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Relationship between Perceived Organizational support, Career Success, Employee Engagement and Organizational Competitive Advantage: An Empirical Evidence from Banking Sector

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Abstract
The study examined the relationships among perceived organizational support; perceived career success, employee engagement, and organizational competitive advantage by assessing role of employee engagement as mediator .Data were collected from 249 employees working in three selected banks through a structured questionnaire. A convenience sampling technique was employed for participant selection. The findings demonstrated that both perceived organizational support and perceived career success have a positive influence on employee engagement within financial institutions. Furthermore, positive employee engagement was found to contribute significantly to organizational competitive advantage. The study provides important practical implications for senior management by emphasizing the need to strengthen organizational support and facilitate employees' perceptions of career success as strategies for improving employee engagement and achieving sustained organizational competitive advantage through employee engagement.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, career success, employee engagement, organizational competitive advantage

Introduction

"The integration of Psychological contract theory and organization support theory contribute more towards employer-employee relationship. presence of Perceived organizational support assist to overcome psychological strains by generating perception that organization would provide tangible and socioeconomically aid when needed and employee willingness increases to accept imposed contract change by organization (Justin & Robert 2003) as "POS is valued as assurance that aid will be available from organization when it is needed to carry out one's job effectively and to deal with stress full situation"(George, 1993) and plays important role in linking HR practices with work outcomes and positively influence variety of work outcomes (Liu, 2004).

In addition to conventional indicators of career success, factors such as significant responsibility, a respected profession, and perceived future earnings potential may also influence employees' career satisfaction. Research on career selection factors found that responsibility and perceived future earnings potential were positively associated with career satisfaction, while the perceived importance of having a respected profession also influenced career-related evaluations (Knemeyer & Murphy, 2004). Therefore, when managers design organizational career paths, they should consider employees' individual career expectations and satisfaction factors, including opportunities for responsibility, professional recognition, leadership, career advancement, and future earning potential. Such career-management practices can strengthen employees' perceptions of career success and satisfaction. This perspective is also supported by research showing that organizational career management is positively associated with career satisfaction and subjective career success (Guan et al., 2015; Singh, 2018).

As a descriptive and empirical study, the purpose is to determine the relationship among perceived organization support, career success, Employee engagement and organizational competitive advantage .Questions addressed in study are,

What is the effect of POS and career support on employee engagement?

What the effect of employee engagement on organization competitive advantage?

How employee engagement transfer the effect of POS and career support on competitive advantage?

Literature Review

Perceived Organization Support:

Perceived organizational support (POS) captures employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al, 2002). POS positively contributes to higher levels of job involvement, which is an important element of lean production, while both POS and job engagement can reduce employees' turnover intentions (Dharmasri & Vathsala, 2010). Similarly, a strong positive relationship exists between POS and overall job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al, 1995). More recently, Maan et al. (2020), based on data from 936 employees, found that perceived organizational support positively influences job satisfaction and psychological empowerment. Their

findings further indicated that psychological empowerment serves as an important mechanism through which organizational support contributes to employees' job satisfaction.

Career Success:
Contemporary career theories explain career success in a broader sense by emphasizing concepts such as self-direction, flexibility, adaptability, whole-life context, and personal meaning (Mahler, 2008). Achieving career success also requires individuals to recognize their own talents and skills, seek guidance and mentorship, remain committed to their career goals, and maintain their personal well-being (Gerson, 2007). Supporting this contemporary perspective, Haenggli et al. (2021) found that individuals' protean career orientation, which emphasizes self-directed career development and personal responsibility for shaping one's career, is associated with career self-management and subjective career success. Their findings highlight that contemporary career success increasingly depends on individuals' active involvement in managing and shaping their own career paths rather than relying solely on traditional indicators such as salary and promotion.

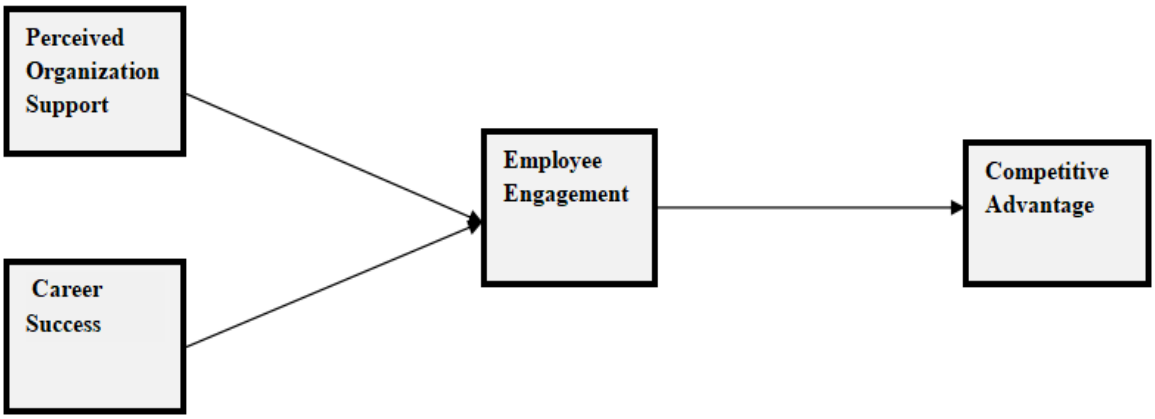
Employee Engagement
"Employee engagement is the extent to which employees are physically, cognitively, and emotionally invested in their work and demonstrate enthusiasm, dedication, and active involvement in achieving organizational goals" (Rich et al., 2010). Engaged employees develop a strong emotional attachment to their organization and are willing to exert additional effort to contribute to organizational success beyond their formal job responsibilities. Employee engagement is significantly associated with positive organizational performance outcomes and can contribute to employee retention, higher productivity, and improved organizational profitability. Supporting this perspective, Schneider et al. (2018) found that workforce engagement significantly predicted organizational financial and customer-related outcomes, demonstrating its importance for overall organizational performance. Similarly, Borst et al. (2019) found that work engagement was positively associated with employee performance and other important organizational outcomes across public, semi-public, and private-sector organizations. These findings suggest that fostering employee engagement can be an important strategy for improving both employee-related and organizational outcomes.

Organizational Competitive advantage:
Historically, organizational competitive advantage was viewed primarily as a matter of market position, where firms occupied a competitive space and developed and defended their market share. Organizational competitive advantage was therefore associated with where a business was located and the markets in which it chose to provide its services (Duncan et al., 1998). However, organizations can also achieve organizational competitive advantage through their people. To accomplish this, executives need to play an effective role in the "war for talent," while HR professionals must contribute to effective HR strategy formulation and implementation. Executives can create competitive value through changes in strategic resources, employee value, and the role of senior management. Similarly, HR professionals can contribute through activities involving the development of challenges, task linkages, and organizational bonding processes. An accumulation-oriented HR strategy improves organizational performance and organizational competitive advantage while reducing employee turnover (Christopher et al., 2002; Mehmood et al. 2023). Supporting this perspective, Delery and Roumpi, (2017) argued that strategic HRM can contribute to sustainable organizational competitive advantage by enhancing employees' abilities, motivation, and opportunities while strategically managing employee mobility. More recently, Battour et al. (2021) found a positive and direct relationship between HRM strategies and sustainable competitive advantage, with strategic agility further strengthening this relationship. These findings highlight that effectively managing human resources and strategically aligning HR practices with organizational objectives can become an important source of sustainable competitive advantage.

Theoretical Frame work
Effect of Perceived organizational support and career success on employee engagement
Perceived organizational support and career success are important factors that can strengthen employee engagement by creating a supportive work environment and providing employees with opportunities for professional growth and achievement. Research has shown that perceived organizational support is positively associated with employee engagement, as employees who feel valued and supported are more likely to invest greater effort in their work (Jin & McDonald, 2017). When employees perceive work environment is safe both emotionally and physically, they become more engaged for organization well-being as POS proved as an antecedent of employee engagement (patipan et al , 2012)

Effect of employee engagement on organizational Competitive advantage:
In today competitive market place, employee engagement is considered critical factor for business success, not only it has potential to increase employee loyalty, retention and productivity but also play effective role for customer satisfaction. Leveraging engagement through designing, measuring and evaluating policies and practices for work place, to attract and retain employees which are requirement of organization for organizational competitive advantage (Nancy , 2007). Employee engagement plays an important role in developing organizational competitive advantage because engaged employees are more committed, energetic, and willing to contribute beyond their formal job responsibilities. In service-oriented organizations such as banks, engaged employees can improve service quality, customer satisfaction, innovation, and organizational performance, thereby strengthening the organization's competitive position. Bhasin et al. (2019) highlighted that employee engagement is essential for achieving competitive advantage, particularly in the service sector where employees play a critical role in delivering value to customers.

Figure 1 showing theoretical Model of the study :



Research Hypotheses:

Hypothesis of the research study are as follows:

H1: Perceived organization support has statistically significant positive effect on employee engagement.

H2: Career success has statistically significant positive effect on employee engagement..

H3: Employee engagement has statistically significant positive effect on organizational competitive advantage.

H4: Employee engagement mediates the relationship between perceived organization support and organizational competitive advantage.

H5: Employee engagement mediates the relationship between career success and organizational competitive advantage.

H6: The level of organizational competitive advantage differs from one bank to another.

Research Methodology:

The research work will be quantitative with deductive approach. Target population was employee's financial institutions (public and private sector) .The research will be conducted on randomly selected banks ; National bank of Pakistan, Habib bank Limited and Allied bank Limited. The questionnaire survey method was used for data collection having structured likert scale questions with set responses in order to quantify the relationship among variables. survey questionnaire was designed. Each question contains responses ranged from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Perceived organizational support was measured using an 8-item version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support originally developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and subsequently used in research including Eisenberger et al. (2002). Career success was measured using the 5-item career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus et al. (1990). Employee engagement was assessed using the 12-item Job Engagement Scale developed by Rich et al. (2010). Organizational competitive advantage was measured using 21 items derived from the resource-based view of Barney (1991), the comparative advantage theory of Hunt and Morgan (1995).

To keep out of the effect of large sample size on P value in results, sample size of 249 is selected through a priori power analysis on G.P 3 with two predictors, at statistical power of .80 with $P < 0.05$ and medium effect size (0.25). Data will be collected from 83 participants in each bank .Convenience sampling technique was applied with aim to make the process less costly, complicated and time consuming. To test hypotheses, Correlation, multiple regression, and ANOVA techniques were used. Data analysis was conducted by using SPSS 22 version.

Results of the study:

Response rate from national Bank of Pakistan was 96.22%, from Allied bank Limited was 92.14% and from Habib bank limited was 87%.

Instrument Reliability:

Inner consistency of items to measure variables in questionnaire was tested through reliability test. Results proved higher consistency among items.

Table 1 showing Variables with Cronbach Alpha value

Variables	Cronbach Alpha value
Perceived organization support	0.743
Career Support	0.763
Employee's engagement	0.892
Competitive advantage	0.773

Correlation among variables:

Table 2 showing Descriptive statistics and correlation among variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Age	31.5	5.77	1						
Work experience in bank	7.77	3.69	.65**	1					
Total work experience	7.8	3.68	.66**	.997**	1				
Perceived organization support	4.25	0.62	-0.95	.05	.04	1			
Career success	4.61	0.41	.17**	-.13*	-.13*	.3**	1		
Employee engagement	4.72	0.34	-.12*	-.11	-.19	.31*	.50**	1	
Competitive advantage	4.81	0.47	-.12*	-.05	-.06	.24**	.41**	.43**	1

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Effect of POS and Career success on Employee engagement:

Multiple regression analysis exhibits statistically significant positive effect of POS($\beta = 0.069, t = 2.140, p < 0.05$) and career success($\beta = 0.373, t = 7.610, p < 0.05$) on employee engagement.

Both independent variables account for variance 26% in employee engagement

Tables 3 showing multiple regression analysis results.

IV	DV	β	t	sig	r2
POS	EE	0.127	2.140	0.03	0.26
CS	EE	0.450	7.610	0.00	

Note: POS= Perceived Organization Support; CS =Career Success; EE= Employee Engagement;

Effect of Employee engagement on competitive advantage:

Multiple regression analysis exhibits predicted relationship and statistically significant positive effect of Employee engagement ($\beta = 0.370$, $t = 6.037$, $p < 0.05$) was found on organizational competitive advantage and brings 9% variance in competitive advantage.

Tables 4 showing regression analysis results

IV	DV	β	t	sig	r2
EE	CA	0.370	6.037	0.00	
					0.37

Note: EE= Employee engagement, CA= Organizational competitive advantage

Mediation Analysis and interpretation:

Multiple Regression analysis technique was applied to find the mediating effect of employee engagement in relationship between POS and Organizational competitive advantage and Career success and competitive advantage.

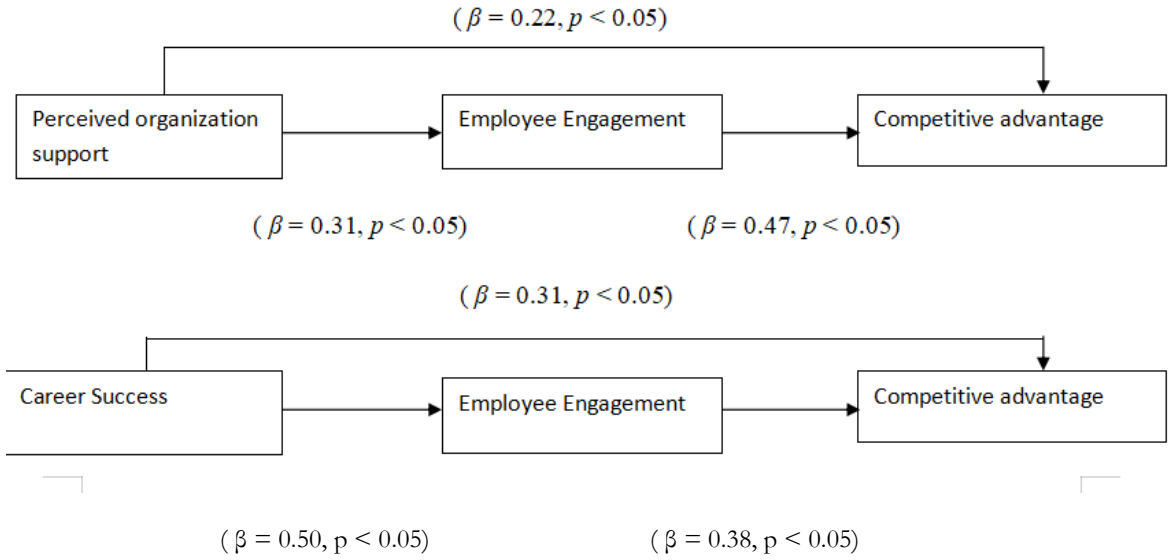
Table 5 showing mediation analysis results

IV	MV	Effect of IV on M	Effect of M on DV	Direct effects	indirect effects	Total effects
POS						.36**
	EE	.31**	.47**	.22**	.14	
CS						.50**
	EE	.50**	.38**	.31**	.19	

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Regression coefficient of POS ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$) and Career success ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$) while entering Employee engagement as a mediator exhibit partially indirect effect on competitive advantage. POS ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.05$) has positive total effect on competitive advantage. Career Success ($\beta = .50$, $p < 0.05$) revealed significant positive effect on organizational competitive advantage and through affective commitment role as mediator, Career success ($\beta = 0.331$, $p < 0.05$) partially indirectly affect competitive advantage.

Figures 2 and 3 showing mediation test results



Difference in organizational competitive advantage between banks:
One way ANOVA test was applied to find out organizational competitive advantage differs between under study banks or not. Results are shown in table.

Table 5 showing ANOVA Results

Table 5 showing ANOVA Results					
Competitive advantage					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.143	2	1.571	5.004	.008
Within Groups	45.533	145	.314		
Total	48.676	147			

Result is significant and exhibits that difference in organizational competitive advantage exists between NBP, ABL and HBL, F (2,145) =5.004, p < 0.05, one tailed, $W = 0.25$.To test which bank has organizational competitive advantage on others, post Hoc (Tukey) test was applied. The results of pair wise comparison as shown in multiple comparison table revealed that National bank of Pakistan has no significant(P>0.05) organizational competitive advantage over Allied bank Limited and Habib Bank Limited , further more Allied Bank (M= 4.94,S = .18) has significant organizational competitive advantage over Habib Bank Limited (M= 4.58,S = .99) ,(p<0.05) ,$W = 0.25$.

Table 6 showing post Hoc (Tukey) test results

(I) bank name	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**(J) Bank_name**	**Mean Difference (I-J)**	**Sig.**
National	53	4.73	.24	Allied	-.210	.134
				Habib	.149	.395
Allied	52	4.94	.18	National	.210	.134
				Habib	.360*	.006
Habib	43	4.58	.99	National	-.149	.395
				Allied	-.360*	.006

Discussion:
The results revealed that perceived organizational support and career success are positively associated employee engagement as well as employee engagement is positively associated with organizational competitive advantage of the banks. In other words, high perceived organization support and career success opportunities will enhance the employee engagement employee which will finally have a positive impact on the organizational competitive advantage of the organization. The mediating results demonstrate the importance of employee involvement and engagement with work. Perceived organization support as well as career success help organizations to get organizational competitive advantage through employee engagement

The results of the multiple regression analysis support the hypothesis of the current study. These findings confirm the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth hypothesis of the research study. Employees' engagement, positive impact on competitive advantage. The perceived organization support has a significant positive impact employee engagement which is supported by the previous research studies (e.g , A Gokul et al., 2012; patipan et al ,2012) This confirms relationships among variables also supported by the previous research studies conducted by earlier research (e.g Nancy , 2007;)The findings indicate that perceived organizational support and career success have significant positive effects on employee engagement, while employee engagement positively contributes to the organizational competitive advantage of banks. These results suggest that employees who feel valued, supported, and provided with opportunities for career development are more likely to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, commitment, and involvement in their work. The findings are consistent with previous research showing that perceived organizational support strengthens employee engagement and positive work-related outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 2020; Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020). Similarly, career development opportunities can enhance employees' work engagement and perceptions of career success (Yang, 2018).

The results further demonstrate that employee engagement contributes to organizational competitive advantage by encouraging employees to exert greater effort, improve performance, support innovation, and provide better customer service. This relationship is particularly important in the banking sector, where employee capabilities and service quality are important sources of differentiation. Recent studies have similarly emphasized the role of employee engagement in promoting innovative behavior, organizational performance, and sustainable organizational competitive advantage (Afsar et al., 2021; Aslan et al., 2021). Overall, the findings confirm the proposed hypotheses and indicate that banks can strengthen their organizational competitive advantage by developing supportive HR practices, providing career-development opportunities, recognizing employee contributions, and fostering a work environment that promotes employee engagement.

The significant ANOVA result indicates that organizational competitive advantage differs among NBP, ABL, and HBL. The Tukey test shows that the significant difference exists between ABL and HBL, with ABL demonstrating a higher level of competitive advantage, while NBP does not differ significantly from either bank. This variation may reflect differences in strategic resources, human-resource practices, employee capabilities, service quality, and organizational practices. Previous research suggests that effective HRM, high-performance work systems, and organizational capabilities can strengthen organizational competitive advantage in the banking sector (Ahmed & Siddiqui, 2020; Mazhar et al., 2020; Akram & Hilman, 2018). Thus, the comparatively higher organizational competitive advantage of ABL may indicate greater effectiveness in utilizing its human and organizational resources to achieve superior competitive positioning.

Conclusion:

The present research examines the relationship between perceived organization support, career success, employees' engagement and organizational competitive advantage in banking sector. The perceived organizational support has positive influence on employee's engagement and the importance of engagement at work can never be denied for achieving competitive edge over competitors. Organizational competitive advantage in the banking sector is not determined solely by financial resources, technology, or market position; it can also be developed through effective management of human resources. Perceived organizational support can strengthen employees' engagement by creating a supportive and appreciative work environment, while career development and career success opportunities can enhance employees' motivation . Employee engagement subsequently transforms these positive employee experiences into higher levels of effort, performance, innovation, and customer-oriented behavior, thereby contributing to the organizational competitive advantage of banks. Therefore, bank management should focus on developing supportive HR practices, providing meaningful career-development opportunities, recognizing employee contributions, and creating an environment in which employees can achieve both personal career success and organizational objectives.

Strengths and Limitations:

The present study is useful for the top level management of the financial institutions as it will aware them from the importance of the career satisfaction and perceived organizational support in engagement of the qualified and devoted employees within organization. It will aware the top level management of the financial institutions about the importance of employee engagement in achieving the organizational competitive advantage in the market. The study has some practical implications for the top level management for achieving the competitive edge over the competitors by focusing on increasing the perceived career satisfaction and perceived organizational support.

Limitations of study are viewed as; Sample size of the study is small. Convenience method of sampling was used for the study and limited numbers of banks were selected for data collection.

Future research implications and Research recommendations

Future research can extend the present study by examining the proposed relationships across a broader range of banking institutions, including private, public, and Islamic banks, to determine whether the findings remain consistent across different organizational settings. Researchers may also investigate additional mediating and moderating variables, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, career adaptability, leadership style, and organizational culture, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizational support and career success influence employee engagement and competitive advantage. Longitudinal studies could further examine whether sustained organizational support and career-development opportunities produce lasting improvements in employee engagement, retention, and competitive advantage. Comparative studies across different regions or countries could also provide valuable insights into the influence of cultural and institutional factors on these relationships.

Based on the findings, banks should strengthen perceived organizational support by recognizing employee contributions, providing supportive working conditions, ensuring fair treatment, and addressing employees' professional and personal

needs. Management should also establish clear career-development pathways, including training, promotion opportunities, mentoring, and professional development programs, to enhance employees' perceptions of career success. Since employee engagement contributes to competitive advantage, banks should develop HR practices that encourage employee participation, recognition, empowerment, and meaningful involvement in organizational activities. Furthermore, management should regularly assess employee engagement levels and identify factors that may encourage employees to remain with the organization. Finally, differences in organizational competitive advantage among banks suggest that institutions should benchmark their HR and employee-management practices against competing banks and continuously improve their human-resource strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

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