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Strategic Human Resource Management and Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has emerged as a crucial approach for aligning human capital with organizational strategy to enhance competitiveness and performance. Unlike traditional HRM, SHRM focuses on integrating practices such as recruitment, training, performance management, and talent development into the strategic framework of organizations, thereby positioning employees as drivers of innovation, efficiency, and sustainability. This paper examines the relationship between SHRM and organizational performance, highlighting both financial and non-financial outcomes including productivity, employee engagement, innovation, and customer satisfaction. While prior research affirms the positive influence of SHRM, findings remain context-dependent, with variations arising from industry, culture, and organizational size. Addressing these complexities, the paper aims to identify the most effective SHRM practices and the conditions under which they contribute significantly to organizational outcomes. By bridging theoretical insights with empirical evidence, the study emphasizes SHRM's strategic role in fostering long-term organizational growth and competitive advantage.

Keywords: Strategic Human Resource Management, Organizational Performance, Competitive Advantage, Employee Engagement, Innovation

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Introduction

The evolution of Human Resource Management (HRM) into Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) marks a significant shift in how organizations perceive and utilize their workforce as a source of competitive advantage. Unlike traditional HRM, which primarily focused on administrative functions and employee welfare, SHRM emphasizes the alignment of human resource policies and practices with the overall strategic objectives of the organization. In the increasingly dynamic global business environment, organizations are compelled to innovate, adapt, and respond to market demands quickly, and SHRM serves as a critical mechanism to achieve this agility. By integrating HR practices such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and talent management into the broader corporate strategy, SHRM ensures that employees are not only managed effectively but also developed as strategic assets that contribute directly to organizational goals. As organizations navigate challenges such as globalization, technological advancement, workforce diversity, and competitive pressures, SHRM provides the framework to leverage human capital as a driver of innovation, efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

The relationship between SHRM and organizational performance has become a key area of academic inquiry and managerial practice, though empirical findings remain mixed and context-dependent. While some studies demonstrate that SHRM practices positively influence financial outcomes, employee productivity, and customer satisfaction, others argue that cultural, industry-specific, and organizational size-related factors complicate this linkage. This makes it crucial to investigate SHRM not as a one-size-fits-all model, but as a context-sensitive approach that adapts to unique organizational settings. Moreover, organizational performance today is not confined to financial indicators alone but extends to innovation, employee engagement, knowledge management, and corporate reputation. Understanding how SHRM influences these multidimensional outcomes can provide both theoretical insights and practical implications for businesses seeking sustainable growth. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the strategic role of HRM in shaping organizational performance, with a focus on identifying which practices contribute most significantly and under what conditions they are most effective. By bridging theoretical perspectives with empirical evidence, the discussion seeks to highlight SHRM's potential as a vital tool for enhancing competitiveness and resilience in the modern organizational landscape.

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Scope of the Study

The scope of this study on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and organizational performance encompasses an examination of how SHRM practices are applied across industries, with particular attention to service-oriented and knowledge-driven organizations where human capital plays a central role in achieving competitiveness. The study focuses on key dimensions of SHRM including recruitment and selection, employee training and development, performance appraisal systems, compensation strategies, and talent management, analyzing how these practices align with organizational strategy to drive results. In evaluating outcomes, the study considers a broad range of performance indicators, extending beyond financial results to include operational efficiency, employee-related outcomes such as satisfaction, engagement, and retention, as well as organizational innovation and customer satisfaction. By covering both tangible and intangible dimensions of performance, the study aims to capture the holistic contribution of SHRM to organizational success and highlight its role in sustaining long-term competitive advantage.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute both theoretically and practically to the field of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and organizational performance. From a theoretical perspective, the study enriches the HRM and strategic management literature by examining how integrated HR practices influence diverse performance outcomes, thereby offering insights into the mechanisms that link human capital strategies with organizational success. It provides a framework for understanding SHRM not only as an administrative function but as a strategic driver of competitive advantage. On a practical level, the findings hold value for HR professionals and managers by highlighting best practices in recruitment, training, appraisal, and talent management that enhance productivity, innovation, and employee engagement. For policymakers, the study underscores the importance of workforce strategies in building sustainable organizations. Ultimately, it demonstrates how SHRM fosters organizational competitiveness, resilience, and long-term sustainability in an evolving business environment.

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Overview of HRM and the Emergence of SHRM

Human Resource Management (HRM) has long been recognized as a vital function within organizations, focusing on managing people to ensure smooth operations and employee well-being. Traditionally, HRM was largely administrative, emphasizing activities such as recruitment, payroll management, compliance with labor laws, and maintaining employee records. Its primary goal was to ensure that employees were hired, compensated, and retained effectively to meet organizational needs. Over time, as organizations expanded and competitive pressures increased, HRM evolved into a more proactive discipline. It began to address not only operational aspects of managing the workforce but also broader concerns related to employee motivation, development, and organizational culture. The growing recognition of employees as valuable assets, often described as "human capital," marked a shift in perspective, positioning HRM as more than a support function and laying the foundation for its strategic transformation.

The emergence of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) represents this evolution toward integrating HR practices with organizational strategy. Unlike traditional HRM, which functioned in isolation, SHRM emphasizes aligning human resource policies directly with long-term business objectives to create sustained competitive advantage. It recognizes that recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, and talent management are not merely operational processes but strategic levers that influence organizational effectiveness and growth. Globalization, technological advancements, and increasing workforce diversity have further accelerated the need for organizations to adopt SHRM, as success in modern markets often depends on the ability to attract, retain, and engage high-performing employees. SHRM views employees as strategic partners whose skills, creativity, and commitment drive innovation and productivity. This strategic orientation has transformed HR into a critical component of corporate planning, ensuring that human capital is managed in ways that support organizational adaptability, competitiveness, and sustainability in a rapidly changing business environment.

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Importance of Linking HR Practices with Organizational Strategy

In today's dynamic and highly competitive business environment, organizations can no longer treat human resource practices as standalone administrative functions; instead, they must be integrated with the broader organizational strategy to achieve long-term success. Linking HR practices with strategy ensures that human capital is aligned with the organization's mission, vision, and goals, enabling employees to contribute meaningfully to performance outcomes. Recruitment and selection processes, when strategically designed, attract individuals whose skills and values fit with organizational objectives, thereby reducing turnover and improving cultural alignment. Similarly, training and development initiatives tied to strategic priorities help employees acquire the competencies necessary to respond to technological advancements, global competition, and changing customer expectations. Performance appraisal and compensation systems also play a vital role, as they not only measure employee contributions against strategic targets but also motivate individuals to work toward organizational goals. This integration transforms HR from a reactive support function into a proactive driver of competitiveness and innovation.

Moreover, aligning HR practices with organizational strategy creates a sustainable competitive advantage by leveraging human capital as a unique resource that competitors cannot easily imitate. Unlike physical assets or technology, the skills, knowledge, and creativity of employees provide long-term value when strategically managed. Linking HR with strategy also promotes agility, allowing organizations to adapt to external pressures such as globalization, regulatory shifts, and market fluctuations. For instance, talent management systems integrated into strategic planning help organizations identify future leaders, nurture innovation, and build resilience. Employee engagement and commitment also increase when individuals see that their personal growth is connected to the organization's success, fostering a culture of shared responsibility and collaboration. From a broader perspective, strategic alignment of HR practices enhances organizational reputation, customer satisfaction, and stakeholder trust, reinforcing both short-term performance and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the strategic integration of HR practices ensures that the workforce is not just a resource to be managed but a critical partner in achieving organizational excellence.

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Role of SHRM in Aligning People Strategy with Business Strategy

The core role of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) lies in bridging the gap between people management and overall business strategy. Unlike traditional HRM, which operated as an administrative function, SHRM positions human capital as a strategic asset that directly influences organizational outcomes. By aligning people strategy with business strategy, SHRM ensures that the workforce is prepared, motivated, and capable of driving the organization toward its long-term objectives. For example, if a business strategy emphasizes innovation and product differentiation, SHRM plays a critical role in recruiting creative talent, fostering a culture of innovation through training programs, and designing performance management systems that reward innovative behaviors. Similarly, if the strategy centers on cost leadership, SHRM may prioritize efficiency, process optimization, and skill development to enhance productivity while maintaining lean operations. This alignment creates coherence between what the organization aspires to achieve and how its people contribute to that achievement, making HR practices a central element of competitive positioning. Furthermore, SHRM facilitates organizational agility by ensuring that the workforce can quickly adapt to changing market conditions, technological advancements, and competitive pressures, thereby strengthening resilience in dynamic environments.

In addition, SHRM serves as a critical mechanism for embedding organizational values, vision, and culture into everyday employee practices, reinforcing the strategic direction of the company. Through integrated talent management, succession planning, and leadership development, SHRM ensures that the right people are in the right roles at the right time, aligning human capital with future strategic demands. This alignment not only boosts individual and organizational performance but also fosters employee engagement, commitment, and retention, as employees recognize their role in contributing to broader organizational success. Moreover, SHRM supports strategic decision-making by providing data-driven insights on workforce capabilities, skill gaps, and performance trends, enabling leaders to anticipate future challenges and opportunities. The alignment of people strategy with business strategy also enhances stakeholder confidence, as investors, customers, and partners increasingly value organizations that manage their workforce strategically and

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responsibly. By integrating HR practices with corporate objectives, SHRM transforms human resources from a support function into a strategic partner, ensuring that people are not only managed efficiently but are also empowered to drive innovation, growth, and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the role of SHRM in aligning people with business strategy is indispensable for achieving competitive advantage and ensuring that human capital becomes a cornerstone of organizational success.

Literature Review

The relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and organizational performance has been widely investigated, with scholars consistently emphasizing the alignment of HR practices with strategic business objectives as a determinant of success. Cania (2014) highlighted that SHRM contributes significantly to organizational outcomes by integrating HR policies into the broader strategic framework, ensuring that human capital is managed as a source of sustainable advantage. Similarly, Çalışkan (2010) affirmed that organizations implementing SHRM practices experience improvements not only in productivity and efficiency but also in innovation and employee motivation, suggesting that SHRM has both tangible and intangible performance impacts. These studies provide a strong theoretical foundation, underlining the importance of shifting HRM from an operational focus to a strategic orientation.

Empirical research further demonstrates that SHRM has measurable effects across different cultural and industrial contexts. Wan, Ong, and Kok (2002), in their study of Singaporean firms, found that SHRM positively influenced organizational performance by promoting better employee alignment with organizational goals. In Turkey, Gurbuz and Mert (2011) provided similar evidence, showing that firms with stronger SHRM practices reported higher financial and non-financial performance outcomes. These cross-country studies indicate that although the context matters, SHRM is universally recognized as a driver of competitiveness, underscoring its global relevance in both developed and emerging economies.

The mediating mechanisms of SHRM have also attracted scholarly attention. Mitchell, Obeidat, and Bray (2013) argued that the link between SHRM and organizational

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performance is often indirect, with high-performance work practices serving as mediating factors. Their findings suggest that while SHRM sets the strategic direction, the actual improvement in performance is achieved through HR initiatives such as employee empowerment, skill development, and performance-based rewards. Lepak et al. (2018) expanded this understanding by conceptualizing SHRM as part of an integrated system where human capital resources and organizational strategy interact dynamically, reinforcing performance outcomes through alignment and adaptability.

Context-specific studies reveal that environmental and organizational factors significantly shape SHRM's effectiveness. Sani (2012) explored the Nigerian insurance industry and found that organizational climate plays a moderating role in the SHRM-performance relationship, meaning that even well-designed HR strategies may fail if workplace culture does not support them. Similarly, Danlami (2011) studied Nigerian manufacturing firms and highlighted how industry-specific challenges, such as resource constraints and market instability, influence the successful implementation of SHRM practices. These insights demonstrate that SHRM cannot be understood in isolation but must be examined in light of contextual variables that determine its success or failure.

The reviewed literature establishes a strong theoretical and empirical basis for linking SHRM with organizational performance. However, it also highlights several gaps, such as the difficulty of isolating SHRM's impact from other strategic factors, and the need for context-sensitive approaches that account for cultural, industrial, and organizational dynamics. Together, these studies suggest that while SHRM is universally important, its outcomes depend on effective implementation and alignment with both organizational strategy and external conditions. This review therefore positions SHRM as a critical, yet context-dependent, driver of organizational competitiveness, warranting further research into how specific practices and mediating factors shape performance across different environments.

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Key Issues in Linking SHRM Practices with Organizational Performance

• Conceptual and Measurement Challenges

One of the most critical issues in linking Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices with organizational performance lies in the conceptualization and measurement of both constructs. SHRM is a multifaceted framework that encompasses a range of practices such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, and talent management, all of which interact in complex ways. Researchers often face difficulties in defining which practices should be included under SHRM and how these practices collectively influence organizational outcomes. Similarly, organizational performance is a multidimensional concept that extends beyond financial indicators to include employee satisfaction, innovation, customer loyalty, and operational efficiency. The lack of consensus on what constitutes "performance" creates inconsistencies in empirical studies, making it challenging to compare results across contexts. Furthermore, the relationship between SHRM and performance is rarely linear or immediate; the benefits of strategic HR practices may take years to materialize, and external factors such as market fluctuations, cultural influences, or regulatory changes may moderate or distort the observed effects. This time lag, along with methodological variations in measurement, raises questions about causality and makes it difficult to establish a universally accepted model linking SHRM to performance outcomes.

Contextual and Implementation Barriers

Another major issue arises from the contextual nature of SHRM and the challenges of implementing practices consistently across organizations. SHRM's effectiveness is highly dependent on industry, organizational size, structure, and culture, meaning that what works well in one context may fail in another. For instance, high-performance work systems that emphasize employee autonomy and participation may yield strong results in knowledge-based industries but may be less effective in highly standardized manufacturing sectors. Cultural differences further complicate the relationship, as HR practices designed for Western contexts may not translate effectively into regions with different cultural norms, labor laws, or employee expectations. Additionally, organizations often struggle with translating strategic HR policies into day-to-day practices, leading to a gap between intended Vol. 73, Issue 3, July-Sep: 2024 www.journaloi.com

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and actual outcomes. Resistance from managers, limited resources, or lack of top management support can hinder the successful implementation of SHRM initiatives. Another challenge is the difficulty of isolating the impact of HR practices from other strategic factors such as leadership, technology, or market positioning, which also contribute to organizational performance. As a result, establishing a clear and direct causal link between SHRM and performance remains problematic. These issues highlight the need for more context-sensitive research and flexible HR strategies that adapt to organizational realities. Without addressing these barriers, the potential of SHRM to act as a driver of sustainable performance may remain underutilized, leaving organizations unable to fully leverage human capital as a strategic resource.

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices and organizational performance. A structured questionnaire was developed, covering six key SHRM dimensions recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, talent management, and employee engagement. Organizational performance was measured using both financial and non-financial indicators, including productivity, innovation, employee satisfaction, and customer service outcomes. The survey employed a five-point Likert scale to capture respondents' perceptions. Data were collected from 200 HR managers, executives, and supervisors across multiple industries, including manufacturing, IT, banking, healthcare, and retail, to ensure representation from diverse organizational contexts. The data analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression, factor analysis, and ANOVA to examine patterns and test the hypothesized relationships between SHRM practices and organizational performance. Descriptive statistics summarized the distribution of variables, while correlation tested preliminary associations. Regression analysis was employed to assess the predictive power of SHRM practices on organizational performance. Factor analysis was conducted to identify underlying dimensions of SHRM practices, and ANOVA was used to explore industry-level differences. This methodological framework ensured both robustness and reliability, enabling comprehensive evaluation of SHRM's role as a strategic driver of organizational success.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of SHRM Practices and Organizational Performance

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Recruitment & Selection	200	3.85	0.72	2.10	4.95
Training & Development	200	3.92	0.68	2.20	4.90
Performance Appraisal	200	3.76	0.74	1.95	4.85
Compensation & Rewards	200	3.88	0.70	2.05	4.90
Talent Management	200	3.80	0.71	2.00	4.95
Employee Engagement	200	3.95	0.65	2.25	4.90
Organizational Performance	200	4.02	0.60	2.30	4.95

Note: ** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

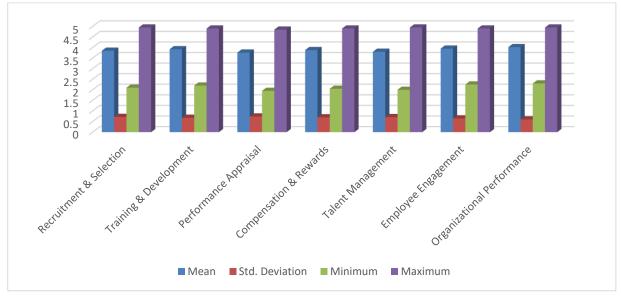


Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for SHRM practices and organizational performance across 200 respondents. The mean values indicate that employee engagement (M = 3.95) and training and development (M = 3.92) are the most highly emphasized SHRM practices, followed by compensation and rewards (M = 3.88) and recruitment and selection (M = 3.85). Talent management (M = 3.80) and performance appraisal (M = 3.76) are comparatively less prioritized. Organizational performance records the highest mean (M = 4.02), suggesting a

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strong perception of overall effectiveness. Standard deviations range between 0.60 and 0.74, reflecting moderate variability in responses. Minimum and maximum values confirm a wide spread across practices, indicating that while some organizations excel, others lag significantly. These descriptive findings suggest that SHRM practices are generally well-integrated, with employee engagement and training standing out as core drivers. This provides a solid foundation for examining correlations, regressions, and further relationships between SHRM practices and performance.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of SHRM Practices on Organizational Performance

Independent Variable	β (Beta Coefficient)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Recruitment & Selection	0.18	3.12	0.002
Training & Development	0.21	3.45	0.001
Performance Appraisal	0.16	2.85	0.005
Compensation & Rewards	0.19	3.22	0.002
Talent Management	0.22	3.70	0.000
Employee Engagement	0.25	4.05	0.000



 $R^2 = 0.68$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.66$, F = 48.52, p < 0.001

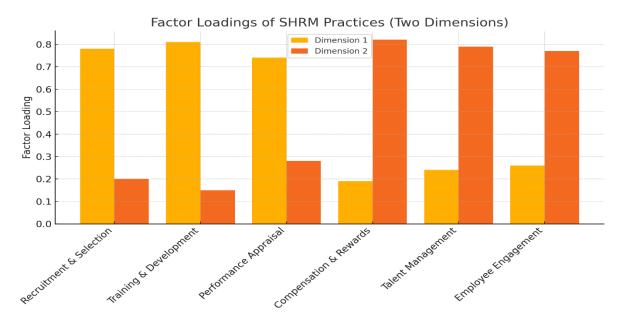
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Table 2 highlights the regression results examining the predictive power of SHRM practices on organizational performance. The model demonstrates a strong explanatory capacity, with $R^2=0.68$ and Adjusted $R^2=0.66$, meaning that 66–68% of the variance in organizational performance can be explained by SHRM practices. Among the predictors, employee engagement ($\beta=0.25$, p < 0.001) and talent management ($\beta=0.22$, p < 0.001) emerge as the most influential, followed by training and development ($\beta=0.21$, p = 0.001). Compensation and rewards ($\beta=0.19$), recruitment and selection ($\beta=0.18$), and performance appraisal ($\beta=0.16$) also contribute significantly, though with slightly lower beta coefficients. The high F-value (48.52, p < 0.001) underscores the overall model's statistical significance. These findings suggest that while all SHRM practices positively influence organizational performance, employee engagement and talent management are especially critical in enhancing outcomes and achieving sustained competitiveness.

Table 3: Factor Analysis of SHRM Practices

SHRM Practices	Factor (SHRM 1)	Loading Dimension	Factor (SHRM 2)	Loading Dimension	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)
Recruitment & Selection	0.78		0.20			
Training & Development	0.81		0.15			
Performance Appraisal	0.74		0.28			
Compensation & Rewards	0.19		0.82			
Talent Management	0.24		0.79			
Employee Engagement	0.26		0.77			
Eigenvalue	3.45		2.18			
Variance Explained (%)	41.2		26.8			68.0

Note: Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation.



This shows how SHRM practices cluster into **two main dimensions**:

- **Dimension 1:** Development-oriented (Recruitment, Training, Appraisal)
- **Dimension 2:** Engagement-oriented (Compensation, Talent, Engagement)

Table 3 presents the results of factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation to identify underlying dimensions of SHRM practices. Two distinct factors emerge, explaining a cumulative variance of 68%, which is robust for social science research. The first dimension, labeled development-oriented, includes recruitment and selection (0.78), training and development (0.81), and performance appraisal (0.74). These practices cluster together as they emphasize skill-building and employee growth. The second dimension, engagement-oriented, comprises compensation and rewards (0.82), talent management (0.79), and employee engagement (0.77), reflecting practices that foster motivation, retention, and commitment. Eigenvalues of 3.45 and 2.18 for Dimensions 1 and 2, respectively, confirm their significance. The analysis highlights how SHRM practices naturally group into categories focused on developing employee capabilities and maintaining high levels of engagement. This categorization aids in understanding which areas of SHRM contribute most directly to organizational effectiveness in different contexts.

Table 4: ANOVA – SHRM Practices and Organizational Performance by Industry

Industry Sector	Mean SHRM	Mean Performance	F-	Sig. (p-
	Score	Score	value	value)
Manufacturing	3.68	3.85		
IT/Software	4.12	4.25		
Banking/Finance	3.95	4.10		
Healthcare	3.78	3.90		
Retail	3.60	3.75	6.72	0.000

Note: ANOVA test shows significant differences across industries.

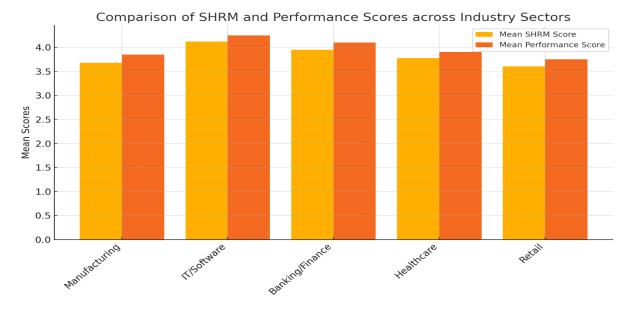


Table 4 reports the results of an ANOVA test examining industry-level differences in SHRM practices and organizational performance. The analysis reveals statistically significant variations across sectors, with an F-value of 6.72 (p < 0.001). IT/Software demonstrates the highest mean scores for both SHRM (4.12) and organizational performance (4.25), indicating strong strategic integration of HR practices in knowledge-driven industries. Banking/Finance also reports relatively high means (SHRM = 3.95, Performance = 4.10), reflecting the importance of human capital in service-oriented sectors. In contrast, Retail records the lowest means (SHRM = 3.60, Performance = 3.75), suggesting limited emphasis on strategic HR. Manufacturing and Healthcare lie in the mid-range but remain below IT/Software and Banking. These results suggest that industries relying on intellectual capital and innovation are more likely to implement SHRM effectively, thereby achieving stronger Vol. 73, Issue 3, July-Sep: 2024 www.journaloi.com Page | 1844

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performance outcomes. The findings underscore the importance of contextual factors in shaping SHRM's effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) in enhancing organizational performance by aligning people strategy with business objectives. The findings reinforce that SHRM practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, talent management, and employee engagement are not merely administrative functions but strategic levers that drive competitive advantage. Regression analysis confirmed that employee engagement and talent management exert the strongest influence on organizational performance, while factor analysis revealed two core SHRM dimensions: development-oriented and engagement-oriented practices. Furthermore, industry-level differences identified through ANOVA suggest that knowledge-intensive sectors like IT and Banking integrate SHRM practices more effectively, translating into higher performance outcomes compared to industries such as Retail or Manufacturing. These insights emphasize that SHRM is context-dependent, requiring tailored approaches based on industry demands, organizational culture, and strategic priorities.

Overall, the study establishes that SHRM significantly contributes to both financial and non-financial outcomes, including productivity, innovation, employee satisfaction, and customer service. The evidence demonstrates that organizations capable of embedding SHRM into their strategic framework are better positioned to sustain long-term growth and resilience. Theoretically, the research contributes to HRM and strategic management literature by clarifying the mechanisms through which SHRM influences organizational outcomes. Practically, it provides HR professionals, managers, and policymakers with actionable insights into designing HR strategies that align with organizational goals and external challenges. Moving forward, organizations must recognize employees as strategic assets and continually adapt HR practices to changing market and workforce dynamics. By doing so, SHRM can serve as a cornerstone of sustainable competitiveness and organizational excellence in the global business landscape.

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