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## **Impact of Internal Corporate Social Responsibility on Employee Engagement *a Study of Moderated Mediation Model***

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### **Abstract**

An organization policies and action which it performed voluntarily refers to as corporate social responsibility. These actions and policies of firms impact on the all stakeholders and implementation of corporate social responsibility practices at all level of analysis such as individual, organizational and institutional. The objective of this study to analyse the impact of internal corporate social responsibility on employee engagement, through mediation of employee perception and influence of employee discretion on employee engagement. A cross sectional quantitative study was conducted. A sample size of 163 employees of five major commercial banks operating in Pakistan. The research administrated questionnaire was distributed for data collection. Demographic analysis of respondents was done with the help of descriptive statistics. The results show that internal corporate social responsibility has direct impact and indirect impact through employee perception on employee engagement. Whereas, indirect effect of internal corporate social responsibility on employee engagement, through employee perception, depends on employee discretion.

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The findings of this study indicated that commercial banks are not properly implement and practices the internal corporate social responsibility to engage their employees at work place. Practically, this study help full for the banks to understand the essential phenomena of their employees and also provide proper solution, how to engage and satisfied the employees at work place. Theoretically, this study contributes to the existing literature on second stage moderated mediation of internal corporate social responsibility in the context of Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Employee discretion; Corporate Social Responsibility; Engagement; Practices; Polices; Stakeholders.

## **1. Introduction**

The definition of CSR is still not acknowledged through literature rather than its increasing significance trends [31, 30]. According to [32] CSR has not provided us a solid view point and consensus because of the incomplete and precise definition of CSR. Moreover, these hurdles link with the construct of CSR which create the question mark in ongoing research through in complete definition, overlapping terminology and unexplained conceptual model [33]. So, according to [5] the corporate social responsibility is that, an organization which covered all the social needs of their internal and external stakeholders at a given point of time. These social needs included legal, economical, ethical and discretionary expectation of the society. But some researchers [34,35] contradicted the explanation of Carroll's and demonstrated that, every business have some other responsibilities more than economic and legal in their practices. Furthermore, the corporate social responsibility was integrated with four different categories of stakeholder framework which elaborated the CSR actions: CSR to government, CSR to consumers, CSR to social and non-social stakeholders and CSR to employee [27]. According to this elaboration of stakeholder framework our study only rely one dimension of this framework which is CSR to employees. Corporate social responsibility for employee explained that a firm action regarding employees career opportunities, natural working environment, training and employee social, friendly policies which support for employee engagement with their organization and guaranteed their support [36].

Reference [37] Explained that current as well as prospective employee seeks positive consideration from a good corporate social responsibility. Moreover, a good image of organization corporate social responsibility creates positive trends towards the middle and lower level employee job satisfaction by raising positive feedback from their family, friends and social groups [38]. There were many studies demonstrated the positive relationship between a firm internal corporate social responsibility and work engagement [39,5]. But we could not ignore the study of [40] which highlighted that, internal stakeholders (employee) were most prominent stakeholders which needs to be understand perfectly because the previous studies more focused on external CSR which investigated consumer engagement with the organization [14,15]. So, this study more precisely focuses on internal CSR to employee engagement with their firm.

In recent years the researchers have more focus on to study the relationship between internal corporate social responsibility and work engagement. Particularly, Reference [25] studies the impact of internal CSR on employee engagement. However, these previous studies were ignored the mediating role of employee perception and moderating role of employee discretion on employee work engagement. There is very limited research on

individual level internal CSR practices precisely on employee engagement in Pakistan. [41] conducted a study to identify the moderating impact of employee's collective orientation on the relationship of internal CSR with three dimensions (employees, consumer and community) and further explore the individual employee's behavior has positive relationship with organizational commitment, organizational identification and knowledge sharing behavior. Reference [7] studied CSR is the strongest predictor of employee engagement, identification and organizational commitment with a mediating relationship of organizational trust and organizational identification. These studies, investigated the impact of internal CSR on employee trust with mediating role organizational commitment and organizational identification. However, they ignored the employee perception as mediator and employee discretions a moderator which are important predictor of employee engagement. Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the mediating role of employee perception and moderator impact of employee discretion.

Here introduce the paper. The paragraphs continue from here and are only separated by headings, subheadings, images and formulae. The section headings are arranged by numbers, bold and 10 pt. Here follows further instructions for authors.

## **2. Research Objective**

- To analyze the impact of Internal CSR on employee work engagement
- To analyze the mediating effect of employee perception between Internal CSR and employee engagement
- To identify, either the employee discretion moderate the relationship of employee perception and employee engagement

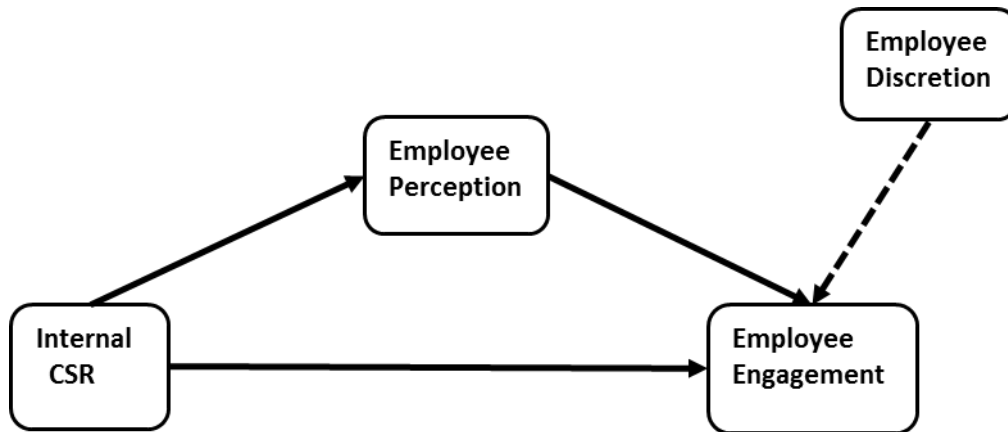
## **3. Literature Review**

### ***3.1. Theoretical Framework***

Theoretical backgrounds of employee engagement were found in the study of [27,28] which discussed that CSR toward customers more rely on social identity theory whereas CSR relates to community and employees more linked with social exchange theory. According to [5] a mutual benefit of two parties based on the principles of social exchange theory because if one person provides some benefits in regards second person give feedback in kindness. Some specific benefits are different from social exchange benefits because social exchange benefits usually provide voluntarily in which society provide responsibility and rewards in return [41,19]. Internal social benefits of organization are more specific with their employee's job satisfaction and work engagement. As the [29] argued that social responsibility and corporate ethics have direct relation with satisfaction and engagement of employees within the organization. There are higher level of commitment between executives and managers towards employee engagement and corporate citizenship [16, 17]. There are some other studies which evaluated that internal CSR are the decent way to identify the organization responsibility regarding their employees which fulfil the social needs of employees. As, the studies of [24,27,2] showed that employee perception of CSR is positively linked with employee engagement and also have a direct relation with CSR and employee engagement. There are direct and indirect relationship of four components of stakeholders group (employee,

consumer, natural environment and society) with employee attitudes and behavior which elaborated with social exchange and social identity process [28]. According to these above studies, rather than social identity theory, we proposed a model based on social exchange theory of the prospective impact of internal CSR on employees engagement.

Therefore, the aim of this study to analyse the impact of internal CSR on employee engagement, with a mediating role of employee perception. However, due to tight working scheduled of banking industry employees have low perception of internal CSR and in regard low work engagement.



**Figure 1:** Hypothesis Model

**3.2. Corporate Social Responsibility**

There are direct and indirect relations of corporate social responsibility with employees. However, different type of CSR practices influence on employee’s behaviour and action. Therefore, the studies of [14, 4, 20] investigated the CSR impact as a single construct. Another study of [43] also examined the CSR effect as whole on employees. But this study examined the internal CSR practices focused on training and education, health and safety and human rights components. It must be help for practitioners to understand which component of internal CSR more effects on the behaviour and perception of employees at their workplace. It also help for top manger to practically apply the internal CSR practices and develop CSR strategies in more detail. In this study, we measure the internal CSR through training and education of employees, health and safety and basic human rights a firm provided to their employees.

The studies of [12, 22] elaborated that, training is a way of performing task through learning whereas education improve the ability to complete these task. Moreover, education is a process to gain knowledge with the help of long term taining. Another study of [44] employee training and education has significant impact on employee work engagement and job satisfaction. Reference [22] also verified that education have significant positive impact on work engagement of employees. The health and safety also an important component of internal CSR, which have significant impact on employee perception and employee engagement. An employee in the workplace should be mentally free from stress anxiety and safe from the diseases [45]. As the study of [25] demonstrated that health and safety have significant positive impact on the perception and engagement of

employee to their work. Human rights another very important indicator of internal CSR which also impact on the behaviour of employees at their workplace. The fundamental needs of the employees referred to as the basic human rights, and company effort to fulfil these needs which enabled the employees to feel freedom and self-respect at their workplace [46,1] Moreover, the study of [46] investigated that employee engagement and human basic rights have a significant positive relationship.

### ***3.3. CSR and Employee Engagement***

An employee engagement is the struggle of a firm which effect the commitment of employees related to job role and in addition its influences on the behaviour of employees [7, 3]. Moreover, the study of [2] explained that, work engagement is the satisfaction of mind which segregated as absorption, dedication and vigour to accomplish the target positively. However, internal CSR impact on the routine behaviour and attitudes of the employee regarding their work engagement were not measure directly by the researcher or very little empirical research was found which investigated the employee engagement through internal CSR [5]. According to study of [6] elaborated that, the theorists of organizational behaviour proposed that internal CSR effect on the perceptions of internal stakeholders (employee) related to their work behaviour and attitude.

The organization success and performance were more rely on the satisfied and engaged workforce. A satisfies employee feel proud regarding their organization and more engaged with their work [25]. Those firms were more successful and sustainable who have more engaged and committed workforce. This is very important for an organization to have more loyal employees for success and stability in the business world. Moreover, those employees who were less engaged to their firm would like to voluntarily leave as compared to those employees who were more engaged to their firm. The engaged employees less like to leave the firm and would perform better [25,13]. However, corporate social responsibility has important contribution regarding employee engagement, decreasing turnover rate and increasing satisfaction of the employees with their firm. Therefore, this study focuses on the effects of internal CSR on employee engagement.

### **H<sub>1</sub>. Internal corporate social responsibility impacts on employee engagement**

### ***3.4. Internal CSR and Employee Perception***

According to studied of [47, 44] were explained that internal CSR influence on the perception of internal stakeholders. The study of [48] further verified that internal CSR and employee engagement had a central variable employee perception which mediates the relationship of these internal CSR and employee engagement. Moreover, internal CSR impact on job performance of employee with mediating role of organizational identification. There was significant positive relationship between employee perception of CSR and organizational commitment whereas CSR have a direct relation with employee engagement [3]. The job seeker was more attract regarding those organization which have perceived CSR practices [37, 38]. A social responsible firm could be identified through their image in the society and internally perception of the employees regrading firm internal CSR practices. The internal CSR actions enhanced the perception of employee self-worth and self-esteem which engaged the employees with their firm in long term [3].

The importance of micro level phenomena was highlighted under the CSR study in which considered the impact of corporate social responsibility and irresponsibility on employee perception [49, 50]. There were some measurement and methodological issues and modification of theories which essential the employees CSR perceptions [49, 50]. However, the studied of [4, 49, 47] argued that internal CSR was an important tool which treated the employee attitudes and behaviour and internal CSR was considered as higher order construct for employee perception evaluation. So, above studies elaborated that, employee perception of internal CSR as the degree to which employees fulfil their social cause from their perspective firms. This study based on the previous literature to explore the employee relation to internal CSR and the influence of internal CSR on employee engagement. Hence these studies focus on internal CSR impact on employee engagement with a mediating role of employee perception. The employee perception as a mediator enhances the greater understanding of internal CSR on employee engagement.

**H<sub>2</sub>. Employee perception mediate the relationship of internal corporate social responsibility and employee engagement**

**H<sub>3</sub>. Employee perception has positive relationship with employee engagement**

### ***3.5. Moderating Effect of employee Discretion on Employee Engagement***

As the previous studies indicated that, the employee engagement was not directly measured with the employee discretion despite that employee creativity has been identified through employee discretion [51]. The study of [52] argued that employee discretion effect the innovative behavior of employees through changes level of employee engagement and motivation of employees at their workplace. However, the study of [5] argued that job autonomy is one of the most important prerequisite of employee engagement. Moreover, [10] study explained employee discretion is the employee job task and how these tasks control by the employees during their decision making. Furthermore, employees have more knowledge sharing behavior if they have more employee discretion. Therefore, the studied of [21, 22, 26] investigated that employee discretion were used as a strong predictor of employee engagement.

**H<sub>4</sub>. Employee discretion moderate the relationship employee perception and employee engagement**

## **4. Research Method**

### ***4.1. Population and sample***

There are fifteen most prominent private commercial banks operating in Pakistan. The study population included all the employees of these private commercial banks situated in the Lahore Pakistan. According to study of [53] the actions and perception of employees have strong influence on the image of an organization. Moreover the study of [54] also explained that employees were give more value to internal CSR so that they are more engaged with the firm. However, study of [55] verified that a sample should be representatives of the entire population. Therefore, the sample of this study considered the employees of five major private commercial banks which are United Bank Limited, MCB Bank Limited, HBL, Allied Bank Limited and Bank Alfalah.

#### **4.2. Instrument and Measurement of Variables**

An adopted scale is used in this study. The entire construct were measured through these adopted validated scales to confirm the questionnaire high reliability and validity. Internal CSR used as a predictor in this study and based on the four components such as training and education, human rights, health and safety which are derived from the study of [56]. Whereas employee engagement used as an outcome which was grapes from the study of [14, 15] in which CSR have positive relation with work engagement. There are 35 items made up in the questionnaire which was used in this study. Internal CSR have 16 items in which training and education category have four items which were taken from study of [20]. Moreover, four items were taken from the study of [46] under category of basic human rights. The health and safety category consist of eight items, four items for health and four items for safety from the study of [45]. However, employee perception of internal CSR 8 items was measure through scale of [57]. Finally to determine the employee discretion among the employees at their workplace 6 items scale of [58] was used. The evaluation of the variables were based on interval scale and five point Likert scale 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree were used to measuring these variables.

#### **5. Data Collection**

A cross sectional survey was conducted in this study and the respondents were approached individually for data collection. The study is based on quantitative nature and researcher administered questionnaire were used for the purpose of primary data collection. There were 210 questionnaire were distributed among the respondents but only 167 questionnaire were returned due to short time constraint. However, 4 questionnaire were incomplete and waste them. Therefore, 163 questionnaires were usable for analysis. The response rate was 79 percent.

#### **6. Ethical Consideration**

The ethical consideration and consent of the respondent are very important while researchers conducting any kind of research. Because the respondents are human beings, who may feel uncomfortable to provide actual feedback and response at their workplace precisely in the banking industry. In order to consider these issues and ethics in research a prior approval from the concerned authorities of respective banks was obtain for data collection purpose. Moreover, the aim of research and their implication were elaborated before the data collection. Finally consent statement were also discuss with respondents prior to data collection

#### **7. Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the survey through research administrated questionnaire were recorded in the data managing software for the purpose of results and analysis. A specialized SPSS Version 20 software was used to analysis this data. However, to analyse the study variables, descriptive as well as inferential statistics techniques were used. Moreover, to test the index of moderated mediation effects of employee discretion as moderator and employee perception as mediator on employee engagement and internal CSR used as a predictor. A bootstrap technique of [23] was used. For index of mediated moderation and second stage moderation this bootstrap technique is the most recent technique as used by [11] in their recent study "An index and test of moderated mediation".

**7.1. Reliability and Validity**

**Table 1: Cronbach’s Alpha**

Variable	No. of Item	Valid N	Cornbach's Alpha
Internal CSR	200	16	0.870
Employee Engagement	200	6	0.760
Employee Perception	200	8	0.787
Employee Discretion	200	5	0.731

According to study of Hilton if the value of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of each scale value between 0.70 to 0.90 then it’s considered high level of reliability. So, that the value in table 1 ensured that all the relevant adopted scale have high reliability.

**Table 2: KMO Measure of Sample Adequacy and Barlett’s Test of Sphericity**

Variable	No. of Item	KMO	Barlett’s Test of Sphericity(Sig)
Internal CSR	16	0.874	0.000
Employee Engagement	6	0.765	0.000
Employee Perception	8	0.829	0.000
Employee Discretion	5	0.729	0.000

The value of KMO in the table 2 demonstrated that all the variables value are above 0.6 which insured that all the items of construct have significant relationship with high level of validity. Moreover the Barlett’s Test of Sphericity  $p= 0.000$  value  $< 0.05$  also verified the significant relationship between all variables item. However, Principal Component Analysis technique was used to ensure the validity of all items.

**8. Data Analysis**

**8.1. Descriptive Statistics**

There are 200 employees of five major banks operating in Lahore, Pakistan are included in this study. From these employees 76 percent fall between age of 25 years to 40 years.

A one major reason behind this is that all the banks now recruited their management trainee officers and business development officers normally from the age of 25 years. Moreover, 67.5 % of the respondents obtaining graduation or higher education. Approximately 65 % of the banks staff working as an executive, officers and trainee in the banks. Therefore, there are high job rotation in banks and 67.5 % of the respondents have less than 15 years of experience.



**Table 3:** Frequency Analysis of Respondents Demographics

Respondents Demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 25 years	21	10.5
25-30	54	27
31-35	42	21
36-40	56	28
Above 40 Years	27	13.5
<b>Education</b>		
Matriculation	11	5.5
Intermediate	54	27
Under Graduate	65	32.5
Graduate	56	28
Postgraduate	14	7
<b>Designation</b>		
Manager	25	12.5
Assistant Manager	46	23
Executive	55	27.5
Officers	44	22
Trainer	30	15
<b>Experience</b>		
Less than 5 years	41	20.5
5-10 Years	45	22.5
11-15 Years	50	25
16-20 Years	39	19.5
Above 20 Years	25	12.5

**Table 4:** Correlation Matrix

	Employee Engagement	Internal CSR	Employee Perception	Employee Discretion
Employee Engagement	1			
Internal CSR	.633	1		
Employee Perception	.689	.586	1	
Employee Discretion	.701	.574	.630	1

The study variables correlation matrix results showed in table 4 which indicated that, employee engagement and internal corporate social responsibility have positive correlation 0.633. These results consistent with the study of [25]. Moreover, the correlation (0.689) and (0.701) value of employee engagement with employee perception and employee discretion also positive [14]. However, there are positive correlation between predictor internal CSR and mediator employee perception [16,17]. Table 5 presented the value of estimated regression coefficients as shown in the table. The internal CSR expressed higher effect on the perception of employee regarding internal CSR provided by the banks, ICSR ( $a_1$ ) = 0.778 with a 95 % confidence interval = 0.1617 to 0.5235 and p value = 0.000. Moreover, the impact of employee perception depends on the employee discretion, EP x ED ( $b_3$ ) = 0.1165 with confidence interval of 95 % = 0.0265 to 0.2700 and p value = 0.000. According to study of [11] verified that, one of the path of the mediation model is sufficient to claim moderation of mediation and it enough for evidence related to moderation. This shows that, the indirect effect of internal SCR on employee engagement through employee perception depends on the employee discretion. Whereas the indirect effect between internal CSR and employee discretion is not estimated with the value of  $b_3$ , because it is not necessary that employee discretion have any interaction with employee perception to create indirect effect with internal CSR [11].

**Table 5:** Second stage moderation mediation Results [59]

Second stage moderated mediation results								
	Employee Perception				Employee Engagement			
	Ceff	LCL	UCL	Sig		LCL	UCL	Sig
ICSR( $a_1$ )	.7788	0.5813	0.9696	0.000				
EP ( $b_1$ )					0.3426	.1617	0.5235	0.000
ED( $b_2$ )					0.3402	.1645	0.5159	0.000
EP x ED( $b_3$ )					0.1165	0.0265	0.2700	0.000

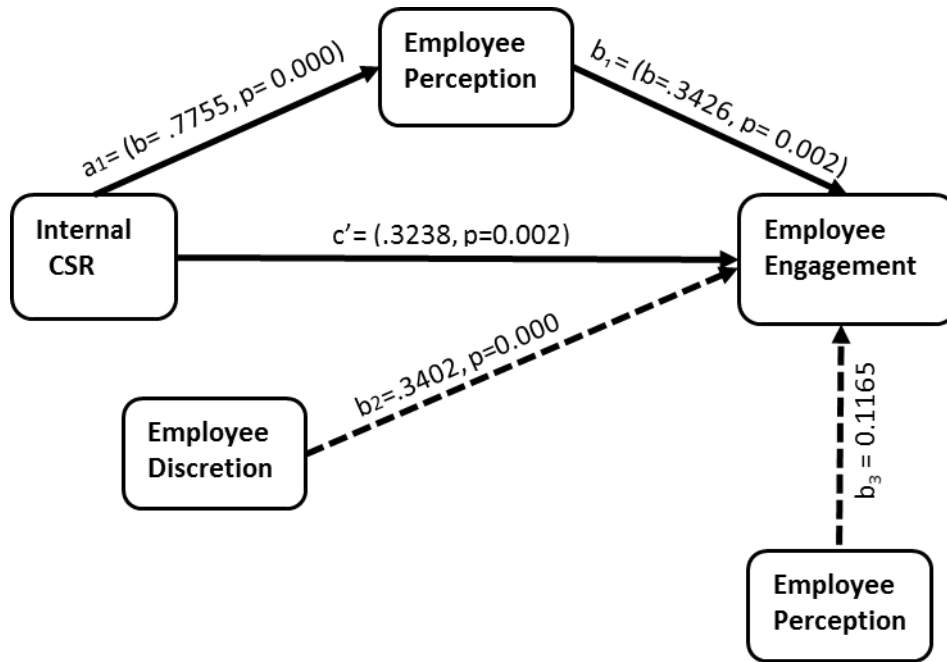
Note N= 200. Bootstrap sample size 10,000. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported LCL= Lower Confidence Limit and UCL Upper Confidence Limit

Dependent Variable = Employee Engagement (EE)

Independent Variable = Internal CSR (ICSR)

Mediating Variable = Employee Perception (EP)

Moderator Variable = Employee Discretion (ED)



**Figure 2:** Second stage moderated mediation statistical model

**Table 6:** Index of moderated mediation

Index of moderated mediation		
Index	LCL	UCL
0.0934	.1910	-.0069

In this study the confidence interval 95 % based on the bootstrap sample size 10,000 includes zero (-.1910 to -0.069), therefore if the sum of lower confidence interval and upper confidence interval is above zero then we can say that the direct effect depends on the employee discretion because index of moderated mediation includes zero.

**9. Discussion**

Demographic Ratio of Internal CSR to Employee Engagement

The table 6 results indicated that, the employee perception and employee engagement through internal CSR are higher in the young employees as compared to those employee have age above 40 years. The also indicated that young employees have more education and training. Moreover, the education have more impact on the perception of employees regarding the internal CSR as well as more educated employees are more engaged with their firm as shown the mean value. This shows that training and education of employees through internal CSR practices have impact on the employee engagement. However, employee designation also impact on their perception related to internal CSR. The low rank employees (Officers and Trainee) means value indicated, if the

banking industry implement internal CSR practice in banks than low rank employee will be motivated and engaged to their workplace. The experience mean value also shows that, less than 5 years and more than 20 years employee have more perception of internal CSR to ward their work engagement.

**Table 7**

		Internal CSR	Employee Engagement
		Mean	Mean
Age	Less than 25 years	3.16	3.27
	25-30 Years	2.93	2.97
	31-35 Years	3.06	3.08
	36-40 Years	3.56	3.45
	Above 40 Years	2.91	2.88
Education	Matriculation	2.49	2.44
	Intermediate	2.89	3.05
	Under Graduate	3.23	3.17
	Graduate	3.35	3.25
	Postgraduate	3.57	3.52
Designation	Manager	2.83	2.80
	Assistant Manager	3.11	3.09
	Executive	2.99	3.01
	Officers	3.30	3.20
	Trainee	3.57	3.70
Experience	Less than 5 years	3.37	3.50
	5-10 Years	2.95	2.98
	11-15 Years	3.10	3.03
	16-20 Years	3.22	3.16
	Above 20 Years	3.18	3.07

Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrated that internal corporate social responsibility have significant positive correlation with employee engagement. As, the employee attitudes and behaviour in commercial banks show that, they perceived internal CSR in positive sense toward their engagement at workplace. However it is also analysed that employee perception and internal CSR (training and education, health, safety and human rights) positively correlated with employee engagement, as the value of correlation 0.633 and 0.689 in table show the high correlation. As, this study investigated the second stage moderated mediation impact with the help of social identity theory of employee social behaviour. The hypothesized model tested with the moderated mediation approach of [23]. The indirect effect of internal CSR on employee engagement through employee perception depends on the employee discretion. So, that, additional vice president and branch manager souled be

delegated some power to their subordinate to engaged them at workplace for longer period of time.

## **10. Implications**

Internal CSR is very important factor to engage the employees at their workplace, which in return increased the performance and output of the firms. As, the ultimate objective of every firm to increase their wealth and achieved their objectives. For this purposes, human resources have a vital role to achieve the organizational goals. The study findings show that internal CSR have significant positive impact on employee engagement with direct and indirect effect. So, this study indicated that internal CSR is one of the key factor which increase the engagement of employees at their work place. The policy makers and top management of commercial banks should take such steps regarding the practices and implementation of internal CSR.

Governance body of corporate sector should introduce such rules and ensured that every organization bound to implementation of internal CSR. Moreover, according to the CSR literature, the researchers have studied that those firm have higher return on equity and satisfaction of their employees, who implemented the internal as well as external CSR. Finally, the empirical findings of this study demonstrated that, through internal CSR (training & education, health, safety and human basic needs) banks are more satisfied to their employees and in regard they are more engaged to their work. Furthermore, banks should provide the proper healthy and safe environment to their employees; manage their working hours of an employee which is a worse phenomenon in banking sector. Banks should visualize their stagey to engage and satisfied their employees at work place.

## **11. Limitation of Study**

This study only taken the five commercial banks with small sample size, so that future studies should be included all commercial banks with a large sample size. Moreover, this study only taken employee engagement as an outcome of internal CSR, future studies should be examined these construct as a single predictors. At the end cross sectional research design itself a carrier limitation, so that longitudinal study to examine the relationship at different time among these variables.

## **12. Conclusion**

This study among the few studies who explained the internal CSR impact on employee engagement with a second stage moderated mediation approach. The concluding remarks regarding this study is that internal corporate social responsibility is the essential issue in all the domestic as well multinational organizations of Pakistan. It is also concluded that internal CSR have significant positive impact on the employee engagement. Therefore, the proper implement and practices of corporate social responsibility improve the social status of employees within and outside of organization. These action leads to higher rate of employee engagement and in return firms achieved their gaols.

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