

The Effects of HR Strength and Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan

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Received: 21-01-2026

Revised: 04-02-2026

Accepted: 19-02-2026

Published: 05-03-2026

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of Human Resource (HR) Strength and Social Identification on Employee Performance in private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. The study, based on social identity theory, examines the relationship between HR strength (based on three components—distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus) and performance outcomes in banking industry. For the collection of data, the design of quantitative research was used in this study which was a cross-sectional survey among 250 employees in private commercial banks in Khairpur Mir's taken by simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection with HR strength, social identification and employee performance on a 5-point Likert scale. Excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .930$) was found through reliability analysis. All the variables were highly positively correlated with each other ($r = .892 - .895, p < .001$). Regression analysis revealed that HR strength ($\beta = .479, p < .001$) and social identification ($\beta = .467, p < .001$) were significant and positively related to employee performance together accounting for 84.5% of the variance ($R^2 = .845$). The results supported the two research hypotheses and validated the integrated model of HR strength-social identification in the context of Pakistan banking sector. The research adds to the HRM literature by contributing to the empirical evidence of which context is largely under-researched, and offers implications for HR managers and policy makers in creating effective HR systems that lead to improved organizational identification and employee performance. Practice and future directions for research are discussed.

Keywords: HR Strength, Social Identification, Employee Performance, Private Commercial Banks

INTRODUCTION

The banking sector is the backbone of any economy and the performance of the banking sector employees is a key determinant on the success of the organization and the economic growth of a country. Private commercial banks play an important role in Pakistan's financial sector and have a large number of employees, which affects the quality of services, clients' satisfaction, and the overall performance of financial institutions. The factors affecting employee performance in this industry, however, continue to be a matter of debate in the academic world, especially in settings outside the West, where organization culture and structures may vary significantly from those in developed nations.

The importance of human resource management for the performance of employees has been acknowledged for a long time (Boxall et al., 2011; Bartram et al., 2021). Of the different HRM frameworks one of the key constructs is that of HR strength. The strength of HR is defined as the characteristics of an HR system that clearly communicate to staff what behavior and priorities are expected (Babar et al., 2022). HR practices that are seen as strong – distinctiveness, consistency and consensus – are more likely to have an impact on employee attitudes and behaviors (Khan et al., 2025). Recent studies have shown that the HR strength is important in the relationship between performance appraisal and their quality, it has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between the appraisal quality and employee performance (Babar et al., 2022). Likewise, it has been revealed that employee outcomes are positively associated with perceived HR strength via a number of mediating factors such as perceived OI and psychological capital (Javed et al., 2021).

At the same time, social identification has become a psychological mechanism that connects HRM systems to employee performance has received a lot of attention. Social identification is a theory that stems from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) that describes the degree to which individuals identify themselves as members of an organization, group or team. Employees who strongly identify with the organization are more likely to internalize the organization's goals, engage in pro-organizational behaviors, and perform better (Khan et al., 2025). The banking industry has always been the subject of study that shows that organizational identification positively impacts employee performance, by boosting motivation and satisfaction at work (Greco et al., 2022). Moreover, research has established that social identification acts as a mediator between well-being-oriented HRM practices and employee performance especially in collectivist cultural settings (Khan et al., 2025).

The concept of HR strength and social identification is an intriguing theoretical approach to the understanding of employee performance. In a study conducted by Khan et al. (2025) on the HR strength and employee performance in private commercial banks of Bangladesh, it was found that the social identification played a mediating role between HR strength and employee performance. They also highlighted the sequential mediation of this relationship via both social interaction with line managers and the quality of intra-group relationships, emphasizing the role of social process in the HRM-performance chain. The results are consistent with previous studies on the Chinese banking industry, which found that social identity and social climate have significant impacts on the performance of employees (Liu et al., 2020).

The case of Pakistan's private commercial banks is unique in terms of the examination of these relationships. The importance of HRM practices to influence the performance of an organization in banks in Pakistan has been emphasized by recent studies (Baig, 2022). In the banking sector of Pakistan, studies have shown that HRM practices like recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal have a significant effect on the performance of employees (Siddiqui et al., 2021). Furthermore, the research was conducted on the Sindh province and it has been observed that the employee related factors including intrinsic motivation, skill flexibility, commitment of employees and their skills level positively influence the performance of employees in private sector banks (Shaikh et al., 2023). Customer and employee loyalty

being a challenge, the links between HRM and employee performance are of relevance especially in the private banking sector of Sindh, specifically in the cities of Khairpur Mir's (Khalil, 2022).

Although a stream of previous studies has been conducted on HRM and employee performance, there are still some gaps. The specific mechanism of how HR strength affects employee performance in the context of banks within Pakistan has not been sufficiently explored. International studies have found social identification to play a mediating role between cultural identity and organizational involvement (Khan et al., 2025) but the same has to be validated in the context of Pakistan's culture and organizational setting. Second, there is an under-researched geographical context of banking sector in Khairpur Mir's, Sindh. The studies focused on this specific region are crucial for building HRM strategies that are relevant to the local context, taking into account the differences in organizational culture, management approaches and employee expectations across the region. Third, there are limited studies in the Pakistani literature in which HR strength and social identification are taken together in one integrated model to predict Employee performance.

To overcome these limitations, this study seeks to examine the impact of HR strength and social identification on employee performance in private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. This study is based on the theory of social identity and suggests that the mediating factor between HR strength and employee performance is social identification, which can be explained directly or indirectly. This research will bring a greater understanding of HRM in developing countries and will benefit HR managers and HR policy makers in the private banking sector of Pakistan aiming at improving performance and productivity of their employees in the banking sector of Khairpur Mir's district.

Research Objectives

To examine the impact of HR Strength on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

To examine the impact of Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

Research Questions

What is the impact of HR Strength on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

What is the impact of Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of HR Strength on Employee Performance

HR strength has become a critical construct for understanding how human resource management systems can be realized in employees' outcomes. Based on the covariation principle of attribution theory and signaling framework, HR strength is described as the characteristics of an HR system that communicate clear and consistent messages to employees, facilitating them to comprehend the required reactions and behaviors they are expected to display within the workplace (Babar et al., 2022). The three dimensions of HR strength—distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus—have been conceptualized by Bowen and

Ostroff's foundational work and have been found to represent whether HR practices are viewed as strong enough to influence employee attitudes and behaviors.

Empirical studies substantively confirmed the importance of HR strength in determining employee performance more recently. The results of a thorough meta-analysis of 65 samples and 29,444 individual participants, on employee perceptions of HR strength, revealed strong evidence of the mediating role of HR strength in five employee outcomes: performance, employee reactions, proactive behavior, burnout, and perceived organizational effectiveness (Bednall et al., 2022). This meta-analytic evidence supports the view that perceived HR strength is a mechanism whereby HR practices affect employee performance, not just a moderator of the HR practices and outcomes relationship. The results indicate that if employees believe HR practices are effective (warm, clear, and consistent across the board), they are more likely to know what is expected of them and to react positively to the practices by increasing their performance.

In the banking sector context, research has shown that the strength of the HR has a significant effect on the performance outcomes of employees. The strength of HRM systems positively influenced the relationship between the quality of appraisal and employee performance, as reported by Babar et al. (2022), meaning that when HR practices are viewed as robust, their positive impacts on employees' performance are heightened. Likewise, research in Pakistan has identified that HR strength, which is one component of the HR system conveying clear expectations to employees, has a positive impact on employee perceived performance (Yousaf, 2023). HR practices' strength has been also associated with organizational climate and organizational outcomes, and HR strength and leadership have been shown to jointly influence employees' perceptions and interpretations of organizational expectations (Santos, 2021).

In addition, studies of effective high performance work systems have demonstrated that their effectiveness in enhancing the performance of employees is largely related to their implementation. HR practices appear to have better relationships with employee outcomes, such as performance, when they are bundled and implemented clearly and consistently (Bednall et al., 2022). This implies that the content of HR practices is not enough and how the practices are communicated or perceived, which can be captured by the notion of HR strength is also important in order to get desired performance outcomes. Yousaf (2023) also found that HRM system strength has direct and combined predictive value on employee outcomes such as affective commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors in organizational context of Pakistan during the COVID-19 pandemic, which substantiated the relevance of this construct in Pakistan.

Impact of Social Identification on Employee Performance

Social identification is a process related to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) which describes the extent to which people see themselves as part of a specific organization or group. Employees who have high identification with their organization internalize the goals, values and norms of their organization, which then affect their behavior and performance. The theoretical basis identifies social identification as one of the psychological mechanisms that could mediate between individual and organizational goals, which should result in better worker performance.

Studies have repeatedly shown that there is a positive correlation between social identification and employee performance. Gillet et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of 112 organizational identification job performance correlations from 67 empirical studies that provided a confirmative confirmation that organizational identification consistently positively impacts frontline employee job performance. This meta-analysis found that organizational identification had a positive effect on performance in diverse frontline occupations, but this impact was more modest for highly meaningful jobs, indicating that there may be a moderating effect between job characteristics and the relationship between organizational identification and performance.

A significant relationship between organizational identification and employee performance was revealed amongst the Saudi bank employees and employee performance was identified as a mediator between organizational identification and corporate reputation in the banking sector specifically, according to Alnehabi (2024). This discovery highlights the importance of social identity when it comes to performance in financial institutions. In the same way, studies in the Pakistani banking environment have shown that organizational identification is significantly connected with employee outcomes and that workplace incivility, perceived supervisor support and job satisfaction are key antecedents of organizational identification (Kumari et al., 2024).

Recent research has also clarified the processes by which social identification impacts on employee performance. National identification and team identification have been proven to boost employees' daily work performance by underlying psychological mechanisms, among which organizational and team identification has been shown to improve employees' well-being and performance by increasing their global psychological need satisfaction and perceived social support, respectively (Gillet et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies based on social identity theory have shown that the positive effect of PAJ on employees' work engagement, organizational identification, and job performance is partially mediated by work engagement and organizational identification, respectively (Zhang et al., 2023). This indicates when employees feel fair in the process, they are more likely to feel that they belong to the organization, and this in turn will improve their performance.

Social identification is especially relevant in collectivist cultures, like those of South Asia. The study results have shown that wellbeing oriented HRM practices positively influence the performance of employees by leading to an increase in individual agency and a sense of belonging of the employees as a whole, as social identification is one of the key intervening factors (Usman et al., 2025). This implies the role of social identification in the relationship between HRM practices and outcomes of HRM may be particularly salient in a culture that values group identity and group solidarity. In addition, a study based on social identity theory demonstrated that the concept of organizational identification was also found to be relevant in contemporary organizational settings in explaining the indirect link between sustainable performance and green human resource management practices (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Integration of HR Strength and Social Identification

The integration of HR strength and social identification provides a comprehensive view of the pathways by which HRM systems can affect employee performance. Theory of social identity explains this integration by stating that employees' social identity is more likely to be created through strong HR systems and is associated with better performance. This view implies that HR strength does not directly affect performance per se but rather it operates psychologically, in this case via social identification.

In a recent empirical study, Khan et al. (2025) tested this integrated framework in the case of the private commercial banks in Bangladesh. The study tested a sample of 436 respondents and validated the mediation model of social identification between HR strength and employee performance. In addition, sequential mediation was found: social interaction with the line manager and social identification sequentially mediated the relationship between HR strength and employee performance, and the quality of relationships in the work team and social identification sequentially mediated HR strength and employee performance. This study shows that the strength of HR is not only directly correlated with employee performance, but it can also be indirectly correlated by helping to improve social interaction and relationship quality, which then leads to the development of social identification. The study brings new insights of the social identification processes as a mechanism to explain the relationship between HRM and employees' performance in the high-power distance and collectivist cultures (Khan et al., 2025).

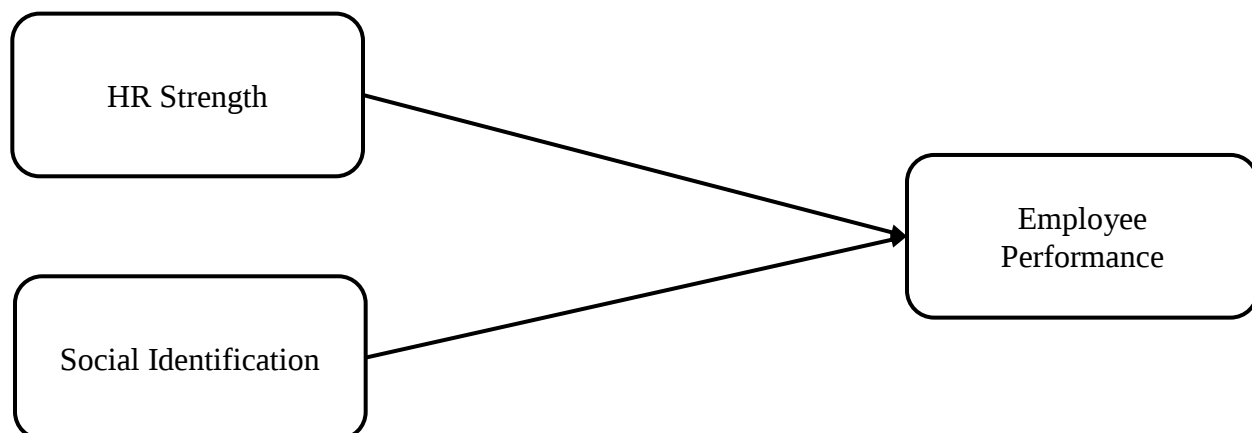
Another research also has confirmed the integrated framework. A study on the Chinese high-speed railway crews revealed that perceived HR strength was positively related to safety performance through organizational identification both directly and indirectly (Wang et al., 2023). Based on social identity theory, this study found that psychological capital could directly mediate the relationship between perceived HR strength and safety performance of drivers, which may indicate that individual psychological resources can interact with the level of perceived HR strength to affect the outcomes through a process of identification. Likewise, the prior study conducted by Kim and Lee (2023) revealed that the HR strength's impact on turnover intention was mediated by job satisfaction and organizational identification, further establishing that the HR strength was mediated via identification mechanisms.

The integrated framework is of great significance to cultures with high power distance and collectivism like that of Pakistan and other south Asian countries. In this context, the contribution of social processes in the HRM-performance chain is particularly relevant. Relationships with line managers and within work groups act as a key pathway for HR strength to become social identification, and ultimately improve employee performance (Khan et al., 2025). Yousaf (2023) also showed that HR climate, organizational justice, and organizational trust mediate the relationship between HRM system strength and employee outcomes in the Pakistani context, where social and relational mechanisms play a key role in the linkage between HRM system and performance in collectivist contexts.

Furthermore, recent studies have broadened this integrated attitude to investigate other social mechanisms of mediation. Usman et al. (2025) concluded psychological empowerment and social identification are two alternative mediators between well-being-oriented HRM practices and employee performance in the banking industry. This indicates that HR strength could have several pathways, and that the psychological pathway of social identification is one of several paths between HRM systems and performance outcomes. The banking sector is also an interesting environment in which to investigate, as it has very high-performance expectations and frequent change in organizations (Usman et al., 2025).

It is a very significant framework for HR managers in real-world application. Through the illustration of how HR strength and social identification can contribute to employee performance, HR systems can be designed to convey clear expectations, as well as to build a feeling of belonging and identification among employees. This combination of HR practices strength and social identification development provides a way to improve employee performance in the banking industry and other industries. Given the specific conditions of customer and employee loyalty in the private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, it is even more important to have insight into these mechanisms in order to develop contextually appropriate HRM strategies (Khalil, 2022).

Research Model



Research Hypothesis

There is positive and significant impact of HR Strength on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

There is positive and significant impact of Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative cross sectional survey research design which is used to examine the effect of HR Strength and Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. The quantitative approach is suitable for this research because the quantitative approach can measure the variables, test the hypothesis, and take the generalization of the research results to the target population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The cross-sectional design allows for data to be collected at one point in time thereby giving a snapshot view of the relationships between the study variables (Saunders et al., 2019). The target population of this study is all the employees of private commercial banks in Khairpur Mir's, Sindh. The simple random sampling technique was used for sampling, where 250 employees were sampled from a total of 45,000 banking employees to ensure representativeness and reduce selection bias. Data was gathered using a structured close ended questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire consisted of three measurement scales, five items for HR Strength, five items for Social Identification and five items for Employee Performance, respectively, totaling 15 items. The HR Strength scale was modified from existing measures used in previous studies that measure perceptions of HR practices distinctiveness, consistency and consensus. The Social Identification scale was used to gauge employees' identification with their organization, and the Employee Performance scale was used to gauge self-reported in-role and extra-role performance behaviors. The questionnaire was pre-tested on a small sample to guarantee the appropriateness and clarity of the items before scaling up to the entire sample of respondents. SPSS version 27, which is commonly used in social science research for data analysis (Field, 2018), was used for analysis. The analysis was carried out in three stages; the first was reliability analysis that was then performed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Secondly, correlation was conducted in order to explore the direction and strength of the relationships between the study variables using Pearson's correlation analysis. Third, regression analysis was used to test the hypothesized relationships between HR Strength and Employee Performance, and Social Identification and Employee Performance. Validity of findings were assessed through all statistical assumptions, such as normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity were checked before the regression analysis. The research methodology is in accordance with the quantitative research method in organizational studies and has been used in earlier research examining the relationship between HRM and employees' performance at banks (Khan et al., 2025; Yousaf, 2023). All respondents were assured of anonymity, data use only for academic purposes and the process of data collection was always conducted with respect for ethical issues. The methodological approach is robust and has ensured the reliability, validity and generalizability of the research findings which have added meaningful knowledge towards the body of knowledge on HR strength, social identification and employee performance in the context of banking in Pakistan.

DATA ANALYSIS

Reliability Analysis

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.930	15

The values of .930 for Cronbach alpha for the 15-item questionnaire showed excellent internal consistency reliability which means that all the items in the questionnaire consistently measure the constructs of HR Strength, Social Identification, and Employee Performance. This high reliability coefficient is greater than the acceptable coefficient of .70, and thus the measurement scales are highly reliable to draw valid conclusions in the study (Field, 2018). Based on the result, the items of the questionnaire are highly correlated and can give a reliable measurement for the three study variables.

Correlation Analysis

Correlations				
		HR Strength	Social Identification	Employee Performance
HR Strength	Pearson Correlation	1	.892**	.895**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	250	250	250
Social Identification	Pearson Correlation	.892**	1	.894**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	250	250	250
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.895**	.894**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	250	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The correlation analysis shows that the relationship between HR Strength, Employee Performance and Social Identification is very positive and statistically significant, with HR Strength having a very strong positive correlation with Employee Performance ($r = .895$, $p < .001$) and Social Identification ($r = .892$, $p < .001$) also having a very strong positive correlation with Employee Performance ($r = .894$, $p < .001$). These very significant ($p < .01$, 2-tailed) correlations reveal that higher HR Strength is correlated with higher Social Identification and higher HR Strength is correlated with higher Employee Performance, and

that higher Social Identification is also correlated with higher Employee Performance (Field, 2018). The high correlation values (all over .89) indicate that the three constructs are highly interrelated and that the hypothesized positive relationships are supported to some degree in this study and require further research by regression analysis to determine the nature and strength of these relationships.

Regression Analysis

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.919 ^a	.845	.844	.39493759	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Identification, HR Strength						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	210.474	2	105.237	674.701	.000 ^b
	Residual	38.526	247	.156		
	Total	249.000	249			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Identification, HR Strength						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-6.736E-17	.025		.000	1.000
	HR Strength	.479	.055	.479	8.648	.000
	Social Identification	.467	.055	.467	8.431	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance						

Overall, the regression model is strong as the model's R square is .845 and this means that HR Strength and Social Identification can explain 84.5% of the variance in the Employee Performance and the highly significant ANOVA result ($F = 674.701$, $p < .001$) confirms that the regression model is statistically valid (Field, 2018). The HR Strength ($\beta = .479$, $t = 8.648$, $p < .001$) and Social Identification ($\beta = .467$, $t = 8.431$, $p < .001$) were found to be able to predict almost equally well, both of them independently contributing significantly to explaining the employee performance outcome, in light of this result, both are found to be

valid predictors of employee performance (Khan et al., 2025). From the standardized beta coefficient analysis, it is observed that each HR Strength and each Social Identification has 0.47 to 0.48 standard deviation impact on Employee Performance which is categorized as strong and significant predictors in the context of the Pakistani banking system.

Hypothesis Status

S/N	Hypothesis	Status
H1	There is positive and significant impact of HR Strength on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's	Accepted
H2	There is positive and significant impact of Social Identification on Employee Performance in Private Commercial Banks of Khairpur Mir's	Accepted

RESULT DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that HR Strength and Social Identification has a significant and positive impact on the Employee Performance of private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. The regression model accounted for a significant amount of variance in employee performance ($R^2 = .845$), with both predictors having very close predictive ability (HR Strength: $\beta = .479$; Social Identification: $\beta = .467$). The findings support the two research hypotheses and provide valuable insights for theory and practice in the context of the banking sector in Pakistan. The positive relationship between HR Strength and Employee Performance ($\beta = .479$, $p < .001$) is consistent and builds on the increasing stream of research on the HRM system strength. This result confirms the theoretical prediction that shared, distinctive, and consistent HR practices can help reinforce behavioral expectations among employees, leading to better performance. The outcome is in line with recent meta-analytical findings which have proved HR strength as a mediating variable between HR practice and employee outcomes. The finding is significant as it highlights the universal applicability of HR strength as a performance driver in the context of Pakistani private banks where the HR organizational structures and culture vary from that of the western countries. Clear HR signals make it easier for employees to understand their expectations, which means that they are more likely to behave in ways that are aligned with the organisation's objectives and will lead to improved performance. This is especially important for the banking industry where the quality of services and customer satisfaction are closely tied to employees' actions. Likewise, the strong and positive relationship of Social Identification with Employee Performance ($\beta = .467$, $p < .001$) confirms the theoretical framework of social identity theory in the organizational context. A strong organizational identity is internalized by the employees, leading to increased motivation, commitment, and thus, better performance. This is in line with the previous meta-analytic evidence that showed that organizational identification has consistently been associated with higher employee job performance. The importance of an individual's social identification is highlighted in the collectivist culture of Pakistan, where group identity and social relations are of significant importance. The greater an employee's loyalty to their organization, the more likely they are to engage in pro-organizational behaviours and exhibit in-role and extra-role performance. The high correlation between the three variables (.892 to .895) and the strong regression model indicate that HR strength and social identification are not just correlated but also have an intimate relationship in affecting employee performance. Such connectedness is consistent with Khan et al. (2025) study which found that social identification is a mediator between HR strength and employee performance. The results indicate that well-designed HR systems play a part in developing employees' social identification, and this is linked to their performance in the sense that it improves their social interaction with line managers and quality relations

in workgroups. For Pakistani banks, this means HR managers should not only aim to create robust HR practices, but also cultivate a sense of belonging among the employees. These findings have significant implications for HR managers and policymakers in the Pakistani private banking industry. First, HR systems need to be built as perceived as strong, with clear communication, consistent implementation, and agreement among employees on HR practices. Second, banks need to take measures to increase social identification, including using a positive organizational culture, acknowledging employee work, and supporting their relationship with line managers and peers. Third, the HR strength-social identification-performance relationship is sequential, meaning that the success of HR strengthening efforts will be greatest if coupled with social identification strengthening efforts.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at finding the impact of HR Strength and Social Identification on the performance of workers in private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. The results clearly support the two research hypotheses: HR Strength significantly positively affects Employee Performance, as does Social Identification. The regression model accounted for 84.5% of the variance in Employee Performance, and HR Strength ($\beta = .479$, $p < .001$) and Social Identification ($\beta = .467$, $p < .001$) had almost equal predictive power. Additionally, the inter-correlations were extremely high, ranging from .892 to .895, for these three constructs, further reinforcing the interrelationships between the constructs.

The study validates the integrated HR strength- social identification framework in the context of banking industry in Pakistan and adds to the existing theory of HRM-performance relationships. The results were consistent with and supported the previous studies done in Bangladesh and China, indicating that social identity theory is applicable across cultures in explaining the impact of HRM systems on employee outcomes. The research aims at filling the gap in literature which was identified in Pakistan by simultaneously studying HR strength and social identification as predictors of employee performance in a single integrated model.

In practice, the results highlight the need to establish good HR systems that are able to clearly articulate expectations to staff and create a context that encourages organizational identification. The significance of these mechanisms to private commercial banks in Khairpur Mir's is highly significant as customer loyalty and employee loyalty are unique challenges for these banks and understanding these mechanisms is essential to design an effective HRM strategy which can improve employee performance and, in turn, contribute to the success and economic growth of the region's private commercial banks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made, based on the results of this study:

The Workshop is suitable for HR Managers and Practitioners

Develop HR systems that are seen as strong: HR practices that are distinct, consistent and with consensus should be developed by banks. This means communicating HR policies effectively, making sure that all departments are following the same procedures, and creating staff buy-in about the meaning and importance of HR practices. The training program of HR professionals in effective communication and implementation of HR policies should be emphasized.

Enhance Social Identification: Organizations should implement strategies to foster employees' sense of belonging and identification with the organization. This can be done by fostering a positive organizational

culture, rewarding employee inputs, involving staff in decision-making and arranging team building exercises to build staff social networks and relations with line managers.

Design integrated interventions that strengthen HR practices and improve social identification: With HR strength linked to social identification, banks should plan integrated interventions to both strengthen HR practices and improve social identification. For example, performance assessment mechanisms should be transparent, consistent, and also include components to promote employees' feeling of belonging to the organization.

Banks Need to Focus on Line Manager Development: Social interaction with line managers is a channel through which HR strength has a positive impact on social identification and performance, and banks should make sure to develop line manager interpersonal and leadership skills. There is a need to focus on effective communication, supportive supervision and the development of relationships with subordinates in training.

For Policymakers

Develop Industry Standards: Regulatory bodies and banking associations should establish industry-wide standards for HRM practices which support HR strength and employee identification, thus improving overall sector performance.

Support HR Research and Development: Policymakers should encourage and fund research of HRM practices in banking sector to continuously improve the understanding of drivers of employee performance in the banking sector in the Pakistani context.

For Future Research

Longitudinal Studies: Further studies should use longitudinal design to determine causal relationships between HR strength, social identification and employee performance over time.

Mediating and moderating variables: Other mediating variables (such as psychological empowerment, organizational commitment) and moderating variables (such as leadership style, organizational culture) should be explored as they may account for other aspects that influence the relationship between HR strength and social identification and performance.

Comparative Studies: Comparative studies across the regions of Pakistan, between public and private bank sectors and industries would improve the generalizability of the findings.

Qualitative Research: In-depth qualitative research with interviews or focus group may be able to give a deeper understanding on how HR strength and social identification relate to employee performance.

Objective Performance Measures: Future studies should use supervisor-rated or objective performance measures to decrease common method bias that occurs with self-reported measures.

Limitations

Though this study is useful, there are some limitations that should be noted:

One drawback of using a cross-sectional research design is that it cannot establish causal relationships among the variables. The findings are associations at a single point in time and longitudinal research is required to establish causal direction of the observed relationships.

All measures (including Employee Performance) were self-reported, which could lead to common method bias. While the reliability coefficients are high, indicating consistency of responses, further research is needed to use supervisor ratings or objective measures of performance to verify these results.

Geographical Scope: The study was carried out in the private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh. The results might not be applicable to all parts of Pakistan or to public sector banks where the organizational culture might vary and HR practices are very different.

Sample Size: 250 employees are sufficient size for the statistical analyses performed here, but larger sample sizes would have increased statistical power and generalizability of the findings.

Limited variables: The study has been conducted only on HR Strength and Social Identification as the predictors of Employee Performance. Other factors that can affect employee performance like leadership style, organizational culture, job satisfaction and work environment were not explored.

Cultural Context: study was done in a particular cultural context (Sindh, Pakistan). The findings are theoretically based, but cultural differences might affect the transferability of findings to other cultural contexts.

Time Constraints: The cross-sectional approach of the study did not enable the study to explore the changes over time of the relationship between the variables, such as changes in the banking sector due to organizational changes or changes in the economy.

However, the study does yield strong evidence for the importance of HR Strength and Social Identification on Employee Performance in private commercial banks of Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan despite these limitations. The results have implications for theory and practice in human resource management and can be helpful for practitioners, managers and HR policymakers in banks.

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