

Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Job Performance of Library Practitioners in Public Sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Human Resource Management (HRM) has arisen as a pivotal mechanism in improving organizational effectiveness, particularly within higher education institutions where libraries serve as critical centres of teaching, learning, and research support. This study explores HRM practices that impact the job performance (JBP) of library practitioners in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Drawing on existing data, the study highlights compensation & reward systems (CRS), employee engagement & motivation initiatives (EMI), and workload & work environment (WWE) as central HRM dimensions influencing JBP. A census-based quantitative design was employed using a structured questionnaire distributed via digital platforms, yielding 91 valid responses. Data were analysed using PLS-SEM through SMART-PLS-4. Outcomes of the study revealed that CRS, as well as EMI, exerts a statistically significant and positive impact on JBP, while WWE demonstrated no significant relationship. The model explained 59.4% of the variance in job performance, reflecting moderate predictive power. These results demonstrate the strategic value of HRM practices in enhancing the effectiveness of library professionals, especially in regions where institutional and cultural factors mediate workforce behaviour. This study focuses solely on public universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and offers significant insights into customizing HRM strategies for library environments. The study recommends that universities prioritize transparent compensation frameworks, strengthen motivation and engagement mechanisms, and investigate workload-related issues through qualitative inquiry to achieve sustainable improvements in job performance.

Keywords: HRM Practices, Library Practitioners, SMART-PLS, Compensation, Motivation, Workload, Employee engagement

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the art of handling people as employees of the organization. It is the system of practices and policies for acquiring, developing, motivating, and retaining people to advance organizational goals (Hamouche, 2023). Recent field-level reflections emphasize HRM as an

ecosystem that must integrate sustainability, technology, and inclusion emphasizes the need to match the human capital to the goals of the organization, both in efficiency and employee welfare (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Efficient HRM makes sure that the right people are hired, trained and motivated to help make the organization successful (Dessler, 2020). HRM is the only managerial activity that focuses on staff issues through practices and policies (Pallis, 2019). The HRM Practices (HRMP) are crucial in enhancing job performance (JBP) across various sectors. HRMP plays an essential role in ensuring that library practitioners remain motivated, productive, and committed to their positions in universities (Warraich & Ameen, 2015). Due to technological advances and changing user expectations, academic libraries require a well-managed workforce supported by strong HRM strategies (Gunapala, 2024). The purpose of HRM practices in Pakistani university libraries is to not only make the staff more productive, but also to make the libraries more important for supporting research and higher education. Literature from both national and international level stresses the importance of HRM practices in giving library workers more power and making sure they can keep providing good services. Empirical studies in Pakistani university libraries highlight the HRM challenges faced in practice. Research indicates that many university libraries in Punjab province are experiencing understaffing and have unfilled positions. Performance appraisals are carried out in a structured way; nonetheless, their implementation lacks consistency in promoting personal development (Warraich & Ameen, 2011). These findings indicate structural HRM deficiencies, especially in staffing, employee engagement, motivation, and compensation, which may impede job performance and restrict service accessibility. This study specifically investigates the influence of HRMP on the JBP of library practitioners in public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. The unique socio-economic and cultural context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa demands a comprehensive analysis of how HRMP can be customized to address the needs of library professionals in this region.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the fundamental HRM practices utilized by public sector university libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
2. To assess the influence of HRM practices on the job performance of library practitioners employed at public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Statement of the Problem

It is very important to put HRM practices into action in order to boost employee productivity and the performance of the whole organization. This is especially true regarding university libraries, which are important places for teaching, learning, and research. Public sector university libraries in Pakistan have ongoing problems with managing their staff, such as not having enough staff, not having good ways to evaluate staff, not having many opportunities for career growth, and not using enough motivational techniques. These problems hurt both employee morale and the quality of the services provided. The problems are most clear in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where social, economic, and institutional barriers make it very hard to manage library staff well. Even though research from around the world shows that salary, employee engagement, motivation, and the work environment can all have a positive effect on job performance, there is very little empirical evidence in Pakistan. No thorough study has yet looked at how HRM practices affect the JBP of library professionals at public universities in KP in a systematic way. This lack of evidence makes it hard to make informed decisions about policies and administrative actions that are needed to improve the role of libraries in higher education. This study aims to fill gap in HRM and library science research by looking at how pay and reward systems, employee engagement and motivation programs, workload and work environment affect library workers' job performance at public-sector universities in KP.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The source of gaining a competitive edge for an organization lies in its human resources (HR), which are considered its most valuable asset. Human resources are regarded as the most crucial organizational resource and are essential to any organization's success (Alfawaire & Atan, 2021). Delery and Gupta (2018) assert that institutions can only achieve their objectives when they possess adequate human resources to fulfill their responsibilities and attain institutional success and strategic standing. Universities are viewed as the most effective institutions for providing high-quality services related to teaching and learning at advanced levels. They are also responsible for shaping students' attitudes and behaviors by motivating them to meet their academic goals, which is vital for their career advancement. The administration (leadership) and staff (human resources) of universities carry the primary responsibility for achieving these objectives (Saad & Zawdie, 2011). Beh and Loo (2013) note that HRM practices encompass a wide range of activities, all of which may influence a firm's performance. Despite the recognition of human resources as an organization's most valuable asset, few organizations manage to fully leverage them (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003). In the academic library sector, HRM practices have garnered increased attention due to their potential to enhance organizational effectiveness and support the achievement of strategic goals.

Compensation and Reward System (CRS)

Compensation and rewards are utilized by organizations to recognize and compensate employees for their contributions. Forms of compensation include base pay, overtime, sales commissions, bonus pay, and merit pay, while benefits encompass company cars, pensions, health insurance, and life insurance (Ikoko, Osinulu, & Tonukari, 2021). A comprehensive compensation and reward system (CRS) that includes both monetary and non-monetary benefits is crucial for effectively managing employee performance within a company. Motivated employees can make significant contributions to an organization's success. When employees work to enhance their productivity, the organization operates more efficiently and is more likely to achieve its goals (Noorazem, Sabri, & Nazir, 2021). The CRS serves as one of the most effective methods for providing support and motivation to employees. This approach is used by companies to boost employee productivity by focusing on improving both individual and organizational performance, which ultimately leads to better outcomes (Ojha & Vaishnav, 2022). An employee's compensation refers to the payment they receive in exchange for their services to the organization. Compensation has a substantial impact on job performance. Pay is a critical factor in both the recruitment and retention of librarians. Despite a significant increase in pay and benefits typically offered by their institutions, there remains room for improvement (Odunlade, 2012). Encouraging employees to improve their performance and boost organizational productivity requires a well-crafted compensation plan. To encourage employees to improve their performance and boost organizational productivity, a competitive compensation package is essential (Reddy, 2020). Khan, Shahid, and Nawab (2013) examined the relationship between compensation practices and employee performance in the education sector of Pakistan. Their findings revealed that both monetary and non-monetary rewards significantly enhance employee satisfaction, motivation, and job performance. Competitive compensation practices in higher education institutions play a vital role in motivating academic staff, enhancing job performance, and reducing turnover intentions (Azeez & Osawe, 2022). Based on the literature discussed above, we frame the following hypothesis:

H-1 : Compensation and reward system have positive impact on job performance of library professionals.

Employee Engagement and Motivation Initiatives

Employee engagement will be a problem for organizations in the future due to its complexity and the strict regulations that many of them must follow (Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2014). The productivity, commitment, loyalty, and reduced attrition of employees are all directly impacted by employee engagement (Saxena & Srivastava, 2015). Employee engagement allows people to make choices and act on their tasks. Inclusion enhances ownership and commitment and generates motivation and collaboration, which helps retain workers. As a result of employee empowerment, productivity is increased, time spent on decision-making is reduced, the gap between managers and subordinates is closed, and worker collaboration is fostered (Hassan, 2016). Motivation is of two types; the self-derived motives that motivate individuals to behave in a certain way or follow a particular route are referred to as intrinsic motivation. Among these qualities are responsibility, autonomy, the ability to use and improve one's skills and abilities, work that is both interesting and challenging, and opportunities for progress. The term "extrinsic motivation" refers to the external forces that are employed to motivate humans. Both rewards and penalties are included in this (Anku, Amewugah, & Glover, 2018). Researchers have unequivocally demonstrated the link between employee engagement and a number of favorable individual and organizational outcomes (Albrecht, Breidahl, & Marty, 2018). A study conducted by (Dajani, 2015) states that Job performance was positively influenced by employee engagement, but organizational commitment was not as highly influenced. The research highlights the significance of employee engagement and pinpoints several factors that significantly impact it. It also demonstrates the substantial and positive correlation between worker engagement and worker performance (Anitha & management, 2014). Broadly speaking, motivation pertains to the elements or occurrences that influence, propel, and direct specific human behaviors within a specific time frame and set of circumstances (Hemakumara & Studies, 2020). An investigation into the connection between worker motivation and output was carried out in Romania. The results indicated that employee job performance continues to be highly dependent on motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic (Tampu, 2015). In view of this the below hypothesis formulated.

H-2 : Employee engagement and motivation initiatives have positive impact on job performance of library professionals

Workload and Work Environment (WWE)

Workload, either directly or indirectly, is the set of tasks or group of activities that an employee completes during a certain time under typical conditions. Stated differently, a workload is any activity, direct or indirect, that demands an employee's time to satisfy their obligations, tasks, and preferences at work (Herdiana & Sary, 2023). Workload can be measured in three ways: the work dimension shows how much work employees are expected to do; the work conditions show how well employees understand their working environment; and the use of working time shows how much time employees spend on their daily tasks (Maulida & Wahyuningtyas, 2020). The physical workspace where employees work is just one aspect of the work environment; other aspects include the relationships that are developed between co-workers and higher-ups (Muslih & Damanik, 2022). Individuals are able to perform better in their jobs when they are provided with a comfortable and secure working environment, which helps to ensure that work processes run smoothly (Nabawi, 2019). A job's workload is a list of tasks that need to be finished within a specific amount of time. Conversely, the work environment encompasses everything that surrounds employees, potentially influencing their ability to complete assigned tasks. According to a research study conducted by Handayani (2022), the employee's performance, or job performance, is highly impacted by the workload and work environment. Muslih & Damanik (2022) found that an employee's performance is somewhat significantly impacted by their workload and workplace. Findings of a study demonstrate that work environments and physical conditions, interpersonal relations, and

workload management significantly affect employee productivity and satisfaction (Chandrasekar, 2011). On the basis of the previous studies, I have drawn the hypothesis.

H-3 : Workload and work environment have a positive impact on an library professional's job performance.

Hypothetical Model

Numerous studies have examined the impact of HRM practices on both organizational performance and employee job performance. The literature review highlights various factors related to human resource management practices. Based on these identified factors, a hypothetical model has been developed, as illustrated in Figure 1.

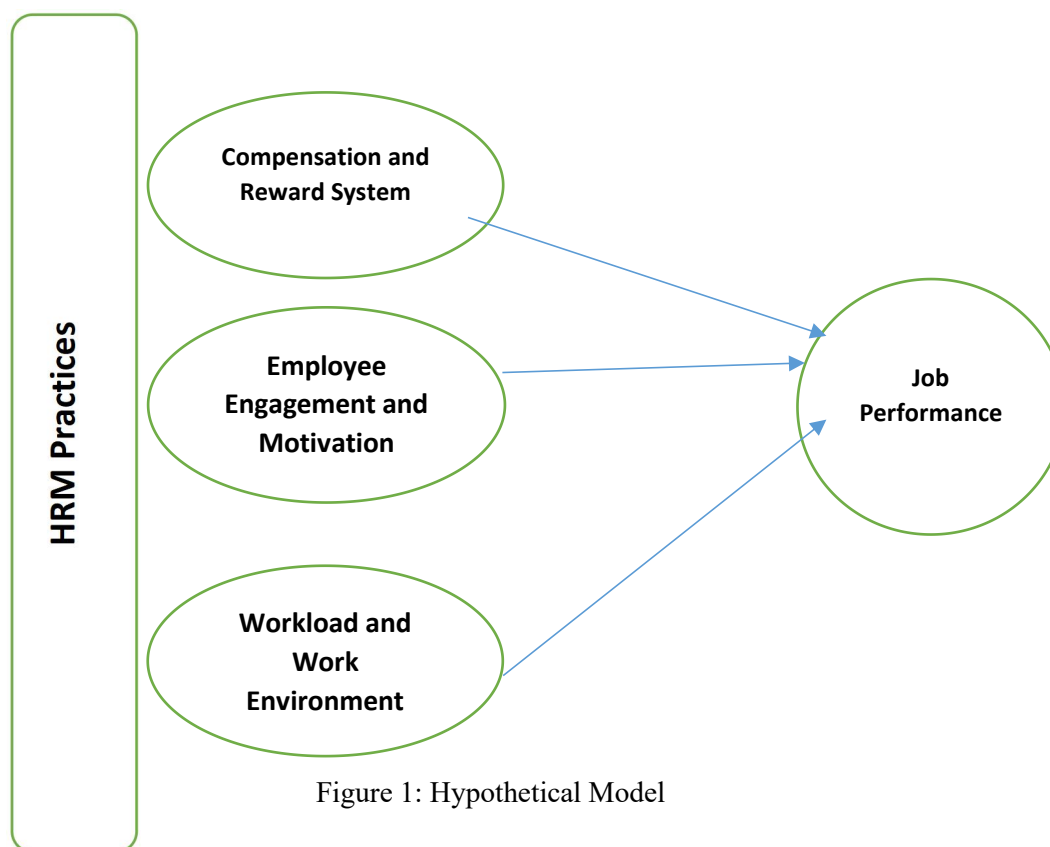


Figure 1: Hypothetical Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey research is often regarded as one of the most suitable quantitative research methods because it is versatile, cost-effective, and efficient for collecting data across a wide range of scenarios. It enables researchers to gather standardized information from large populations quickly and at relatively low cost compared to other approaches (Cresswell, 2018). This research used quantitative approach and data was collected via survey questionnaire, since it was a census-based study, so the researcher circulated the questionnaire using WhatsApp and email among all the respondents, resulting in 91 out of 127 responses being collected. Items on the questionnaire were not developed but rather adapted from those developed

and used by researchers in their studies previously. The adapted items were carefully scrutinized to ensure accuracy. In addition, reliability and validity were tested via Smart-PLS-4 to ensure the consistency and validity of the responses. Respondent perceptions of the statements were collected using a five-point Likert scale, which was easy to construct, scalable, and relatively reliable. 20 of the 25 items in the questionnaire pertain to “Compensation and reward system, Employee engagement and motivation initiatives, Workload and work environment, and Job performance.” In addition, five other items have been developed based on demographic data from the respondents. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Models (SEMs), including the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method.

RESULTS

Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis of all the library professionals working in public university libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan participated in this study, which is highlighted in charts and graphs for visual representations. It includes information about gender, age, qualification, designation and experience. The analysis indicates a workforce that is predominantly male (72.5%), although a notable proportion of female professionals (27.5%) is also represented across various designations. In terms of age, respondents are distributed across various age groups, with a notable portion falling within the 31-40 years and 41-50 years categories. The majority of the groups representing 69.2 % holds BS-LIS/MLISc degree, 24.2 % of the group possesses MS/MPhil degree while .7 % having Ph.D degree. The majority serve as Assistant Librarians, while others hold senior posts such as Deputy Librarian, Chief Librarian, Additional Librarian, and Classifier/Cataloguer, reflecting a diverse range of professional responsibilities. Professional experience varies widely, with many respondents possessing over 20 years of service, complemented by substantial representation in the 11–15 and 16–20-year, while fewer are in the early-career group with less than 5 years of experience. Overall, the profile reflects an experienced, academically qualified, and gender-diverse professional community, providing depth and stability to the library workforce in the public university sector.

MEASUREMENT MODEL (MM)

Convergent Validity (CV)

Table-1 illustrates convergent validity, which evaluates how items and latent variables relate to one another. CV is evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Rho, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extract (AVE) tests. According to Zakria (2024) a model should be tested or applied only if its CA value is at least 0.7, as this is the cutoff value for the model. Additionally, the latent variables and the items were examined for discrepancies using AVE. The variables listed in Table 1's Cronbach's alpha values match the required condition because they are greater than 0.7. The composite reliability, on the other hand, also satisfies the necessary condition having values higher than 0.7, while AVE values meet the threshold value of 0.55 (Raza et al., 2020). Thus the values mentioned above, corroborate the suggested model's convergent validity. Table-1 illustrates that convergent validity was established, as the AVE values for all constructs exceeded 0.5, with the exception of WWE, which recorded a value of 0.493. The value is marginally under the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), yet the CR of 0.792 exceeds the minimum standard of 0.70. Hair et al. (2019) say that an AVE value that is just below 0.50 is appropriate if the Composite Reliability (CR) of a construct is higher than 0.70. CR is a better way to quantify internal consistency than just CA and AVE. WWE's Composite Reliability is 0.792, which is higher than the minimum. Even though the AVE of 0.493 is a little less than 0.50, the strong CR shows that the construct has good convergent validity. Empirical studies validate this approach. Malhotra and Dash (2011) say that in social sciences, especially exploratory research, AVE values that are somewhat

less than 0.50 may be fine when CR is high. Fornell and Larcker (1981, p. 46) claim that the construct's convergent validity is still good if AVE is less than 0.50 but CR is greater than 0.60. As a result, the convergent validity of WWE was considered satisfactory.

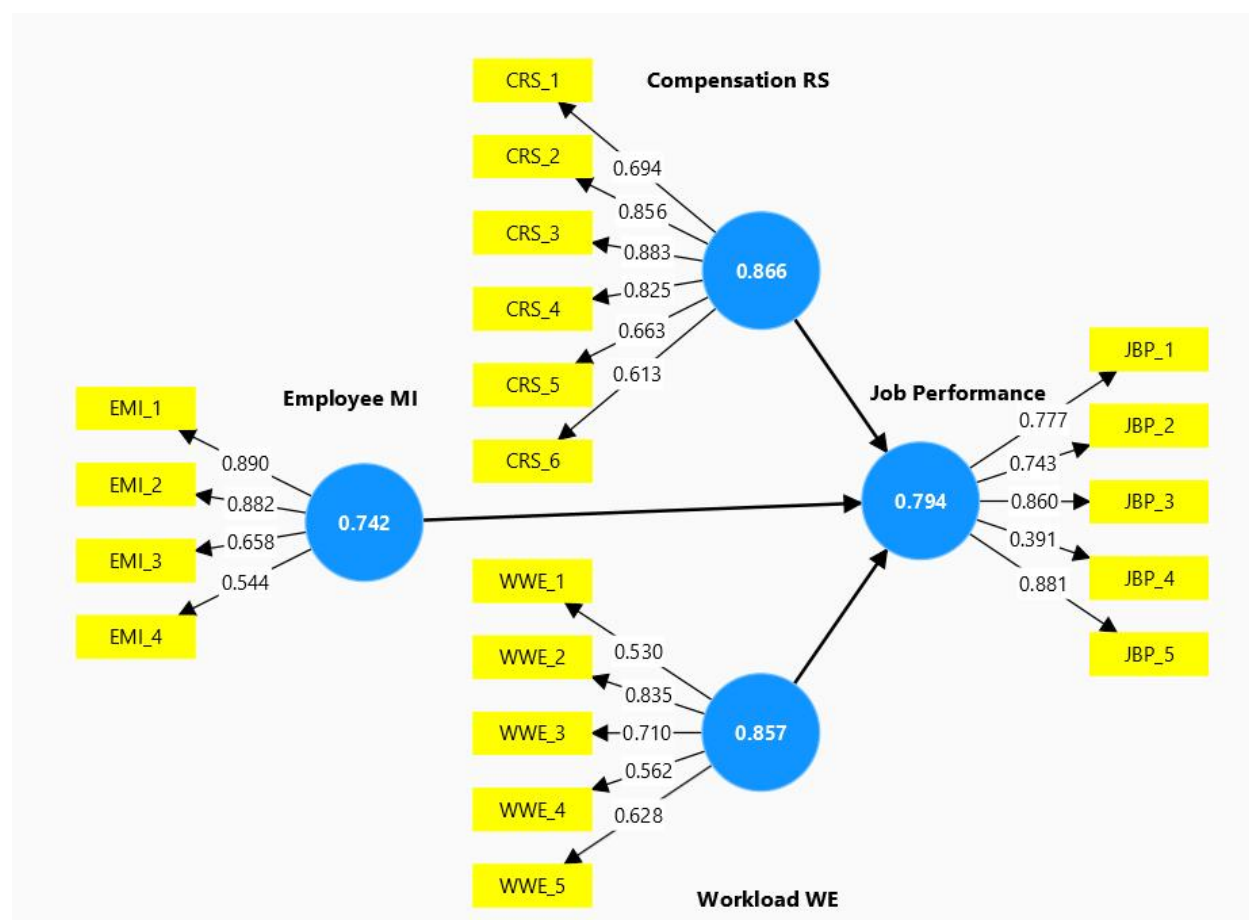


Figure 2 : Measurement Model

Table 1: Convergent Validity

| Construct | CA | Rho_A | CR | AVE |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CRS | 0.866 | 0.891 | 0.891 | 0.582 |
| EMI | 0.742 | 0.819 | 0.839 | 0.575 |
| WWE | 0.857 | 0.720 | 0.792 | 0.493 |
| JBP | 0.794 | 0.848 | 0.860 | 0.565 |

Note: CRS: Compensation and Reward System, EMI: Employee Engagement and Motivation Initiatives
WWE: Workload & Work Environment, JBP: Job Performance

Discriminant Validity (DV)

Discriminant Validity aims to analyze differences between the latent variables and their items. This constitutes the second section of the measurement model, comprised of HTMT, Farnell and Larcker

criteria, and cross loading principles. For a construct to meet the criteria set forth by Farnell and Larcker (1981), its square root should exceed the correlation it has with the other constructs in the model.

Table 2 : Fornell and Larcker criterion

| Construct | CRS | EMI | JBP | WWE |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| CRS | 0.763 | | | |
| EMI | 0.445 | 0.758 | | |
| JBP | 0.639 | 0.654 | 0.752 | |
| WWE | 0.455 | 0.299 | 0.428 | 0.662 |

Note: Bold diagonal elements indicate the square root of the AVE.

Table 2 illustrates that each diagonal value is the square root of AVE. This satisfies the required criteria (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) as it is more significant than the correlation between the specified components.

Table 3

Cross loading

| Variables | Items | CRS | EMI | WWE | JBP |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Compensation and reward system | CRS-1 | 0.694 | | | |
| | CRS-2 | 0.856 | | | |
| | CRS-3 | 0.883 | | | |
| | CRS-4 | 0.825 | | | |
| | CRS-5 | 0.663 | | | |
| | CRS-6 | 0.613 | | | |
| Employee engagement and motivation initiatives | EMI-1 | | 0.890 | | |
| | EMI-2 | | 0.882 | | |
| | EMI-3 | | 0.658 | | |
| | EMI-4 | | 0.544 | | |
| Workload and work environment | WWE-1 | | | 0.530 | |
| | WWE-2 | | | 0.835 | |
| | WWE-3 | | | 0.710 | |
| | WWE-4 | | | 0.562 | |
| | WWE-5 | | | 0.628 | |
| Job Performance | JBP-1 | | | | 0.777 |
| | JBP-2 | | | | 0.743 |
| | JBP-3 | | | | 0.860 |
| | JBP-4 | | | | 0.391 |
| | JBP-5 | | | | 0.881 |

Table 3 shows that each item and its corresponding determinant have a positive correlation. The pre-defined threshold of 0.1 (Raza and Hanif, 2013; Qazi et al., 2020) is less than the cross-loading difference. To conclude, Table 4's HTMT analysis is observable, and it meets the criterion that construct values must be less than 0.85 (Raza et al., 2020). The approved MM incorporates both CV and DV.

Table :4

Heterotrait and Monotrait (HTMT)

| Construct | CRS | EMI | JBP | WWE |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| CRS | | | | |
| EMI | 0.466 | | | |
| JBP | 0.663 | 0.789 | | |
| WWE | 0.548 | 0.294 | 0.338 | |

7.3 STRUCTURAL MODEL AND TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Table 5 shows, non-parametric bootstrapping was used to obtain path coefficients for the structural model. P-values and T-values were analyzed in the table-5.

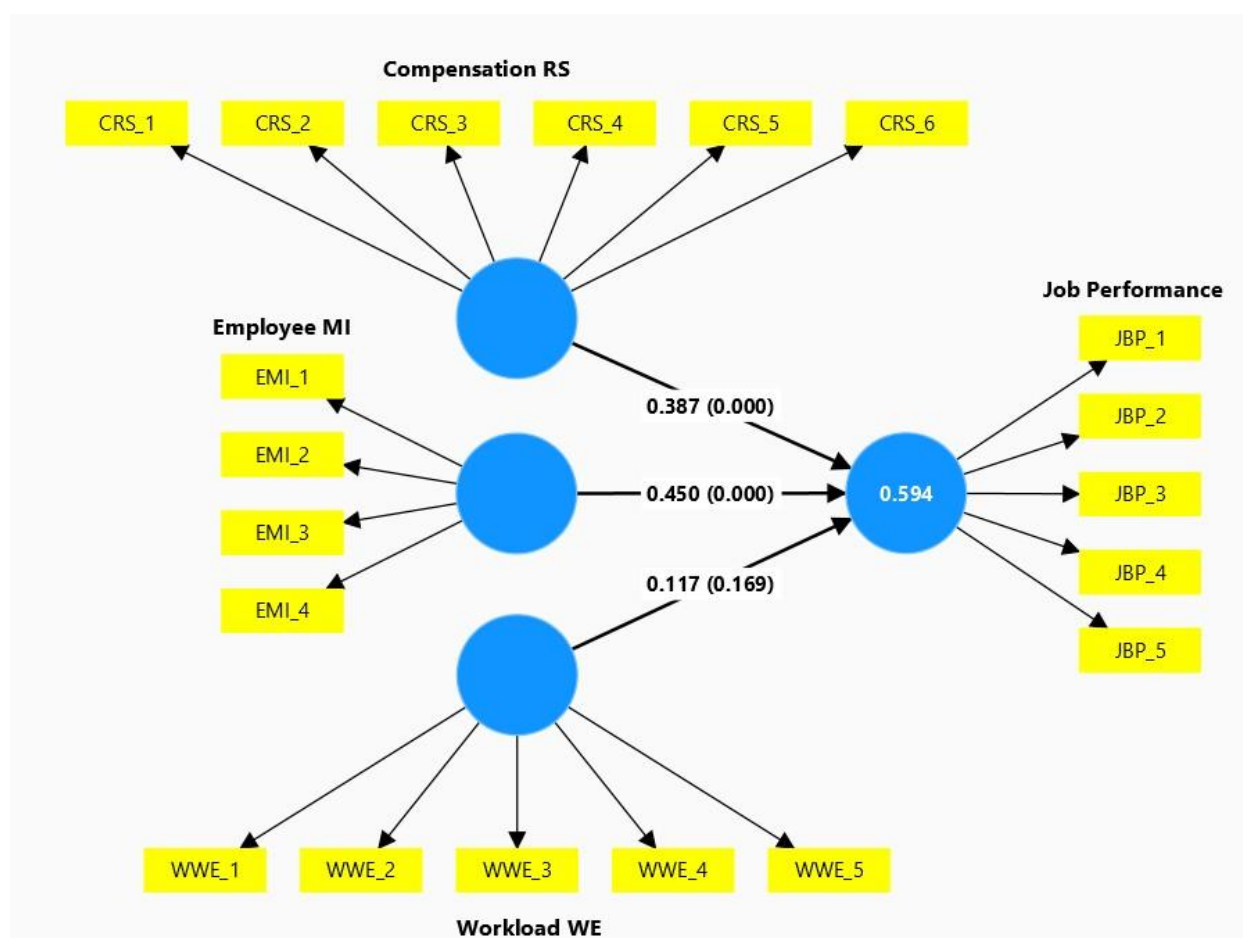


Figure: 3- Structural Model

Table 5

Path coefficient for direct effect.

| Hypothesis | Path | B- Values | T-Values | P-Values | Results |
|------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| H1 | CRS → JP | 0.387 | 4.601 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H2 | EMI → JP | 0.450 | 6.492 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H3 | WWE → JP | 0.117 | 1.377 | 0.169 | Not-Supported |

Note: Threshold values. “***p < 0.05, *T > 1.96”

Hypothesis H-1 & H-2

The table states that the T-values are 4.601 & 6.492 for the constructs CRS & EMI respectively are greater than 1.96 and the P-values are 0.000 & 0.000 for the same constructs CRS& EMI respectively are less than 0.05 at the 95% significant level, and found that the constructs CRS & EMI have significant and statistically positive influence on JBP. Thus H1 & H2 are supported.

Hypothesis H-3

WWE have T-value $1.377 < 1.96$ and P-value $0.169 > 0.05$ highlights that WWE have less impact on JBP at the 95% significant level. This indicates that WWE have no significant influence on JBP. So H3 is not supported.

Table. 6

R- Square Values

| Constructs | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Job Performance | 0.594 | 0.580 |

The model explains 59.4% of the variance in Job Performance ($R^2 = 0.594$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.580$). According to Chin (1998) and Hair et al. (2011), this value indicates a moderate explanatory power of the exogenous constructs on Job Performance. The small difference between R^2 and Adjusted R^2 suggests that the model does not suffer from overfitting, confirming that the predictors meaningfully contribute to explaining Job Performance. Thus, the structural model demonstrates satisfactory predictive relevance for the Job Performance construct.

DISCUSSION

The study affirms the critical role of HRM practices in enhancing organizational effectiveness. Compensation and Reward Systems were found to significantly influence job performance, echoing prior findings that fair remuneration and recognition are strong motivators for professional productivity (Reddy, 2020). In the context of Pakistani public universities, where financial and career advancement opportunities are often constrained, the provision of equitable pay structures and reward mechanisms becomes even more vital for retaining skilled library professionals (Odunlade, 2012). Employee Engagement and Motivation Initiatives also demonstrated a strong positive effect on performance. This backs up what Anitha (2014) said about how engagement increases loyalty, productivity, and the ability to deliver new services. Academic libraries can boost engagement by offering professional development, participatory management, and intrinsic motivators like autonomy and recognition (Albrecht et al., 2018). In this study, workload and work environment did not significantly affect job performance. This is

different from what earlier studies (Handayani & Putri, 2025; Muslih & Damanik, 2022) found, but it could mean that the workload pressures in Pakistani academic libraries are becoming more normal. Library professionals, who are used to work with limited resources, often put service delivery first when faced with environmental problems. Alternatively, this may indicate that the effects of workload are affected by supplementary variables not incorporated in the existing model, such as leadership style or organizational culture. The results show that HRM in academic libraries should move from just following rules to giving staff more power to make decisions. This method can help organizations make their employees happier and provide better service.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The implications of this study indicate that libraries and higher education institutions should integrate HRM practices more systematically into their operations. Transparent compensation frameworks, inclusive decision-making, and opportunities for mentorship and professional development can strengthen organizational capacity and employee engagement. Developing HRM competencies among managers is particularly critical for ensuring effective policy implementation and equitable supervision. Moreover, sustained attention to workload, digital infrastructure, flexible work arrangements, and workplace culture may improve employee well-being and service quality. As higher education continues to evolve, aligning HRM strategies with institutional change will be essential for long-term sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that HRM practices, especially compensation and reward systems, as well as initiatives to get employees involved and motivated, greatly improve the job performance of library professionals in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The minimal effect of Workload and Work Environment underscores the necessity for additional investigation into the contextual factors that may affect these relationships. The findings, while offering a satisfactory degree of elucidation, confirm that HRM practices are vital tools for enhancing the role of academic libraries within the realm of higher education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study was confined to public-sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and adopts a quantitative research design making the findings less generalizable. Private universities, different provinces, or cross-national contexts should be considered in future research to give a comprehensive overview of HRM practices in academic libraries. Mixed method or qualitative methodologies may provide richer understanding of contextual factors, such as leadership and organizational culture, support and staff attitudes. Other HRM dimensions such as performance appraisal, career development, training, and leadership effectiveness should also be investigated in further research. It would be useful to have longitudinal research on how HRM practices affect job performance over time, especially in the context of digital transformation and shifts in higher education requirements. The investigation of moderating or mediating factors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and technology adoption can enhance the understanding and enable better HRM practices.

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