaction with the organization (EOR quality). They may do this simply as a way to express emotions rather than seek revenge. According to Lee and Yue (2020), while some of these behaviors may be harmful to their company, others, such as expressing opinions and suggesting positive changes, may contribute to its success. Therefore, management needs to understand the underlying motivation for employee behavior both positive and negative – to unleash the full potential of their workforce and achieve optimal outcomes. Finally, our results show that OJ correlates with PEMI, contrary to Im *et al.*'s (2023) study findings, which attributes the lack of OJ to poor communication and unfair treatment. The results also suggest that EOR is significant in mediating the relationship between justice and internal communication within an organization. They elucidate the crucial interplay between justice cognition, perceived EOR quality and employees' communication behaviors, which help to recognize their importance in creating a positive work environment (Park and Kim, 2023). When employees are treated fairly in terms of distribution, organizational procedures and interpersonal treatment, it satisfies the reciprocity norm in EOR. However, when these norms are violated, employees do not perceive a good-quality relationship with the organization, posing a significant risk as it can encourage employees to share content internally, severely damaging the organization's reputation (Aggarwal *et al.*, 2022).

## 5.2 Practical implications

This study has several significant managerial implications. The results demonstrate that OJ plays a crucial role in mitigating employees' internal megaphoning behavior. Therefore, OJ can be posited as a preventive measure against unfavorable outcomes in the workplace (López-Cabarcos *et al.*, 2015). Organizations that practice ethical human resource management, provide employees with rewards and benefits as recognition of their contributions, treat them with respect and dignity, are fair and just in their decision-making processes and create an atmosphere of positivity and productivity. Such an approach can help secure employee loyalty, boost morale and improve operational efficiency (Kong *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, businesses must adopt ethical human resource practices as the cornerstone of their corporate culture, inspiring their workforce to achieve greatness and contribute to a better future. The efficacy of internal relationship management is paramount as it has a profound impact on employee ethics and their proclivity toward favorable discussions about the company. Moreover, ethical internal management practices facilitate the development of high-quality EOR, which in turn minimizes the dissemination of sensitive information inside and outside the organization. Therefore, a coherent, well-structured internal relationship management system is important for promoting a positive work environment and mitigating the potential risks associated with the dissemination of confidential information (Oubrich *et al.*, 2021). Assessing organizational procedures and reporting lines regularly can prevent the dissemination of negative information and create a fair work environment. It is crucial to address these issues proactively to boost employee morale and productivity. Consequently, organizations should adopt a proactive approach to identify and address issues that may cause employees to believe that they are being unfairly treated. Respect and dignity are vital for leaders when dealing with employees, and transparent information is crucial for workplace justice. Human resources can provide training opportunities to equip leaders with the knowledge and talent needed to make fair decisions and treat employees accordingly, which can reduce negative communication behavior and lead to a more harmonious and productive work environment. The findings emphasize the necessity of creating an impartial work environment to enhance internal communication and reduce negative behaviors such as "negative megaphoning" (Lee *et al.*, 2022). Organizations should implement specific measures to gather employee opinions and understand their needs, ultimately fostering a positive atmosphere that boosts both productivity and motivation. Furthermore, leadership plays a pivotal role in ensuring fairness among employees, with ethical management of internal relationships being crucial. To improve employee relations, managers need practical guidance and suitable training. In addition, a robust justice system within the organization significantly impacts its reputation by ensuring the dissemination of accurate, ethical and positive information.

## 5.3 Limitations and future studies

This study has several limitations. First, we focused only on the OJT; however, future research should investigate other theoretical perspectives, such as public relations theory. Second, this study focused only on the public sector. To enhance future research, longitudinal studies should be conducted across both public and private tourism sectors in various countries and regions. Comparing results between these sectors would allow for a series of comparative analyses, leading to more generalizable results (Lee and Kim, 2022). Third, the model proposed in this study explores the role of EOR as a mediator between OJ and PEMI. The study can be expanded to alternative constructs to better understand their importance and impact on EM within the framework of the tourism sector and other business units. To advance this study, future researchers should consider investigating various forms of megaphoning (positive and negative) (Cao *et al.*, 2023). The present model can be extended to alternative constructs to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of their significance and influence on PEMI within the tourism sector and other business units. By doing so, researchers can gain deeper insight into the factors that impact PEMI and develop effective strategies for enhancing employee performance and productivity.

Finally, the relationships were examined using a quantitative approach; future studies could examine them using qualitative methods or both to provide greater depth and context. This approach can significantly benefit the tourism industry, particularly regarding the impact on PEMI by EOR, affect and OJ. Using a comprehensive analysis of these factors or control variables (e.g., gender and experience) can yield a deeper understanding of their complex relationships and how they contribute to organizational performance in the Middle East. This research will be valuable to both businesses and academics, offering a more sophisticated understanding of the factors that drive employee engagement and organizational success.

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