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IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE HRM PRACTICES ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE - MODERATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Venissa N Shenoy¹ and Dr. Shobha T.S²

¹Assistant Professor, Mount Carmel College, Autonomous,
+91-9008416643, venissa.n.shenoy@mccblr.edu.in

²Associate Professor, Mount Carmel College, Autonomous,
+91-9945841070, shobha.t.s@mccblr.edu.in

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) practices balances business success with employee well-being and promotes positive societal impact. This study analyses the influence of Sustainable HRM practices on organizational performance of Information Technology (IT) companies and investigates the moderating effect of employee motivation on the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance.

This research study is descriptive in nature and a convenience sample of 101 IT employees working in the city of Bengaluru were selected. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was established through the Master validity tool by Gaskins. Further, SPSS AMOS was used for data analysis and Andrew Hayes Process Macros-Model1 was used for moderation analysis.

The findings of the study indicate a significant positive association between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance. It is identified that employee motivation has a crucial moderating role in achieving organizational performance though sustainable HRM practices. Motivated workers are more inclined to adopt and embrace sustainable practices of the firm, which in turn improves employee performance. The study provides valuable contribution to the literature on sustainable HRM practices, highlighting mechanisms by which these practices can effectively boost organizational performance and improve outcomes in the organization.

KEYWORDS: Employee Motivation, Human Resource Management, Organizational Performance, Sustainable Human Resource Practices.

INTRODUCTION

The HR department holds considerable importance in every firm, overseeing and enhancing the labour

force, guaranteeing compliance to regulations and fostering a favorable work atmosphere (Garcia-Bladon, 2019). Human resource practices are of great importance in recruitment, retention of skilled personnel and also promoting inclusivity within the organizational context. HR practices are crucial in implementing Performance Management Systems and Training and Development initiatives to bring about provide Human Resource Development in the organization. The initiation of sustainable HRM techniques encourage firms to prioritize welfare and work life balance for their employees (Randev & Jha, 2019). These sustainable practices include flexible work hours, remote work alternatives and employee well-being measures. These practices also promote significant and positive impact on not employee satisfaction, but also on their growth, increasing dedication and loyalty of employees towards organisation (Mahmoud et al., 2021, Kalogiannidis, 2021)).

These sustainable practices also decrease attrition rates, breeds loyalty and foster consistent labor force, enabling organizations to have robust growth and achieve enduring success. Further, the implementation of sustainable HRM practices will also yield financial benefits, through initiatives like adopting energy-efficient processes and implementing waste reduction initiatives, leading to cost reduction. The contemporary corporate environment, which is intensively competitive and environment conscious, the integration of sustainable HRM practices has become very critical for the firms to achieve long-term survival and accomplishment of their goals.

In the above context, the current research aims to analyze the impact of sustainable HRM practices on organization performance and further investigates the moderating effect of employee motivation on relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance.

The first section of the study gives an overview of the study background. The second section focuses on the review of literature. The research methods are discussed the third section and the fourth section presents the results of the study. The last section of this research concludes with limitations and scope for further research.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study used a systematic literature review process to identify the gap and proceeded to answer the research questions. Of the total of 34 studies selected for review process, 24 research papers were selected due to comprehensive nature of the research undertaken, but from them 4 studies were excluded due to the iterative processes and concerns regarding their quality. Therefore, the present study is grounded on a comprehensive review of 20 relevant and highly eminent research this field of sustainable HRM practices and its impact on the organizations.

Sustainable HRM practices

Macke & Genari, 2019 in his research identified that development of sustainable HRM techniques has been propelled by the increasing acknowledgment of the influence that HRM has on social, environmental, and economic sustainability. HRM approaches aligns itself around conventional activities like recruitment, training and performance management aspects (Chams & García-Blandón, 2019). The present trend identifies a considerable move in the organizational consciousness towards harmonizing HRM practices with sustainable business objectives (Yong et al., 2020). This shift according to Randev & Jha, 2019 has encouraged the integration of practices fostering diversity and inclusion, prioritize employee well-being and to uphold ethical leadership principles. While this process of synchronizing HRM practices has further led the development of organizations by establishing both sustainable and socially responsible work environment (Yong et al., 2020).

Ehnert, & Harry, 2012 and Amrutha & Geetha, 2020 identified that sustainable HRM practices encompasses a range of techniques and approaches that prioritize the enduring prosperity and welfare of both people and the firm. These practices, are designed with the objective of cultivating a favorable work environment, fostering employee engagement and growth, and facilitating the efficient allocation and utilization of resources (**Bahuguna et al., 2023**). The implementation of sustainable HRM techniques has the potential to yield several positive outcomes inside an organization (Yasin, et al., 2023). These include heightened levels of employee satisfaction, improved employee retention rates, enhanced productivity, as well as diminished turnover rates and associated expenses related to recruiting and training (Tanova, & Bayighomog, 2022) and plays a pivotal role in fostering the long-term viability and achievement of the business (Sharma, et al., 2022).

Employee Motivation

Employee motivation encompasses the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that stimulate employees to attain their objectives and exhibit optimal performance (Mahmoud, et al., 2021). Further, Wolor, et al., 2020 identified that employee motivation is a key driving factor fostering employee engagement, productivity, and commitment to their work. Motivated employees are inclined to exceed expectations, demonstrate proactive behavior, and make valuable contributions to the overall success of their firm (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Employee motivation positively impacts learning and personal growth, leading to employee development resulting in greater productivity and enhanced job performance (Kalogiannidis, 2021).

Susanto et al., 2023 noted that employees exhibiting strong levels of motivation, would actively pursue avenues for enhancing their professional growth. Motivation is also significant factor affecting employee retention, as motivated employees would remain affiliated with the company and contribute towards organizational growth (Korzynski, 2013) and also exhibit a propensity for elevated levels of job satisfaction (Rajhans, 2012, Shangareev, 2018).

Organizational Performance

The organizational performance pertains to the comprehensive efficacy and productivity of an organization in attaining its predetermined goals and objectives, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative elements (Zhang, et al., 2019). While Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020, recognized organizational performance as a measure of the organization's ability to effectively employ its resources and talents in order to achieve desired outcomes. This concept is multiple dimensional, including financial performance, customer happiness, employee productivity, and market share (Abubakar, et al., 2019). The long-term success and sustainability of an organization in a competitive business environment are contingent upon the important factor of organizational performance (Abdelwhab, et al., 2019).

There are multiple approaches and indicators to assess organizational performance (Rhodes, et al., 2008). One of the most comprehensively used approach is the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) utilized to evaluate performance across various domains, including revenue expansion, profitability, customer retention, and employee attrition (Askarany, 2011). Further research has identified additional strategies comparing performance to industry benchmarks, administering surveys to gauge consumer happiness, and scrutinizing financial documents (Gavrea, et al., 2011). Moreover, the evaluation of performance could include qualitative assessments, including employee feedback, assessments of organizational culture, and measurements of innovation and creative levels inside the firm (Almaamari, et al., 2022).

Impact of Sustainable HRM Practices and Organizational Performance

Sustainable HRM, alternatively referred to as Green HRM (Tortia, et al., 2022), is a strategic approach that aims to incorporate environmental and social sustainability principles into the management of Human Resources (Mariappanadar & Kramar, 2014). Research has demonstrated that this strategy has been associated with a favorable influence on the overall performance of organizations (Arman, 2017). Sustainable HRM fosters increased productivity, creativity, and innovation inside the organization by actively supporting employee engagement, well-being, and development (Arman, 2017). Additionally, this practice aids the firm in cultivating a favorable perception and standing (Jeronimo, et al., 2020), thereby enticing highly skilled individuals and nurturing a climate of corporate social responsibility (Rashid, & Alam, 2020). Overall, the adoption and integration of sustainable HRM techniques have the potential to enhance the organization's financial performance and ensure its long-term viability (Amjad, et al., 2021 and Hosain, 2017).

Sustainable HRM Practices, Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance

The interconnection between sustainable HRM practices, employee motivation, and organizational performance is of paramount importance in determining the success of an organization (Tortia, et al.,

2022). Organizations can cultivate a conducive work environment that enhances employee motivation by adopting sustainable HRM practices, which encompass initiatives such as the promotion of work-life balance and the provision of avenues for professional development (Dar, et al., 2014). Consequently, this phenomenon results in enhanced employee engagement and productivity, thereby boosting overall organizational performance. The implementation of sustainable HRM techniques has a significant role in enhancing the overall sustainability of a company. This is achieved through the promotion of employee well-being, the mitigation of turnover rates, and the attraction of high-caliber employees (Giauque, et al., 2013).

RESEARCH GAP

The above review of literature highlights the importance of Sustainable HRM practices, but there is a dearth of research that examines the role of employee motivation as a moderator in the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance. This study addresses the existing research gap in literature by investigating the correlation between sustainable HRM practices, employee motivation, and organizational performance. There is a limited body of research inside the Indian IT industry that has investigated these linkages. Hence, the primary objective of this research is to enhance the understanding and offering valuable perspectives on the influence of sustainable HRM practices and employee motivation on organizational performance within the distinct setting of the Indian IT sector. Through the implementation of this research study, a more comprehensive comprehension may be attained pertaining to the function of employee motivation as a moderator inside this particular association. The results has the potential to assist firms in devising effective human resources strategies aimed at augmenting their overall performance.

Research Objectives: The objective of the study are-

- To analyse the impact of sustainable HRM on Organizational Performance
- To examine the moderating role of employee motivation on the relationship between sustainable HRM on Organizational Performance

HYPOTHESIS

The integration of sustainability principles into HR processes can serve to bolster the reputation of IT corporations as socially responsible entities, augmenting consumer and investor interest. In the context of the swiftly evolving IT industry, the implementation of sustainable HRM techniques holds the potential to significantly impact the enduring prosperity of the IT Companies (Rashid & Alam, 2020). Hence, H₁

H₁- There is a significant impact of sustainable HRM on Organizational Performance

Motivation plays a pivotal role in fostering increased levels of employee engagement, dedication, and job satisfaction, hence yielding enhanced organizational performance and productivity (Dar, et al., 2014). Further, the implementation of sustainable HRM techniques plays a significant role in fostering

the organization's overall sustainability and long-term prosperity. This is achieved through the promotion of employee well-being and the mitigation of turnover rates (Tortia, et al., 2022). **Hence, H₂**

H₂ - Employee motivation moderates the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is descriptive in nature and has deductive approach. This study is limited to employees across IT companies in Bengaluru. Convenience sampling method was used to circulate a well-structure questionnaire, adapted from previous studies to 120 respondents. Valid responses from 116 respondents were received, after rejecting outliers around 101 responses were found to be valid. The scores for Reliability for all constructs in the instrument were above 0.9 and below 0.95 indicating excellent reliability (George and Mallery, 2003). The inter-item correlations between the constructs is tested using the confirmatory factor analysis. The Pearson correlation r value is 0.675 which is well within the criteria to affirm internal consistency. Convergent Validity (CV) is the assessment of the degree of correlation among various concept indicators that show agreement. The indicator's factor loading, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must all be considered in order to determine convergent validity (Hair Jr, et al., 2017). The values are between 0 and 1.

It is important for the AVE value to exceed the cutoff point of 0.50 in order to guarantee CV. $\text{MaxR(H)} - \text{Maximum reliability} > \text{than MSV}$; $\text{CR (Composite Reliability)} > \text{than } 0.70 (0.872)$; $\text{AVE} > \text{than } 0.50 (0.655)$; $\text{MSV (Maximum Shared Square Variance)} > \text{than AVE}$. The Fornell-Lacker criterion is used to assess discriminant validity when applying the second criterion (Fornell & Bagozzi, 1994). This method compares the correlation of latent constructs with the square root of the AVE (Hair Jr, et al., 2017). A latent construct's ability to explain variance in its own indicators is predicted to be greater than its ability to explain variance in indicators of other latent constructs (Hair Jr, et al., 2017). It is expected that the correlations with other latent constructs will be lower than the square root of the AVE for each construct. The questionnaire has the required validity and reliability in the current model since all dimensions have been verified and all constructs meet the validity criteria. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was tested using the master validity tool by Gaskins. The data analysis was conducted using the SPSS and AMOS software. For moderation analysis, Andrew Hayes Process Macros- model 1 was used.

THE FINDINGS/RESULTS

Demographic profile of the Respondents

Women constitute only 26% of Indian workforce (Economic Times Mar 08, 2022), and similarly in the current study there are 76% male and 24% female under the study. A large proportion of 58% IT

employees are in the age group of 24-35 years, 25% belong to 36-45 years age group and 17% are above 45 years in age. The basic qualification for Jobs in IT industry is Graduation. A majority 61% IT Employees are Graduates and 21% are post-graduates and the rest 17% are of professionals with technology courses.

Regarding the IT experience in the industry, 24% of IT employees have 5 to 7 Years of experience, 21% have 8-10 years of experience and 30% have above 13 years of experience, in the current organization. While 16% and 18% respondents in the study have 2-4 years and 5 to 7 years of experience respectively. This indicates that the respondents in the current study have sufficient experience and are the expectation is that they are in a position to give better inputs on leadership styles. Designation is one of the most important parameters of the study and it determines their role in the Job. A larger proportion of 28% are Software Engineers / System Engineers and 40% IT employees are Team Leaders / Project Leaders. 12% are Project Managers / Delivery Managers and 10% are Delivery Head / Group Leader.

Item Analysis for Sustainable HRM, Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance

Table -1: Item Analysis for Sustainable HRM, Employee Motivation and Organizational performance

Variables/ Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
SNHRM_1 Sustainable HRM emphasizes more on economic outcomes	3.71	1.178	-0.657	-0.216
SNHRM_2 Sustainable HRM is built around organisational goals	4.00	1.095	-0.978	0.359
SNHRM_3 Sustainable HRM is the major concern of strategic HRM	4.28	0.862	-0.955	0.021
SNHRM_4 Sustainable HRM emphasizes more on social outcomes	3.93	1.061	-0.988	0.579
SNHRM_5 Sustainable human resource management concerned with achieving strategic outcome	4.02	1.104	-1.040	0.424
SNHRM_6 Strategic CSR enhances the competitiveness of the organization	3.35	0.932	-1.203	0.276

SNHRM_7 Sustainability is integrated with corporate accountability for the greater success	4.11	1.038	-1.261	1.125
Average score- Sustainable HRM	3.91	1.04	-1.01	0.37
EM_1 Organisational culture and motivation are instigators for employee engagement	4.12	1.169	-1.156	0.303
EM_2 Social and Behavioural norms are important for the individual employee motivation	4.00	1.114	-0.798	-0.413
EM_3 Employee motivational factor enhances employee performances/ organizational performance	3.98	1.086	-1.011	0.477
EM_4 Engaged employees are intrinsically motivated	4.34	0.972	-1.391	1.103
EM_5 Organisational success directly depends on factors of employee motivation	4.32	0.882	-1.117	0.331
Average Score - Employee motivation	4.15	1.04	-1.09	0.36
OP_1 Ability to attract the essential employees	3.30	0.855	-1.009	0.166
OP_2 Ability to retain the essential employees	3.40	0.813	-1.192	0.616
OP_3 Satisfaction of customer and clients	3.37	0.869	-1.166	0.343
OP_4 Relations between managers and other employees	3.78	0.944	-0.565	0.160
OP_5 Relations among employees in general	3.24	1.078	-0.295	-0.291
Average score - Organizational Performance	3.42	0.91	-0.85	0.20

Table 1, indicates the item analysis showed that the mean scores for sustainable HRM practices is 3.91 indicating neutral to agreement range of responses, the employee motivation statements had a mean score of 4.15 indicating the importance of Employee Motivation and a mean score of 3.42 indicates that the responses have neutral to agree range of responses. The standard deviation is below 1.50 indicating less variation in responses. The skewness and kurtosis are measures of normal distribution and are well within the acceptable criteria. The item analysis indicate that the variables selected for

the study are fulfilling the assumptions of the tests and hypothesis can be tested.

H₁ – There is an impact of sustainable HRM Practices on Organizational performance of IT companies

Table 2 - Measurement Model – Impact of sustainable HRM Practices on Organizational performance of IT companies

Model Fit Summary						
CMIN						
Model	NPAR	CMIN	Degrees of Freedom	CMIN/DF (χ^2/df)	RMR	GFI
Default Model	27	195.776	(78-27) 51	3.837	0.048	0.826
Criteria				<3.000	<0.100	>0.80

Table 2 displays the essential statistics for model fit. The chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2 / df) falls little above the acceptable range of 3 (specifically, 3.837). The observed Goodness of Fit value (0.826) surpasses the proposed attributes. The boundary estimation yields a value of 0.048 for the RMR. The model in question has garnered significant recognition within the academic community, and its measures of fit are reasonably appropriate.

Figure 1- Structural relationship - Impact of sustainable HRM Practices on Organizational performance of IT companies

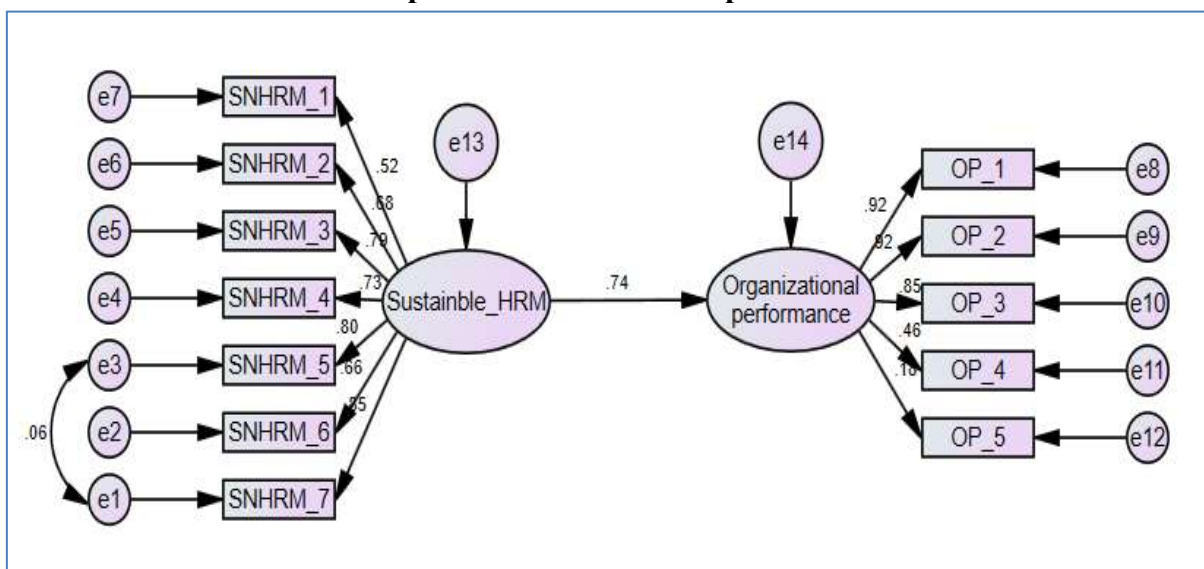


Figure 1, indicates that there is a significant positive association between sustainable HRM practices and achieving organizational performance with a coefficient of (B=0.84, B=0.74, P=0.000), suggesting that one unit increase in mean scores of Sustainable HRM will lead to increase in mean scores of Organizational performances by 84 units. This indicates a strong positive impact of using sustainable HRM Practices on organizational performance.

Table 3 – Unstandardized and standardized co-efficient - Impact of sustainable HRM Practices on Organizational performance of IT companies

STRUCTURAL RELATIONSHIP			Unstd Estimate	Std Estimate	P
Organizational_Performance	<---	Sustainable_HRM	0.84	0.736	***

Table 3, identifies that sustainable HRM practices encompass the adoption of environmentally conscious policies and initiatives, the cultivation of employee well-being and work-life equilibrium, and the allocation of resources towards employee development and training. The implementation of sustainable HRM techniques within IT organizations holds the potential to mitigate their environmental footprint, enhance employee satisfaction and productivity, and facilitate the attraction of high-caliber personnel. These practices are crucial in fostering a positive work culture and making significant contributions to the overall success and performance of the organization. Moreover, the adoption of environmentally friendly policies and initiatives can not only facilitate the reduction of carbon emissions by IT organizations but also yield long-term cost savings. IT organizations have the potential to make valuable contributions towards achieving a more sustainable future through the adoption of energy conservation measures, the establishment of recycling initiatives, and the promotion of responsible waste management practices. Furthermore, the promotion of employee well-being and the cultivation of work-life balance have been found to be associated with elevated rates of employee retention, reduced absenteeism, and heightened levels of job satisfaction. Finally, the allocation of resources towards staff development and training guarantees that employees possess the essential competencies and expertise required to execute their job responsibilities proficiently, resulting in enhanced performance and the fostering of innovative practices within the organizational context.

H₁ – There is an impact of sustainable HRM Practices on Organizational performance of IT companies is accepted

Further analysis was conducted to understand the moderating role of employee motivation on the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance.

H₂ - Employee motivation moderates the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and

Organizational Performance

Table 4 - Moderation Interaction Results – Moderating role of employee motivation on relationship between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance

Model Summary						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.480	0.231	0.580	9.700	3.000	97.000	.000
Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.818	.786	2.314	.023	.259	3.377
SNHRM_1	.433	.237	1.825	.071	-.038	.904
EM_1	.452	.189	2.393	.019	.077	.827
Int_1	.163	.054	1.164	.007	.044	.170
Product terms key:						
Int_1 : SNHRM_1 x EM_1						
Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):						
R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p		
X*W	.011	1.355	1.000	97.000	.007	

Table 3, indicates the results of the Moderating role of employee motivation on the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance. Y: OP_1 indicates the independent variables, X: SNHRM_1 indicates the dependent variables and W: EM_1 indicates the moderating variables. The Interaction value of 0.163 is statistically significant indicating the effect of moderating variable. The R square change of 0.011 is also significant at $p=0.007$. Employee motivation has a crucial moderating role in achieving organizational performance via sustainable HRM practices. The level of dedication and participation from employees in promoting long-term HRM strategies is directly correlated with their level of motivation. Motivated workers are more inclined to adopt and embrace the sustainable practices of the firm, which in turn improves performance. The regression equation in figure 2 presents the size of effect caused by employee motivation on organizational performance.

Figure 2 – Regression Equation– Moderating role of employee motivation on relationship between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance

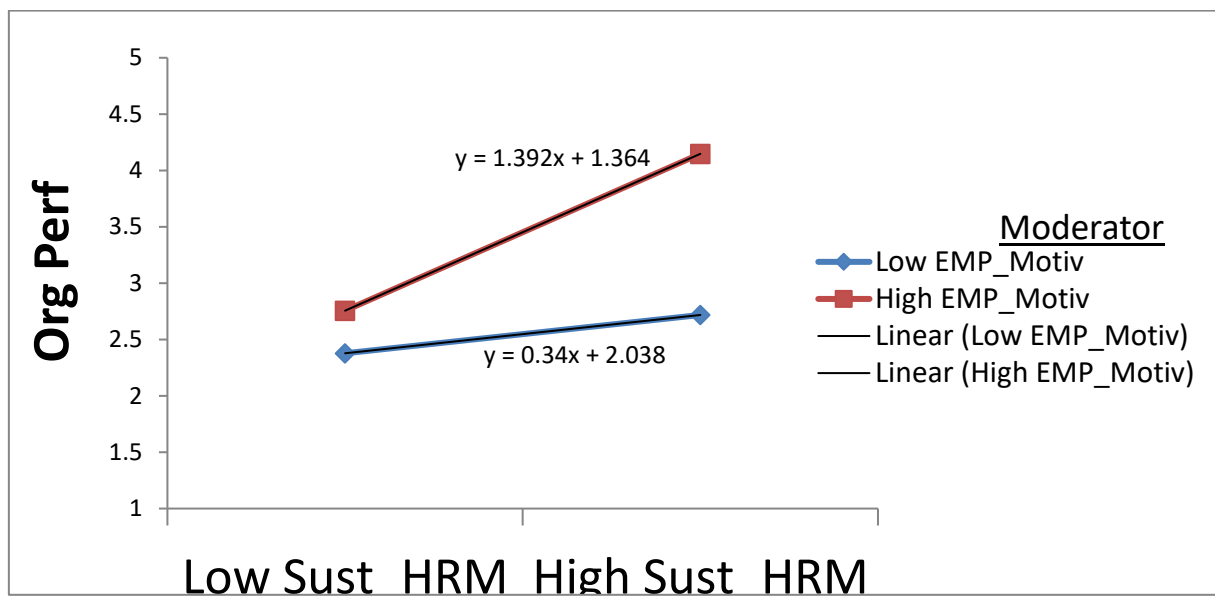


Figure 2, indicates that with employee motivation, the sustainable HRM practices can lead to enhanced organizational performance. The equation of $y=1.392x+0.1364$ shows that the effect of relationship moves upwards and is steeper when compared to achieving organizational performance without employee motivation. The equation posits a positive relationship between x, representing employee motivation, and y, representing organizational performance, whereby a one-unit rise in x is associated with a 1.392-unit increase in y. Furthermore, the presence of a y-intercept value of 0.1364 suggests that there exists a baseline level of organizational performance, even in the absence of any employee motivation ($x=0$). This underscores the relevance of employee motivation in facilitating corporate performance and underscores the criticality of cultivating a motivated workforce.

H2 - Employee motivation moderates the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and Organizational Performance is accepted

Implications for Theory and Practice

HRM methods that are sustainable include those that improve the workplace for workers, encourage their health and happiness, and encourage them to take on new challenges. These methods not only inspire workers, but also equip them to provide their very best, which in turn boosts output, contentment on the job, and loyalty to the company. Today's dynamic and complex business environment calls for firms to engage in Sustainable HRM techniques in order to generate a

competitive advantage and achieve long-term success. There are several aspects that contribute to employee motivation, such as the leadership style, the rewards and recognition programs, the possibilities for advancement, etc. Employee morale can be greatly improved by a leadership style that encourages free flow of information and gives workers a sense of autonomy. Boosting employee motivation is also possible through the use of reward and recognition programs. Employees are more likely to give their all to the company's success if they see a route for professional growth and advancement.

Fostering a great work culture, providing regular feedback, and creating flexible work arrangements are all excellent ways to increase employee engagement, and these advice and methods may be provided to firms. Companies should make an effort to foster a welcoming and accepting workplace in which all employees are respected and their contributions are appreciated. Companies that care about their workers' happiness and career advancement are more likely to have employees who are invested in the company's success.

This indicates that the sustainable HRM practices have a greater influence on enhancing organizational performance when employees are motivated. The positive slope of the equation shows that productivity increases in tandem with increases in employee motivation. In order for businesses to get the full benefits of sustainable HRM practices, it is essential that they engage in employee motivation.

CONCLUSION

The present study aims to analyze the effects of implementing Sustainable HRM practices on the organizational performance of IT organizations. The findings of the study indicate a substantial influence. Additionally, the researcher also investigated the major significance of employee motivation as a moderator. The research revealed that IT organizations who used Sustainable HRM practices exhibited superior organizational performance in comparison to those that did not incorporate such practices. This implies that the implementation of sustainable practices not only yields environmental advantages but also contributes to the overall prosperity of the organization. Furthermore, it was shown by the researcher that the correlation between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance was influenced significantly by employee motivation. Specifically, individuals who exhibited high levels of motivation demonstrated a greater propensity to contribute to the overall success of the business when sustainable HRM practices were effectively implemented. There is a suggestion that IT organizations should prioritize the adoption of Sustainable HRM practices in order to enhance their overall organizational performance. Furthermore, it is imperative to exert endeavors towards augmenting employee motivation, as it assumes a pivotal function in mediating the correlation between Sustainable HRM practices and the performance of organizations. By using these steps, IT organizations can anticipate favorable outcomes and a heightened level of

sustainability in the future.

Prospective researchers have the opportunity to undertake a qualitative analysis in order to acquire a more profound comprehension of the experiences and viewpoints of the individuals engaged in the investigation. Through the utilization of interviews or focus groups, researchers have the ability to collect extensive and intricate data, which can yield valuable insights into the intricate dynamics and nuances of the issue under investigation. Conducting qualitative analysis in collaboration with human resource managers can facilitate the identification of prevailing themes and patterns, hence enabling a more complete interpretation of the obtained results. Moreover, this methodology has the potential to provide valuable contributions to the advancement of theoretical frameworks and the formulation of testable hypotheses, which can then be investigated in subsequent quantitative research endeavors.

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