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## **Research Paper**

**Investigating the effect of marketing activities on gaining a competitive advantage with the mediating role of relationship quality (case study: Ansar Bank – Mashhad branches).**

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### **Abstract**

The banking industry is experiencing an increasingly competitive atmosphere. The emergence of financial institutions and their entry into the competition arena have disrupted the existing security margin for banks. They have also challenged the guaranteed market share of many banks. Therefore, the purpose of the present research was to investigate the effect of marketing activities on gaining a competitive advantage with the mediating role of customer relationship quality at Ansar Bank, Mashhad, Iran. An applied research model with a descriptive survey design was used in this study. The statistical population of the research consists of the customers of the branches of Ansar Bank in Mashhad. The statistical population was selected using simple random sampling with the distribution of 400 questionnaires. Expert opinion was used to measure validity. Reliability measurement was performed using Cronbach's alpha which was calculated to be 0.93. Structural equation modeling (SEM) and LISREL were used for data analysis. The results suggest that marketing activities have a positive and significant effect on

relationship quality and acquiring a competitive advantage. They also indicate that relationship quality has a significant effect on gaining a competitive advantage. Furthermore, it was revealed that marketing activities have a positive and significant effect on acquiring a competitive advantage with the mediating role of relationship quality.

**Keywords:** Competitive advantage, Relationship quality, Marketing activities

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