

A Structural Equation Modeling Approach to Strategic HRM Practices, Employee Engagement, and Workforce Sustainability

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Abstract - The emergence of strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices can be seen as an important tool for boosting employee engagement (EE) and sustaining the workforce. This paper examines the effect of SHRM practices on the issue of employee engagement and workforce sustainability by adopting an SEM approach. In this regard, the main aim of the study is to understand how SHRM helps in achieving employee engagement and fostering a sustainable workforce. The research was carried out using a quantitative approach whereby data were gathered from 200 individuals using questionnaires developed on a five-point Likert scale. The stratified random sampling technique was used for this purpose. The gathered data were analyzed using correlation, regression, and SEM techniques. The results indicate that SHRM practices have a significant and positive effect on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.674$, $p < 0.001$). The correlation analysis showed the existence of strong relationships between employee engagement and factors related to the dimension of workforce sustainability, such as the well-being of employees ($r = 0.682$), employee retention ($r = 0.721$), and organizational commitment ($r = 0.748$). As a result of the application of the SEM technique, it has been proven that SHRM practices have a positive effect on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.674$, $p < 0.001$) and workforce sustainability ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.001$), whereas the impact of EE on workforce sustainability is also significant ($\beta = 0.590$, $p < 0.001$). The indirect effect of SHRM practices mediated by employee engagement is significant ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$).

Keywords: Strategic Human Resource Management, EE, Workforce Sustainability, SEM, HR Practices, Employee Retention, Organizational Commitment

I. INTRODUCTION

SHRM has become an important tool that helps organizations to develop and maintain competitiveness and sustainable workforces. In contrast to the conventional HR management models, SHRM involves a coordinated development of skills of the employees and achievement of organizational goals in connection with sustainable development due to successful recruitment, training, performance management, and development of employees (Khassawneh, 2026; Ohri & Dutta, 2026). Recent investigations show that sustainable HR practices provide responsible management of the workforce and increase organizational resilience through the improvement of employee promise and engagement (Alfadel et al., 2025). Organizational competitiveness is enhanced by strategic HRM practices, which establish supportive workplace conditions that promote long-term employee retention, enhance human capital development, and strengthen employee capabilities (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019).

EE has become a factor that affects organizational performance and the sustainability of the workforce. Engaged employees tend to exhibit greater motivation, commitment,

efficiency, and psychological well-being (Aloqaily & Al-Zaqeba, 2024). Employee empowerment, recognition and appreciation, career development, and participation in organizational decision-making are some elements that help build higher engagement levels and promote sustained relations between the employees and organizations (Rahi, 2023). EE is also known as one of the mediating mechanisms that connect HR practices and employee commitment and performance (Sharif et al., 2026).

There have been various challenges associated with the retention of employees, changes in the workplace, and adaptation in organizations. Workforce sustainability involves maintaining employees' wellbeing, increasing organizational commitment, and building up capabilities (Bajaj et al., 2026). Research shows that a combination of sustainable HRM practices with EE practices increases the level of satisfaction among employees and ensures continuous growth of organizations (Sypniewska et al., 2023; Lulewicz-Sas et al., 2022). The influence of the combination of SHRM practices and EE on workforce sustainability by using an appropriate framework of analysis has been found in some of the research. This is why the current research uses technique analysis to explore the relationships among SHRM activities, EE, and workforce sustainability.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of SHRM practices on EE among organizational employees.
2. To analyze the relationship between EE and workforce sustainability in terms of employee well-being, retention, and long-term organizational commitment.
3. To develop and validate a SEM framework to evaluate the direct and indirect effects of strategic HRM practices and EE on workforce sustainability.

Research Hypotheses

H1: There is a high positive impact of SHRM practices on EE.

H2: High EE results in high sustainability of the workforce.

H3: The impact of SHRM practices on workforce sustainability occurs via the mechanism of EE.

Research Questions

RQ1: What impact do SHRM practices have on the engagement of employees in organizations?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the engagement of employees and the sustainability of the workforce in organizations?

RQ3: Is EE a link between SHRM practices and workforce sustainability?

The organization of this paper is formatted as follows: Section I introduces the research background, outlines the objectives, presents the hypotheses, and discusses the research questions focused on SHRM practices, employee engagement, and workforce sustainability. Literature review and the research gap are addressed in Section II. Methodology, including research design, data collection, measurement, and analysis, is discussed in section III. Results are shown in Section IV using SEM, regression, and correlation analysis. Discussion, implications, and recommendations are covered in Section V. The paper is concluded with key findings and future scope in Section VI.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In SHRM, an organization is able to develop its human capital in order to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable HR practices emphasize the development of employees, workforce planning, and the work is created for increasing organizational sustainability. Recent research reveals that green HRM practices help in the process of achieving sustainable development through the involvement of employees and environmentally oriented organizational practices (Alfadel et al., 2025). Strategic HRM practices were revealed as significant factors in sustaining competitive advantages via human capital development and employee commitment (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019). These findings prove the significance of HR practices in ensuring workforce sustainability (Okorie & de Guzman, 2025).

Work engagement is considered a crucial factor by which HRM activities have an impact on the sustainability of the workforce. In numerous studies, the use of HRM activities oriented towards psychological well-being, empowerment of employees, and participation in their activities has been linked to work engagement and sustainable employment relations (Rahi, 2023). Moreover, the difference between HRM activities and employee commitment has been researched, and work commitment has been proven (Sharif et al., 2026). Lastly, a previous investigation employing the SEM approach confirmed the mediating influence of EE in refining organizational processes and employee performance (Abdullahi et al., 2022).

HRM systems that sustain development have increasingly considered the impact of workplace culture, environmental initiatives, and the values of the organization for engaging employees. In addition, it has been shown that sustainable HR activities and green workplaces contribute positively to green engagement through environmental awareness and behavior among employees (Khan et al., 2025). Positive impacts of green HRM activities have also been seen in the sustainable EE of organizations (Razali & Vasudevan, 2024). Moreover, employee satisfaction and work engagement have been identified as key outcomes of sustainable HRM practices, supporting employee well-being and improving overall organizational effectiveness (Sypniewska et al., 2023). It has also been found that EE promotes the sustainability of organizational practices (Graham et al., 2023).

A number of recent research studies have expanded the scope of knowledge about sustainable HRM by studying talent retention, organizational commitment, employer branding, and sustainability culture. Sustainable HRM has been shown to increase EE by means of innovation, prestige, and internal branding (Ganguly et al., 2025). Integration of CSR and sustainable HRM has increased EE by means of strengthening organizational identity and employer attractiveness (Hosseini et al., 2022). Strategic HRM practices have helped to ensure talent retention by improving job satisfaction, engagement, and empowerment of employees (Shahzad et al., 2024). Moreover, sustainability culture and green HRM practices are some of the determinants of EE among Gen Z employees, such as millennials and Generation Z (Talukdar & Ganguly, 2026). Recent SEM-based research confirms complex relations between HRM practices, EE, and organizational outcomes (Akgün et al., 2026; Repakula et al., 2026).

According to the literature reviewed above, the concepts of strategic HRM practices and EE have substantial importance in attaining sustainable workforces. However, past empirical studies have mostly concentrated on individual associations without considering direct and indirect associations in a single SEM model. As a result, the current study intends to adopt an integrated model to analyze the effect of SHRM practices on workforce sustainability.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Fig. 1 shows the SEM model depicting the relationships among SHRM Practices (independent variable), EE (mediating variable), and Workforce Sustainability (dependent variable). The model clearly identifies how HRM factors, like training, performance management, compensation, recruitment, and career development, impact EE factors of vigor, dedication, and absorption, and finally lead to sustainability through retention, well-being, and organizational commitment.

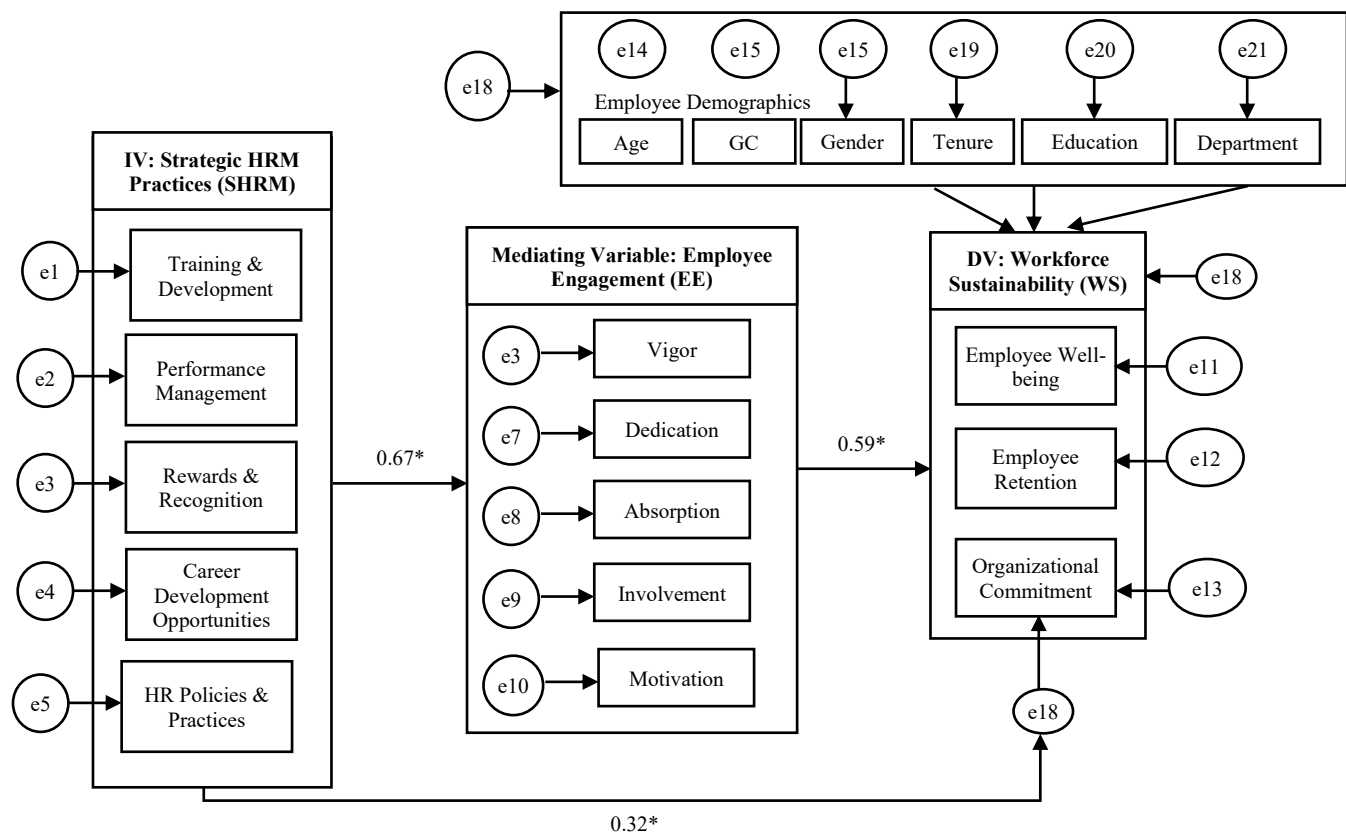


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework of SHRM Practices and EE on Workforce Sustainability

3.1 Research Design

Quantitative research methodology is applied to examine the relationship between SHRM practices, EE, and sustainable workforce. It incorporates the application of both descriptive and explanatory research approaches to establish the difference in HRM practices and EE and the sustainability of the workforce. The data is collected and organized from 200 respondents employed in various parts of the organization. A stratified sampling method is used to choose the respondent.

3.2 Data Collection and Sampling Methods

The paper used a quantitative approach, collecting primary data through a questionnaire administered to employees. A Likert scale is used to collect primary data, where an individual would rate their response from 1(Strongly Disagree) to 5(Strongly Agree). There will be questions concerning HRM.

The selection of employees will employ the stratified sampling method to ensure that there is the right representation of employees from diverse departments, positions, and organizational levels. There will be a sample

size of 200 employees for this research. Data will be analyzed using SEM to measure construct reliability, validity, and interrelationships between the variables. Data processing will include checking for missing responses.

TABLE I QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS FOR MEASURING STRATEGIC HRM PRACTICES, EE, AND WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY

Objectives	Questionnaire Item	5 – Strongly Agree	4 – Agree	3 – Neutral	2 – Disagree	1 – Strongly Disagree
Objective - 1: To examine the influence of SHRM practices on EE among organizational employees.	My organization provides effective training and development opportunities to enhance employee skills.	✓				
	My organization's performance management system encourages employees to improve their performance.		✓			
	My organization follows fair and transparent compensation and reward practices.			✓		
	The organization supports employee career growth through appropriate HR policies and practices.		✓			
	Strategic HRM practices in my organization increase my motivation and involvement in work activities.			✓		
Objective - 2: To analyze the relationship between EE and workforce sustainability in terms of employee well-being, retention, and long-term organizational commitment.	I feel emotionally connected and committed to my organization.				✓	
	I actively participate and contribute to achieving organizational goals.	✓				
	I feel motivated and enthusiastic while performing my job responsibilities.	✓				
	My organization promotes employee well-being through supportive workplace practices.		✓			
	I intend to continue working with my organization for a long period.				✓	
Objective - 3: To develop and validate an SEM framework to evaluate the direct and indirect effects of strategic HRM practices and EE on workforce sustainability.	Effective HRM practices contribute significantly to creating a sustainable workforce.		✓			
	EE acts as an important link between HR practices and workforce sustainability.	✓				
	Organizations with strong HRM strategies experience higher levels of employee commitment and retention.		✓			
	EE improves the effectiveness of HR strategies in achieving sustainable workforce outcomes.			✓		
	The combined influence of strategic HRM practices and EE enhances long-term workforce sustainability.		✓			

Table I shows the structured questionnaire items that have been created for the research objectives. The items will be analyzed using a Likert scale to measure perceptions of employees about HR practices, engagement levels, and sustainable workforce results.

3.3 Measurement of HRM Practices and EE

The measurement of HRM practices and the level of EE will help to identify the way employees perceive corporate

policies and the extent of their involvement in work-related processes. The analysis of strategic HRM practices will be conducted considering significant factors such as training and skill acquisition, performance appraisal programs, compensation and reward schemes, career development opportunities, and the extent of organizational support that is provided for the employees. EE will be assessed considering the following aspects, including passion for work, organizational commitment, engagement in activities, belonging to the group, and emotional attachment to the job.

All questions that measure the above-listed dimensions will be rated using a scale ranging. The well-established concepts are applied in the SEM framework to evaluate the practices of SHRM and employee engagement.

3.4 Analysis Methods

In this research, an extensive statistical approach comprising correlation, regression, and SEM analyses is used to investigate the relationships among SHRM practices, EE, and employee sustainability. For the identification of correlations between EE and the different aspects of workforce sustainability, such as well-being, retention, and organizational commitment, Pearson correlation analysis is performed. Furthermore, regression analysis will be conducted for the evaluation of the predictive power of SHRM practices on EE, and the role of HR practices will be enhanced. Finally, SEM will be used to test the suggested research framework by evaluating the measurement

reliability, fit of the model, and direct and indirect mediating effects of the research variables.

IV. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

4.1 SEM Analysis of Strategic HRM Practices, EE, and Workforce Sustainability (Objective 3)

To develop and validate the theoretical framework for this research, SEM analysis was conducted to look at both the direct and indirect linkages between SHRM practices, engagement, and workforce sustainability. SEM analysis measures the strength of the between the constructs and assesses whether engagement is the mediator in the linkage between SHRM practices and workforce sustainability. In tables II and III below, the results of SEM path analysis and the model fitness analysis are shown, respectively. The findings confirm the appropriateness of the proposed SEM framework.

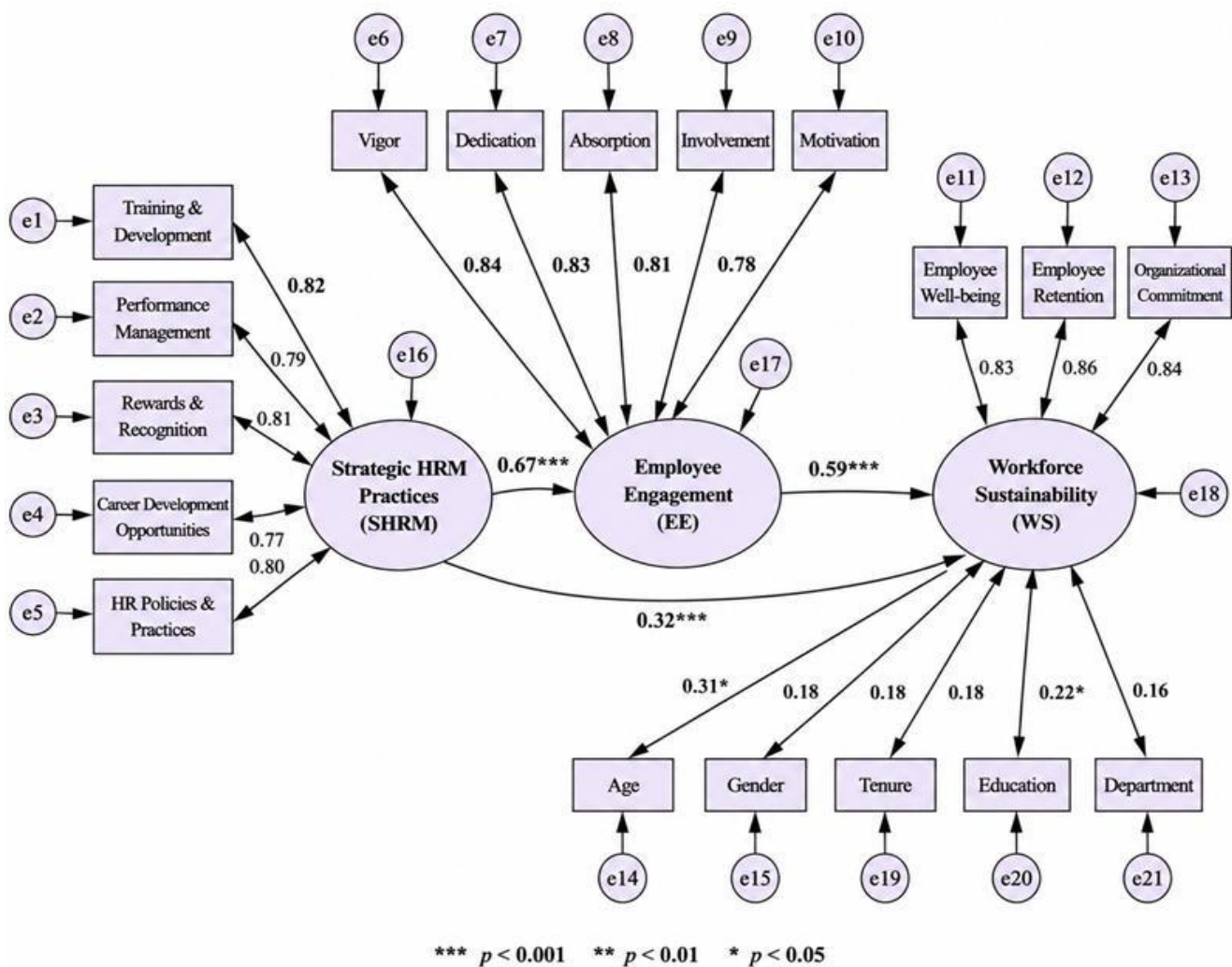


Fig. 2 SEM Framework Showing the Relationships among Strategic HRM Practices, EE, and Workforce Sustainability

The SEM model in fig. 2 demonstrates the connections between SHRM, EE, and Workforce Sustainability (WS). The model indicates that SHRM practices positively affect

EE and workforce sustainability. That the latter serves as a mediator. Measurement indicators and path coefficients used to measure the strength of each connection.

TABLE II SEM PATH ANALYSIS FOR STRATEGIC HRM PRACTICES, EE, AND WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY

Hypothesized Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Strategic HRM Practices $\rightarrow$ EE	0.674	0.065	10.531	<0.001	Supported
Strategic HRM Practices $\rightarrow$ Workforce Sustainability	0.320	0.066	4.85	<0.001	Supported
EE $\rightarrow$ Workforce Sustainability	0.590	0.067	8.76	<0.001	Supported
Strategic HRM Practices $\rightarrow$ EE $\rightarrow$ Workforce Sustainability (Indirect Effect)	0.40	0.058	6.90	<0.001	Supported

TABLE III SEM MODEL FIT ASSESSMENT

Fit Index	Findings	Recommended Value
χ^2/df	2.14	Less than 3.0
CFI	0.94	Greater than 0.90
TLI	0.93	Greater than 0.90
RMSEA	0.052	Less than 0.08
SRMR	0.041	Less than 0.08

Tables II and III show that SHRM practices affect EE and workforce sustainability. EE positively affects workforce sustainability. The statistically significant indirect effect proves the intermediating role of EE between SHRM practices and workforce sustainability. The developed SEM model is statistically valid and acceptable, as shown.

4.2 Regression Analysis of Strategic HRM Practices and EE (Objective 1)

It was used to evaluate the effects of SHRM practices on EE levels. The regression analysis was based on the data gathered from 200 employees using stratified sampling techniques. The SHRM practices like training and development, performance management, rewards, and career development opportunities were used as the predictors while the engagement level was used as the response variable.

TABLE IV REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC HRM PRACTICES ON EE

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	1.126	0.218	—	5.165	<0.001	Significant
Strategic HRM Practices	0.674	0.064	0.674	10.531	<0.001	Supported

TABLE V MODEL SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	p-value
SHRM Practices $\rightarrow$ EE	0.674	0.454	0.451	110.90	<0.001

The regression analysis in tables IV and V explores the connection between SHRM and EE. The findings reveal that SHRM influences employee engagement, emphasizing its significance in raising the level of employee motivation and engagement. The regression analysis reveals the existence of a significant connection between the variables and explains a considerable amount of variance in EE. The results indicate that training and development, performance management, reward systems, and career advancement contribute significantly to increasing employee motivation and engagement.

4.3 Pearson correlation analysis of EE and Workforce Sustainability Dimensions (Objective 2)

This analysis has been carried out to explore the relationship between EE and several other parameters related to workforce sustainability, such as employee well-being, employee retention, and organizational commitment. The

analysis has used data collected from 200 employees of the organization. Correlation coefficients have been used to analyze the degree and nature of the relationships among these variables. From the results in table VI, all variables have significant positive correlations.

TABLE VI CORRELATION MATRIX OF STUDY VARIABLES

Variables	EE	EWB	ER	OC
EE (EE)	1.000	0.682**	0.721**	0.748**
Employee Well-being (EWB)	0.682**	1.000	0.655**	0.694**
Employee Retention (ER)	0.721**	0.655**	1.000	0.773**
Organizational Commitment (OC)	0.748**	0.694**	0.773**	1.000

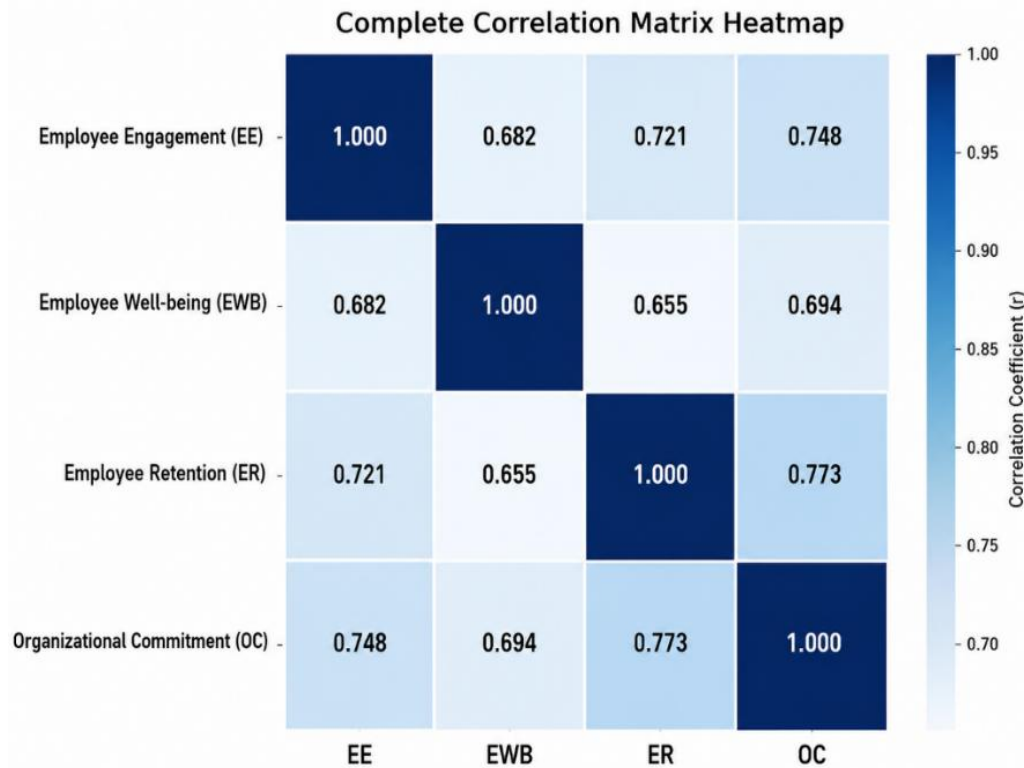


Fig. 3 Correlation Heatmap of EE and Workforce Sustainability Dimensions

Fig. 3 shows the correlation heatmap, which depicts the correlation between EE and the dimensions of the sustainable workforce. The results of the correlation analysis show that the EE variable has a significant positive relationship with important factors of workforce sustainability, such as employee well-being, employee retention, and organizational commitment. This shows that employee engagement promotes better results in terms of a sustainable workforce. The strongest correlation was found between employee retention and organizational commitment.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing and Conclusion

The current research framework aims at testing three hypotheses on the relationships between SHRM practices,

EE, and workforce sustainability. First, hypothesis H1 suggests that SHRM practices will positively impact EE, thus improving their motivation, involvement, and commitment via appropriate training, performance management, rewards, and career development programs. Hypothesis H2 looks into the positive effect of EE on workforce sustainability, whereby engaged employees contribute to well-being, retention, and organizational commitment. H3 tests the positive impact of SHRM practices on workforce sustainability directly through the creation of an appropriate workplace environment for the improvement of employee satisfaction and workforce sustainability.

TABLE VII HYPOTHESIS SUMMARY

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Strategic HRM Practices $\rightarrow$ EE	0.674	10.531	<0.001	Supported
H2	Employee Engagement $\rightarrow$ Workforce Sustainability	0.590	8.760	<0.001	Supported
H3	Strategic HRM Practices $\rightarrow$ Workforce Sustainability	0.320	4.850	<0.001	Supported

Table VII proves the outcomes of the hypothesis. The practices of SHRM have a strong influence on the EE ($\beta = 0.674$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that proper HR practices help to improve the EE and their commitment to the organization. Also, the engagement of employees contributes to the sustainability of the workforce ($\beta = 0.590$, $p < 0.001$), proving that engaged employees show better well-being, retention, and organizational commitment. Furthermore, the practices of SHRM have a effect of sustainability of workforce ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.001$).

V. DISCUSSION

The results from this research show that SHRM strategies contribute significantly to the process of improving the levels of engagement of the employees as well as the sustainability of the workforce. It is clear from the regression analysis that the HRM strategies that include training, performance appraisal, compensation, and career planning have a positive impression on the EE. From the correlation analysis, there are significant connections between the level of engagement of the employees and the dimensions of workforce

sustainability, which include the well-being, retention, and organizational commitment of the employees. The results obtained from the SEM confirm the suggested framework by showing the relationships among the three factors.

5.1 Practical and Theoretical Implications

The paper contributes to theory and practice with many implications for both theoretical and practical aspects of how strategic HR practices and EE lead to workforce sustainability. On a theoretical note, the paper adds to the HRM and organizational sustainability literature by empirically demonstrating the mediating effect of EE using the SEM approach. As per practical considerations, the results obtained from this research have provided useful directions to the management and HR experts in formulating successful strategies for managing their workforce, which include engagement and retention of employees.

5.2 Recommendation

Considering the conclusions made in this research, organizations are advised to enhance their strategic HRM processes by adopting such employee-related approaches as policy creation, continuous learning, effective performance management, and creating supportive environments. It is important for managers to concentrate on such initiatives that increase the engagement of employees, including transparency in communication, rewards and recognition programs, decision-making involvement, and career development. Organizational managers need to assess EE and workforce sustainability on an ongoing basis to find areas that need improvement. The use of HR analytics can be useful in creating adaptive strategies for organizations.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper examined the effects of SHRM practices, EE, and sustainability using SEM analysis. This study examined HR practices, training and development, career development, and HR policies. Regression analysis shows that $\beta = 0.674$ ($p < 0.001$) is considered the impact of EE. In this, various HR strategies should be considered important, benefiting from this to motivate employee participation and the organizational process. An additional finding is that, in the SEM analysis, EE ($\beta = 0.674$, $p < 0.001$) and sustainability ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.001$) were significant, indicating that EE influences workforce sustainability. Furthermore, defined as the significant effects ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$) provide the mediating effects under the EE with workforce sustainability. This study ensures organizational workforce sustainability related to the application of practices of Human Resources and engagement. The proposed SEM model will provide useful insights for HR professionals in designing HR policies related to retention, health, and organizational commitment of employees. Future studies may build on this one by looking at samples of greater size and including people from different geographic locations and from different industrial sectors. Future studies might investigate other variables,

including leadership style, organizational culture, digital transformation of HRM, flexibility at the workplace, and psychological factors of employees, to develop a sustainable workforce framework.

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