

The Impact of Communication Skills and Career Commitment on Career Success of Business Graduates in Pakistan

Ishtiaq Alam Khan

alamhospital998@gmail.com

M.Phil. Scholar, Management Sciences, Institute of Management Sciences, IMS, Lahore, Pakistan

Dr. Asmat N. Khattak

asmat.khattak@gmail.com

Associate Professor, HOD Management Sciences, Institute of Management Sciences, IMS, Lahore, Pakistan

Corresponding Author: * Dr. Asmat N. Khattak asmat.khattak@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) is giving a high value to communication skills for career success of university graduates. The young generation in Pakistan are educated and hardworking, opportunities to make advancement in professional life are not available. This mixed methods explanatory sequential (causal-comparative) research study investigated the impact of communication skills and career commitment on career success of business graduates in Pakistan. A list of 100 chemical firms was obtained from the office of Pakistan Chemical Manufacturing Association (PCMA), Lahore, Pakistan. Of these, 72 firms operating in the Punjab Province were selected for the study. Five questionnaires were distributed at every firm to the Heads of 1) marketing, 2) sales, 3) finance, 4) procurement, and 5) human resource management (HRM) and 305 filled questionnaires were received back and response rate was 84 percent. For data analysis in the quantitative study, SPSS software (version 27) was used to compute the descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and reliability of measurement (values of Cronbach's alpha). The study computed the coefficient of determination (R^2), t -statistic, F -statistic, p -values, and beta (β) in regression analysis. A moderator guide was developed. Ten experts were chosen using the snowball sampling technique to participate in the focus group in the qualitative section. The data was transcribed, thematic analysis was performed, and both these findings were merged and useful themes were obtained. The study concluded that communication skills have a positive and significant impact on career success and the impact of career commitment on career success was insignificant and negative. The study recommends business graduates to have excellent communication skills. Effective and excellent communication skills are key component of a successful career.

Keywords: Communication skills, Pakistan Chemical Manufacturing Association, university graduates

INTRODUCTION

The youth in Pakistan are both strategically important to the nation's growth and provide a possible demographic dividend (World Bank Group, 2024). Pakistan's economy is still in its early stages of development (Bunker et al., 2004; Wirtenberg et al., 2007; Agarwal & Brem, 2015; Ahmed & Ahsan, 2011; Yaqoob, 2011; Marshak, 2006; Batool & Zulfiqar, 2011). Education is essential to a nation's development and advancement (Khorakian et al., 2021). Prior research has shown how important education is for social and economic advancement (Ahsan, 2003; Rehman, 2004; Ahmad, 2012; Mushtaq & Alam, 2014; Aziz & Ara, 2013; Rehman, 2005). Every young person who graduates finds employment in both public and private organizations. The work standards and the quality of jobs attract the job candidates. Pakistan should boost employment and raise work standards. There are numerous obstacles for graduates to face. This issue has previously mentioned in earlier study studies (Begum, 2022; Ahmed & Samad, 2019; Assad et al, 2020; Becker et al., 2021; Farooq, 2011; Husain, 2018).

A successful career is the foundation of a successful life. One of the greatest worries for graduates is their career and its success. In Pakistan, building a successful career is the aim of every business graduate. Employability is a major focusing area. Previous studies have also emphasized the desire of graduates for career success (Tanascu, et al. 2020; Supriatna, et al. 2022; Coffelt, et al. 2022; Haines et al., 2014). The Higher Education Commission Ordinance, (2002), National Curriculum Revision Committee (NCRC), (2015), Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), National Qualification Framework of Pakistan (2015), PSG-2023, QA Framework (2023), HEC Undergraduate Education Policy (2023), and HEC Graduate Education Policy (2023) all make the case for increasing graduates' quality, employability and career success.

The definition of career success according to previous research studies (Judge et al., 1994; Haines et al., 2014) is "the positive psychological or work-related outcomes." Researchers often make a distinction between career success that is objective and subjective. Career success objectives are similar to designation, position, and salary range. Career success is subjective, and job happiness and career satisfaction are related (Nexhip et al., 2023; Swartz et al., 2016; Tanascu, et al. 2020; Supriatna, et al. 2022). According to the earlier studies (Judge et al., 1994; Haines et al., 2014), career success is defined as "the positive psychological or work-related outcomes." Researchers frequently distinguish between objective and subjective career success. Objectives career success is like position, title, and pay scale. Job happiness and career satisfaction are subjective career success. (Swarz et al., 2016; Nexhip et al., 2023; Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021).

Developing communication skills is essential for the business, as well as for educational institutions (Sumaira, 2022; Khattak et al., 2023; Swarz et al., 2016; Nexhip et al., 2023). Several studies have found that effective communication is necessary for one to succeed in their work (Tanascu et al., 2020; Supriatna et al., 2022). The purpose of this research study is to investigate the impact of communication skills on affect Pakistani business graduates' career success. Because of the considerable changes in the careers landscape, we were able to identify the gap in the literature. Professional achievement raises employees' spirits at work (Zhang et al., 2020).

According to Human Capital Theory (HCT), the intelligence, talent, and capability of human capital are the most crucial factors in associations. The effective management of this asset gives an organization a competitive edge (Adam Smith, 1776; Almendarez, 2013; Schultz, 1961; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Fisher et al., 2007). The research investigation was guided by HCT. An organization's human capital is one of its most valuable assets. In order to maximize business and employee resources, boost productivity, and preserve competitive advantage, human capital is crucial (Simkovic, 2013)

Communication skills are necessary to find and keep a job (Tanascu et al., 2020; Supriatna et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2020; Swarz et al., 2016; Nexhip et al., 2023). The next element required for career success is career commitment. career commitment refers to the degree of a person's drive to stay employed in their chosen and current employment (Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021). Highly committed individuals are likely to make significant career investments if they actively plan their careers, place a strong emphasis on training and development programs to advance in their positions, and make an effort to learn new skills and information (Sultana et al., 2016; Van der Heijden, 2022; Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021). The research study looked at communication skills and commitment and emphasized how crucial they are to career success (Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication skills and Career Success

The key components of success are strong institutions, innovations, and domestic talent (World Bank, 2014; Asian Development Bank, 2024; Pakistan Economic Survey, 2022-2023; The World Economic Forum, 2019). The definition of career success according to previous research (Judge et al., 1994; Haines et al., 2014) is "the positive psychological or work-related outcomes." Researchers often make a distinction between career success that is objective and subjective. Career success objectives are similar to designation, position, and salary range. Career success is subjective, and job happiness and career satisfaction are related (Nexhip et al., 2023; Swartz et al., 2016; Batool & Zulfikar, 2011). Researchers are still eager to discover this mystery (Heslin, 2005; Dries, 2011). PSG (2023), QA Framework (2023), HEC Undergraduate Education Policy (2023), HEC Graduate Education Policy (2023), Higher Education Commission Ordinance (2002), National Curriculum Revision Committee (2015), Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) (2024), and National Qualification Framework of Pakistan (2015) all have their primary goal the career success of business graduates.

Having a successful career is essential to have a successful life. The private and public sectors organizations do not offer numerous career opportunities. Previous studies have also brought attention to graduates' aspirations for prosperous careers (Tanascu, et al. 2020; Supriatna, et al. 2022). Career success is a component of life success. Everyone is entitled to pursue professional achievement. Both a "process" and a "outcome" are involved in career success. Success is contingent upon an individual's persistent efforts (Yang & Chau, 2016; Yudha et al., 2022; Unite et al., 2014; Santos, 2016; Khan & Siddique, 2024; Sukma & Nurhayati, 2021; Luh & Dewi, 2020; Argyropoulou & Kaliris, 2018).

Both businesses and educational institutions need to develop communication skills of students. The necessary aptitudes, expertise, and knowledge are needed to do this (Sumaira, 2022). Business graduates that demonstrate strong communication skills have a higher chance of landing and keeping jobs, according to Khattak et al. (2023). The level of workplace diversity is higher than it has ever been. The employer's expectations have changed as a result. Employability requires additional skills, such as clear comprehension along with successful communication (Ghauri & Ayub, 2021; Hiew et al., 2021).

Prior research has also recommended examining strategies to improve the employability and communication skills of fresh graduates. To find out what employers want from job applicants and what skills they need to succeed in the workforce, more research should be conducted (Russia & Shaw, 2022). Communication skills were highly valued by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and the Pakistan Qualification Framework. Career success and employability depend on these skills (PQF, 2015; HEC, 2023).

Pakistan's corporate culture is quite loving of communication in English. Speaking it fluently will benefit both your social and professional life. Applicants who communication in English well when speaking are admitted. In our society, being able to speak English is considered a show of intelligence and competency. Speaking and learning English is popular. One of the powers is English. Minds are empowered by English.

Career Commitment and Career Success

The level of a person's motivation to continue working on the chosen and ongoing job position is referred as career commitment (Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016). Proactively planning their careers with an emphasis on training and development programmes to progress in their jobs and an attempt

to gain new skills and information, highly devoted persons are likely to make large career investments (Sultana et al., 2016; Karavardar, 2014). Research studies are conducted and show a positive association between career commitment and subjective career success (Van der Heijden, 2022). HRM practices play a major in enhancing career commitment (Wang et al., 2020; Raheem & Khan, 2029). Career commitment and positive work behavior increase productivity and success at workplace (Wasim ul Rehman, 2020; Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016).

Both objective and subjective career success are correlated with career commitment. Employees that are dedicated are more productive by nature (Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016). Devoted workers look for opportunities to advance their careers. The finest performance is attained by dedicated workers. Higher intention to quit, lower involvement, worse output, and general discontent are all signs of diminished commitment (Karavardar, 2014). Commitment is meaningless if the work is inferior Whyte, 1986; Wiener, 1982; Welsch & Lavan, 1981; Karavardar, 2014). Organizations need to facilitate and develop employees to improve the performance (Abdul Razak bin Zamri, 2023; Agor, 2018; Akinlabi, et al., 2021). Research studies show that motivated employees show greater performance (Belanger, et al., 2024; Bowen, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Callahan, et al. 2024; Chen & Shih, 2021; Cherian, et al., 2021; Christopher & Edwinah, 2022, Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021).

Human Capital Theory (HCT)

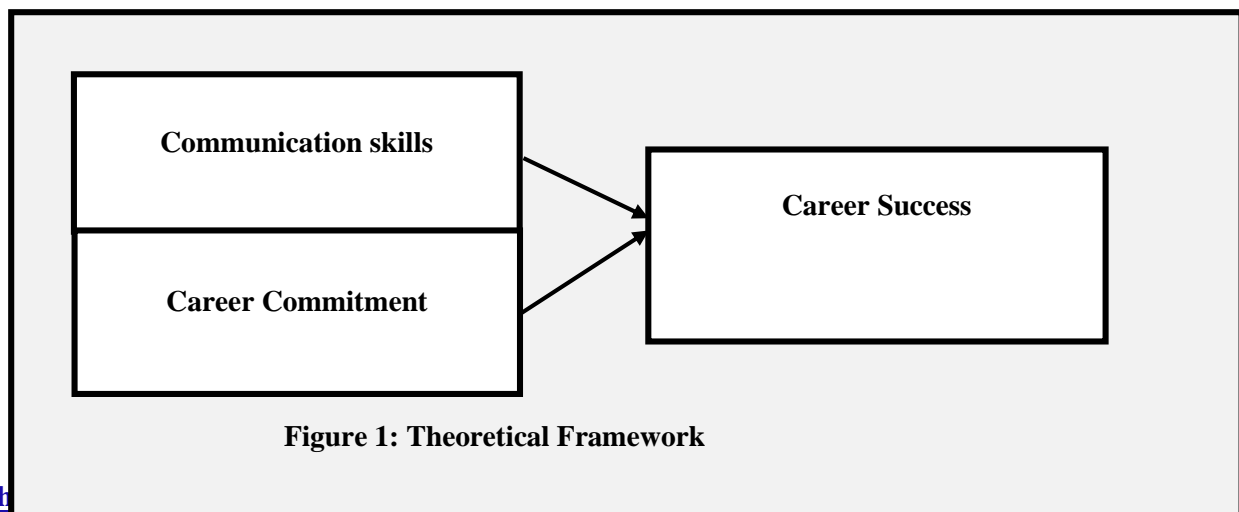
Adam Smith (1776) laid the groundwork for what would eventually be known as the study of human capital (Almendarez, 2013). Human abilities can be either inborn or acquired, and when they are developed further, they can become human capital, according to Schultz (1961), who also proposed the theory of human capital in 1981 (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Fisher et al. (2007) state that the most important aspect in associations is human capital's intelligence, talent, and capability; an organization's competitive edge comes from how this asset is managed. HCT will guide the research study. One of an organization's greatest resources is its human capital.

According to Simkovic (2013), the definition of HC is "an essential component in the optimization of company and employee assets to increase productivity and maintain competitive advantage."

Research Model

After literature review, the following research model is developed (see Figure 1). Communication skills (CS) and career commitment (CC) are independent variables and career success is the dependent variable (D.V).



Development of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are developed with the help of existing theories, literature review and to find answer of the research questions of the study.

H1: The communication skills significantly impact the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

H2: The career commitment significantly impacts the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed methods explanatory sequential (causal-comparative) and investigated the impact of communication skills and career commitment on career success of business graduates in Pakistan. The study The mixed method approach has numerous goals. Triangulation of data is the initial goal. Effective data analysis is the second goal, and combining two different kinds of data to create creative research ideas is the third (Datta, 1997; Murphy & Nicholl, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Creswell, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Pasick et al., 2009; Collins et al., 2006; Brannen; 2005; Bryman, 2001; Greene, 2007; Morgan, 2007; Cressell, 2009; Brannon, 2020; McCusker et al., 2015). The merging of the data is a suitable practice to achieve the valid results. The merging of data approach is suitable for integration of the quantitative and qualitative data.

The first independent variable communication skills were assessed on 3-items scale adapted from the study of Tanascu et al. (2020). The second independent variable career commitment was assessed by 7-items scale adapted from the scale developed by Blau (1989). Blau (1989) created the career commitment measurement criteria. The items were altered by Reilly and Orsak (1991) to suit the nursing profession. Similar modifications could be made to the measure to accommodate other specialized occupations. The coefficient alpha values (Somers & Birnbaum, 1998) varied between .76 and .88. The dependent variable career success was assessed on 3-items scale adapted from the “subjective career success inventory (SCSI)” of Shockley et al. (2015). The study's population included all *Heads of 1) HRM, 2) Sales, 3) Marketing, 4) Procurement, and 5) Finance* who were employed in the chemical firms in the province Punjab, Pakistan. The list of firms was obtained from the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA), Lahore, Pakistan.

There are 100 chemical firms in Pakistan nationwide (see Table 3.1) and 72 chemical firms in the Punjab Province (PCMA, 2024). The sample size was the entire population of 72 chemical firms. Five questionnaires were given out in a single unit. Thus, 360 (72*5) questionnaires were distributed throughout Punjab province. 305 answered questionnaires were returned, yielding an 84 percent response rate.

Table 3.1
Populations and Sample Firms

Total Number of Chemical Firms in Pakistan	Total Number of Chemical Firms in Province of Punjab, Pakistan	Total Number of Questionnaires Distributed in One Organization	Total Number of Questionnaires Distributed in the Province of Punjab, Pakistan	Total Number of Questionnaires Received Back	Response Rate Percentage
100	72	5	360	305	84%

The snowball non-probability sampling approach is used for the qualitative investigation. The purpose of focus group interviews is to investigate the research issues. Another name for the snowball technique is the chain referral sampling approach. Making objective estimations from snowball samples presents challenges for researchers. Anheier and Katz (2004) assert that the snowball or network sampling approach offers unique benefits for gathering data on attitudes or opinions.

TABLE 3.2
Experts of Focus Group

Expert	Qualification	Experience (Years)
E1	MSc Environmental Sciences	10
E2	MPA HRM	10
E3	MBA Supply Chain	08
E4	MBA Sales and Marketing	15
E5	MBA Marketing	20
E6	MBA Finance	25
E7	MPhil HRM	16
E8	MBA HRM	18
E9	PhD Business Administration	18
E10	PhD Management Sciences	14

The moderator guide (see Table 3.3) included the following interview question (Morgan, 1988).

Table 3.3
The Moderator Guide

S. No.	Expert Questions
1.	Kindly explain the quantitative results in which the study investigated the impact of communication skills on career success of business graduates in Pakistan.
1.	Kindly explain the quantitative results in which the study investigated the impact of career commitment on career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

The study employed International Business Machine (IBM) Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 software to investigate the cause and effects among variables. The study used a closed-ended questionnaire for the gathering of quantitative data. The researcher employed an authentic approach to develop the questionnaire and also carry out the pilot study. A draft questionnaire was developed in the presence of the experts of the focus group. They experts assessed and reviewed the draft questionnaire. Finally, they developed the final version of the questionnaire. All experts were agreed that items and questions included are suitable and satisfactory. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A focuses on the items and questions related to the constructs and section B focuses on demographics of respondents. The study got the responses on five-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). The study conducted a pilot study on 50 chemical units selected purposively from the population. Cronbach's alpha was calculated and it ranged from .70 to .90 which show reliability.

The data analysis focused and computed the demographic profile of the respondents, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and reliability of measurement (values of Cronbach's alpha). The study calculated the coefficient of determination (R^2), t-statistic, F-statistic, p-values, and beta (β) in regression analysis.

In regression analysis, the beta coefficient (β) is a crucial estimate. The "strength" and "direction" of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables are indicated by the value of β . Either 0 and 1 or 0 and -1 are the ranges. The value is closer to 1 or -1 the stronger the association. The beta coefficient (β) estimates how much the dependent variable changes for each unit increase in the independent variable. A variation of the beta coefficient that compares the relative impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable using standard deviations is called a standardized beta coefficient (β).

A focus group of 10 experts was performed to explain the quantitative results. The qualitative data was transcribed and thematic analysis were conducted and valuable themes were extracted. The quantitative and qualitative results were merged and useful results were obtained. Participants received the moderator guide and the informed consent form. After the interview, they were contacted to confirm that the comments were actually reflected in the transcript. According to Human Capital Theory (HCT), the intelligence, talent, and capability of human capital are the most crucial factors in associations. The effective management of this asset gives an organization a competitive edge (Adam Smith, 1776; Almendarez, 2013; Schultz, 1961; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Fisher et al., 2007). The research investigation was directed by HCT. An organization's human capital is one of its most valuable assets. In order to maximize business and employee resources, boost productivity, and preserve competitive advantage, human capital is crucial (Simkovic, 2013).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

360 questionnaires were distributed to Heads of Sales, Marketing, Procurement, HRM and Finance of 72 chemical firms and received 305 filled questionnaires back. The response rate was 84% (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Total Questionnaires Distributed and Response Rate

Total Number of Chemical Firms in Pakistan	Total Number of Chemical Firms in the Province of Punjab, Pakistan	Total Number of Questionnaires Distributed in One Organization	Total Number of Questionnaires Distributed in the Province of Punjab, Pakistan	Total Number of Questionnaires Received Back	Response Rate Percentage
100	72	5	360	305	84%

The demographic profile of the 305 respondents on gender, position, education, age, years in the organization and total work experience is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Respondents' Demographics	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	251	82.3
Female	54	17.7
Position		
Head of Sales	75	24.6
Head of Marketing	34	11.1
Head of HRM	58	19.1
Head of Procurement	32	10.5
Head of Finance	106	34.8
Education		
BBA	61	20.0
MBA	211	69.2
MPhil	30	9.8
PhD	3	1.0
Age		
Below 30 Years	10	3.2
31-40 Years	50	17
41-50 Years	90	29
Above 51 Years	155	50.8
Years in the Organization		
1-10 Years	77	25.2
11-20 Years	167	54.8
21-30 Years	60	19.7
31-40 Years	0	0
41-50 Years	1	0.3
51-60 Years	0	0
Total Work Experience		
1-10 Years	6	2
11-20 Years	5	1.6
21-30 Years	1	0.3
31-40 Years	206	67.5
41-50 Years	87	28.5
51-60 Years	0	0

Descriptive Statistics

A descriptive summary of items is given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3
Descriptive Statistics of Survey Items

Items of Constructs	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S. D
How important do you think communication skills are for your career?	305	1	5	3.93	1.176

If you were to retake your university studies, would you give importance to this discipline?	305	1	5	4.20	.826
Has it happened to you to fail/miss out because you didn't know, how to prove your communication skills?"	305	1	5	4.40	.895
I like this career.	305	1	5	4.61	.681
If I could go into a different profession which paid the same, I would probably take it.	305	1	3	1.80	.751
If I could do it all over again, I would not choose to work in this profession.	305	1	3	1.70	.633
I definitely want a career for myself in this profession.	305	1	5	4.49	.557
If I had all the money, I needed without working, I would probably still continue to work in this profession	305	1	5	4.18	.900
I am disappointed that I ever entered this profession	305	1	5	1.97	1.325
This is the ideal profession for a life's work	305	1	5	1.61	.796
Considering my career as a whole: my career is personally satisfying	305	1	5	4.68	.763
Considering my career as a whole: I am enthusiastic about my career	305	1	5	4.39	.740
Considering my career as a whole: I have found my career quite interesting.	305	1	5	4.50	.761
Valid N (listwise)	305				

Reliability of Measurement

The values of Cronbach's alpha vary from 0.70 to 0.93 which show high reliability (see Table 4.3) communication skills (alpha=0.70), career commitment (alpha=0.875), career success (alpha=0.83). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient measures the internal consistency, or reliability of the items of constructs in a survey. Cronbach's alpha quantifies the level of agreement on a standardized 0 to 1 scale. Higher values indicate higher agreement between items.

TABLE 4.4
Reliability of Measurement

Constructs	Valid N	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Communications Skills	305	03	0.70
Career Commitment	305	07	0.75
Career Success	305	03	0.83

Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis is conducted (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5.

Correlation Analysis

COMMUNIC ATION_SKIL LS	CAREER_CO MMITMENT	CAREER_SU CCESS
	.54	.60

COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Significance		.000	.000
CAREER COMMITMENT	Significance	.54		-.022
		.000		.705
CAREER SUCCESS	Significance	.60	-.022	
		.000	.705	

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is a statistical test used to analyze the difference between the means of more than two groups. The results show that (Table 4.6) the model is good fit.

Table 4.6

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.910	2	29.955	8.141	.000
	Residual	1111.218	302	3.680		
	Total	1171.128	304			

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis is conducted to study the impact of communications skills and career commitment (independent variables) on career success (dependent variable). It takes the ability of correlation to investigate the strength and direction of a relationship between variables.

TABLE 4.7

Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable (Career Success)		
	β	t statistic	p-value Significance
Communication skills	0.406*	4.016	<.001
Career Commitment	- 0.046	- 0.765	.445
Adjusted R ²	0.605		
F - statistic	20.141		

Table 4.7 show that communication skills positively and significantly affect career success ($\beta=0.406$, sig. <0.01). The value of R² (0.605) represents that 60.5% variation in career success is explained by the independent variable. The F-statistic (20.141) is significant at less than 1% significant level which reveals that our model is a good fit. The analysis further show that career commitment is negatively and insignificantly affects career success ($\beta= - 0.046$, sig. 445).

We have the following two hypotheses.

H1: The communication skills significantly impact the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

H2: The career commitment significantly impacts the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

The results show that the impact of communication skills on career success is positive and significant. The results support the hypothesis H1 which states that “the communication skills significantly impact the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.” The result does not support the H2 which states that “the career commitment significantly impacts the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.”

We conducted a focus group to gather the qualitative data. The objectives of the qualitative portion of this mixed research study are to explain and understand the quantitative findings.

Expert Question 1: *Kindly explain the quantitative results in which the study investigated the impact of communication skills on career success of business graduates in Pakistan.*

The quantitative results show that communication skills positively and significantly affect career success ($\beta=0.406$, sig. <0.01). The value of R^2 (0.605) represents that 60.5% variation in career success is explained by the independent variable. The F-statistic (20.141) is significant at less than 1% significant level which reveals that our model is a good fit. The focus group experts stated that the younger generation is hardworking and well-educated, but there aren't many prospects for them to progress. Career success can be established in a variety of ways. One important component of the career path is the level of job satisfaction. For current business graduates, communications skills are among the best approaches. The communication is a crucial component of organizational processes. For corporate executives to motivate their team members, they must possess strong communications skills. Effective communication skills can lead to greater jobs, promotions, and global opportunities.

Expert Question 2: *Kindly explain the quantitative results in which the study investigated the impact of career commitment on career success of business graduates in Pakistan.*

The quantitative results show the insignificant impact of career commitment on career success. The expert shared that career success is dependent on a variety of elements, including effective leadership, culture, management style, personal motivation, updated and strong communication skills, suitable education, and career planning (Bhawna et al., 2024). However, the antecedents of career success changes from culture to culture (Ting & Fu, 2018). Another possibility is that despite putting in a lot of time and effort, business graduates fail to attain subjective successful careers due to a "skills mismatch" between their job descriptions and their career commitment. The other extracted theme was "external circumstances," which can hinder career progression even in cases where one has a strong "career commitment." When graduates don't succeed right away, they become disappointed and frustrated due to factors like "lack of support" and "unrealistic expectations" for their career path.

DISCUSSION

The study's quantitative findings supported the first hypothesis, which stated that there is a positive and significant relationship between communication skills and career success." We operationalized the career success as subjective career success which is job happiness and career satisfaction (Nexhip et al., 2023).

One aspect of life success is career success. An employee must work consistently in order to succeed. A successful life depends on having a successful career. Career opportunities are scarce in both public and private sector enterprises. The graduates must follow some strategies to address these professional challenges like low level of employment and career progression opportunities (Tanascu et al., 2020; Supriatna et al., 2022; Yudha et al., 2022; Santos, 2016). The business graduates must possess the requisite employee skills and be creative. In order to help employees succeed professionally, firms make a lot of effort to enhance their skills, knowledge, and abilities. These consist of training, employee development

initiatives, and mentorship (Luh & Dewi, 2020; Argyropoulou & Kaliris, 2018; Khan & Siddique, 2024; Sukma & Nurhayati, 2021).

According to the focus group experts, the younger generation is educated and diligent, but their opportunities for advancement are limited. There are several strategies to build career success. The degree of job satisfaction is a crucial aspect of the professional path. "Communications skills" are one of the greatest strategies for recent business grads. An essential element of organizational procedures is effective communication.

Employers want their employees to be able to communicate effectively. Business graduates should assess how well they communicate, exhibit confidence, and make a good impression. Given that "communications is the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop," honing your communication abilities can help you promote yourself and exert power over other people (Schramm, 1993). Strong communication skills are essential for inspiring others at work, but Pakistan poses several challenges because of the diversity of regional languages. The technologies aren't properly accessible. There are instances when responding within the given time frame is not feasible. Businesses may build a strong foundation for success by addressing challenges and implementing improvement strategies, the experts say.

According to the focus group experts, business bosses need to have great communications skills in order to inspire their team members. Proficiency in honest and effective communication can result in more options for employment, promotions, and "global opportunities." The communication skills improve "performance" and "productivity." Developing "relationships" and "trust" calls on excellent communication skills, which involve understanding what to say, how to say it, and considering the audience.

Strong communication skills increase a business graduate's chances of getting and keeping a job. Diversity in the workplace is more prevalent than it has ever been. Other abilities, such effective communication and clear comprehension, are necessary for employability (Ghauri & Ayub, 2021; Hiew et al., 2021). Communication skills are highly valued by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and the Pakistan Qualification Framework. Career success and employability depend on these skills (PQF, 2015; HEC, 2023).

Communication skills are becoming increasingly important in the workplace because they help people build rapport, which leads to more productive interactions and stronger professional partnerships. They are also a major criterion for being employable and career success. Business managers interact with a wide range of people in the workplace, making presentations, participating in meetings, and occasionally speaking in front of groups of people.

Gaining confidence and competent communication skills are essential for both personal and professional growth. Job candidates and interviewers need to get along. Candidates should maintain their composure and concentrate on the interview questions. To increase confidence, candidates should feel mentally at ease. One of the most important strategies for increasing confidence is self-belief. The basis of self-assurance is a strong theoretical framework combined with effective communication skills.

The study's quantitative findings do not support the second hypothesis, which stated that career commitment significantly impact the career success of business graduates in Pakistan.

The level of a person's motivation to continue working on the chosen and ongoing job position is referred as career commitment (Ozdemir, et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021; Zacher, 2016; Zacher, 2014; Zacher et al., 2015; Woo, 2018; Weng, & McElroy 2012; Waldeck et al., 2021). Proactively planning their careers with an emphasis on training and development programmes to progress in their jobs and an attempt to gain new skills and information, highly devoted persons are likely to make large career investments (Sultana et al.,

2016). Research studies are conducted and show a positive association between career commitment and subjective career success (Van der Heijden, 2022).

The focus group expert shared that career success is dependent on a variety of elements, including effective leadership, culture, management style, personal motivation, updated and strong communication skills, suitable education, and career planning. However, the antecedents of career success changes from culture to culture (Ting & Fu, 2018). Another possibility is that despite putting in a lot of time and effort, business graduates fail to attain subjective successful careers due to a "skills mismatch" between their job descriptions and their career commitment. The other theme that was extracted was "external circumstances," which can impede career advancement even when a person has a strong career commitment. Graduates' disappointment and frustration are caused by things like "lack of support" and "unrealistic expectations" for their career path.

Organizations should concentrate on the development of employees. The human capital theory (HCT) says that the intelligence, talent, and capability of human capital are the most crucial component of associations; the way in which this asset is managed determines an organization's competitive advantage (Adam Smith, 1776; Almendarez, 2013; Schultz; 1961; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Fisher et al., 2007). HCT served as the study's guide. A company's human capital is one of its most valuable assets. According to Simkovic (2013), human capital is a crucial element in the optimization of business and employee assets in order to boost productivity and preserve competitive advantage.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that communication skills have a favorable and significant impact on subjective career success measures including job happiness and career satisfaction. Communications skills are among the best strategies for business graduates. The study found no apparent relationship between career commitment and career success. The factors that contribute to career success vary depending on the culture. Another theory is that a "skills mismatch" between their job descriptions and their devotion to their careers prevents business graduates from achieving subjectively successful careers, even after investing a great deal of time and energy. The external circumstances can impede career advancement even when a person has a strong career commitment. Because of things like "lack of support" and "unrealistic expectations" for their career path, graduates become frustrated and disappointed when they do not succeed right away.

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