

# Exploring the Factors Affecting Organisational Image: Implications for State-Owned Entities

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**Abstract---** *Organisational image is crucial to attract and retain talented individuals with enhanced engagement and commitment. Purpose of current study is to explore the factors affecting organisational image in purely state-owned organizations working in capital of Punjab, Pakistan. Organisations are forced to build a positive image after the development of concepts like environmental protection, corporate social responsibility and ethical climate in order to attract and engage talented employees. For this study 250 closed-ended questionnaire were distributed among employees of three different wings of Pakistan audit department using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the proposed hypothesis. The findings of the study depict that ethical climate, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental friend lines play vital role in developing positive organisational image. In Pakistan, the work on said variables is not sufficient and public sector organizations are perceived as incompetent, corrupt and crooked not only by natives but also international communal as well. Hence, this paper provides practical implications for employers in public sector to affectively address the factors that leads to positive organisational image.*

**Keywords---** *Public Sector, Organisational Image, Ethical Climate, Environmental Friendliness and Corporate Social Responsibility.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In global economic domain Public sector enterprises play a pivotal role because empirical evidence confirms that more than 10% of giant multinationals are state-owned (Florio, 2014). Currently global economy is witnessing more or less 1500 state-owned multinationals with more than 86000 wholly/partially subsidiaries. Surprisingly emerging economies own 50% of these enterprises. Besides providing employment these state-owned enterprises contribute more or less 10% of the world' GDP (Xie & Redding, 2018). Public sector entities are also important to boost up the process of economic growth and social change (Muhammad & Farooq, 2002).

In Pakistan, public sector organisations are far more important for the economy due to significant economic presence because a large number of these entities are performing at national and provincial levels (Naveed et al, 2018). Pakistan public sector is comprised of around 200 entities carrying out their activities in various sectors involving energy, transportation, engineering, services, hydrocarbons, finance, audit etc. These public sector entities contribute 28% of market capitalization, 10% to total GDP and provide employment opportunities to more than

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500000 people. However, unfortunately, most of these organizations are running in losses due to numerous reasons some of which are operational inefficiency, protecting self-interest, political interventions, corruption and un-ethical practices. According to the report published by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) public sector entities ate 1.3 trillion of taxpayers' money cumulatively in 2018 because their total debt and liabilities increased to 23.5 percent constituting 3.8 percent of total GDP (Khan, 2018).

Kaur (2017) explored that unethical practices and corruption leads to continuous decline in the organisational output along with absence of employee engagement. In the wake of this scenario significance of Auditor General of Pakistan increases even more due to government's proposal to expand the scope of Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) by including regulatory, forensic, information technology, management and performance audit to ensure transparency that resultantly yields in better performance of public sector organisations (Rana, 2017). Furthermore, according to Frontier Post (2018) after expansion of the scope of work, Pakistan audit department has mandate to audit all entities owned by state of Pakistan.

It is important to identify the factors that helps to enhance employee engagement and commitment to successfully instigating and executing the strategy (Moela, 2016), and bringing change (Naidoo & Martins, 2014). Therefore, it becomes essential to enhance the employee engagement and commitment level, working in offices of AGP. In this regard, for enhanced engagement and accountability, an emotional belongingness with the organisation is necessary as elaborated by social identity theory (Trepte, 2006). Among various factors such as trust, communication, organisational culture and respect, organisational image is equally important that can affect employee engagement (Dhir & Shukla, 2019).

Positive emotions like pride, trust and bonding with the organisation are linked with organisational CSR practices (Onkila, 2015). According to El-Kassar et al., (2017) organisation's ethical climate is positively correlated with CSR. Wu (2002) investigated that ethical climate is positively associated with the organisational performance. Furthermore, Moon & Choi (2014) found that CSR and ethical climate helps organisations to achieve competitive advantage. CSR activities results in development of organisational image (Virvilaite & Daubaraitė, 2011). Du et al., (2010) found that CSR is an important tool to strengthen the organisations relations with stakeholders and develop positive image. Scope of CSR initiatives and priorities vary with respect to varying institutional environment and country of origin (Halkos & Skouloudis, 2016). Krettenauer (2017) suggests that due to significance of environmental issues environmental friendliness has gained tremendous attention.

Unfortunately, very limited work has been done to explore the factors influencing the organisational image, of Public Sector organisations in Pakistan. Due to inherent importance of employee commitment and engagement level that can be hanced by developing positive image of the organisation, identification of the factors influencing the organisational image is the need of the hour.

The novelty of this paper is that it narrows the current gap by shedding light on the factors that influence the organisational image which can resultantly lead to better performance through enhanced employee commitment in offices of Pakistan audit department. According to Khalid et al., (2014) due to lack of understanding of factors affecting HRM management deterioration in performance of public sector organisations in Pakistan is evident.

Moreover, factors affecting the employee performance is an area that is still understudied (Khalid et al., 2014).

As empirical evidence confirms the correlation between employee engagement level and organisational image. The findings of study will provide insight to employers and policy makers to construct strategies in order to develop positive organisational image through improving ethical climate and CSR practices emphasizing environmental concerns as well. Public organisations need to consider factors that can contribute in developing organisational image and retaining top talent to enhance the performance level, instead of following the traditional practices. Keeping in view the literature discussed this study sets the following important objectives:

- To explore the correlation between ethical climate and CSR.
- To explore the correlation between ethical climate and environmental friendliness.
- To confirm environmental friendliness and CSR positively influence organisational image.

## **II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### ***The Ethical Theory***

According to Moore (2007) ethical theories lay foundation to decide the morality or rightness of an action. The categorization and division of ethical theories is also a matter of contention (Louden, 1996). Consequentialist approach (philosophical egoism & utilitarianism) emphasises on the consequences of the action, contrary to this deontological approach tried to define actions, which are inherently right or wrong, regardless what consequences of the actions are (Dion, 2012). Ruhe et al., (2008) highlighted that in development of ethical theories, religion also contributed along with philosophical sources. For instance, Islam has made it obligatory to be honest, just, fair, trustworthy and to keep promises and on the other hand forbids breach of contracts, lying, unfaithfulness and involvement in other unethical practices (Rice, 1999).

Ethical theories highlight the importance of developing and implementing ethical climate. In this respect current study explore how organisation meets the need of multiple stakeholders to attain positive organisational image.

### ***Stakeholder Theory***

According to Freeman & Velamuri (2006) stakeholder refers to any entity or group who can affect or be affected by the organisation's activities. Sarikaya (2009) states that stakeholder theory emphasises on managing relationships with a broad stakeholder range for successful survival of businesses.

According to Crilly, Ni, & Jiang (2016) an important platform have been provided by stakeholder theory for a great deal of research on corporate social responsibility. Jamali (2008) states that by protecting interests of a wider network of stakeholders, as suggested by stakeholder theory, organisations may obtain multi-fold benefits. Therefore, Sarikaya & Kara (2007) suggests that, for long-term sustainability organisations should emphasise on being more responsible and consider interests of all stakeholders. Based on the propositions of stakeholder theory organisations need to consider the interests of a broad range of stakeholders including employees, society and environment. Thus, current study aims to probe the impact of CSR activities and being environmental friendly on organisational image.

### **III. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

#### ***Ethical Climate and Corporate Social Responsibility***

Victor and Cullen (1988) defined ethical climate as “the prevailing perceptions of typical organisational practices and procedures that have ethical content”. According to Schneider and Rentsch (1988) ethical climate lays foundation for organisations to perform their activities and to decide which actions are to be encouraged or discouraged. It has been found that ethical climate is positively correlated with organisation’s output and its socially responsible behaviour (Shin et al., 2015). Berger (2007) found that in order to develop strategies, emphasising on socially responsible activities, organisational culture is crucial.

An organisational culture in which protection of stakeholders’ interests is given importance, emphasise on development and implementation of CSR initiatives (Schaubroeck & Hannah, 2012). Considering the importance of culture with regard to CSR initiatives González & Bande (2018) found that organisations with ethical climate have suitable environment for developing and implementing CSR practices. Although several scholars have investigated the dimensions of CSR with respect to China and India but in other countries of Asia a lot more needs to be done (Li et al., 2019; Davidson and Yin, 2019). Keeping in view above literature it is hypothesised as:

H1: There is positive relationship between ethical climate and corporate social responsibility.

#### ***Ethical Climate and Environmental Friendliness***

Although, a number of scholars identified the direct relationship between ethical climate and CSR however, Davidson & Yin(2019); Baumann et al., (2018) associates the contextual and cultural aspects with organisational CSR practices. Davidson & Yin(2019) highlighted that cultural differences and contextual variations may affect primacies of CSR agenda in Asian territories. Jamali and Sidani (2012) identified the charity and philanthropy as a common description of CSR in organisations of developing countries, in America CSR implementation is classified with employee’s patronage, in Europe it is linked with environment protection whereas, in Asian regions prime concerns are given to social issues while implementing CSR initiatives (Skouloudis et al., 2015). During strategy formulation, with respect to CSR organisation should also indoctrinate the agenda of environmental protection (Haden et al., 2009). Keeping in view above literature it is hypothesised as:

H1: Ethical climate is positively related to environmental friendliness.

#### ***Corporate Social Responsibility and Organisational Image***

Taghian et al., (2015) stated “corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the voluntary actions taken by firms to benefit social and environmental causes and communicated to the organisation’s key stakeholders”. It involves organisation’s commitment towards protecting interests of multiple stakeholders, striving for sustainable development and betterment of society (Jamali et al., 2008). Bruch (2005) recognized several beneficial outcomes that could be obtained by carrying out CSR activities. CSR activities leads towards increased organisational commitment (Wang et al., 2013), and organisation identification (De Roeck & Delobbe, 2012). Lii and Lee (2012) found that when an organisation’s CSR agenda takes into account society’s needs and plan activities accordingly it helps organisations to improve its public image as well. According to previous literature CSR activities have become

inevitable for the success of the organisations rather than merely strategic advantage (Falkenberg and Brunsael, 2011). Zainab et al. (2018) explored that CSR activities significantly influence organisational image. Organisations are using CSR activities as a significant tool to develop a positive image (Virvilaite & Daubaraitė, 2011). CSR activities lead to positive organisational reputation and image, hence finally resulting in retaining and attracting competent employees (Story, Castanheira & Hartig, 2016). Keeping in view above literature it is hypothesised as:

H3: Corporate social responsibility is positively related to organisational image.

#### ***Environmental Friendliness and Organisational Image***

Chen (2011) states that, pollution is caused by expanded environmental activities around the globe. For this reason, recent years have witnessed environment management as being crucial element of business management. As a result of increased public awareness organisations take environmental concerns seriously (Rashid et al., 2012). To ensure effectiveness of environmental protection strategies organisations must consider all the aspect of its operations (Lee, 2009). Stojanović et al., (2016) states that for sustainability of the business it is important for organisations to consider the environment in long run.

According to Bri'o and Junquera (2003) eco-friendly have become important for the businesses irrespective of their size whether small or medium. Organisational initiatives for the sake of environment are considered as the part of firm's CSR operations (Carrington et al., 2010). Moreover, firm's initiatives for the protection and preservation of the environment play crucial role in developing a positive organisational image as it shows firm's concerns towards its society (Ko et al., 2013). Earlier studies also confirm that environment protection activities help organisations to develop a positive image in the mind of public (Gou, 2016). Lynes & Dredge, (2012) highlighted that green image of an organisation developed through CSR practices for protection of environment leads towards overall positive image of the firm. In this connection, Ko et al. (2013) underlined the lack of work on organisational environmentalism in Asian countries. Keeping in view above literature it is hypothesised as:

H4: Environmental friendliness is positively related to organisational image.

### **Conceptual Framework**

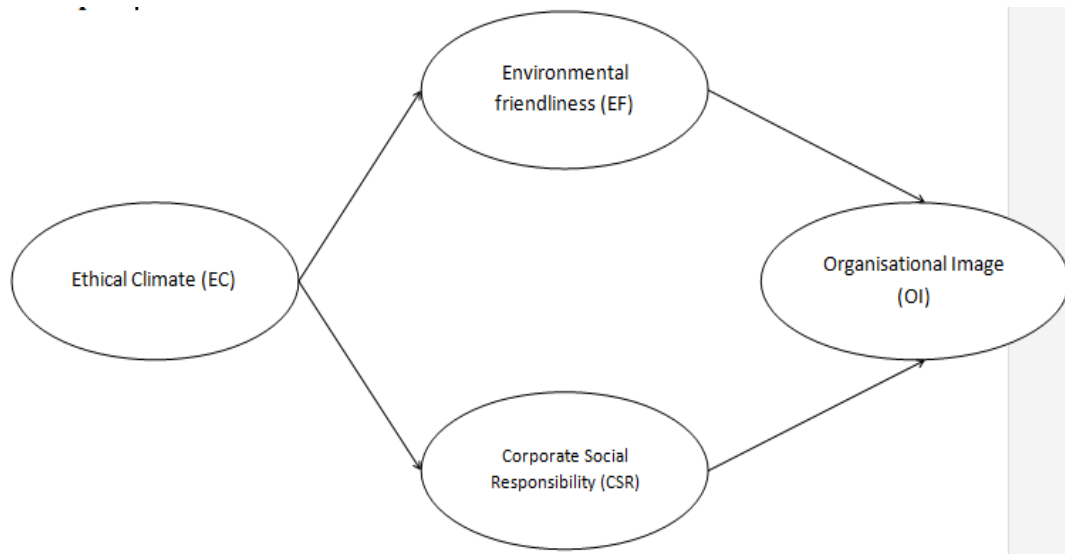


Fig. 1

## **IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Questionnaire developed from literature (Farouk & Jabeen, 2018; Barkat et al., 2016) was used to collect the data. Five-point likert scale was used to measure the variables. 250 copies in total were distributed in three different offices of Pakistan audit department. As total population in these offices is 400 hence according to small sample technique sample size of the study is 200 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

### **Measurement Items**

In this research structural equation model was used to investigate the employees' perception about organisational image and factors that contribute towards its development as discussed in literature review and presented in conceptual framework. A 21 item scale validated by Farouk & Jabeen (2018); Menguc & Ozanne (2005); Barakat et al., (2016) was developed to measure the variables of the study.

## **V. RESULTS**

### **Sample Characteristics**

63% of the respondents were 25 to 35 years old, 36% were above 36 years and older, while only 1% were below 25 years. Majority of the respondents (74% ) were male while only 26% were female. Majority part of the respondent (84.5%) had graduated or masters degree and 15.5% were under-graduated. 43% , 34% and 23% respondents belong to Pakistan Railways Audit, DG Audit Punjab and DG Audit Water and Power. Nearly half of the total respondents were "Senior Auditor", 16% were "Audit Officers", 23% were Assistant Audit Officer and 10% were "Junior Auditors".

The current study used Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyse the data by two-stage data analysis using SmartPLS3.0 (Ringle et al., 2015). At first stage validity and reliability of the latent

constructs were determined by “Measurement Model”, while at second stage “Structural Model” was tested to ascertain the hypothetical relationships among the constructs (Hair et al., 2017).

**Measure Model**

To assess the measurement model composite reliability (CR), convergent validity (CV) and discriminant validity (DV) were tested (Hair et al., 2017). If value of composite reliability is 0.7 or more it is considered as satisfactory (Hair et al., 2017). The results shows that composite reliability of the constructs is satisfactory as values are as follows EC (0.879), CSR (0.910), EF (0.913) and OI (0.908). Cronbach alpha is the measure of internal consistency of the constructs used in the study. As rule of thumb, values of Cronbach alpha needs to be above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). As it can be noticed that all values of cronbach alpha were above 0.70. Therefore, internal consistency exists. Average variance extract is the measure of convergent validity. For satisfactory level of convergent validity values of AVE should be 0.50 or more for every understudy construct in the study (Hair et al., 2017). The results indicates that AVE for CSR was 0.718, 0.709 for EC, 0.638 for EF and 0.587 for OI. Discriminant validity exists if square root of AVE is higher than correlation values among the latent variables (Hair et al., 2017). Results of measurement model has been shown in table-1. This study used Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion to evaluate DV and the results shows that DV exists as shown in table - 2.

Table 1: Results of the Measurement Model

Latent Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach Alpha
Ethical Climate	EC1	0.779	0.709	0.879	0.792
	EC2	0.918			
	EC3	0.822			
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR1	0.800	0.718	0.910	0.868
	CSR2	0.926			
	CSR3	0.795			
	CSR4	0.863			
Environmental Friendliness	EF1	0.731	0.638	0.913	0.885
	EF2	0.849			
	EF3	0.890			
	EF4	0.834			
	EF5	0.732			
	EF6	0.739			
Organisational Image	OI2	0.726	0.587	0.908	0.882
	OI3	0.722			
	OI4	0.726			
	OI5	0.703			
	OI6	0.844			
	OI7	0.825			
	OI8	0.802			

Table 2: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Constructs	CSR	EC	EE	EF	OI
CSR	0.847				
EC	0.761	0.842			
EF	0.730	0.577	0.460	0.798	
OI	0.700	0.696	0.613	0.618	0.766

Table 3: Fit Summary

Estimated Model	
SRMR	0.056

**Structural Model**

At second stage structural model is used to the multi-collinearity through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), model fitness through Standardized Root Mean Residuals (SRMR) and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping procedure. If value of VIF is above 5 it shows that collinearity among constructs exists (Hair et al., 2017). In the present study VIF value of all constructs were less than 5 therefore, it can be concluded that collinearity is not an issue in the present study.

Henseler et al., (2016) introduced and recommended to apply Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) to evaluate model fitness. According Hairet al., (2014) this value should be equal to zero but can go down till 0.08. Value of SRMR showed presence of good model fitness

which is 0.056 for estimated model (Table-3).

Table-4 depicts the path results of all the hypotheses of this study. According to the results all the proposed hypothesis are acceptable. For first hypothesis findings depicts that ethical climate significantly influence CSR with path coefficient value 0.761 and t value 29.337.

Path coefficient value and t value are 0.577 and 11.613 respectively for the second hypothesis hence ethical climate influences environmental friendliness. For third hypothesis path coefficient value and t value are 0.259 and 2.792 hence, supported. For the fourth and final hypothesis path coefficient value is 0.212 and t value is 2.757 thus environmental friendliness influences organisational image.

Table 4

Relationships	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	Decision
EC -> CSR	0.761	0.026	29.337	0.000	Supported
EC -> EF	0.577	0.050	11.613	0.000	Supported
CSR -> OI	0.259	0.093	2.792	0.005	Supported
EF -> OI	0.212	0.077	2.757	0.006	Supported



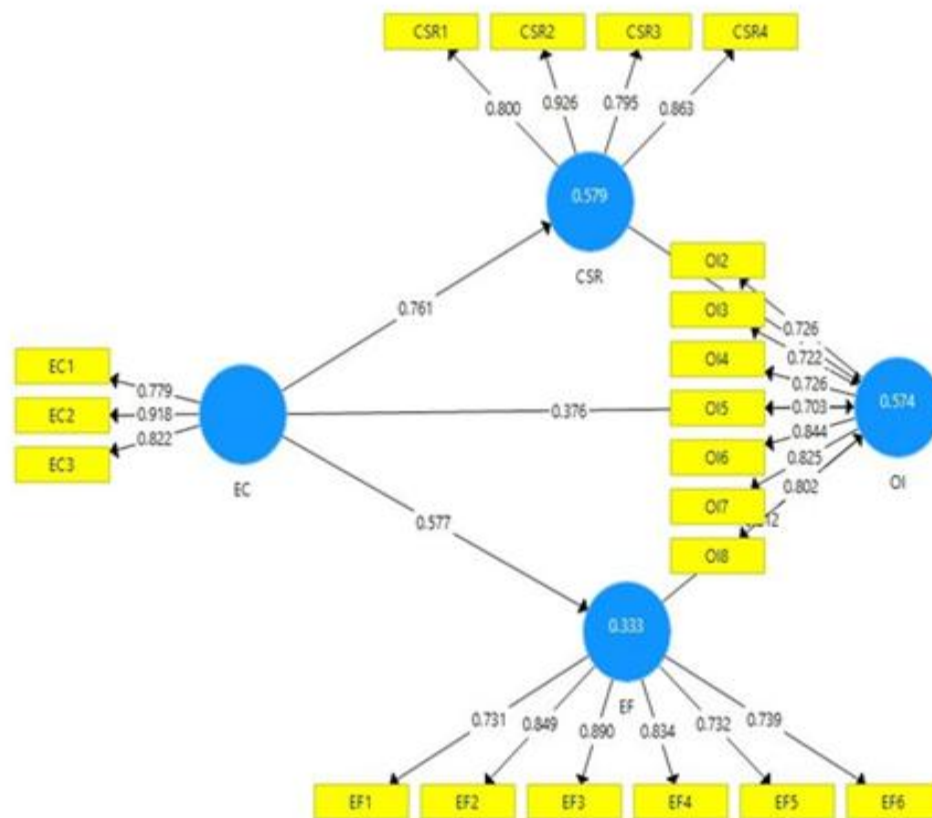


Fig 2: Model Results

## VI. DISCUSSION

The current study investigates the impact of ethical climate on organisational image through CSR and environmental friendliness to attract and retain talented employees. It fills the gap that has remained unexplored by prior studies in the developing countries with emerging economies. The findings indicate that for portraying a positive image, organisations must promote ethical climate and initiate CSR practices with prime focus on environmental concerns. The results of the study state that employees' perception regarding ethical climate and CSR should be taken into account in public sector organisations. Moreover, communicating CSR initiatives and ethical practices carried out by organisation, can instil a sense of pride for being part of a socially responsible organisation that can lead to enhanced employee performance. Therefore, organisation must emphasise on building positive image and must take it as an ongoing strategy that results in employee loyalty. The study also confirms the findings and results of the prior literature emphasising on the importance of ethical climate. In nutshell, the results of the study confirm the significance of ethical climate to develop a positive image through CSR and environmentalism that in result enhances the employee engagement and output.

## **VII. IMPLICATIONS**

### ***Theoretical Implications***

This study offers substantial theoretical contribution to the existing stock of knowledge with respect to importance of ethical climate in developing a positive image of the firm with the help of CSR and environmental friendliness. Results of the study are consistent with findings of Naqvi et al. (2013) where CSR and organisational image are positively correlated. Further, this study helps to comprehend the theoretical reasons that how ethical climate bring change in organisation's behaviour towards society and environment to build a positive organisational image.

### ***Practical Implications***

The current study provides several practical implications for public sector employers for formulating strategies to build a positive organisational image in order to attract and retain talented employees and increase commitment and engagement level of existing employees. This will resultantly lead to better organisational performance, efficiency and output. Organisational involvement in CSR practices and promoting ethical climate within organisation can make employees feel proud of their organisation. This will increase employee satisfaction, commitment and engagement level. Enhanced employee engagement can lead towards several benefits in the shape of creativity and innovation that further results in competitive advantage and more profits.

Public sector employers should emphasise on promoting ethical climate within organisation and prioritize environmental protection in organisational CSR agenda. Employees' training on ethical climate can results in favourably hence, this aspect should be an important element while formulating strategy. To portray positive organisational image, environmental protection and CSR activities must be advertised continuously. For success and survival organisations needs to have strong ties with respective stakeholders. However, unfortunately in this wake, public sector organisations are far behind than private sector competitors. Public sector entities emphasising on keeping strong bonding with a broad range of stakeholders through portraying positive organisational image. Therefore, in order to improve performance, during strategy formulation, public sector organisation must take into account these factors.

### ***Limitations and Scope of Future Research***

The study have certain limitations. For instance, it cannot be generalized to the whole country as only three offices of the AGP, which are based in Lahore, the capital of Punjab, were taken to conduct the current study. Moreover, respondents of this research were mostly middle level officers. Other organisational variables such as departments, subculture, hierarchical levels, formations in different cities and consideration of bureaucracy were not included in this study that can be incorporated in future studies for further empirical tests.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of ethical climate on organisational image through CSR and being environmentally friendly in public sector organisations of Pakistan.

As discussed in the background performance of state-owned entities in Pakistan is deteriorating day by day and

causing decline in economic growth. Thus, it is need of the time to enhance the performance of state-owned entities for economic growth by engaging and retaining competent employees in public sector organisations for which a positive organisational image plays a vital role.

Findings suggest that ethical climate significantly influence organisation's operationalisation regarding CSR and environmental friendliness for building a favourable organisational image in the eyes of employees that in turn influence the employees' commitment level and performance.

This study not only extends the literature on ethical climate, CSR, environmental friendliness and organisational image but also provides insights to retain top talent which in turn positively contribute to operational efficiency of public sector organisations and economic growth of the country.

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