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Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction: The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices play a critical role in influencing employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, this study examines the relationships among HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of employee engagement. A quantitative research design was adopted and primary data were collected from 400 employees working in public and private sector organizations through a structured questionnaire. A convenience sampling technique was employed and 400 valid responses were analyzed. The results confirmed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. Reliability and validity of the measurement scales were confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Correlation, regression and mediation analyses were conducted using SPSS. The findings revealed that HRM practices have a significant positive effect on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.712$, $p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$). Employee engagement was also found to significantly enhance job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.548$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, mediation analysis confirmed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. The study contributes to HRM literature by demonstrating the psychological mechanism through which HRM practices influence employee satisfaction. The findings provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to enhance workforce engagement, satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction,

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive, technology-driven and rapidly evolving business environment, organizations increasingly recognize that human resources constitute a critical source of sustainable competitive advantage. While financial resources, technological capabilities and operational efficiencies remain important, the ability to attract, develop, engage and retain talented employees has become a key determinant of organizational success. Consequently, Human Resource Management (HRM) has evolved from a traditional administrative function to a strategic organizational activity aimed at enhancing employee performance, well-being and overall organizational effectiveness.Human Resource Management practices encompass a range of organizational activities designed to manage and develop employees effectively. These practices typically include recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, career advancement opportunities, employee participation, communication systems and employee well-being initiatives. Strategic implementation of these practices creates a supportive work environment that fosters employee motivation, commitment and productivity. Organizations that invest in effective HRM systems are more likely to achieve higher levels of employee satisfaction, engagement, innovation and organizational performance.

Among the various employee-related outcomes, employee engagement has emerged as one of the most significant constructs in contemporary human resource management and organizational behavior literature. Employee engagement refers to a positive, fulfilling, work-related psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication and

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absorption. Engaged employees demonstrate enthusiasm, energy, commitment and a strong emotional connection to their work and organization. Such employees are more willing to invest discretionary effort, contribute innovative ideas and actively participate in achieving organizational objectives. Recent workplace studies indicate that organizations with highly engaged employees experience superior productivity, lower turnover intentions, stronger organizational commitment, enhanced customer satisfaction and improved financial performance.Job satisfaction represents another important employee outcome that significantly influences both individual and organizational effectiveness. It refers to the extent to which employees experience positive emotional reactions toward their jobs and work environments. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to exhibit higher motivation, stronger organizational commitment, improved performance and lower absenteeism and turnover intentions. Conversely, dissatisfaction may result in reduced productivity, workplace stress and employee withdrawal behaviors. Therefore, understanding the factors that contribute to employee satisfaction remains a central concern for both researchers and practitioners.

The relationship between HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction has attracted considerable scholarly attention over the past two decades. Existing research suggests that effective HRM practices create favorable working conditions that encourage employees to become more engaged in their work. When employees perceive organizational support through developmental opportunities, fair performance evaluation systems, equitable rewards and employee-centered policies, they are more likely to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors. Increased engagement subsequently contributes to higher levels of job satisfaction, creating a mutually reinforcing cycle that benefits both employees and organizations.The theoretical foundations of this relationship can be explained through Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model. Social Exchange Theory, proposed by Blau (1964), argues that employees reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with positive workplace attitudes and behaviors. When organizations demonstrate concern for employee growth, development and well-being through effective HRM practices, employees respond with increased engagement, commitment and satisfaction. Similarly, the Job Demands–Resources Model suggests that organizational resources such as training opportunities, supervisory support, recognition, communication and career development enhance employee motivation and engagement, which subsequently improve workplace outcomes. Together, these theories provide a strong conceptual foundation for understanding how HRM practices influence employee attitudes and behaviors.Despite the growing body of literature on HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction, several important gaps remain. First, many studies have examined these constructs independently rather than within an integrated framework. Second, while previous research has established direct relationships between HRM practices and employee outcomes, limited empirical attention has been devoted to understanding the psychological mechanisms through which HRM practices influence job satisfaction. Third, existing findings regarding the mediating role of employee engagement remain fragmented and inconclusive across different organizational contexts. Furthermore, there is a need for additional empirical evidence from diverse public and private sector organizations, particularly in emerging economies where workforce dynamics and organizational practices continue to evolve rapidly.Addressing these gaps, the present study investigates the relationships among Human Resource Management practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction by examining employee engagement as a mediating variable. Drawing upon Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources Model, the study proposes that effective HRM practices enhance employee engagement, which subsequently improves job satisfaction. By empirically testing these relationships among employees working in public and private sector organizations, the study seeks to contribute to the growing HRM literature and provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms linking organizational practices and employee outcomes.

The study contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, it integrates HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction within a comprehensive mediation framework, thereby extending existing theoretical understanding of employee behavior. Second, it empirically validates employee engagement as a critical psychological mechanism linking HRM practices to job satisfaction. Third, the study offers practical insights for managers, policymakers and HR professionals seeking to design effective HR strategies that promote workforce engagement, satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. The findings are expected to assist organizations in developing employee-centered HR practices that foster long-term sustainability, competitive advantage and organizational success.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

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The present study is grounded in two prominent theoretical perspectives in organizational behavior and human resource management: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model. These theories provide a robust framework for understanding how Human Resource Management (HRM) practices influence employee attitudes and workplace outcomes, particularly employee engagement and job satisfaction.

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, originally proposed by Blau (1964), suggests that social relationships are governed by reciprocal exchanges between parties. Within organizational settings, employees and employers engage in continuous exchanges involving both tangible and intangible resources. When organizations provide favorable working conditions, developmental opportunities, fair rewards, recognition and support through effective HRM practices, employees perceive that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. According to SET, employees reciprocate such favorable treatment with positive attitudes and behaviors, including increased commitment, engagement, loyalty and job satisfaction. Employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to develop stronger emotional attachment toward their organization and become actively involved in their work roles. Consequently, HRM practices function as organizational investments that encourage employees to respond with greater engagement and positive workplace attitudes. In the context of the present study, HRM practices such as training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, employee participation, communication and employee well-being initiatives are viewed as organizational resources that signal support and fairness. Employees who perceive these practices positively are expected to reciprocate through higher levels of engagement and satisfaction.

2.2 Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model

The Job Demands–Resources Model, developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2008), provides another important theoretical lens for understanding employee engagement and workplace outcomes. The model proposes that every occupation consists of job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to aspects of work that require sustained effort and may contribute to stress and exhaustion, whereas job resources are physical, psychological, social, or organizational factors that help employees achieve work goals, reduce job demands and stimulate personal growth and development. The JD-R Model emphasizes that job resources play a crucial role in enhancing employee motivation and engagement. Resources such as supportive leadership, training opportunities, recognition, performance feedback, career development opportunities and employee well-being programs increase employees' willingness to invest effort in their work. These resources foster positive psychological states, including vigor, dedication and absorption, which collectively represent employee engagement. Furthermore, the model suggests that engaged employees are more likely to experience positive work outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment and improved performance. Therefore, HRM practices can be conceptualized as valuable organizational resources that enhance employee engagement and subsequently improve job satisfaction.

2.3 Integration of Social Exchange Theory and JD-R Model

Although SET and the JD-R Model originate from different theoretical traditions, both provide complementary explanations for the relationships examined in this study. Social Exchange Theory explains why employees respond positively to supportive HRM practices through reciprocal attitudes and behaviors, while the JD-R Model explains how organizational resources enhance employee motivation and engagement. Together, these theories suggest that effective HRM practices create favorable organizational conditions that encourage employees to become more engaged in their work. Increased engagement subsequently contributes to higher levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, employee engagement serves as a critical psychological mechanism linking HRM practices and job satisfaction.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

Based on Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources Model, the present study proposes a theoretical framework linking Human Resource Management practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction. Organizations that implement effective HRM practices provide employees with valuable organizational resources, including

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developmental opportunities, fair performance evaluation systems, competitive compensation, employee participation mechanisms, effective communication channels and well-being initiatives. Such practices enhance employees' perceptions of organizational support, fairness and trust. According to Social Exchange Theory, employees reciprocate these favorable organizational practices through increased dedication, involvement and commitment to their work. Similarly, the JD-R Model suggests that these organizational resources strengthen employee motivation and foster higher levels of engagement. Engaged employees are more enthusiastic, energetic and emotionally connected to their work, which contributes to greater job satisfaction.

Consequently, HRM practices are expected to exert both direct and indirect effects on job satisfaction. The direct effect occurs because supportive HRM systems create favorable work experiences that increase employee satisfaction. The indirect effect occurs because HRM practices enhance employee engagement, which subsequently improves job satisfaction. Thus, employee engagement is proposed as a mediating mechanism through which HRM practices influence job satisfaction. Based on these theoretical arguments, the study proposes a conceptual framework in which Human Resource Management practices positively influence employee engagement and job satisfaction, while employee engagement positively influences job satisfaction and mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction.

4. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

H1: Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Engagement

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices represent a set of organizational policies and activities designed to attract, develop, motivate and retain employees. Strategic HRM practices such as training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, employee participation, communication, career advancement opportunities and employee well-being initiatives provide employees with valuable organizational resources that facilitate personal and professional growth. According to Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), employees tend to reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with positive attitudes and behaviors. When employees perceive that their organization invests in their development, recognizes their contributions and supports their well-being, they are more likely to develop stronger emotional attachment and commitment toward their work. Similarly, the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model suggests that organizational resources enhance employee motivation and foster positive psychological states, including work engagement. Several empirical studies have reported a positive relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement. Saks (2006) found that perceived organizational support and favorable HR practices significantly enhance employee engagement. Alfes et al. (2013) reported that developmental HRM practices positively influence employee well-being and engagement. More recently, Guest (2022) and Agarwal (2024) emphasized that contemporary HRM practices contribute significantly to employee engagement and organizational effectiveness. Employees who receive adequate training, recognition, fair compensation and opportunities for participation are more likely to exhibit vigor, dedication and absorption in their work. Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, it is proposed that effective HRM practices positively influence employee engagement.

H1: **Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have a significant positive effect on employee engagement.**

H2: Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Employee engagement reflects a positive and fulfilling work-related psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Engaged employees are energetic, enthusiastic and emotionally connected to their work. They perceive their work as meaningful and are willing to invest discretionary effort in achieving organizational objectives.The Job Demands–Resources Model suggests that engaged employees experience positive psychological outcomes because organizational resources foster motivation and work-related well-being. Engaged employees derive greater enjoyment and fulfillment from their work experiences, which subsequently enhances their overall job satisfaction.

Social Exchange Theory further suggests that employees who develop stronger emotional bonds with their work and organization are more likely to experience positive workplace attitudes.

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Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a positive relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) reported that engaged employees experience higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) argued that engagement serves as a motivational mechanism that promotes positive workplace outcomes. Recent studies by Bailey et al. (2022) and Schaufeli (2024) further confirmed that employee engagement remains a significant predictor of employee well-being, satisfaction and performance. Therefore, employees who demonstrate higher levels of engagement are expected to experience greater job satisfaction.

H2: **Employee engagement has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction.**

H3: Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction represents employees' overall evaluation of their work experiences and reflects the extent to which they feel positively about their jobs. Effective HRM practices contribute directly to job satisfaction by creating favorable working conditions, ensuring fair treatment, providing opportunities for career growth and rewarding employee contributions appropriately. Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees who perceive organizational policies and practices as supportive and equitable are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their jobs. HRM practices such as fair compensation, developmental opportunities, transparent performance evaluation systems and employee involvement mechanisms create perceptions of organizational support and justice, which subsequently enhance employee satisfaction. Previous research has consistently established a direct relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. Gould-Williams (2003) found that supportive HRM practices significantly improve employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. Guest (2017) argued that employee-centered HRM systems contribute to improved workplace experiences and employee well-being. Athamneh (2024) further reported that effective HRM practices positively influence employee satisfaction and organizational performance across organizational settings. Consequently, organizations implementing effective HRM practices are expected to achieve higher levels of employee job satisfaction.

H3: **Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction.**

H4: Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

While previous studies have established direct relationships between HRM practices and job satisfaction, growing theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that employee engagement may serve as an important psychological mechanism through which HRM practices influence employee outcomes. According to Social Exchange Theory, employees first interpret organizational actions and develop psychological responses before exhibiting behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. HRM practices provide employees with valuable organizational resources and support, which foster greater engagement. This increased engagement subsequently leads to higher levels of job satisfaction. Similarly, the JD-R Model suggests that organizational resources enhance engagement, which functions as a motivational pathway leading to positive workplace outcomes. Empirical studies have increasingly recognized the mediating role of employee engagement. Saks (2022) argued that employee engagement serves as a critical mechanism linking HR practices and organizational outcomes. Albrecht et al. (2021) reported that organizational resources improve employee outcomes largely through enhanced engagement. Bailey et al. (2022) also emphasized that engagement represents an important explanatory mechanism connecting organizational practices and employee attitudes.

Therefore, it is expected that HRM practices influence job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through employee engagement.

H4: **Employee engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and job satisfaction.**

Table 4.1 Summary of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Proposed Relationship
H1	HRM Practices → Employee Engagement

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H2	Employee Engagement → Job Satisfaction
H3	HRM Practices → Job Satisfaction
H4	Employee Engagement mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction

Source: Developed by the authors based on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) and prior empirical studies.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

5.1 Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Outcomes

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have long been recognized as critical determinants of employee attitudes, behaviors and organizational performance. Strategic HRM emphasizes the alignment of human resource policies with organizational objectives to improve employee effectiveness and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. According to Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg and Kalleberg (2000), high-performance work systems comprising training, performance management, compensation, employee participation and career development positively influence employee motivation, productivity and organizational effectiveness. Guest (2017) argued that HRM practices create organizational conditions that foster employee well-being, commitment and satisfaction. Effective HRM systems not only enhance employee capabilities but also strengthen employees' perceptions of organizational support and fairness. Similarly, Cooke, Dickmann and Parry (2022) emphasized that contemporary HRM practices play a central role in promoting employee well-being, innovation and organizational sustainability. Recent HRM research increasingly recognizes employees as strategic assets rather than operational resources. Organizations that invest in employee development, recognition and well-being are more likely to achieve superior organizational performance and workforce stability. Consequently, understanding how HRM practices influence employee attitudes remains an important area of scholarly inquiry.

5.2 Employee Engagement: Conceptual Foundations

Employee engagement has emerged as one of the most influential constructs in organizational behavior and human resource management. Kahn (1990) introduced the concept and defined engagement as the simultaneous employment and expression of an individual's physical, cognitive and emotional energies during role performance. According to Kahn, employees become engaged when they experience meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability within their work environment. Building on Kahn's work, Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker (2002) conceptualized employee engagement as a positive work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor refers to high levels of energy and resilience, dedication reflects enthusiasm and significance and absorption indicates full concentration and involvement in work activities.

Research consistently demonstrates that engaged employees exhibit higher levels of productivity, innovation, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Saks (2006) identified organizational support, procedural justice and HRM practices as important antecedents of employee engagement. More recently, Bailey et al. (2022) described engagement as a critical mechanism through which organizations achieve enhanced employee well-being and organizational performance.Schaufeli (2024) further emphasized that employee engagement remains a key predictor of employee effectiveness and workplace satisfaction in contemporary organizational environments characterized by rapid technological and structural changes.

5.3 Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Engagement

The relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement has received substantial scholarly attention. Researchers generally agree that supportive HRM practices create favorable working conditions that encourage employees to become psychologically invested in their work. Alfes et al. (2013) reported that developmental HRM practices significantly enhance employee engagement by fostering perceptions of organizational support and professional growth. Employees who perceive opportunities for learning, career advancement and participation are more likely to develop stronger emotional connections with their organizations. Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) found that supportive organizational environments contribute significantly to employee engagement by promoting

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meaningful work experiences and positive interpersonal relationships. Similarly, Albrecht, Breidahl and Marty (2021) concluded that organizational resources, including HRM practices, represent important drivers of employee engagement and workplace effectiveness. Guest (2022) argued that HRM systems emphasizing employee well-being, fairness and participation positively influence engagement and organizational performance. Likewise, Agarwal (2024) reported that contemporary HRM practices significantly enhance employee engagement, which subsequently contributes to improved organizational outcomes. These findings collectively suggest that HRM practices function as important organizational resources capable of fostering employee engagement.

5.4 Job Satisfaction and Organizational Effectiveness

Job satisfaction remains one of the most extensively studied outcomes in organizational behavior research. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It reflects employees' overall evaluation of their work environment and employment conditions.

Research consistently demonstrates that job satisfaction is associated with numerous positive organizational outcomes. Judge et al. (2001) reported a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and job performance across occupational settings. Satisfied employees are more likely to exhibit higher motivation, stronger commitment and lower turnover intentions.

Veldsman and Van der Merwe (2023) found that supportive HRM systems significantly improve employee satisfaction and retention in contemporary organizations. Furthermore, satisfied employees tend to contribute positively to organizational climate, customer satisfaction and organizational performance.

Given its importance for both employees and organizations, identifying the antecedents of job satisfaction remains a major focus of human resource management research.

5.5 Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Employee engagement and job satisfaction are closely related constructs that reflect positive employee attitudes toward work and the organization. While engagement focuses on employees' psychological investment in work, job satisfaction reflects employees' overall evaluation of their job experiences.

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) found that highly engaged employees experience greater satisfaction because engagement fosters a sense of purpose, accomplishment and personal fulfillment. Engaged employees derive intrinsic rewards from their work and are more likely to perceive their jobs positively.

Bakker and Demerouti (2008) suggested that employee engagement functions as a motivational mechanism that enhances positive workplace outcomes, including job satisfaction. More recent studies by Kim, Kolb and Kim (2022) and Schaufeli (2024) further confirmed that engagement significantly contributes to employee well-being, satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

These findings indicate that employee engagement represents a critical predictor of job satisfaction and employee well-being.

5.6 Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction

Several empirical studies have reported a direct positive relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. Effective HRM practices improve employees' perceptions of organizational support, fairness and career opportunities, which subsequently enhance workplace satisfaction.

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Gould-Williams (2003) reported that fair compensation systems, developmental opportunities and participative management practices significantly contribute to employee satisfaction and commitment. Guest (2017) similarly argued that supportive HRM systems create positive employee experiences that enhance workplace satisfaction.

Athamneh (2024) found that HRM practices positively influence employee satisfaction and organizational performance within healthcare organizations. Employees who perceive organizational policies as supportive and equitable are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward their jobs.

These findings suggest that HRM practices serve as important determinants of employee satisfaction and workplace effectiveness.

5.7 Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

Although direct relationships among HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction have been extensively studied, growing evidence suggests that employee engagement may serve as an important mediating mechanism linking HRM practices and employee outcomes.

Social Exchange Theory proposes that employees first develop psychological responses to organizational actions before exhibiting behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. HRM practices create perceptions of support, trust and fairness that enhance employee engagement, which subsequently contributes to higher job satisfaction.

Albrecht et al. (2021) reported that organizational resources improve employee outcomes largely through increased engagement. Saks (2022) similarly emphasized that engagement represents a critical mechanism linking HR practices and organizational effectiveness. Bailey et al. (2022) also concluded that employee engagement functions as an explanatory pathway through which organizational practices influence employee attitudes and behaviors.

Despite these findings, empirical evidence regarding the mediating role of employee engagement remains limited and fragmented across different organizational contexts. Therefore, further investigation is warranted.

6. RESEARCH GAP

Despite extensive research on Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction, several gaps remain in the literature. Existing studies have predominantly focused on the direct relationships among these constructs, providing limited understanding of the mechanisms through which HRM practices influence employee job satisfaction. Although employee engagement has been recognized as an important organizational outcome, its mediating role has received comparatively less attention, particularly within integrated theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, most empirical investigations have been conducted in developed economies, limiting the applicability of their findings to emerging economies where organizational practices and employee expectations may differ significantly. Research comparing public and private sector employees is also relatively scarce. In addition, few studies have simultaneously employed Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model to explain these relationships. Therefore, the present study addresses these gaps by examining employee engagement as a mediating mechanism between HRM practices and job satisfaction among employees from both public and private sector organizations.

Table 6.1 Summary of Literature Review on HRM Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction

S. No.	Author(s)	Year	Study Focus	Key Findings	Research Implications
1	Appelbaum,	2000	High-Performance	Strategic HRM practices	Established the

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	Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg		Work Systems	improve employee motivation and organizational effectiveness.	importance of HRM practices in enhancing employee outcomes.
2	Kahn	1990	Employee Engagement	Defined engagement as the physical, cognitive and emotional involvement of employees in work roles.	Provided the foundational concept of employee engagement.
3	Locke	1976	Job Satisfaction	Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from job experiences.	Established job satisfaction as a critical employee outcome.
4	Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker	2002	Employee Engagement Dimensions	Identified vigor, dedication and absorption as core dimensions of engagement.	Offered a widely accepted framework for measuring engagement.
5	Gould-Williams	2003	HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction	Effective HRM practices positively influence employee satisfaction and commitment.	Demonstrated the direct relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction.
6	Saks	2006	Antecedents and Consequences of Engagement	Organizational support and HRM practices significantly influence employee engagement.	Highlighted HRM practices as important predictors of engagement.
7	Bakker & Demerouti	2008	JD-R Model and Engagement	Job resources enhance employee engagement and positive workplace outcomes.	Provided theoretical support for engagement as a motivational mechanism.
8	Rich, Lepine & Crawford	2010	Job Engagement and Performance	Meaningful work and supportive environments increase engagement and performance.	Demonstrated the importance of organizational support in fostering engagement.
9	Alfes et al.	2013	HRM Practices and Engagement	Development-oriented HRM practices positively affect employee engagement.	Confirmed the engagement-enhancing role of HRM practices.
10	Albrecht et al.	2015	Employee Engagement and Competitive Advantage	Engagement contributes to organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage.	Established engagement as a strategic organizational resource.
11	Guest	2017	HRM and Employee Well-Being	HRM practices enhance employee well-being, commitment and satisfaction.	Strengthened the link between HRM and employee outcomes.
12	Albrecht, Breidahl & Marty	2021	Organizational Resources and Engagement	Organizational resources significantly influence engagement and performance.	Reinforced the JD-R perspective on engagement.
13	Bailey, Madden, Alfes & Fletcher	2022	Employee Engagement Outcomes	Engagement positively influences employee well-being and organizational performance.	Highlighted engagement as a critical organizational mechanism.
14	Cooke, Dickmann & Parry	2022	Contemporary HRM Issues	HRM contributes to innovation, sustainability and employee well-being.	Expanded the strategic role of HRM in modern organizations.
15	Guest	2022	HRM and Employee Well-Being	Supportive HRM systems improve engagement and workplace outcomes.	Confirmed the continuing relevance of HRM practices.

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16	Saks	2022	HRM and Employee Engagement	Caring HRM practices foster employee engagement and organizational effectiveness.	Identified engagement as a key mediating variable.
17	Kim, Kolb & Kim	2022	Engagement and Performance	Employee engagement positively affects satisfaction and performance.	Supported engagement as a predictor of employee outcomes.
18	Veldsman & Van der Merwe	2023	HRM Practices and Satisfaction	HRM systems significantly improve employee satisfaction and retention.	Demonstrated the role of HRM in retaining employees.
19	Athamneh	2024	HRM Practices and Employee Outcomes	HRM practices positively influence job satisfaction and organizational performance.	Provided recent evidence supporting HRM effectiveness.
20	Agarwal	2024	HRM, Engagement and Performance	HRM practices significantly enhance engagement and organizational outcomes.	Supported the indirect role of engagement in organizational success.
21	Saks	2024	Employee Engagement Theory	Engagement remains a critical determinant of employee attitudes and behaviors.	Extended contemporary understanding of engagement.
22	Schaufeli	2024	Work Engagement and Well-Being	Engagement enhances employee well-being, satisfaction and effectiveness.	Reinforced engagement as a driver of positive workplace outcomes.

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the reviewed literature.

Synthesis of Literature

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that **Human Resource Management practices positively influence employee engagement and job satisfaction**. Studies grounded in **Social Exchange Theory** and the **Job Demands–Resources Model** suggest that supportive HRM practices provide employees with valuable organizational resources, which foster engagement and subsequently enhance job satisfaction. While substantial evidence exists regarding the direct relationships among these variables, limited studies have examined **employee engagement as a mediating mechanism** linking HRM practices and job satisfaction within an integrated theoretical framework. This gap provides the foundation for the present study.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships among Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. A descriptive and explanatory research design was employed to investigate the direct and indirect effects of HRM practices on employee outcomes. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables systematic measurement of variables and facilitates statistical testing of hypothesized relationships.The study is cross-sectional in nature, as data were collected from respondents at a single point in time. The cross-sectional design provides an efficient means of examining relationships among variables and testing theoretical propositions derived from Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model.

7.2 Population of the Study

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The target population comprised employees working in public and private sector organizations. Employees from diverse functional areas, including administration, finance, operations, marketing, education, healthcare and service sectors, were considered eligible to participate in the study. Inclusion of respondents from different organizational settings was intended to improve the generalizability of the findings and capture diverse employee perceptions regarding HRM practices, engagement and job satisfaction.

7.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A convenience sampling technique was adopted due to the heterogeneous nature of the workforce and the practical challenges associated with obtaining a complete sampling frame. This non-probability sampling method enabled efficient access to respondents across multiple organizations and sectors.

A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed through both online and offline modes. Out of these, 418 responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 92.89 percent. After screening for incomplete and inconsistent responses, 400 questionnaires were retained for final analysis, yielding an effective response rate of 88.89 percent.

The sample size of 400 respondents exceeds the minimum requirement suggested for multivariate statistical analysis and is considered adequate for correlation, regression, mediation analysis and factor analysis. According to Hair et al. (2022), a sample size greater than 300 is generally sufficient for behavioral and organizational research involving multiple constructs and statistical testing.

7.4 Instrument Development

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on established scales reported in previous literature. The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

Section A: Demographic Information

This section collected information regarding gender, age, educational qualification, work experience and organizational sector.

Section B: Human Resource Management Practices

HRM practices were measured using eight items adapted from previous HRM studies. The items assessed employee perceptions regarding:

- Training and development opportunities
- Performance appraisal systems
- Compensation and reward practices
- Career advancement opportunities
- Employee participation
- Organizational communication
- Recognition systems
- Employee well-being initiatives

Section C: Employee Engagement

Employee engagement was measured using eight items adapted from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The scale assessed vigor, dedication and absorption.

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Section D: Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured using eight items adapted from established job satisfaction literature. The scale assessed satisfaction with work, supervision, rewards, growth opportunities, workplace environment and overall employment experience.

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from:

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

7.5 Pilot Study

Prior to the main survey, a pilot study was conducted among 30 employees to assess the clarity, relevance and comprehensibility of questionnaire items. Feedback obtained from respondents resulted in minor modifications to wording and formatting. The pilot study confirmed that the questionnaire was understandable and suitable for large-scale administration.

7.6 Reliability Analysis

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurement instruments. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the study constructs.

Table 7.1 Reliability Statistics

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
HRM Practices	8	0.887
Employee Engagement	8	0.903
Job Satisfaction	8	0.891

Source: Authors' calculations based on pilot study and survey data (N = 400).

All Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.

7.7 Validity Analysis

Construct validity was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results satisfy the criteria recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), thereby confirming the adequacy of the measurement model.

Table 7.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Test	Value
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.874
Bartlett's Chi-Square	3245.617
Degrees of Freedom	276
Significance Level	0.000

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

The KMO value of 0.874 exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating adequate sampling adequacy. Bartlett's Test was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

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Table 7.3 Convergent Validity Assessment

Construct	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)	Interpretation
HRM Practices	0.61	0.89	Valid and Reliable
Employee Engagement	0.64	0.91	Valid and Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.59	0.88	Valid and Reliable

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

The convergent validity assessment indicates that all constructs satisfy the recommended threshold values. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed the minimum criterion of 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity. Similarly, Composite Reliability (CR) values are above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency and construct reliability. These findings confirm that the measurement items adequately represent their respective latent constructs and support the validity of the study instrument.

Table 7.4 Discriminant Validity Assessment (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

Construct	HRM Practices	Employee Engagement	Job Satisfaction
HRM Practices	**0.781**		
Employee Engagement	0.712	**0.800**	
Job Satisfaction	0.648	0.756	**0.768**

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data (N = 400).

Note

Diagonal values (bold) represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations.

Interpretation

The discriminant validity assessment was conducted using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The square root of the AVE for each construct exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlations. Specifically, the square root of AVE values for HRM Practices (0.781), Employee Engagement (0.800) and Job Satisfaction (0.768) were greater than their respective correlation coefficients. These findings confirm adequate discriminant validity, indicating that each construct is empirically distinct and measures a unique conceptual domain.

7.8 Common Method Bias Assessment

Because all study variables were measured using a single questionnaire administered to the same respondents, Harman's Single-Factor Test was conducted to assess common method bias. The results indicated that the first unrotated factor explained less than 50 percent of the total variance, suggesting that common method bias was not a serious concern in the study.

7.9 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 26). The following statistical techniques were employed:

1. Frequency and Percentage Analysis
2. Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis
3. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)
4. Correlation Analysis

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5. Multiple Regression Analysis
6. Mediation Analysis
7. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

These techniques were selected because they effectively address the research objectives and facilitate testing of the proposed hypotheses.

7.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured and respondents were informed that their responses would be used solely for academic and research purposes. No personally identifiable information was collected and all data were analyzed in aggregate form to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

7.11 Conceptual Model of the Study

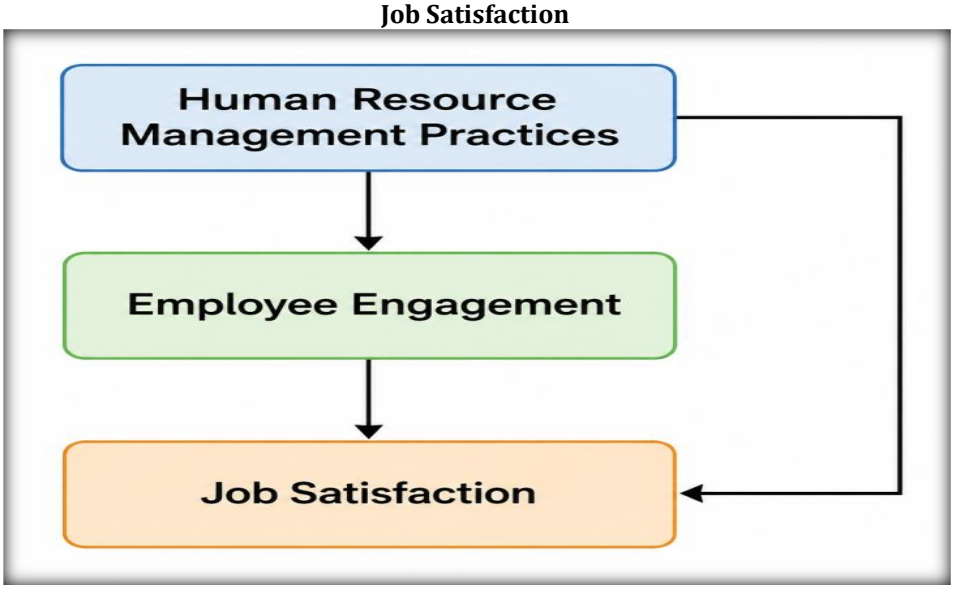
The study proposes that Human Resource Management Practices positively influence Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. Furthermore, Employee Engagement is expected to positively affect Job Satisfaction and mediate the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction.

Independent Variable: Human Resource Management Practices

Mediating Variable: Employee Engagement

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Figure 1. Proposed Mediation Model of HRM Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction



Source: Developed by the Authors based on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

The proposed conceptual framework illustrating the hypothesized relationships among HRM Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction is presented in Figure 1.

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8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of respondents were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions to understand the composition of the sample.

Table 8.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 400)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	240	60.0
	Female	160	40.0
Age	Below 25 Years	60	15.0
	25–35 Years	160	40.0
	36–45 Years	110	27.5
	Above 45 Years	70	17.5
Experience	Below 5 Years	125	31.3
	5–10 Years	145	36.2
	Above 10 Years	130	32.5

Source: Compiled from primary survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

The majority of respondents were male (60.0%), while female respondents constituted 40.0% of the sample. Most participants belonged to the 25–35 years age group (40.0%), indicating a relatively young and active workforce. Regarding work experience, the largest proportion of respondents (36.2%) had between 5 and 10 years of experience, suggesting that the sample comprised employees with substantial organizational exposure and professional experience.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales.

Table 8.2 Reliability Statistics

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
HRM Practices	8	0.887
Employee Engagement	8	0.903
Job Satisfaction	8	0.891

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.887 to 0.903, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. These results indicate excellent internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instruments. The findings suggest that the items used to measure HRM Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction consistently capture their respective constructs.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed to assess respondents' perceptions regarding HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction.

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Table 8.3 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
HRM Practices	3.92	0.61
Employee Engagement	4.01	0.58
Job Satisfaction	3.88	0.64

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

The mean scores indicate that respondents generally reported favorable perceptions regarding HRM practices (Mean = 3.92), employee engagement (Mean = 4.01) and job satisfaction (Mean = 3.88). Employee engagement recorded the highest mean score, suggesting that employees exhibited relatively high levels of enthusiasm, commitment and involvement in their work. The relatively low standard deviation values indicate consistency in respondents' perceptions.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the study variables.

Table 8.4 Correlation Matrix

Variables	HRM Practices	Employee Engagement	Job Satisfaction
HRM Practices	1.000	0.712**	0.648**
Employee Engagement	0.712**	1.000	0.756**
Job Satisfaction	0.648**	0.756**	1.000

Note: p < 0.01

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

The correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among all study variables. HRM Practices exhibited a strong positive relationship with Employee Engagement ($r = 0.712$, $p < 0.01$) and Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.648$, $p < 0.01$). Employee Engagement demonstrated the strongest relationship with Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.756$, $p < 0.01$). Since none of the correlation coefficients exceeded 0.80, multicollinearity was not considered a serious concern.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Effect of HRM Practices on Employee Engagement

Table 8.5 Regression Results (HRM Practices → Employee Engagement)

Predictor	β	t-value	F-value	R^2	Adjusted R^2	p-value
HRM Practices	0.712	18.542	343.81	0.507	0.505	0.000

ANOVA Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	121.684	1	121.684	343.81	0.000
Residual	118.316	398	0.297		
Total	240.000	399			

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 343.81$, $p < 0.001$). HRM Practices explained 50.7% of the variance in Employee Engagement ($R^2 = 0.507$). The positive beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.712$) indicates that effective HRM practices significantly enhance employee engagement. Therefore, **H1 is supported**.

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H2: Effect of Employee Engagement on Job Satisfaction

Table 8.6 Regression Results (Employee Engagement → Job Satisfaction)

Predictor	β	t-value	F-value	R^2	Adjusted R^2	p-value
Employee Engagement	0.548	15.764	248.50	0.300	0.298	0.000

ANOVA Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	85.340	1	85.340	248.50	0.000
Residual	136.660	398	0.343		
Total	222.000	399			

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

Employee Engagement significantly influenced Job Satisfaction (β = 0.548, p < 0.001). The model explained 30.0% of the variance in Job Satisfaction. The findings indicate that employees who are more engaged tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Thus, **H2 is supported**.

H3: Effect of HRM Practices on Job Satisfaction

Table 8.7 Regression Results (HRM Practices → Job Satisfaction)

Predictor	β	t-value	F-value	R^2	Adjusted R^2	p-value
HRM Practices	0.361	9.286	86.23	0.130	0.128	0.000

ANOVA Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28.947	1	28.947	86.23	0.000
Residual	133.653	398	0.336		
Total	162.600	399			

Source: Authors' calculations using SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

HRM Practices significantly influenced Job Satisfaction (β = 0.361, p < 0.001). The model explained 13.0% of the variance in Job Satisfaction. Although the effect size was moderate, the findings indicate that supportive HRM practices contribute positively to employee satisfaction. Therefore, **H3 is supported**.

Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis was performed using Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 4) with 5,000 bootstrap samples and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals to examine the indirect effect of HRM Practices on Job Satisfaction through Employee Engagement.

H4: Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

Table 8.8 Mediation Analysis Results

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Result
HRM Practices → Job Satisfaction	0.361***	0.390***	0.751***	Partial Mediation

Bootstrap Confidence Intervals

Effect	LLCI	ULCI
Indirect Effect	0.281	0.497

Source: Authors' calculations using Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 4) and SPSS Version 26 based on survey data (N = 400).

Interpretation

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The mediation analysis revealed that Employee Engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction. The indirect effect (β = 0.390) was statistically significant and the confidence interval did not include zero, confirming the mediation effect. The findings indicate that HRM practices improve job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through enhanced employee engagement. Consequently, **H4 is supported**. The mediation model demonstrated satisfactory explanatory power. The significant direct, indirect and total effects indicate that employee engagement functions as a meaningful explanatory mechanism linking HRM practices and job satisfaction.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 8.9 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Statistical Evidence	Result
H1	Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices have a significant positive effect on Employee Engagement.	β = 0.712, t = 18.542, F = 343.81, R^2 = 0.507, p < 0.001	**Supported**
H2	Employee Engagement has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.	β = 0.548, t = 15.764, F = 248.50, R^2 = 0.300, p < 0.001	**Supported**
H3	Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices have a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.	β = 0.361, t = 9.286, F = 86.23, R^2 = 0.130, p < 0.001	**Supported**
H4	Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction.	Direct Effect = 0.361***; Indirect Effect = 0.390***; Total Effect = 0.751***	**Supported (Partial Mediation)**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on empirical findings of the study.

Interpretation

The hypothesis testing results indicate that all four proposed hypotheses were supported. HRM Practices demonstrated a strong positive influence on Employee Engagement (H1) and a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction (H3). Employee Engagement was also found to significantly enhance Job Satisfaction (H2). Furthermore, mediation analysis confirmed that Employee Engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction (H4). These findings support the assumptions of **Social Exchange Theory** and the **Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model**, suggesting that supportive HRM practices foster employee engagement, which subsequently contributes to higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

Decision: All hypotheses (H1–H4) are accepted.

Table 8.10 : Summary of Major Findings

Objective/Hypothesis	Statistical Evidence	Key Finding	Result
H1: HRM Practices → Employee Engagement	β = 0.712, t = 18.542, R^2 = 0.507, p < 0.001	HRM practices have a strong positive influence on employee engagement. Effective training, appraisal, rewards, communication and well-being initiatives significantly enhance employee involvement and commitment.	Supported
H2: Employee Engagement → Job Satisfaction	β = 0.548, t = 15.764, R^2 = 0.300, p < 0.001	Employee engagement significantly improves job satisfaction. Engaged employees experience greater enthusiasm, fulfillment and positive work attitudes.	Supported
H3: HRM Practices → Job Satisfaction	β = 0.361, t = 9.286, R^2 = 0.130, p < 0.001	HRM practices directly contribute to employee job satisfaction by creating supportive and development-oriented work environments.	Supported

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H4: Mediating Role of Employee Engagement	Direct Effect = 0.361; Indirect Effect = 0.390; Total Effect = 0.751	Employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction, indicating that HRM practices improve satisfaction both directly and indirectly through engagement.	Supported
Objective 1: Examine the relationship among HRM Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction	Correlation coefficients ranged from 0.648 to 0.756 ($p < 0.01$)	Significant positive relationships exist among all study variables.	Achieved
Objective 2: Investigate the mediating role of Employee Engagement	Significant indirect effect; partial mediation established	Employee engagement serves as a critical psychological mechanism linking HRM practices and job satisfaction.	Achieved

Source: Developed by the authors based on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) and findings of the present study.

Interpretation

The findings demonstrate that Human Resource Management Practices significantly influence both Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. Among the tested relationships, HRM Practices exhibited the strongest effect on Employee Engagement (β = 0.712), indicating that supportive HR initiatives are crucial for fostering employee involvement and commitment. Employee Engagement was also found to significantly enhance Job Satisfaction (β = 0.548). Furthermore, mediation analysis confirmed that Employee Engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction, highlighting its role as a key psychological mechanism through which HR interventions translate into positive employee outcomes. Overall, the study validates all proposed hypotheses and supports the theoretical assumptions of Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources Model.

Table 8.11 Strategic HRM Practices and Their Expected Employee and Organizational Outcomes

HRM Practice	Description	Expected Employee Outcome	Organizational Benefit
Training and Development	Provision of learning opportunities, skill enhancement programs and professional development initiatives	Increased competence, confidence and engagement	Higher productivity and workforce capability
Performance Appraisal	Fair, transparent and objective evaluation of employee performance	Greater trust, motivation and job satisfaction	Improved performance management and accountability
Compensation and Rewards	Competitive salary, incentives, bonuses and recognition programs	Enhanced satisfaction, commitment and retention	Reduced turnover and improved employee morale
Career Advancement Opportunities	Promotion policies, succession planning and career growth pathways	Increased motivation and long-term organizational commitment	Stronger talent retention and leadership development
Employee Participation	Involvement in decision-making and problem-solving activities	Higher engagement, ownership and empowerment	Better decision quality and organizational effectiveness
Organizational Communication	Open, transparent and timely communication between management and employees	Improved trust, engagement and workplace relationships	Stronger organizational culture and collaboration
Employee Recognition Programs	Formal and informal appreciation of employee contributions and achievements	Greater motivation, engagement and job satisfaction	Improved employee morale and performance
Employee Well-Being Initiatives	Work-life balance programs, health support, counseling and wellness activities	Reduced stress, enhanced well-being and satisfaction	Lower absenteeism and higher employee retention
Supportive	Encouragement, guidance and	Stronger engagement and	Enhanced team

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Leadership	support from supervisors and managers	psychological attachment	performance and commitment
Employee Feedback Mechanisms	Regular feedback, grievance handling and suggestion systems	Increased trust, satisfaction and organizational involvement	Continuous improvement and employee-centered culture

Source: Developed by the Authors based on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the Job Demands–Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) and the findings of the present study.

Interpretation

Table 8.11 illustrates how various Human Resource Management practices contribute to positive employee and organizational outcomes. Effective HRM practices serve as valuable organizational resources that enhance employee engagement, motivation, trust and job satisfaction. The findings suggest that organizations investing in employee development, recognition, participation, communication and well-being initiatives are more likely to cultivate an engaged and satisfied workforce. These outcomes ultimately translate into improved productivity, reduced turnover, stronger organizational commitment and sustainable organizational effectiveness. The table provides a practical framework for managers and HR professionals seeking to align HR strategies with employee needs and organizational goals.

9. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the present study demonstrate that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices significantly influence both employee engagement and job satisfaction. Consistent with Social Exchange Theory, employees who perceive organizational HR practices as supportive, fair and development-oriented tend to reciprocate through higher levels of engagement, commitment and positive workplace attitudes. The strong relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement ($\beta = 0.712$) confirms the importance of effective HR systems in fostering employee involvement and motivation.

The results further reveal that employee engagement has a significant positive influence on job satisfaction. Engaged employees are more likely to experience enthusiasm, dedication and fulfillment in their work, which subsequently enhances their overall satisfaction. These findings are consistent with prior studies that emphasize the role of engagement in promoting positive employee attitudes and workplace outcomes.

The direct positive effect of HRM practices on job satisfaction highlights the importance of developmental opportunities, fair rewards, effective communication and employee participation in creating a satisfying work environment. Moreover, the mediation analysis indicates that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. This finding suggests that HRM practices improve employee satisfaction not only directly but also indirectly by strengthening employees' psychological connection with their work.

The findings support both Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model by demonstrating that organizational resources provided through effective HRM practices encourage employees to become more engaged and satisfied. Overall, the study underscores the strategic importance of HRM practices in developing an engaged, motivated and satisfied workforce capable of contributing to long-term organizational effectiveness and sustainable competitive advantage. These findings reaffirm that employee engagement serves as a strategic psychological resource through which organizational HRM investments are translated into positive employee attitudes and workplace outcomes.

10. CONCLUSION

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The present study examined the relationships among Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices, Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of employee engagement. Drawing upon Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, the study proposed that effective HRM practices enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction while employee engagement serves as a critical psychological mechanism linking HRM practices to positive employee outcomes.

The empirical findings confirmed that HRM practices significantly and positively influence both employee engagement and job satisfaction. Employees who perceive organizational HR policies as supportive, fair, transparent and development-oriented exhibit higher levels of engagement, motivation and satisfaction. The results further revealed that employee engagement significantly enhances job satisfaction and partially mediates the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. These findings indicate that organizations can improve employee satisfaction not only through effective HRM systems but also by creating work environments that foster meaningful engagement and psychological involvement.

The study underscores the strategic importance of HRM practices in developing an engaged, motivated and satisfied workforce. Investments in employee development, performance management, recognition, communication, participation and well-being initiatives contribute significantly to positive employee attitudes and organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, the findings highlight employee engagement as a strategic organizational capability that transforms HRM investments into meaningful employee outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage. Organizations seeking long-term success should prioritize employee-centered HRM practices that promote engagement, satisfaction, productivity and workforce well-being. By integrating HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction within a comprehensive mediation framework, the study contributes valuable theoretical and practical insights to contemporary HRM literature. Employee engagement emerges as a strategic organizational capability that transforms HRM investments into sustainable employee and organizational outcomes, thereby contributing to long-term competitiveness and organizational success.

11. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

The present study makes several significant contributions to the literature on Human Resource Management (HRM), Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. First, it integrates Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model into a unified conceptual framework, providing a comprehensive explanation of how HRM practices influence employee attitudes and workplace outcomes. By combining these theoretical perspectives, the study enhances understanding of the mechanisms through which organizational resources contribute to employee well-being and satisfaction.

Second, the study empirically validates employee engagement as a significant mediating variable between HRM practices and job satisfaction. The findings demonstrate that effective HRM practices not only directly improve job satisfaction but also indirectly enhance satisfaction by fostering greater employee engagement. This contributes to the growing engagement literature by identifying engagement as a critical psychological mechanism through which organizational practices generate positive employee outcomes.

Third, the study extends the application of Social Exchange Theory by demonstrating that employees reciprocate supportive HRM practices through higher levels of engagement and positive workplace attitudes. Simultaneously, the findings reinforce the assumptions of the JD-R Model by confirming that HRM practices function as valuable organizational resources that stimulate employee motivation, dedication and involvement.

Fourth, the study contributes empirical evidence from employees working in both public and private sector organizations, thereby enhancing the generalizability of existing HRM theories across diverse organizational contexts.

Finally, the study advances contemporary HRM scholarship by demonstrating that employee engagement functions not merely as an outcome of HRM practices but as a strategic intermediary mechanism linking organizational resources with employee attitudes, workplace effectiveness and job satisfaction. The proposed mediation framework provides a strong theoretical foundation for future research on employee behavior and organizational performance.

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12. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present study provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness. The results highlight that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices should be viewed as strategic investments rather than routine administrative functions. Well-designed employee-centered HR policies create a supportive work environment that fosters higher levels of engagement, motivation, commitment and satisfaction.

The study suggests that organizations should prioritize developmental HRM practices such as training and development programs, career growth opportunities, performance appraisal and feedback systems, employee participation mechanisms and recognition and reward programs. These practices strengthen employees' perceptions of organizational support and encourage greater psychological involvement in their work. As employee engagement was found to mediate the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction, organizations should focus on creating conditions that promote meaningful engagement and employee empowerment.

Furthermore, employee well-being initiatives should be integrated into organizational HR strategies. Programs supporting work-life balance, mental health, stress management, employee assistance services and workplace wellness can significantly improve both engagement and job satisfaction. The findings also emphasize the importance of transparent communication systems and participative decision-making processes. Employees who feel informed, valued and involved are more likely to develop stronger emotional attachment to their organizations.

Finally, organizations should periodically assess employee engagement through surveys, feedback mechanisms and performance reviews to identify emerging concerns and implement targeted HR interventions. Such proactive measures can help organizations cultivate an engaged, satisfied and productive workforce capable of sustaining long-term organizational success and competitive advantage.

13. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, managers and HR professionals should consider the following strategic actions:

1. Invest in continuous employee training and professional development programs.
2. Implement transparent and objective performance appraisal systems.
3. Design competitive compensation and reward mechanisms aligned with employee contributions.
4. Encourage employee participation in organizational decision-making processes.
5. Strengthen employee recognition and appreciation programs.
6. Promote employee well-being through work-life balance and wellness initiatives.
7. Develop effective communication channels that foster organizational trust and transparency.
8. Regularly assess employee engagement and satisfaction levels to identify improvement opportunities.
9. Create supportive leadership practices that strengthen employee commitment and motivation.
10. Align HRM strategies with organizational goals to enhance workforce effectiveness and long-term organizational performance.

14. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged.

1. The study relied exclusively on self-reported responses, which may be subject to common method bias and social desirability bias.
2. The cross-sectional research design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among the study variables.
3. The use of convenience sampling may restrict the generalizability of the findings to broader employee populations.

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4. The sample was limited to 400 respondents and may not fully represent all industries and organizational contexts.
5. The study focused on selected HRM practices and did not examine other organizational variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, psychological safety, or organizational commitment.
6. Regional and cultural variations were not explicitly considered, which may influence employee perceptions of HRM practices and workplace outcomes.
7. Although Harman's Single-Factor Test indicated that common method bias was not a significant concern, the use of self-reported data may still introduce perceptual bias. Future studies may employ multi-source data collection approaches to improve measurement accuracy.

15 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The findings of the present study suggest several avenues for future research:

1. **Longitudinal Research Designs:** Future studies may employ longitudinal designs to examine the causal relationships among HRM practices, employee engagement and job satisfaction over time.
2. **Moderating Variables:** Researchers may investigate the moderating effects of leadership styles, organizational culture, psychological safety and perceived organizational support on the proposed relationships.
3. **Sector-Specific Comparisons:** Comparative studies involving public and private sector organizations may provide deeper insights into sectoral differences in HRM effectiveness.
4. **Additional Mediating Variables:** Future research may explore mediating factors such as organizational commitment, employee well-being, psychological empowerment, organizational trust and work meaningfulness.
5. **Cross-Cultural Studies:** Multinational and cross-cultural investigations may enhance the generalizability of the findings across different organizational and national contexts.
6. **Industry-Specific Research:** Studies focusing on healthcare, education, manufacturing, information technology and service sectors may provide industry-specific insights.
7. **Advanced Analytical Techniques:** Future researchers may employ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to validate and extend the proposed theoretical framework.
8. **Demographic Moderators:** Variables such as age, gender, educational background, work experience and organizational tenure may be examined as potential moderators influencing employee engagement and job satisfaction.
9. **Remote and Hybrid Work Contexts:** Future studies may investigate how HRM practices influence employee engagement and job satisfaction in remote and hybrid work environments.
10. **Technology-Enabled HRM Practices:** Researchers may examine the impact of digital HRM systems, artificial intelligence and analytics-driven HR practices on employee attitudes and organizational outcomes.

16. FINAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The present study demonstrates that Human Resource Management Practices significantly contribute to employee engagement and job satisfaction. More importantly, it establishes employee engagement as a critical psychological mechanism through which HRM practices influence employee satisfaction. By integrating Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources Model, the study advances theoretical understanding and provides practical guidance for organizations seeking to develop an engaged, satisfied and high-performing workforce capable of sustaining long-term organizational success. The study highlights employee engagement as a strategic organizational capability through which Human Resource Management practices can create sustainable employee and organizational outcomes.

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