

## **Role of External Corporate Social Responsibility towards Task Performance: Unveiling Serial Mediation of Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment**

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### **Abstract**

The importance of CSR is undeniable—it serves as a powerful driver that boosts both employee performance and overall organizational success. Extensive research is found in literature on CSR and its several dynamics related to the performance. Therefore, the objective of the study is to investigate how employees' external CSR perception influences the task performance of the employees. Based on the social identity theoretical lens, this study drives the research framework of CSR and performance with potential mediating effect of organizational pride and effective commitment. The data was collected from a sample of 372 employees working in private organizations of service sector. For data analysis, PLS-SEM was utilized which validates the hypothesized relationships between variables. The results of this study lend support for hypothesized model. Additionally, it is exhibited that organizational pride and affective commitment sequentially mediate the relationship between employee's external CSR perception and task performance. The findings of this study contributed to the existing literature by explaining the CSR and task performance in the different context that has not been explored yet. Moreover, this study also discussed the robust theoretical contributions and practical implications of the results.

**Keywords:** External CSR, task performance, organizational pride, affective commitment, service sector, Pakistan.

### **1. Introduction**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has acknowledged being the major strategy of organizations for profit maximization and the sustainability (Rupp, Aguinis, Siegel, Glavas, & Aguilera, 2024). The current decade evident the major contributions in the field of CSR and main stream topic within organizational behavior and organizational psychology (Ibrahim, Ahmed, & Nayel, 2024). The wide spread growth of CSR practices makes it imperative to determine how they influence different stakeholders (Ibrahim et al.,

2024). Among different stakeholders such as employees, customers, investors, suppliers and government; employees are the vital to the discussion as they are directly influenced by the organizational practices. Most micro CSR studies focused on external stakeholders such as customers and environment (Hichri & Ltifi, 2021). Employee's judgment regarding organizational activities for CSR makes or breaks their behavior and attitude (Shahzadi, John, Qadeer, Jia, & Yan, 2024) towards their own performance, which ultimately may affect organizational performance (Wang, Zhang, Lu, & Tang, 2024). Despite the recognized importance of employees CSR perception limited exploration has been conducted regarding employees underlying mechanism of response towards their own performance (Yasmeen, Ahmed, & Warraich, 2021).

A handful of studies suggested that employee's performance is heavily impacted by their perception of CSR (Ghaderi, Mirzapour, Henderson, & Richardson, 2019; Yasmeen et al., 2021), which in turn, casts our attention towards whether it is true for all types of CSR or which type of CSR, internal CSR or external CSR (van Prooijen & Wang, 2024). Prior research has often overlooked the categories, primarily because of the assumption of positivity lying in CSR. Moreover, in the case of internal CSR, employees definitely appreciate the resource utilization for themselves. Here, a question arises whether the employee's view external CSR as valuable resource utilization or not? If yes than what is the underlying mechanism? Current literature lacks a unified framework for explaining the impact of external CSR perception upon their performance. This gap limits our understanding regarding employees' response towards external CSR.

Therefore, current study revolves around the following research questions:

- Does employee's external CSR perception affect an employee's performance?
- What are the underlying psychological mechanisms about external CSR, organizational pride, affective commitment, and task performance?

The current study is aiming to empirically examine the employee's perception regarding organizational spending upon the society other than the employee's. The purpose of this paper is to empirically examine the impact of employee's perception regarding external CSR on their task performance and the underlying mechanism resulting in attitudes and behaviors from the employee's perception regarding external CSR towards performance.

The current research aimed at exploring the underlying mechanism about employee's perception regarding CSR and the impact upon their performance. Such as, relating to employee's perception of CSR towards the wellbeing of society, future generation, and natural environment, and the impact of their perceptions upon their performance. Here, performance means the in-role performance. Employees are the facilitator to the external-CSR; therefore, they are linked to both categories. However, their responses towards both categories impact quite differently and their mechanism is also different. Therefore, the

current research is aimed at identifying the underlying mechanism and its behavioral outcomes impacting the in-role performance.

In the literature, external CSR perception has not been examined with the employee's perspective, therefore, in the current research the impact of external CSR perception has been explored with task performance in the presence of organizational pride and affective commitment.

Though, a surge in CSR literature has indicated the need to focus in developing countries in respect of saturated literature from developed nations (Sharma, 2019). The current study is in response to the call for research in developing nations such as Pakistan. According to the Human Development Report (2019) by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), out of 189 countries, Pakistan is ranked 150th on education indicators, while compared on regional bases, it is just above Afghanistan. This situation is alarming, moreover, according to HDR Pakistan is among those countries where inequality prevails in terms of income, education, and health.

Lack of public investment in education, health, and food made it vulnerable for the people to live, however, the corporations are trying to take part in making the situation better and fulfill their responsibility (Ehsan et al., 2018). While doing so, profitability cannot be undermined, so the organizations required such a plan which multiplies their investment. Addressing the scenario, the employee's perspective regarding CSR will help in understanding the mechanism of indirect returns, being the key stakeholder of the organization. External CSR is basically intended to allocate the resources to stakeholders who are outside of the organization. Employee's being integral part of the organizational performance, their perception is very important in this regard.

To attain the overall sustainability and development of the organization, the understanding of the employee's perception about organizational actions is essential (Yasmeen et al., 2021). Therefore, the significance of this study is twofold; it involves both academia and industry. The curiosity regarding investigation of employee's perception about CSR prevails among researchers. They are fascinated to inspect the mechanism of employee's perception about CSR most specifically the external CSR and the underlying mechanism.

Similarly, the understanding of the key constructs through which organizations can achieve favorable outcomes from employees can be considered as a matter of interest for practitioners and managers. In this context, the findings of this study provide managers with strong rationale for employing valuable resources and investing in external CSR.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

CSR refers to the social responsibility of the organizations towards its stakeholders, such as employees, community, environment, customers. CSR being multidimensional concept, has multiple stakeholders some are internal to the organization and some are external. In this regard, CSR scholars classify the CSR activities of an organization into internal and external CSR with the perspective of its targeting stakeholders. Internal CSR refers to the

policies and practices directed towards its employees to satisfy their needs and expectations. On the other hand, external CSR refers to the policies and practices directed to the local community, natural environment, and consumer (Hameed, Riaz, Arain, & Farooq, 2016).

In this paper, we examined the outcomes of employee's perception regarding external CSR. External CSR can have both impacts positive and negative. According to Shen and Zhang (2019) employees have shown support for external CSR in the presence of CSR directed towards employees, however, the relationship was mediated by organizational CSR climate. Employees' positive attitude towards community betterment expenditure could have a number of reasons.

In the current research we have taken the stance of inner pleasure to be identified with a socially reputed organization. Pride is basically a psychological structure which is studied in psychology related to employees and its organization. It is believed that every person has its identity where he belongs to, and these belongings have some certain reputation in the society. This affiliation becomes a source of motivation for them (John, Qadeer, Shahzadi, & Jia, 2019). If the need for self-esteem is fulfilled by connecting to a prestigious organization, it will generate the attitude of organizational pride in them (Ng, Yam, & Aguinis, 2019). The other positive thing attached to that pride is that the member would try to sustain that position or the affiliation with which it feels proud. This attitude brings a number of good behaviors, which will benefit the firm (Deepa, Baral, & Saini, 2025).

### *2.1 Linking Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment to Task Performance*

Commitment is a bond or a link between an employee and the organization he works. Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) defined commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with an involvement in the organization". Affective commitment refers to the employees' emotional attachment, identification, and involvement in the organization, and dominates among the other commitment components in CSR literature being influential towards behavior (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

In current research the focus is on affective commitment as it is more relevant to the emotion perspective which has potential to impact behavior while incorporating external CSR. It has been experienced that when outsiders perceive an organization as positively distinctive, their employees feels pride in their organization; they tie their identity with the organizational repute which enhances their affective commitment (Ahmad & Islam, 2018). The extant literature has modeled organizational pride in several roles i.e. independent, mediator and outcome. Recent research shows organizational pride as a positive and significant contributor towards the employees' attitudes in different settings (Schaefer, Cunningham, Diehl, & Terlutter, 2024). Furthermore, (Hameed, Khan, Islam, Sheikh, & Khan, 2019) tested the organizational pride as mediator in the context of hospitality

industry in Pakistan. The relationship of OP with AC needs to be further explored as it provides the feeling of pride to be part of the organization in which they work resulting in positive behaviors which are beneficial to the organization. Thus, we propose that

- H1: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between organizational pride and task performance.

### *2.2 Linking CSR Perception to Organizational Pride and Performance*

Organizational pride is a very less studied phenomenon when it comes to the CSR literature (John et al., 2019). Previous literature states the direct associations of CSR with behaviors, while ignoring the underlying mechanism pertaining to the underlying attitudes. However, psychological and social mechanisms are incomplete without the pride factor, as researchers give importance to this as an attitude that has long-lasting effects, resulting from consistent activities (John et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2025).

Social identity theory demonstrated that organizational pride bridges the association between EXCSR and task performance. CSR carries prestige and reputation in the community and the overall external stakeholders, developing a sense of pride in the employees. Similarly, Asante Boadi, He, Bosompem, Opata, and Boadi (2020) noted CSR and OP relationship in dyads of employee and supervisor, they asserted the CSR perception increased the performance and the pride of the employees. In the same vein, research on hospitality industry of Pakistan has also affirmed that CSR enhances employee's sense of pride (Hameed et al., 2019). The findings also suggested that pride contain intrinsic motivation characteristics. In a systematic literature review, Madanaguli, Srivastava, Ferraris, and Dhir (2022) reviewed the studies about CSR in the tourism industry from 2007 to 2020. They emphasized on understanding the pride factor as an important mediator. Moreover, a most recent research (Schaefer et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2025) has also asserted the positive role played by organizational pride as a mediator. They supported the stance of positive impact of CSR among the employees in the presence of pride beneficial for both the company and the employee.

So based on the social identity theory, we proposed that external CSR positively impact organizational pride leading to in role performance.

Thus, we proposed that

- H2: Organizational pride mediates the relationship between external CSR and task performance.

### *2.3 Linking CSR Perception to Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment*

Previous research revealed the potential of CSR to impact employees' attitudes and behaviors by improving organizational pride (Jia, Yan, Liu, & Huang, 2019). Similarly, by incorporating a multi-study research approach, Ng et al. (2019) stated CSR perception was positively linked with organizational pride. In the same way, John et al. (2019) also mentioned perceived CSR resulting in organizational pride. According to McNamara,

Carapinha, Pitt-Catsouphes, Valcour, and Lobel (2017), internally focused CSR was associated with affective commitment, and externally focused CSR resulted in employee engagement and affective commitment. Schaefer et al. (2024), showed that evaluations of four CSR domains environment, customer, philanthropy and employee increased organizational pride. However, Story and Castanheira (2019) have found affective commitment to be related and did not find mediation impact in the CSR-performance relationship. Moreover, (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2015) examined four Scandinavian countries and found a significant relation of CSR to affective commitment. Rodrigo, Aqueveque, and Duran (2019) examined strategic CSR and commitment with three mediators to be significant, which states affective commitment, is a major outcome of CSR. Hence, resulting in the following hypothesis:

- H3: Organizational pride mediates the relationship between external CSR and affective commitment.

#### *2.4 Linking CSR Perception to Affective Commitment and Performance*

A wide variety of employees' attitudes and behaviors have been studied in relation to CSR, as its consequences. However, organizational actors have been found to be active agents in shaping CSR orientation and outcomes. Commitment has its profound importance because it has been observed that the effect of CSR on employees commitment diffuse into greater organizational performance (Bouraoui, Bensemmane, Ohana, & Russo, 2019). Such as, (McNamara et al., 2017) examined employee perception of internally focused CSR and externally focused CSR and found two employee-level outcomes, employee engagement and effective commitment, associated with both orientations. According to their findings internally focused CSR was associated with affective commitment and external CSR was linked to both, i.e. employee engagement and affective commitment. They further suggested the need for more nuanced country-specific analysis. According to a most recent bibliometric analysis, the CSR and commitment have been found to be the most influential research stream among others (Frerichs & Teichert, 2023). Moreover, a recent study on construction industry, results showed insignificant results for external CSR and performance mediating by affective commitment (Silva, Moreira, & Mota, 2023). Furthermore, external CSR has been found to impact attitudinal commitment (Chatzopoulou, Manolopoulos, & Agapitou, 2022) having partially mediating impact.

A recent literature review by (Onkila & Sarna, 2022) based on 331 journal articles offered that employees' positive CSR perceptions results in affective commitment. Moreover, they further found that the commitment further turns into employees' work performance. Bouraoui et al. (2019) examined the CSR and affective commitment relation, and developed an indirect mechanism by the mediation of perception of PO-fit, organizational identification, and POS. (Madanaguli et al., 2022) reviewed 76 CSR studies from the tourism sector and suggested that the commitment was an important intervening variable with CSR perspective.

Based on formerly reasoning, we suppose that CSR perception indirectly influence employee's performance via affective commitment.

- H4: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between external CSR and task performance.

#### *2.5 Sequential Mediation Effect of Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment*

Oo, Jung, and Park (2018) used Organizational pride as a mediator; however, they tested OCB in relation to CSR in the South Korean context. In the same vein, (De Roeck & Maon, 2018) have emphasized the role of pride as being mediating mechanism in external CSR and performance whether it is individual level or organizational level. By taking into account the essence of social identity, we argue that external CSR leads to the pride which develops a sense of commitment among employees resulting in increase in task performance. The discussion concludes at the following hypotheses:

- H5: Organizational pride and affective commitment sequentially mediate the relationship between external CSR and task performance.

After reviewing the literature, it is clear that external CSR have been under studied and it is imperative to examine the impact of external CSR on employee's perception and its underlying mechanism. In the current study, our focus is on external CSR which include the wellbeing of society, sustainability for future generations, protecting the natural environment such as switching to renewable energy, lowering the carbon footprint of company operations, collaborating with nongovernmental organizations NGO's.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The target population of this study comprised full-time employees working in private service-sector organizations. The service sector was selected due to its high visibility of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and frequent employee–organization interactions, which make CSR perceptions particularly salient. Employees were considered appropriate respondents because the study investigates individual-level perceptions of external CSR and their behavioral outcomes. A cross-sectional research design was employed, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees in private service-sector organizations. A total of 372 usable responses were obtained for final analysis. The sample size exceeds commonly recommended thresholds for structural equation modeling and provides adequate statistical power to detect mediation effects within complex structural models. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure that respondents met predefined eligibility criteria, including full-time employment status and minimum organizational tenure. This approach ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to their organization's CSR activities and were capable of evaluating their perceptions accurately.

To minimize the potential impact of common method bias, several procedural remedies were implemented. First, respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality to

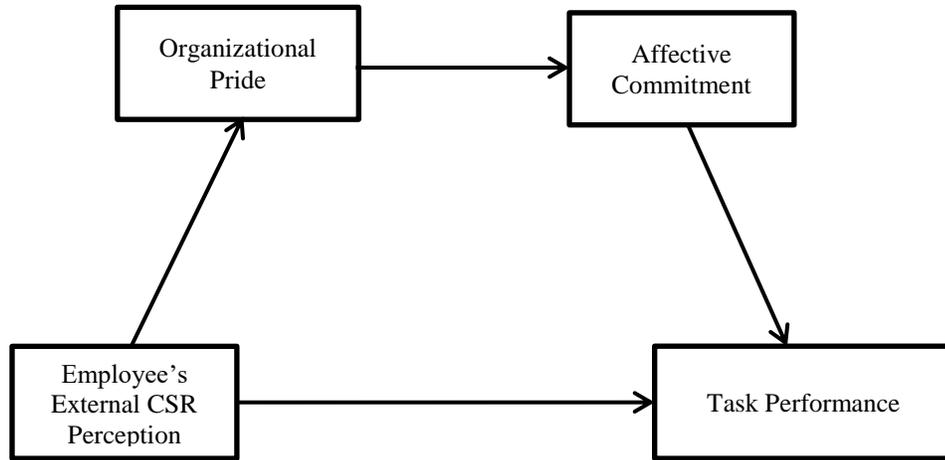
reduce evaluation apprehension. Second, clear instructions were provided, and ambiguous wording was avoided. Third, measurement items for predictor and criterion variables were placed in different sections of the questionnaire to reduce respondents' ability to infer causal relationships. Additionally, validated scales from prior studies were used to enhance measurement reliability.

External CSR has been measured by Turker (2009), task performance has been scaled by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1989) for affective commitment Meyer and Allen (1993) and Pride has been scaled by 3 items by Lea and Webley (1997).

The structural equation modeling has been applied on the data by using Smart-PLS, which is statistical software for helping in social sciences research. PLS-SEM preferred rather than covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) based on methodological alignment with the research objectives and data characteristics. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for prediction-oriented research, whereas CB-SEM is more appropriate for strict theory confirmation and global model fit evaluation. The proposed model includes multiple latent constructs and structural paths (including mediation/moderation if applicable), increasing model complexity. PLS-SEM handles complex hierarchical and mediated relationships efficiently without imposing excessive estimation constraints, making it more appropriate than CB-SEM for the present framework.

As suggested by Sarstedt, Ringle, and Hair (2021) Smart-PLS is among the authentic modern tools employed for primary data analysis. PLS-SEM is very valuable in the theoretical endeavor and for analyzing the decomposable relationships among the variables.

At the start, the data clarification procedure was employed in which just about 20 observations were removed and discarded due to the missing values, and unengaged reactions. As recommended by Mason and Suri (2012), the information clearing criteria is one of the essential steps to proceed before the final testing as it accommodates the data and clears it from the unwanted errors in the data. Moreover, later that SmartPLS checks the data for quality criteria (i.e., consistency and accuracy) from multiple references. Furthermore, the relationships and the hypothesis built were lastly, tested by running the activity, and outcomes were accomplished for mediation. Figure 1 presents the research framework of this study.



**Figure 1: Research Framework**

#### **4. Data Analysis and Results**

##### *4.1 Measurement Model Assessment*

Before applying the final testing, internal consistency is the important to be checked. As suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the acceptable range of the reliability is .70 or above. In this research, all of the constructs had values greater than the threshold value of .70. Meaning, that these measures are showing acceptable score for the internal consistency and when these scales will be used on the same sample, they will bring the consistent results. Table 4 presents Cronbach's Alpha values for each variable. Furthermore, Fornell and Larcker (1981) recommended that the quality of the data is the second most essential feature before employing the ultimate testing. The convergent credibility explain the identical persona, it displays the validity of the devices inside the conception, and it is patterned through with the AVE, the threshold quantity of AVE is 0.5 and above. Table 4 displays that convergent validity, rho-A, composite liableness, and AVE come across the standard values and are essential, reliable and valid. Items with factor loading less than (<0.50) were deleted.

Collinearity diagnostics in Tables 3 and 4 indicate that the data is free from common method bias since all values for inner and outer VIFs are below the 3.3 thresholds as suggested by Kock (2015).

**Table 1: Inner VIF**

	<b>Affective Commitment</b>	<b>CSR EX</b>	<b>Organizational Pride</b>	<b>Task Performance</b>
<b>Affective Commitment</b>				2.008
<b>CSR EX</b>	1.273		1.000	1.661
<b>Organizational Pride</b>	1.273			1.574
<b>Task Performance</b>				

The aspect for appointing content authenticity is introduced by factor loadings of every portion with every potential conception. All items in Table 5 show factor loading values of close or greater than 0.7 with their respective conception which is the threshold score for displaying that the entries are statistically associated with their respective conception as displayed in the table below.

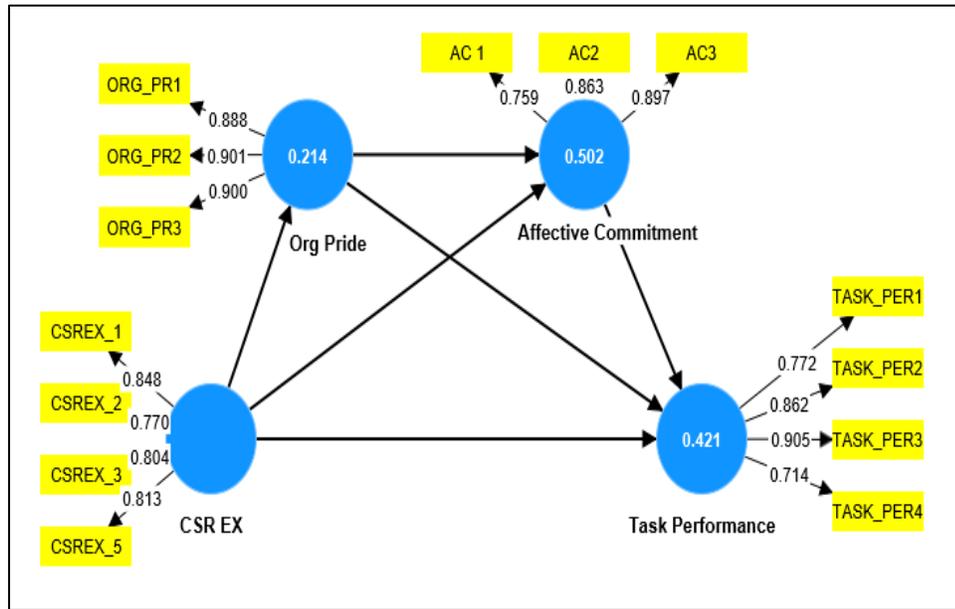
Some other quality criteria is used to verify the discriminant authenticity. It is showed different vital role to check the convergent validity. The discriminant authenticity verify to relate the various items in constructs which should be distinguished from all the other constructs. As each items is the mastered predictor of their constructs and does not create any relationship with the other constructs. For checking discriminant validity an important tool Fornell Larcker Criterion has been used. As recommended by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) this author prefer the square root of the AVE (i.e., the diagonal values) has to be greater than the off-diagonal values. So that, if this criterion is preferably suit then the data will be named as having discriminant authenticity. Table 2 is displaying the outcomes and all the diagonal values of all the constructs are valid more than the off-diagonal values.

**Table 2: Fornell Larcker Criterion**

	<b>CSR EX</b>	<b>Organizational Pride</b>	<b>Task Performance</b>	<b>Affective Commitme</b>
<b>CSR Ex</b>	0.810			
<b>Org Pride</b>	0.462	0.897		
<b>Task Performance</b>	0.377	0.536	0.817	
<b>Affective Commitment</b>	0.584	0.670	0.638	0.774

**Table 3: Descriptive Analysis**

Name	Mean	Median	S.D	Kurtosis	Skewness
Gender	0.404	0.000	0.491	-1.881	.397
Age	28.576	25.000	8.691	1.091	1.423
Degree	1.556	1.000	0.639	-0.463	0.731
Current Experience	4.825	3.000	5.960	4.395	2.204
Total Experience	6.247	3.000	6.935	1.921	1.633



**Figure 2: Measurement Model Assessment**

**Table 4: Convergent Validity**

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Affective Commitment	AC1	0.759	0.792	0.879	0.709
	AC2	0.863			
	AC3	0.897			
External CSR	CSREX1	0.848	0.824	0.884	0.655
	CSREX2	0.770			
	CSREX3	0.804			
	CSREX5	0.813			
Organizational Pride	ORG_PR1	0.888	0.879	0.925	0.804
	ORG_PR2	0.901			
	ORG_PR3	0.900			
Task Performance	TASK_PER1	0.772	0.831	.888	0.667
	TASK_PER2	0.862			
	TASK_PER3	0.905			
	TASK_PER4	0.714			

#### 4.2 Structural Model Assessment

Table 5 path analysis indicate the results of bootstrapping. The results below showing that Affective commitment mediates the relationship between organizational pride and task performance (t-value, 3.033 > 1.96; p= 0.002, < 0.05), so H1 is supported. In addition to this, the statistical findings also confirmed that CSR external perception enhances organizational pride and results in task performance (t-value, 2.473; p= 0.013, < 0.05), hence H2 is supported. This result suggests that employee's perception regarding CSR to community enhances their performance by increasing organizational pride.

Concerning EX CSR and Affective Commitment through the mediation of OP (t-value, 3.153; p= 0.002, < 0.05), it is clear that the coefficients are presenting positive and significant effects. Thus, hypothesis H3 is supported. Furthermore, CSR-EX has been proved for increasing the task performance (i.e., t-value, 2.554; p= 0.011, < 0.05) directly and through the Affective commitment, hence H4 is supported. Last but not the least, CSR-EX has been proved for increasing the task performance (i.e., t-value, 2.714; p= 0.007, < 0.05) directly and through the organizational Pride and Affective commitment Thus H5 is supported. Therefore, it is proved that firms involved in the external CSR they are more likely to enhance the organizational pride, which increases affective commitment, ultimately improving the task performance.

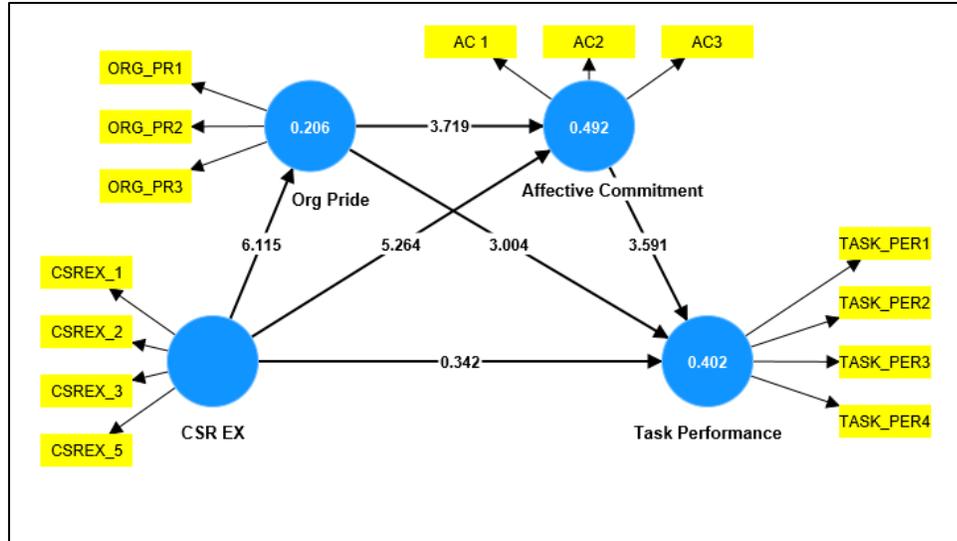


Figure 3: Structural Model Assessment

Table 5: Path Analysis

	Relationships	Original Sample	Sample Mean	S.D	t-Value	P-Value	Decision
H1	Org Pride -> Affective Commitment -> Task Performance	0.179	0.174	0.059	3.033	0.002	Supported
H2	CSREX -> Org Pride -> Task Performance	0.133	0.139	0.054	2.473	0.013	Supported
H3	CSREX -> Org Pride -> Affective Commitment	0.179	0.183	0.057	3.153	0.002	Supported
H4	CSREX -> Affective Commitment -> Task Performance	0.203	0.207	0.080	2.554	0.011	Supported
H5	CSREX -> Org Pride -> Affective Commitment -> Task Performance	0.083	0.082	0.031	2.714	0.007	Supported

Table 5 shows the results of regressing task performance with external CSR perception, organizational pride and affective commitment. R2 value shows that the model explains 41% of the variance in task performance.

Accordingly, the above statistics indicate that EXCSR is partially mediated by TP inferring from the above significant effects of both direct and indirect relationships. Considering

both the significant positive path of the long-way mediation and the significant direct effect of EXCSR on task performance, the current results partially support the serial mediation hypothesis. EXCSR caused an increase to the organizational pride which is followed by affective commitment, leading to an increase in the task performance.

The structural model assessment indicates that the inclusion of mediating variables significantly improved the model's explanatory power. In the direct model, external CSR perception explained 29% of the variance in task performance ( $R^2 = 0.29$ ). However, upon incorporating Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment as mediators, the explained variance increased to 40% ( $R^2 = 0.40$ ), reflecting a substantial improvement in predictive accuracy.

The variance accounted for (VAF) was calculated to assess the magnitude of mediation. The increase in explained variance attributable to the mediators was 11% ( $0.40 - 0.29$ ), resulting in a VAF value of 27.5%. According to established PLS-SEM guidelines, this value indicates partial mediation, as it falls within the 20%–80% threshold.

These findings suggest that while external CSR perception directly influences task performance, a meaningful proportion of its effect operates indirectly through psychological mechanisms, namely Organizational Pride and Affective Commitment. The increase in  $R^2$  demonstrates that the proposed mediated model possesses greater explanatory power compared to the direct-only model, thereby strengthening the theoretical validity of the framework.

## 5. Discussion

The main purpose of the study was to identify a missing link between employees' perception about external CSR and their task performance by providing a novel framework about its mechanisms. In doing so, the researcher also addressed the other gaps in micro-level CSR literature such as unfolding the underlying mechanism by which employees' attitudes and behaviors can be influenced.

The findings of the current study support the H1, Organizational pride reinforces employees' emotional bond with the organization, and thereby strengthening affective commitment through internalized identification processes (Liu et al., 2025). According to the above results, it is clear that pride to be part of a reputed organization develops positive attitude among employees. It results in productive behavior such as commitment with the work, being the positive and effective behavior, is an important construct as we are concerned for the task performance.

The findings of H2 are also in line with the findings of (Schaefer et al., 2024) where they found the pride a significant outcome of CSR and having positive impact on the employees' behavior. Organizational pride is an important attitude that predicts affective commitment. Therefore, organizations should focus on the strategies which are predictors of such attitude to develop positive behaviors which are crucial for their performance. The results of H3

show that OP has a mediating impact on the EXCSR and affective commitment. The results are consistent with previous studies such as Ng et al. (2019) have asserted that CSR results in pride. However, Kim, Rhou, Uysal, and Kwon (2017) and Asrar-ul-Haq, Kuchinke, and Iqbal (2017) asserted that commitment is the consequence of CSR but these studies were limited to the single dimension of perception.

The results of H4 show the CSR performance link is mediated by commitment. This is in line with the previous research on external CSR such as Chatzopoulou et al. (2022) in the same vein. However, the results are contradicting with the findings of Silva et al. (2023), they have also tested the mediating role of organizational commitment in the constructions industry but found insignificant relation, this could be because of contractual nature of jobs as the accomplishment of a project terminate the employment.

EXCSR is basically intended to allocate the resources to stakeholders who are outside of the organization. There were mixed feelings whether employees feel pride or they feel discouraged, with the allocation of the resources employed for society such as environment, future generation and doing sustainable acts. Literature is available about EXCSR and commitment link (Brammer, Millington, & Rayton, 2007), by incorporating SIT, however, the current research has found another link in between which is pride. So, the above findings clear the notion that external CSR leads to the commitment via OP i.e. they feel pride when the society is benefited by their organization, and in return they become committed with the organization to sustain its position.

The finding of H5 supports the notion that employees' perception of external CSR affects TP through the mediation of OP and affective commitment. As suggested by Edwards and Kudret (2017), EXCSR positively impact employees' attitudes and behavior. In the same way, John et al. (2019) also mentioned perceived CSR resulting in organizational pride. Rather than just exerting a purely direct influence on performance, CSR perceptions operate through sequential psychological pathways involving pride and affective commitment (Liu et al., 2025). This study's results corroborate the notion that employees respond positively to the cues that their organization is doing right; they become more productive to be part of the reputation.

In other words, taking the stance of SIT, to sustain the positive image of the firm for which employee's feels pride, he or she will become more committed to their work, and this commitment would assuredly encourage them towards the better performance of their assigned tasks. Consistent with the above, these results give us a clear path of employees' perception that how it is impacting to their performance.

Though EXCSR is facilitating the society, taking the perspective of SIT, employees are feeling positive being identified with a sustainable organization which is encouraging good for all irrespective of customer, environment or society. Furthermore, the employees' are also living in the society if firms are doing best practices about environment for example doing plantation, they are impacting overall community in which employees' themselves are living. It is clear that CSR which is meant for community is meant for every being

living in there, so the notion of good deeds go with it. Hence, employee's being attached to a doing well firms feel pride and this positivity generate positive behavior in them by being committed ultimately satisfying their inner which is good for their well-being and resulting in win-win situation.

The above results lead us to conclude that EXCSR generates organizational pride among the employees' this sense of identity leads them to be committed with work. Following the social identity perspective, employees maintain their pride by commitment. It ultimately helps them in their task performance. Hence, we can safely state that organizational pride is a significant outcome of EXCSR.

Thus, the findings reveal that external CSR activities result in positive attitudinal and behavioral change, as it enhanced the organizational pride, in return employees' affective commitment is enhanced which results in task performance.

### *5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications*

The study has several theoretical and practical implications. First, the study is a significant addition to the micro-level CSR literature by responding to the calls to focus on the individual level of analysis, i.e., how the employee perceives organizational CSR endeavors, and how this impacts individual-level outcomes (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019; Glavas & Kelley, 2014; Khan et al., 2021). By exploring potential mediators of the CSR-outcome relationship, this study extends and refines recent studies by analyzing the impact of CSR. Individual-level of CSR, particularly employees, has largely gained less attention. Therefore, a significant implication of the research is the need to view CSR from employees' perspectives. Moreover, further categorization CSR into external would further expand the literature on CSR.

Second, it contributes to the broader management literature by examining how employee perceptions of CSR are related to employee task performance and its underlying mechanisms, moving beyond the bivariate linear relationship among two variables. The current research is an addition to organizational behavior by identifying attitudes and their resulting behaviors. This is also an addition to the positive organizational scholarship by stating positive impact and removing or lightening the effect of burdensome work impression into positive psychology.

Third, using social identity theory to describe novel paths between the two categories yielded new insights. The framework guides to develop a structure for explaining how task performance is affected by employees' CSR perception. The subsequent findings bolstered existing theories and added to the body of knowledge on CSR and performance relationships. While Liu et al. (2025) established the mediating role of organizational pride, the present study advances this line of inquiry by quantifying the magnitude of sequential mediation using PLS-SEM and demonstrating enhanced explanatory power within a different contextual setting. Fourth, the current study's findings back up the aforesaid

mechanism empirically. Previous research was limited to the direct relationships so there was little empirical support about the sequential impact of perceived CSR towards linking attitudes and behaviors. Fifth, these findings depict that employees' respond to external CSR practices almost equally but develop a unique attitude resulting in different behaviors. Sixth, the current research enlightened the role played by mediators, i.e. OP, AC. Therefore, the current study contributes in development of these variables by providing a way to augment those attitudes and behaviors.

In addition to its theoretical contributions, practical implications are also imperious. The current research sheds light on the positive manifestation impact of micro-CSR policies at the individual level leading to the firm level. CSR is well known for its competitive advantage and is playing an important role in strategic HRM (Gupta & Sharma, 2016). The study shows that employees' perception of their organizational CSR strategies improves employee behavioral outcomes. Organizations can improve employee commitment and performance by implementing micro-level CSR practices. This results in a more productive workforce.

As businesses invest in CSR to enjoy the benefits, it's critical to understand which categories of internal and external CSR investments produce the highest results in terms of performance. Therefore, practitioners worldwide can devise the CSR strategies after identifying the employees' perception about each type of CSR i.e. internal and external to pursue organizational policies accordingly. The current research findings are supporting the notion that the organizational-employee relationship gets stronger (Onkila & Sarna, 2022) by CSR i.e. organizational pride and AC are the consequences of CSR policies.

Today, employees are considered as influencers towards the social responsibility behavior of the organizations (Onkila & Sarna, 2022). Organizational decisions are based upon the demands of their stakeholders, their perceptions are important for crafting the policies; managers should be aware of the development of the perception and resulting attitudes and behaviors. There are multiple aspects involved while crafting CSR policy, therefore it is recommended to develop wholesome CSR programs.

Performance is the major concern for the managers; therefore, it becomes imperative for the managers to consider employees' perceptions. For example, according to the current study, external CSR perception leads to organizational pride, which leads to commitment. Policymakers can enhance task performance by triggering organizational pride and affective commitment of employees. As a result, policymakers and practitioners should be concerned about increasing public knowledge of CSR initiatives. Internal stakeholders should be informed about the organization's strategies, and any issues, they may have, should be addressed through awareness campaigns.

### *5.2 Limitations and Future Directions*

Despite offering meaningful theoretical and practical insight, the current study has several limitations which may offer future research directions. Firstly, the present research is cross

sectional, which limits the ability to infer the causality among external CSR perception, pride, commitment and task performance. Future research may adopt longitudinal research design to strengthen causal inference. Secondly, the mediating mechanisms were limited to organizational pride and affective commitment. While these variables capture important affective pathways, future research could explore additional psychological mechanisms such as perceived organizational support, organizational identification, moral elevation, or meaningfulness at work to develop a more comprehensive explanatory framework. Thirdly, future studies could investigate potential moderators that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between CSR perception and performance, such as leadership style, organizational justice, employee value orientation, or tenure. Examining such boundary conditions would offer deeper insight into when and for whom CSR perceptions are most impactful.

Moreover, the present study is grounded in the lens of positive organizational psychology, there remains a pressing need of future research on the potential harmful effects of CSR initiatives on employees, particularly within broader societal and environmental contexts.

### *5.3 Conclusion*

This study has focused on positive impact of employees' CSR perceptions on their task performance. Particularly, the study aimed at providing a novel framework about serial mediation mechanism. In doing so, the researcher also addressed the other gaps in micro-level CSR literature such as unfolding the underlying mechanism by which employees' attitudes and behaviors can be influenced. Furthermore, external CSR independent, organizational pride was chosen as immediate mediating variables, AC was chosen as second stage mediator and task performance was chosen as a dependent variable. This study uses social identity theory to provide a mechanism and guide for constructing a structure around external CSR perception as well as the results that emerge. The results indicated support for all the hypotheses depicting the partial mediation. The study findings revealed that external CSR results in organizational pride which results in affective commitment leading a path to task performance.

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### **Availability of Data**

The dataset is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

### Declaration of AI Use

No AI tool was used for write up improvement or to generate original ideas, theoretical arguments, data analysis, empirical results, or interpretations, etc.

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