




How human resource practices, organisational support and trustworthiness shape job satisfaction



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Orientation: The unsatisfactory performance of some Tanzanian public parastatals could be linked to low job satisfaction, which is largely attributed to problems in human resource management practices (HRMP). Employees have indicated inadequate perceived organisational support (POS), and scholars are suggesting that further examination of managers' trustworthiness in these institutions is important.

Research purpose: This study examines the direct and indirect effects of four HRMP dimensional variables on job satisfaction, focussing on the mediation effect of POS and the moderating effect of managers' trustworthiness.

Motivation for the study: Enhancing HRMP, employees' POS and managers' trustworthiness could improve employees' job satisfaction in Tanzanian public parastatals. Consequently, the performance of these vital public institutions will improve.

Research approach/design and method: A cross-sectional approach randomly selected 438 employees from different transportation parastatals to complete self-administered questionnaires. A partial least squares-structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was utilised to analyse quantitative data.

Main findings: Three HRMP dimensional variables – training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits – directly impacted job satisfaction. In addition, POS partially mediated the relationship. In contrast, the recruitment and selection dimensional variable did not show a significant direct relationship with job satisfaction; yet, POS fully mediated its effect. Meanwhile, trustworthiness moderated the relationship between POS and job satisfaction.

Practical/managerial implications: The study's findings suggest that enhancing HRMP, boosting POS and increasing managers' trustworthiness could improve job satisfaction.

Contribution/value-add: The findings present a novel and reliable conceptual framework that enhances our understanding of the complex interrelationships among the HRMP variables, POS, trustworthiness and job satisfaction.

Keywords: human resource management practices; perceived organisational support; trustworthiness; job satisfaction; public transportation parastatals; Tanzania.

Introduction

In Tanzania, public parastatals include commercial entities, governing bodies, marketing boards, holding companies and non-commercial organisations, such as research and educational institutions. These organisations are either wholly owned by the government or the government holds more than a 51% stake (World Bank, 1988). This study focusses on job satisfaction within six selected underperforming parastatals in the transportation sector wholly owned by the government. They include air, land and marine transport services for commercial and non-commercial purposes. The entities were selected for analysis because of several challenges they face: (1) low contributions to the consolidated government fund, (2) low returns on investment and (3) significant financial losses (United Republic of Tanzania-Controller and Auditor General, URT-CAG, 2023, 2024; United Republic of Tanzania-Office of Treasury Registrar, URT-OTR, 2022, 2023). One possible reason for the unsatisfactory performance of the selected parastatals could be linked to employees' low job satisfaction (Magesa & Mtey, 2024; Mwakasungula & Mwita, 2021). Therefore, implementing interventions aimed at improving job satisfaction could enhance the overall performance of these organisations. As job satisfaction is

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directly associated with individual and organisational performance, it fosters employee engagement, happiness and commitment (Katebi et al., 2022; Mongi, 2020).

In these public institutions, the job satisfaction issue stems from problems with human resource management practices (HRMP) (Massae, 2023). The reports by the CAG (URT-CAG, 2018, 2024) and the OTR (2022), along with a previous study by Manento (2020), indicate factors contributing to poor HRMP performance in Tanzania's parastatals. The identified factors include inadequate recruitment and selection practices, insufficient training and development programmes, flaws in performance appraisal and compensation and benefits systems. Such factors result in low job satisfaction among employees in the parastatals (Kisumbe, 2019; Massae, 2023; Mwakasungula & Mwita, 2021).

In addition, it has been observed that perceived organisational support (POS) is inadequate among employees in Tanzanian public parastatals (Msuya, 2023). In various studies, POS has significantly mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and professional commitment (Wulandari et al., 2023), deviant behaviours (Malik & Lenka, 2023) and HRMP and customer-focussed outcomes (Gavino et al., 2021). Moreover, POS has moderated the relationship between employee empowerment and taking charge behaviour (Kumar et al., 2022), ethical leadership and innovative work behaviour (Musenze & Mayende, 2023) and collaborative culture and knowledge management (Shehzad et al., 2023). Despite the extensive research on POS in human resource management literature, there is limited empirical research on its mediating role in the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, scholars argue that the trustworthiness of managers in government-owned corporations deserves further attention (Julius, 2020). Previous studies have examined trustworthiness as a predictor of managerial outcomes (Cho & Ringquist, 2011), as a dependent variable (Perry & Mankin, 2004), as a mediator between transformational leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour (Lee et al., 2024) and as a moderator between empowerment and organisational identification (Ertürk & Albayrak, 2019). However, there is still limited empirical evidence on the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Thus, bridging this knowledge gap will provide essential insights for policymakers and human resource professionals.

Research gap and objectives

The relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction, particularly in the public sector of developing economies such as Tanzania, has not been thoroughly examined. It is imperative to analyse the direct and indirect effects of HRMP on job satisfaction, considering the mediating role of POS and the moderating influence of managers' trustworthiness. As this complex relationship is evident in the workplace, this study

seeks to address the existing research gaps by examining (1) the direct positive effects of each HRMP dimensional variable on job satisfaction in Tanzanian public transportation parastatals, (2) the direct positive impact of each HRMP dimensional variable on POS, (3) the direct positive effect of POS on job satisfaction, (4) the mediating effects of POS on the relationship between HRMP dimensional variables and job satisfaction and (5) the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction.

Literature review

The principle of reciprocity, as described in social exchange theory, indicates that interactions with others involve a series of exchanges (Choong & Ng, 2022). In human resource management, researchers have developed their conceptual framework to analyse the reciprocal dynamics between managers and employees within employment agreements (Amarneh & Muthuveloo, 2020; Rubel et al., 2020). Employees' intentions to act or engage in actual behaviours are influenced by their perceptions of the benefits they receive from their employers, supervisors or colleagues (Lee et al., 2024; Winarno et al., 2022). For instance, when employees perceive kindness from their employers, supervisors or peers, they may be motivated to reciprocate by engaging in positive actions or behaviours (Winarno et al., 2022).

Job satisfaction refers to the degree of contentment, happiness, fulfilment and positive emotions a person feels regarding their profession, job and working conditions (Amarneh & Muthuveloo, 2020; Maharmeh, 2021). It is critical for employees' effectiveness, commitment, productivity and well-being (Adom & Asunka, 2020; Mongi, 2020). Satisfied employees tend to contribute to lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Bharadwaj et al., 2021; Massae, 2023), enhance physical and mental well-being by reducing burnout and stress (Soares et al., 2022) and improve client satisfaction (Ren et al., 2023). Conversely, a lack of support for job satisfaction can lead to increased turnover (Wulansari et al., 2021), absenteeism, employee complaints, stress, workplace accidents (Mazhiyeva, 2020) and decreased job performance and productivity (Katebi et al., 2022; Mongi, 2020).

In this study, HRMP consists of four-dimensional variables: (1) recruitment and selection, (2) training and development, (3) performance appraisal and (4) compensation and benefits. Recruitment and selection involve choosing the most qualified candidate for a job vacancy within an organisation (Vlachos, 2009). Training and development are the strategies and activities that organisations implement to enhance their employees' knowledge, skills and abilities through training and development initiatives (Buckley & Caple, 2009). Performance appraisal encompasses evaluating, decision-making and managing employee performance over a period (Schuler, 1992). Lastly, compensation and benefits include employees' total remuneration, including salaries, bonuses, leave entitlements, rewards, medical insurance, recognition programmes, commissions and intangible benefits, such as flexible work arrangements (Hee & Jing, 2018).

Employees' perception of organisational support refers to how valued and well compensated the employees feel, and their beliefs that the employer is concerned about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Msuya, 2023). The POS based on reciprocity motivates employees to work hard for their organisation's success and has been found to have a positive relationship with HRMP and job satisfaction (Rubel et al., 2020). Most studies examining the link between POS and HRMP variables or between POS and job satisfaction have focussed on private firms in developed countries (Rubel et al., 2020; Winarno et al., 2022). However, there is limited empirical evidence on the variables in developing countries in Africa, particularly in the public sector.

Managers' trustworthiness refers to the qualities a manager must possess to be perceived as trustworthy by subordinates (Ben-Ner & Halldorsson, 2010). Trustworthiness forms the foundation of trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Samuel, 2018). Mayer et al. (1995) identified three critical aspects of trustworthiness: ability, benevolence and integrity. Ability pertains to the skills and knowledge that enable managers to influence in their field. Benevolence describes the extent to which managers prioritise their subordinates' best interests over their self-interest. Integrity refers to how consistently a manager upholds and demonstrates values essential and accepted by the organisation and employees (Mayer et al., 1995; Samuel, 2018). While trustworthiness has been examined as a mediator or moderator variable in various studies (e.g. Ertürk & Albayrak, 2019; Lee et al., 2024; Vanhala & Dietz, 2019), empirical research specifically examining the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness between POS and job satisfaction is limited.

While extensive research has analysed the relationship between HRMP dimensional variables and job satisfaction, most of these studies were conducted in developed countries in Europe, America and Asia, primarily within private organisations (e.g. Badrea et al., 2021; Hauret et al., 2022; Thu et al., 2021). In Africa, a few studies have examined the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction in Kenya (Kithuku, 2012), Ghana (Adom & Asunka, 2020), South Africa (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2021) and Nigeria (Nwachukwu, & Chládková, 2017). In Tanzania particularly, a few studies that examined this relationship have predominantly focussed on just one or two HRMP dimensions (Mongi, 2020; Tarimo & Lymo, 2022). As a result, a limited understanding of how multiple HRMP dimensional variables are related to job satisfaction in the public sector of Tanzania is still unresolved.

Similarly, studies in Africa that examine the mediating effects of POS on the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction remain unpublished. Moreover, research addressing the moderation effects of managers' trustworthiness on the relationship between POS and job satisfaction is also scarce. Only two studies – one in China (Mayes et al., 2016) and another in Thailand (Pungnirund et al., 2020) – had analysed the mediating role of POS within the context of HRMP and job satisfaction in the private sector. However, no empirical studies published in Scopus or Web of Science journals have analysed the mediating role of POS and the moderating role

of managers' trustworthiness within a single research model. Therefore, this current study proposes a unique research model to bridge the literature gap. The conceptual model of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

Hypotheses development

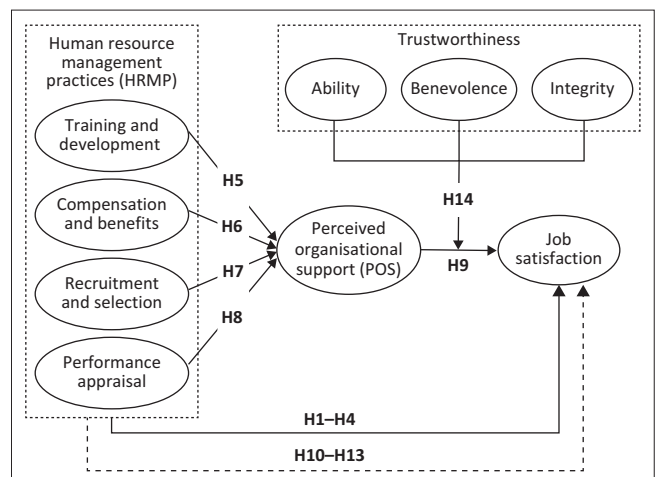
Grounded on social exchange theory, this study hypothesises that employees in public transportation parastatals will experience greater job satisfaction if managers implement appropriate and effective HRMPs that align with employee expectations. In addition, successfully applying these HRMPs will enhance employees' perceptions of POS, further boosting their job satisfaction. Moreover, the trustworthiness of managers will amplify the positive effects of POS on job satisfaction. Consequently, satisfied employees are more likely to work diligently, contributing to individual and parastatal performance.

The direct relationships between human resource management practices and job satisfaction

This study develops four hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 and H4) in response to the first objective. Previous studies have established a strong connection between recruitment and selection practices and job satisfaction (Amarneh & Muthueloo, 2020; Adom & Asunka, 2020). The current study predicts that enhancing overall job satisfaction in parastatals, which have consistently underperformed, will increase employees' productivity and improve organisational performance. One effective strategy to achieve this is to hire individuals who align with the company's values, goals and capabilities, thereby supporting the organisation's objectives (Sinclair et al., 2024). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Recruitment and selection have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Research indicates a positive relationship between training and development and job satisfaction (Mampuru et al., 2024).



Note: Direct paths: H1 to H9; Mediating paths: H10 to H13; Moderating path: H14.

FIGURE 1: Current study's conceptual model.

Training and development opportunities improve employees' skills, knowledge, engagement and confidence in their work, including creativity, teamwork, communication and decision-making. This ultimately results in greater job satisfaction (Amarneh & Muthuveloo, 2020; Thu et al., 2021). Accordingly, we hypothesise that training and development significantly contribute to job satisfaction, leading to the following proposition:

H2: Training and development have a positive impact on job satisfaction.

The effectiveness of the performance appraisal process plays a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction (Elhadi, 2020). Studies have indicated that when employees are involved in establishing work performance standards and assessments, their job satisfaction improves (Ismail et al., 2022). This collaborative approach fosters better communication between management and employees, increasing job satisfaction (Amarneh & Muthuveloo, 2020; Badrea et al., 2021). As such, a performance appraisal system that promotes open communication enhances individual performance and salary increments and boosts employees' job satisfaction in public transportation parastatals in Tanzania. Thus, we propose:

H3: Performance appraisal has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Previous research has identified a positive link between compensation and benefits, and job satisfaction (Ghafoor et al., 2021; Sibanyoni et al., 2024). These studies suggest that when employees feel valued and receive benefits, such as paid time off, flexible work schedules and health insurance, they are more likely to perceive fair compensation, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction (Mayes et al., 2016). This study posits that fair compensation and benefits motivate employees to share their skills and knowledge, and to exert additional effort to achieve personal and organisational goals (Nguyen et al., 2020). Hence, we hypothesise:

H4: Compensation and benefits have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Direct relationships between human resource management practices and perceived organisational support

Four hypotheses (H5, H6, H7 and H8) are developed in response to the second objective. Previous studies indicate that POS increases when employers provide job descriptions and essential information during recruitment (Pungnirund et al., 2020). Furthermore, equitable and uniform staffing processes have been found to enhance POS, mainly when a merit-based system is used to appoint and select suitable employees (Khoreva et al., 2018). This research suggests that effective recruitment and selection practices are crucial for improving POS in Tanzanian public transportation parastatals, as they help to create a favourable impression of the organisation among potential and current employees (Rubel et al., 2020). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Recruitment and selection have a positive relationship with organisational support.

Practical training and development programmes have demonstrated to increase POS when implemented effectively. Such programmes can enhance job performance, productivity and the likelihood of receiving pay raises, promotions and career advancement (Winarno et al., 2022). Research also suggests that when employees are provided with adequate training and development opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge, they feel more supported by their organisations (Kura et al., 2019). Therefore, we hypothesise that:

H6: Training and development have a positive relationship with organisational support.

Previous studies indicate that employees feel valued when they engage in performance assessments with their supervisors, primarily when their performance is evaluated using objective quantitative metrics (Ismail et al., 2022). A fair and transparent performance appraisal process can enhance employees' perceptions of supervisors' support and overall well-being. In addition, performance appraisals promote open communication between managers and employees, improving job knowledge and a stronger sense of organisational support among employees (Uysal, 2019). Based on these insights, we propose the following hypothesis:

H7: Performance appraisal has a positive relationship with organisational support.

The literature indicates a positive relationship between compensation and benefits and POS (Rubel et al., 2020). This relationship is strengthened by implementing performance-based rewards, such as bonuses and salary increases, contributing to employee satisfaction and POS (Winarno et al., 2022). Furthermore, offering comprehensive benefits packages, including health insurance and long-term retirement plans, significantly fosters a positive response from employees towards their organisation (Sealome & Chipunza, 2020). In line with these discoveries, our study anticipates a positive association between these variables, as public sector organisations are expected to provide attractive compensation and benefits packages, including competitive salaries and health insurance. Such packages will likely enhance employees' POS and job satisfaction, improving organisational performance. As such, we propose that:

H8: Compensation and benefits have a positive relationship with organisational support.

The direct relationship between perceived organisational support and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 9 (H9) has been developed in response to the third research objective. Previous research has found a positive correlation between POS and job satisfaction (Maan et al., 2020). When employees feel that their employer values their performance and cares about their well-being, their happiness and satisfaction tend to increase (Mayes et al., 2016; Msuya, 2023). In addition, transparent and regular communication between managers and staff can help

employees feel that their thoughts and opinions are valued, hence improving their job satisfaction (Lukovszki et al., 2021). In summary, if employees in public parastatals think they are treated fairly and with respect, they are likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, we predict that:

H9: Perceived organisational support has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

The mediation effects of perceived organisational support

Four hypotheses (H10, H11, H12 and H13) are developed in response to the fourth objective. Previous studies indicate that POS mediates the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction (Mayes et al., 2016; Pungnirund et al., 2020). Implementing fair recruitment and selection processes and comprehensive induction training for new employees helps them feel valued by the organisation. This enhances their POS and increases job satisfaction (Adom & Asunka, 2020). Furthermore, training and development programmes that improve employees' skills and knowledge are associated with increased perceptions of being valued, respected and supported by the employer, leading to greater job satisfaction (Changare & Mosoma, 2022).

Research also shows that performance appraisal, POS and job satisfaction are interconnected. A transparent and fair performance appraisal process is linked to higher levels of job satisfaction, as employees develop confidence in the support provided by the company (Pungnirund et al., 2020). Similarly, equitable compensation packages – comprising monetary and non-monetary benefits – reflect an appreciation for employees' well-being and hard work, enhancing job satisfaction (Ghafoor et al., 2021). Based on the above-stated assertions, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H10: Perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between recruitment and selection and job satisfaction.

H11: Perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between training and development and job satisfaction.

H12: Perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between performance appraisal and job satisfaction.

H13: Perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between compensation and benefits and job satisfaction.

The moderation effects of managers' trustworthiness

Hypothesis 14 (H14) is developed in response to the fifth research objective. A study conducted in the United States by Ko and Hur (2014) found that management trustworthiness moderates the effect of procedural justice on employees' job satisfaction. Research shows that managers' trustworthiness plays a crucial role in enhancing the positive outcomes of various managerial initiatives, including HRMP (Vanhala & Dietz, 2019), organisational fairness (Humayun & Siddiqui, 2023) and employee empowerment (Ertürk & Albayrak, 2019). Furthermore, managers' trustworthiness moderates the relationship between employees' motivation and job

satisfaction (Cho & Perry, 2009). According to social exchange theory, employees exhibit positive job attitudes and behaviours in response to the organisation's favourable actions, support and kindness (Ertürk & Albayrak, 2019; Rubel et al., 2018). In addition, by fostering positive relationships, managers' trustworthiness can enhance the quality of reciprocal social exchange between them and their employees, evaluating job satisfaction levels (Rubel et al., 2018, 2020). Thus, a manager's trustworthiness plays a critical moderating role in this context. Based on these arguments, we propose the following hypothesis:

H14: Managers' trustworthiness moderates the relationship between perceived organisational support and job satisfaction such that the relationship is stronger when managers' trustworthiness is high.

Methods

Research design and approach

The study used a quantitative research design through a cross-sectional survey approach.

Research participants

This study projects that managers' trustworthiness influences the relationship between POS and job satisfaction (refer to H14). To test this hypothesis, the study focussed solely on non-managerial employees in six underperforming public transportation parastatals. Including managerial employees could distort the results, as their views on HRMPs differ from those of non-managerial employees. Hence, the differences in treatment could lead to varying perceptions of POS.

The selected parastatals are located throughout all regions of Tanzania and are categorised into six zones: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central and Lake Zones. One region was selected from each zone based on shared characteristics. Samples were drawn proportionally from the selected parastatals in each selected region, reflecting the number of employees in those areas. This approach ensures that the sample accurately represents the workforce of Tanzania's public transportation parastatals.

Research procedure and the survey fieldwork

We used Yamane's (1967) formulation to determine the ideal sample size of 365 respondents with a 5% margin of error. We used a buffer of 20% to account for potential non-responses, resulting in 438 distributed questionnaires (Goodluck, 2009). A simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents from each selected parastatal. Data were collected using close-ended questionnaires and a drop-off pick-up method to maximise the response rate. Data collection took place from 15 January 2024 to 30 May 2024. Three facilitators were trained to assist in the data collection process. Out of the 438 distributed questionnaires, 52 (12%) were not returned, and 14 (3%) were excluded from the dataset because of missing values exceeding 15% (Hair et al., 2017). Consequently, 372 questionnaires (85%) were included in the analysis.

Measuring instruments

The study adapted items with higher reliability scores from previous research to measure the variables of interest. The scales met the minimum reliability threshold of 0.7, as recommended (Hair et al., 2017). We assessed recruitment and selection using four items from Matookchund and Steyn (2019), Hee and Jing (2018) and Otoo (2018). A sample item from this scale is 'Standardised, and valid tests are used in the selection process'. Training and development were evaluated through five items adapted from Salas-Vallina et al. (2021), with a sample item being, 'This organisation is committed to providing training programmes and development opportunities'. We measured performance appraisal using four items adapted from Otoo (2018), with a sample item being: 'Employees are informed of the organisation's performance appraisal criteria'. We assessed compensation and benefits using four items from Matookchund and Steyn (2019) and Hee and Jing (2018). We measured POS using an 8-item scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1997), with a sample item being, 'My organisation cares about my well-being'.

Finally, we measured trustworthiness as a higher-order construct (HOC) using a 17-item scale developed by Mayer and Davis (1999), which consists of three facets: ability, benevolence and integrity. Sample items include, 'My manager is capable of performing his or her job' (Ability), 'My manager is concerned about employees' job welfare' (Benevolence) and 'My manager has a good sense of justice' (Integrity). Job satisfaction was assessed using the Short Index of Job Satisfaction (SIJS) developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951), with an example item being, 'I feel fairly satisfied with my present job'.

The questionnaire was in English. We requested three experts to examine all items to ascertain the content validity of the measures. This was followed by a reliability check in a pilot study. All items scored a reliability loading score of 0.7 and above (Hair et al., 2017); therefore, no items were deleted. The items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Statistical analysis

We utilised partial least squares-structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 4 to analyse the relationship between variables. Trustworthiness was assessed as a reflective-reflective HOC. We employed a two-stage approach to estimate this study's measurement and structural models (Becker et al., 2023). A statistical method was applied to ensure our data did not suffer from common method bias (CMB) issues. Following the guidelines provided by Kock (2015), we conducted a full collinearity test to check for CMB in our PLS-SEM analysis. Our findings revealed that all variables exhibited a variance inflation factor (VIF) score of less than 3.3, indicating no CMB issues in this study (Kock, 2015).

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval to conduct this study was obtained from Tunku Abdul Rahman University, the UTAR Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (No. U/SERC/250/2023).

In addition, the researchers secured approval letters from the management of the parastatals surveyed before data collection. The respondents were informed of the study's objectives through a cover letter attached to the questionnaires, which also requested their consent to participate. We obtained consent from all participants. To minimise participants' anxiety, we ensured their anonymity. The questionnaires were distributed and collected at the respondents' workplaces, following the schedule confirmed by the HR departments' representatives during working hours.

Results

Respondents' demographic profile

The analysis of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 (IBM Corporation, 2017. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows. Armonk, New York, United States) reveals that 209 (56.2%) respondents are men, while 163 (43.8%) are women. In addition, the data showed that respondents aged between 18 years and 35 years constitute the largest portion of respondents (193), accounting for 51.9%. This trend is expected, as many young people in this age group are completing their post-secondary education and preparing to enter the labour market. Table 1 summarises the demographic information of the respondents.

Measurement model results

The study employed the PLS algorithm to estimate the measurement model, utilising a disjoint two-stage approach to calculate a HOC, specifically trustworthiness. The latent variable scores from the first-order constructs served as the indicators for the second-order construct (trustworthiness). Initially, the validity and reliability of the first-order constructs of trustworthiness (ability, benevolence and

TABLE 1: Respondents' demographic profile ($N = 372$).

Demographic information	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	209	56.2
Female	163	43.8
Age (years)		
18–35	193	51.9
36–45	106	28.5
46–55	48	12.9
56 and above	25	6.7
Marital status		
Married	197	53.0
Unmarried or single	167	44.8
Widow or widower	08	2.2
Work experience (years)		
1–5	171	46.0
More than 5	201	54.0
Education		
Primary education	04	1.1
Secondary education	18	4.8
Certificate or Diploma	118	31.7
Bachelor's degree	191	51.3
Master's degree	40	10.8
Doctorate degree	001	00.3

integrity), along with other non-hierarchical variables, were assessed. Followed by an evaluation of the second-order construct. The results are summarised in Table 2.

As indicated in Table 2, the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (rho_a) scores for all constructs exceed the threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2017), demonstrating good reliability. Furthermore, average variance extracted (AVE) scores of all the constructs surpassed the threshold score of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019), indicating strong convergent validity.

The discriminant validity of the key constructs in this study was evaluated by examining the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) scores. As shown in Table 3, all constructs achieved HTMT scores below the required threshold of 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001), indicating no issues with discriminant validity in the current study.

Structural model results

The structural model was estimated using a bootstrapping approach with a minimum of 10000 re-samples, as recommended by Becker et al. (2023). The results are presented in Table 4.

Direct relationship results

Table 4 reveals that only one HRMP variable (recruitment and selection) is not significantly related to job satisfaction at a probability value of 0.05 ($\beta = -0.012$; t -value = 0.314), indicating that H1 is not supported. In contrast, the remaining three HRMP variables are significantly related to job satisfaction at a probability value of 0.05 (TD \rightarrow JS: $\beta = 0.192$, t -value = 4.612, PA \rightarrow JS: $\beta = 0.121$, t -value = 2.476 and CB \rightarrow JS: $\beta = 0.120$, t -value = 3.377), thereby supporting hypotheses H2, H3 and H4.

In addition, all HRPM variables are significantly related to POS at a probability value of 0.05 (RS \rightarrow POS: $\beta = 0.285$, t -value = 2.30; TD \rightarrow POS: $\beta = 0.121$, t -value = 2.839; PA \rightarrow POS: $\beta = 0.469$, t -value = 9.042 and CB \rightarrow POS: $\beta = 0.102$, t -value = 2.746), supporting hypotheses H5, H6, H7 and H8. Among these HR practices, performance appraisal appears to be the most essential element in shaping POS among the employees in the present study. Perceived organisational support and job satisfaction are also significantly related ($\beta = 0.207$, t -value = 4.481), thus supporting H9.

Mediation results

Table 4 shows no significant direct relationship between recruitment and selection dimension and job satisfaction. However, POS mediates this relationship with a probability value of 0.05 (RS \rightarrow POS \rightarrow JS: $\beta = 0.059$, t -value = 3.717), indicating full mediation. Therefore, the findings support H10. This clearly shows that as recruitment and selection practices do not directly influence job satisfaction, POS serves as an essential mechanism for conveying their impact on job satisfaction.

TABLE 2: Factor loadings, composite reliability and convergent validity results.

Variable	Item code	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	AVE
Recruitment and selection	RS1	0.894	0.915	0.915	0.797
	RS2	0.896	-	-	-
	RS3	0.896	-	-	-
	RS4	0.884	-	-	-
Performance appraisal	PA1	0.889	0.901	0.901	0.770
	PA2	0.879	-	-	-
	PA3	0.889	-	-	-
	PA4	0.853	-	-	-
Training and development	TD1	0.762	0.827	0.830	0.590
	TD2	0.780	-	-	-
	TD3	0.786	-	-	-
	TD4	0.752	-	-	-
	TD5	0.760	-	-	-
Compensations and benefits	CB1	0.728	0.728	0.735	0.549
	CB2	0.716	-	-	-
	CB3	0.770	-	-	-
	CB4	0.747	-	-	-
Perceived organisational support	POS1	0.841	0.934	0.935	0.685
	POS2	0.828	-	-	-
	POS3	0.814	-	-	-
	POS4	0.848	-	-	-
	POS5	0.836	-	-	-
	POS6	0.828	-	-	-
	POS7	0.810	-	-	-
	POS8	0.816	-	-	-
Job satisfaction	JS1	0.865	0.919	0.920	0.756
	JS2	0.858	-	-	-
	JS3	0.880	-	-	-
	JS4	0.869	-	-	-
	JS5	0.875	-	-	-
Ability	ABL1	0.857	0.934	0.934	0.751
	ABL2	0.871	-	-	-
	ABL3	0.883	-	-	-
	ABL4	0.881	-	-	-
	ABL5	0.860	-	-	-
	ABL6	0.846	-	-	-
Benevolence	BEN1	0.852	0.902	0.905	0.773
	BEN2	0.886	-	-	-
	BEN3	0.898	-	-	-
	BEN4	0.881	-	-	-
Integrity	INT1	0.844	0.922	0.922	0.720
	INT2	0.857	-	-	-
	INT3	0.862	-	-	-
	INT4	0.843	-	-	-
	INT5	0.852	-	-	-
	INT6	0.833	-	-	-
Trustworthiness (Second order)	Ability	0.911	0.890	0.892	0.819
	Benevolence	0.897	-	-	-
	Integrity	0.906	-	-	-

AVE, average variance extracted.

In addition, POS mediates the relationship between three other dimensions of HRMP – training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits – and job satisfaction. Specifically, the mediating effects are as follows: training and development (TD \rightarrow POS \rightarrow JS: $\beta = 0.025$, t -value = 2.286), performance appraisal

(PA→POS→JS: $\beta = 0.097$, t -value = 4.151) and compensation and benefits (CB→POS→JS: $\beta = 0.021$, t -value = 2.321), thus supporting hypotheses H11, H12 and H13. The direct and indirect effects are significant, indicating that POS partially mediates the relationship between these dimensional variables and job satisfaction (Hair et al., 2017; Nitzl et al., 2016). This implies that POS plays a valuable role in enhancing the impact of training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits on job satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings suggested that POS is a complementary tool for enlightening the connection between training and development and job satisfaction.

Moderation results

The bootstrapping results indicate that H14 is supported as trustworthiness significantly moderates the relationship between POS and employee job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.036$; $p < 0.05$; t -value = 1.753). Before introducing the moderator (trustworthiness), the R -square value was 0.654. After including the moderator, the R -square value increased to 0.738, suggesting that the interaction contributes an additional 8.4% increase in job satisfaction.

We conducted a simple slope analysis to understand the nature of this significant moderating effect (refer to Figure 2).

TABLE 3: Discriminant validity results for the key constructs.

Variable Code	RS	PA	TD	CB	POS	TRT	JS
RS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PA	0.703	-	-	-	-	-	-
TD	0.442	0.474	-	-	-	-	-
CB	0.392	0.449	0.689	-	-	-	-
POS	0.718	0.804	0.542	0.515	-	-	-
TRT	0.598	0.713	0.588	0.518	0.744	-	-
JS	0.591	0.716	0.714	0.648	0.769	0.863	-

RS, recruitment and selection; TD, training and development; PA, performance appraisal; CB, compensation and benefits; POS, perceived organisational support; JS, job satisfaction; TRT, trustworthiness.

TABLE 4: Structural relationship result.

Hypothesis	Path	β	p	CI	t	Decision
Direct relationship results						
H1	RS→JS	-0.012	0.377	-0.077; 0.050	0.314	Not supported
H2	TD→JS	0.192	0.000	0.123; 0.261	4.612	Supported
H3	PA→JS	0.121	0.007	0.042; 0.201	2.476	Supported
H4	CB→JS	0.120	0.000	0.061; 0.178	3.377	Supported
H5	RS→POS	0.285	0.000	0.222; 0.349	7.508	Supported
H6	TD→POS	0.121	0.002	0.051; 0.191	2.839	Supported
H7	PA→POS	0.469	0.000	0.379; 0.550	9.042	Supported
H8	CB→POS	0.102	0.003	0.045; 0.166	2.746	Supported
H9	POS→JS	0.207	0.000	0.130; 0.281	4.481	Supported
Mediation results						
H10	RS→POS→JS	0.059	0.000	0.034; 0.086	3.717	Supported
H11	TD→POS→JS	0.025	0.011	0.009; 0.044	2.286	Supported
H12	PA→POS→JS	0.097	0.000	0.058; 0.136	4.151	Supported
H13	CB→POS→JS	0.021	0.010	0.008; 0.037	2.321	Supported
Moderation results						
H14	TRT x POS→JS	0.036	0.040	0.003; 0.070	1.753	Supported

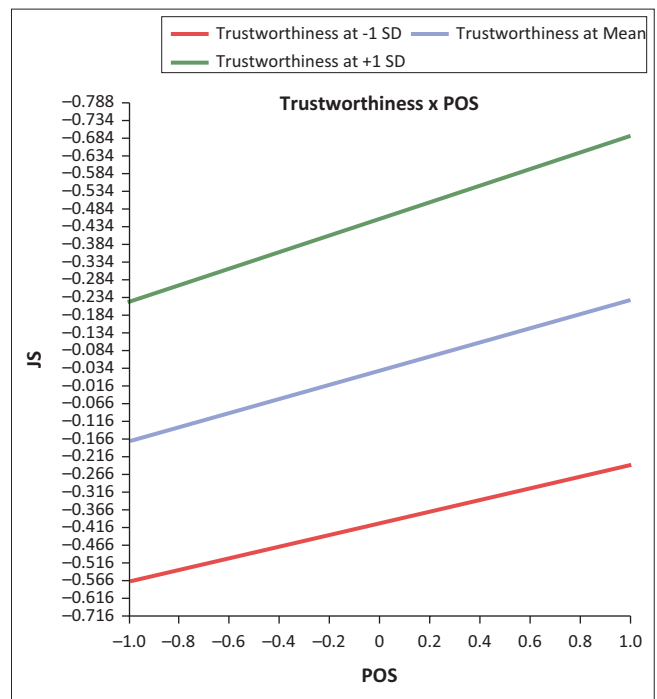
Note: β = path coefficient.

RS, recruitment and selection; TD, training and development; PA, performance appraisal; CB, compensation and benefits; POS, perceived organisational support; TRT, trustworthiness; JS, job satisfaction; CI, confidence interval.

The green line in the analysis is slightly steeper than the red line, indicating that increased managers' trustworthiness strengthens the positive relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Conversely, low levels of managers' trustworthiness weaken the relationship between POS and job satisfaction.

Discussion

We developed hypotheses H1, H2, H3 and H4 to address our first research objective. The results for H1 suggest that recruitment and selection processes do not have a direct correlation with job satisfaction among employees in



POS, perceived organisational support; JS, job satisfaction; SD, standard deviation.

FIGURE 2: Simple slope analysis of the moderation results.

Tanzanian public transportation parastatals, indicating that this hypothesis is unsupported. These findings contradict previous empirical studies conducted in Jordan (Amarneh & Muthuveloo, 2020) and Ghana (Adom & Asunka, 2020). However, our current results align with studies conducted by Kisumbe (2019) in Tanzania and Bharadwaj (2015) in India. The differences in outcomes among these studies may arise from the fact that not all employee respondents were chosen through fair, open and equitable recruitment and selection procedures. This likely negatively affected the job satisfaction of some respondents (Kisumbe, 2019). The variation in experiences among respondents contributed to the absence of a significant relationship between recruitment and selection processes and job satisfaction in this context.

Previous research suggests that the importance of recruitment and selection processes decreases as employees gain more work experience. Factors such as job autonomy, role clarity, psychological well-being and opportunities for career advancement become more influential in determining job satisfaction (Kooij et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2000, 2007). In this study, the lack of a significant direct relationship between recruitment and selection, and job satisfaction may be attributed to the demographics of the respondents. Notably, 201 employees (56%) have over 5 years of work experience, which could make them less concerned about the recruitment and selection processes.

Support for H2 aligns with the principles of social exchange theory. Employee job satisfaction in public transportation parastatals is expected to improve when employers offer training and development programmes that effectively enhance skills and knowledge. This improvement boosts confidence, engagement and productivity in work-related tasks (Cherif, 2020; Mampuru et al., 2024; Thu et al., 2021). Such positive outcomes lead to greater job satisfaction, consistent with findings from a previous study by Badrea et al. (2021).

Support for H3 aligns with the principle of reciprocity (Blau, 1964). Employee job satisfaction in public transportation parastatals will likely increase when workers view the organisation's performance evaluation criteria as fair (Ismail et al., 2022). This type of appraisal system helps employees better understand the organisation's performance evaluation standards and fosters open communication between employers and employees about setting and assessing performance targets.

Support for H4 aligns with a study by Hee and Jing (2018) conducted in Malaysia. The findings indicate that employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction when they receive fair and equitable salaries and benefits that meet industry standards and adequately fulfil their basic needs. In addition, employees expect their efforts to be recognised, which should be reflected in their compensation and benefits packages.

Table 4 supports all hypotheses concerning the relationship between each HRMP dimensional variable and POS, specifically related to the second research objective (H5 to H8). The results for H5 indicate that employees reciprocate the efforts of parastatals to implement effective recruitment and selection practices by developing a positive perception of POS, as noted by Pungnirund et al. (2020). Employees expect their employers to follow a standardised process for shortlisting candidates, selecting employees based on merit and providing job descriptions and induction programmes for newly hired staff.

The significant relationship identified in H6 between training and development and POS indicates that respondents view their organisations as supportive and caring when training and development programmes enhance their knowledge and practical skills. Employees are more likely to feel valued and supported if parastatals create training and development programmes based on a thorough training needs analysis and performance appraisal results that align with both the employees' expectations and those of the parastatals. According to the principle of reciprocity, when employees perceive that training and development programmes have improved their knowledge and skills, they tend to experience higher levels of POS. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Pohl et al. (2017) and Winarno et al. (2022).

The support for H7 suggests that employees want to discuss their work performance appraisals with the company representative and receive constructive feedback and guidance for improvement. As Uysal (2019) noted, this could enhance employees' perceptions of POS. Meanwhile, support for H8 aligns with studies by Rubel et al. (2020) and Sealome and Chipunza (2020). The results show that employees appreciate compensation and benefits that fairly and equitably reward their time and efforts, consistent with industry pay scales; ultimately, this leads them to view their organisation as supportive.

Under the third research objective, H9 was tested and confirmed. This hypothesis indicates that when employees perceive that their organisation values their opinions and well-being, their job satisfaction increases. These reciprocal reactions support the principles of social exchange theory and align with the findings of Lukovszki et al. (2021) and Maan et al. (2020).

The fourth research objective seeks to evaluate the mediating role of POS between the four dimensions of HRMPs and job satisfaction. Hypotheses H10, H11, H12 and H13 were tested and affirmed. The support for H10 suggests that POS fully mediates the relationship between recruitment and selection and job satisfaction. The findings indicate that the effect of recruitment and selection on job satisfaction is not direct; instead, it is mainly transmitted through POS. Perceived organisational support is crucial as it nurtures an emotional bond between employees and the organisation. Given the bureaucratic nature of parastatals, which involves adhering

to standardised and rigid processes, recruitment and selection do not directly enhance job satisfaction unless employees perceive ongoing support that enriches their experience within the organisation. Therefore, parastatals must prioritise fostering POS to ensure that their recruitment and selection efforts lead to long-term employees' satisfaction.

However, these findings contradict those of Pungnirund et al. (2020) in Thailand, which indicated that POS partially mediated the relationship between recruitment and selection practices and job satisfaction, with both direct and indirect relationships being significant. In the current study, POS serves as the primary channel through which recruitment and selection influence job satisfaction, while in Pungnirund et al.'s (2020) research, POS played a supplementary role.

Conversely, the supporting hypotheses (H11, H12 and H13) and the direct effects of other HRMP variables – such as training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits – indicate a partial mediating effect of POS on job satisfaction. This suggests that job satisfaction is influenced both directly by these HRMP variables and indirectly by POS. Employees view their organisations as supportive when parastatals invest in their professional growth, aligning with the findings of Pohl et al. (2017). Consequently, this investment significantly boosts job satisfaction among employees. Moreover, a well-structured performance appraisal system that promotes open communication during the evaluation process nurtures positive perceptions of POS, which enhances job satisfaction, consistent with the findings of Mayes et al. (2016). Finally, when parastatal employees believe they are compensated fairly and adequately, they regard their organisations as supportive. As a result, their job satisfaction rises, reflecting the reciprocity principle in social exchange theory and previous studies by Pungnirund et al. (2020).

Finally, concerning the fifth research objective, we tested H14. The results indicated that trustworthiness has a moderating effect on the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Specifically, there was an 8.4% increase in job satisfaction (R^2 change) after introducing trustworthiness as a moderator. This increase underscores the importance of managers' trustworthiness in enhancing the positive effects of POS on employees' job satisfaction. From the perspective of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), trustworthiness increases individuals' willingness to reciprocate the favourable treatment they receive from the organisation. In the context of Tanzanian parastatals, our study suggests that employees are more likely to perceive organisational support as genuine when the manager is viewed as trustworthy. The significant moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in our study aligns with the findings of a related study by Ko and Hur (2014).

Policy and managerial implications

The implications section outlines the practical and theoretical consequences of the study's findings. It suggests actionable

strategies for policymakers to implement HRMP more effectively. The current study's findings indicate that HRMP variables – specifically training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits – positively correlate with employee job satisfaction in Tanzania's public transportation parastatals. These insights can be valuable for policymakers and the management of these essential public institutions as they seek to improve business performance. Therefore, enhancing policies and strategies for the effective implementation of HRMP can significantly improve job satisfaction, leading to a more motivated workforce that is likely to work diligently and improve overall performance within these parastatals. The following paragraph outlines strategies to improve these practices.

To enhance training and development, management in parastatals should frequently organise and offer high quality, tailored training and learning programmes based on feedback from performance appraisals and training needs assessments. These programmes can be conducted through in-person classes or online platforms closely monitored by human resources departments. Such initiatives will help employees refine their skills and knowledge to meet job requirements and advance their careers, thereby increasing both job satisfaction and productivity. In addition, emphasising mentorship and coaching can allow employees to learn from experienced mentors and coaches, enhancing their skills and knowledge crucial for improving individual and organisational performance.

To improve performance appraisal practices, the management of parastatals can implement several strategies. Firstly, they should clearly define and communicate the main objective of the performance appraisal process. Sharing information with employees through memos or staff meetings will help them understand the purposes of the appraisal (such as for promotion), enabling them to prepare accordingly and making the process more meaningful and engaging. Secondly, it is crucial to establish transparent and fair performance criteria. This can be achieved by setting key performance indicators that are clear and measurable evaluation methods accepted by managers and subordinates. These performance targets must be clearly defined and aligned with individual and organisational goals. Thirdly, fostering a culture of continuous performance improvement is essential. This can be facilitated by increasing the frequency of performance feedback to employees, ideally weekly, monthly or quarterly, rather than solely relying on mid-year or annual performance reviews. Regular, constructive feedback will help employees take timely corrective actions and enhance their satisfaction and productivity.

Regarding compensation and benefits, parastatals are encouraged to offer competitive salary and benefits packages that adequately compensate employees' efforts and contributions. This can be accomplished by conducting an internal compensation audit to assess the alignment between salary packages, employee contributions and living costs. Furthermore, implementing performance-based bonuses,

promotions and recognition can significantly increase employees' satisfaction, fostering a high-performance culture. Finally, parastatals should invest more in providing non-monetary benefits such as health insurance, fitness services such as counselling, flexible work hours, letters of appreciation, paid holidays, gifts and public recognition for top performers, which can help elevate employees' job satisfaction.

Improving employees' POS is also crucial, as this variable mediates the relationship between all four HRMP dimensional variables and job satisfaction. Enhancing training and development, performance appraisal and compensation and benefits can increase POS. In addition, managers should cultivate an inclusive organisational culture that promotes open communication, making employees feel valued and supported by the parastatals. This can involve offering training on equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), promoting open dialogues and debates on various issues linked to EDI, launching channels for anonymous feedback such as suggestion boxes and call centres and providing well-being services such as counselling, stress management training and fitness programmes.

Finally, beyond strengthening the positive effect of POS on job satisfaction, managers' trustworthiness is critical in the public transportation parastatals in Tanzania, as it can yield additional benefits from implementing various managerial practices such as HRMP by trustworthy managers. These benefits include employee engagement (Liu et al., 2022), decreasing employee turnover (Ren et al., 2024), cultivating organisational citizenship behaviour (Krosgaard et al., 2022) and improving team performance (Rego et al., 2013). Therefore, as these public institutions strive to improve their performance, promoting managers' trustworthiness is imperative. Managers can bolster their trustworthiness by engaging in continuous training and learning initiatives to develop their skills and knowledge. This improvement is vital for enhancing their abilities, which are essential aspects of trustworthiness. Communication with subordinates should also be prioritised to emphasise work-life balance and encourage empathy. In addition, managers can foster trustworthiness through integrity by increasing transparency in their actions and decisions, keeping promises and serving as role models for employees.

Theoretical implications

This study thoroughly examined the direct relationships between four HRMP dimensional variables and job satisfaction and analysed how POS mediates the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction. In addition, this study examined how managers' trustworthiness moderates the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Consequently, this research is the first empirical study to analyse such multiple relationships within a single research model. The findings yield a novel and reliable conceptual framework that enhances our understanding of the complex interrelationships among HRMP variables, POS, trustworthiness and job satisfaction through the lens of social exchange theory.

Previous research has primarily focussed on the private sector when analysing the mediating role of POS between HRMP variables and job satisfaction. However, this mediation effect has not been adequately discussed in the public sector, particularly in developing countries. As a result, the indirect relationship identified in this study expands the existing body of knowledge in the HRMP and job satisfaction literature. Moreover, the findings bridge a gap in the literature by analysing the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. While Ko and Hur (2014) assessed the moderation effect of trustworthiness in the relationship between procedural justice and job satisfaction—suggesting that procedural justice is similar to POS—it is essential to recognise that these constructs differ and are measured using distinct items. Therefore, this study contributes to the organisational behaviour literature by examining the role of managers' trustworthiness as a moderator in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction.

Lastly, the non-significant relationship between one HRMP variable (recruitment and selection) and job satisfaction highlights caution when selecting employee respondents. In this study, 56% of the respondents had over 5 years of work experience and no longer viewed recruitment and selection practices as significant influences on their job satisfaction. Future researchers should consider less experienced employees to examine the relationship between recruitment and selection practices and job satisfaction.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

The study utilises cross-sectional data to examine the relationships among HRMP variables, POS, managers' trustworthiness and job satisfaction. It is recommended that future research adopt a longitudinal approach, as external factors – such as political, economic, technological and social changes – can influence employee behaviour over time. In addition, this study examines public transportation parastatals in Tanzania, which may present challenges in generalising the results because of the study's limited scope. Nonetheless, future researchers are encouraged to apply the conceptual frameworks from this study when examining other public and private organisations in different industries and contexts. Finally, this study considers managers' trustworthiness as a HOC comprising ability, benevolence and integrity. Future studies should examine these elements as separate and independent factors to better understand the moderating effect of managers' trustworthiness. Such an approach would allow policymakers to design specific strategies tailored to each dimension.

Conclusion

Despite extensive research on the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction, limited empirical studies examined the mediating effect of POS, particularly in public organisations. In addition, research analysing the moderating

role of managers' trustworthiness between POS and job satisfaction has not yet been published. To our knowledge, the current study is the first to examine the mediating role of POS in the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction while also assessing the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. As a result, the findings of this study contribute to the literature by providing a unique and novel conceptual framework that enhances the understanding of the complex interrelationships between HRMP, POS, managers' trustworthiness and job satisfaction. Moreover, these findings address an existing literature gap by confirming the mediating role of POS in the relationship between HRMP and job satisfaction within the context of public transportation parastatals in Tanzania.

Furthermore, we established the moderating role of managers' trustworthiness in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction, enriching the literature on organisational behaviour. In light of these findings, policymakers and management within the public transportation sector should prioritise improvements in HRMP while fostering POS and enhancing managers' trustworthiness. This focus is crucial for improving the performance of individuals and parastatals. In addition, future researchers could replicate this study's conceptual framework by collecting longitudinal data to gain deeper insights into how these complex interrelationships evolve in a broader context.

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Competing interests

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Authors' contributions

E.D.B. contributed to the article's conceptualisation, data collection, processing and analysis and first draft writing. Y.-L.C. is the main supervisor, while L.P.N. is the co-supervisor. They both were involved in this article and contributed massively to every step of this research, including conceptualisation, data analysis, reviewing and editing of the manuscript. In addition, Y.-L.C. was in charge of the research and handled all administrative work.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, Y.-L.C., upon reasonable request.

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